

MMA 101

Greg Jackson on Striking

BY GREG JACKSON // PHOTOS BY PAUL THATCHER



When I was a kid, my parents instilled in me the importance of helping others, which is what drew me to teaching. Martial arts is what I know and love best, and I honestly hope the information between the pages of *Jackson's MMA, The Stand Up Game* will either help people defend themselves or win professional fights. Whatever you're looking for, I hope I can help you find it.

Over the years, I've been in hundreds of corners and trained hundreds of fighters. From world champions to the military and police forces—in addition to the everyday guys off the street—I've had to learn what works best through trial and error...and error...and error. When my students convinced me to start coaching grappling tournaments, I faced many obstacles. Because I had no Jiu-Jitsu instructor, I had to figure out what worked and what didn't and figure it out fast. These techniques, coupled with my students' drive, helped us defeat more experienced opponents and we were able to win nearly every grappling tournament we entered.

Our transition into MMA started early, and we went through a similar progression. Using what moves worked and discarding what did not, we continued to evolve. We began winning all the bare-knuckle fights. From there,

we progressed to winning the established events, eventually holding almost every King of the Cage belt as well as championships from many other organizations. In due course, my higher level fighters were introduced to the bigger stage of the UFC, WEC and Strikeforce. We have been lucky enough to earn a few of their belts, but more importantly we have been fortunate enough to have had a front row seat in the near-global recognition of the art we love.

The lessons I learned through this process are invaluable. All of the years of experience in corners, behind the scenes and working game plans have led me to a point where I feel like I sincerely stand behind the techniques I promote.

The result of my dedication is captured in the pages of my first book for Victory Belt Press called *The Stand-up Game*. These are the things I want people to know so they won't have to go through all the pains I did to figure out what works and what doesn't. I hope it helps.

Over the next three months, readers of *FIGHT! Magazine* will get an exclusive look at a few of my favorite techniques from the book as well as a sneak peak at some of the material from my next book, which will be out in February 2010.



Greg Jackson's book, *The Stand Up Game*, is available now at bookstores everywhere.

▮ STRIKING COMBINATION #1

This is a combination that is simple yet effective. It highlights a few of the tenets of Jackson's MMA. The first is to use deception to create an opening and tie combinations together that flow naturally from each other (sometimes called kinetic energy

chain sequences). It relies on a jab to distract your opponent while you switch your feet and deliver a low kick. This disrupts the opponent's balance and when added to the forward momentum of the kick, will set you up for a crushing uppercut.



1) I'm squared off with Mike in my fighting stance.



2) I throw a jab to distract him and obscure his vision. At the same time, I switch my feet so my lead becomes my rear and vice versa. I now have a clear avenue to deliver a leg strike to his lead leg.



3) I kick his lead leg out from under him, making sure to strike with the shin of my rear leg and not the foot. This disrupts his balance and causes him to spread his arms out, which opens up his defense and leaves his head unprotected.

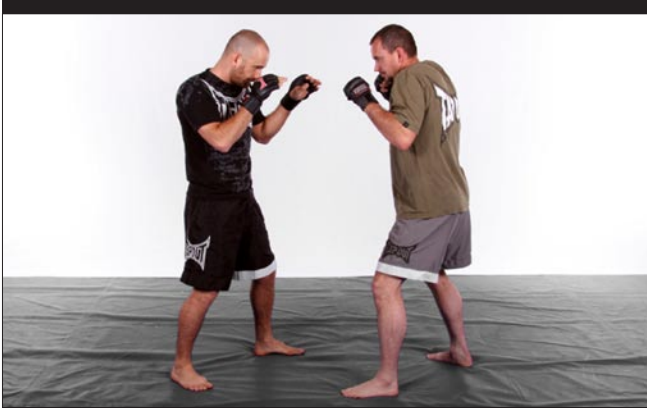


4) I plant my left leg to reestablish my base, pivot my body in the opposite direction and throw an uppercut into his chin with as much force as I can generate.

▾ STRIKING COMBINATION #2

This combination is a good example of a kinetic chain sequence. Each strike flows from the previous one and allows you to turn your hips and generate velocity behind each strike. Like the pre-

vious combination it starts with a low kick to seize the initiative. This throws your opponent off balance and the rapid combination that follows prevents him from re-establishing his defense.



1) I am squared off in my fighting stance with Mike. Both of us have the same foot forward.



2) Placing all my weight on my trail leg, I throw a low kick into the inner thigh of his lead leg. This throws his balance off and opens up his hands.



3) Instead of recoiling my leg back into my fighting stance, I place it outside his trail leg and establish my base. I step forward and throw an arcing elbow into the side of his head.



4) Using the momentum of the elbow strike, I drop my level down to set myself up for the next strike.



5) I rotate my hips and push up with both legs to generate velocity and throw an uppercut into Mike's chin. My right hand protects my chin in case he tries to counterstrike.



6) Rotating my hips back in the opposite direction, I throw a hard overhand right into his temple. My left hand protects my chin in case he tries to counterstrike. ▮