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Double-Leg Takedown for Submission Wrestling

Becca Borawski

This month we continue working with world champion grappler Valerie Worthington. Valerie has trained extensively in both gi (wearing the traditional kimono) and no-gi grappling techniques and has chosen a few of her favorites to share with us.

Many jiu-jitsu schools, either because of size restrictions or because a large focus of the curriculum is on the ground game, do not spend much time working on takedowns. Frequently, grapplers interested in competing in submission wrestling (sometimes also called nogi jiu-jitsu) have to seek takedown knowledge from wrestling and adapt it to their jiu-jitsu game. The double-leg takedown we present this month is one of the wrestling takedowns Valerie has found to be useful in her matches.

Jiu-jitsu matches begin from the feet, with both opponents facing each other, feeling each other out for a takedown. One of the more common takedowns is the “double-leg” takedown, in which the attacking grappler shoots in, traps both legs of the opponent, lifts them off balance, and then drives them to the ground.

To begin, both grapplers are in a standing ready stance, with legs bent and elbows tucked in, prepared to drive forward or jump back as quickly as needed. This position benefits greatly from the development of a good powerful squat. Being able to move quickly up and down, side to side, and forward and back keeps grapplers safer from attack and enables them to mount a fast offense (photos 1 and 2).

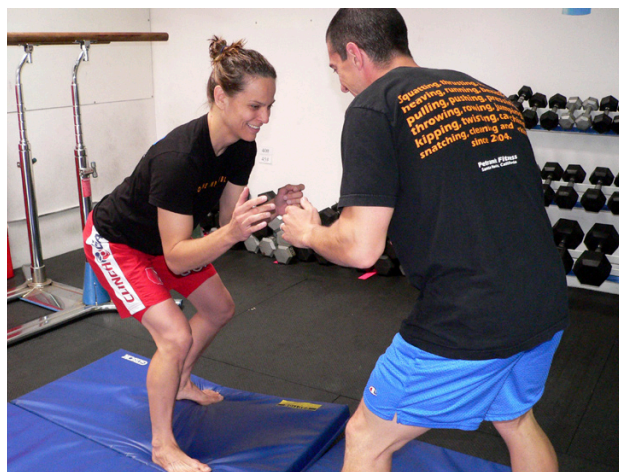


Photo 1



Photo 2

1 of 4

Double-Leg Takedown for Submission Wrestling (continued...)



Photo 3



Photo 4

When Valerie feels the timing is right, she initiates her takedown by doing two things: coming up underneath her opponent's hands to trap them and, at the same time, stepping inward. She achieves both of these movements by dropping her level. Essentially, changing one's level means raising or lowering the hips. It is not leaning forward or bending over. She keeps her torso erect and her hips underneath her, while dropping her hips down and in toward Andy. At the same time, she is pushing her hands upward underneath Andy's wrists (photos 3 and 4).

After Valerie has lowered her stance, she will take her penetration step. This means she will continue moving herself toward Andy, rolling her right leg forward onto her knee. She goes from being on the ball of her foot, moving forward in the same line, onto her knee. Her shoulder is now pressing into Andy's abdomen, her right knee is between his feet, and she has placed her hands on the backs of his legs.



Photo 5



Photo 6

Valerie's head is tight to his torso and her neck is reaching up and to the right. The placement of the neck is important at this juncture to prevent Andy from reaching down and executing a guillotine choke. Mixed Martial Arts fans have seen many decorated wrestlers come into the world of the UFC and promptly get choked out due to not paying attention to this moment in the double-leg takedown (photos 5 and 6).

Double-Leg Takedown for Submission Wrestling (continued...)



Photo 7



Photo 8

Valerie now prepares to “turn the corner.” She prepares to do this by taking her left foot, which is behind her, and stepping it out to the side. This is going to provide her with the ability to drive up and to the right. One of the common mistakes with beginners learning this takedown is not turning the corner. It is much easier to take down an opponent by driving them at an angle, as opposed to straight back (photos 7 and 8).

Next, Valerie raises her level by standing, but she does not stand straight up. She comes up and to her right side. She pushes off from her left foot, while driving her shoulder and her head to the right. She lifts Andy's right leg up as she does this. By raising his leg while driving her body to the side, Valerie can take Andy's balance. By moving him back at an angle, Valerie has successfully “turned the corner” (photos 9 and 10).



Photo 9

Now she continues to walk Andy back in the angled direction while lifting up on his left leg. She does so as forcefully and for as much distance as she needs in order to take his balance and bring him to the ground.

By separating herself from Andy while he is going down, Valerie is able to land the takedown in side control. If she were to stay tight to his body throughout the movement, she likely would have landed between Andy's legs, also known as being in his guard. If Andy were a knowledgeable jiu-jitsu fighter, this could be dangerous. In a side control position, though, Valerie is in the advantaged position and has the ability to set up her ground game offense.



Photo 10

Double-Leg Takedown for Submission Wrestling (continued...)



Photo 11



Photo 12



Photo 13

There are many examples of fantastic double-leg takedowns in the world of mixed martial arts. Because many collegiate-level wrestlers have moved on to the world of fighting, there are a number of fighters with a high degree of proficiency and explosiveness in takedowns. Examples of fighters to look for include Matt Hughes, Kevin Randleman, and Josh Koscheck.



Becca Borawski teaches and trains at [Petranek Fitness/CrossFit Los Angeles](#) in Santa Monica. She has a master's degree in film from the University of Southern California and a background in martial arts training. She has blended these skills together to produce DVDs and build websites for professional fighters. Her main job is as the music editor on the TV show *Scrubs* and she currently trains jiu-jitsu under Eddie Bravo at 10th Planet Jiu-Jitsu in Hollywood.

Valerie Worthington earned her Brazilian jiu-jitsu purple belt from Carlson Gracie and Carlson Gracie, Jr. She currently trains at the New Breed Academy in California. A dedicated member of Petranek Fitness/CrossFit Los Angeles, Valerie was a gold medalist at the 2007 World Grappling Championships in Turkey.