

# MMA 101

## Greg Jackson on The Clinch

BY GREG JACKSON // PHOTOS BY PAUL THATCHER

**G**reg Jackson is widely considered one of the top MMA trainers in the fight game, operating Jackson's Submission Fighting out of Albuquerque, N.M. His stable of fighters includes Georges St-Pierre, Rashad Evans, and Nate Marquardt.

Known for creating cerebral fight plans and fostering a sense of brotherhood amongst his fighters, Jackson has developed 10 world champions. Fighters in his camp can routinely be seen in events around the globe, including the UFC, Abu Dhabi and Grapplers Quest.

Jackson grew up in a family of wrestlers and was instilled with the values of hard work and dedication at an early age. Eventually, Jackson began studying martial arts, and combined his knowledge of grappling with Judo locks and submission wrestling. In 1992, Jackson opened his first school. However, it wasn't until watching UFC 1 in 1993, that Jackson realized the efficiency of Gracie Jiu-Jitsu. Eventually, Jackson began incorporating BJJ, kickboxing and Muay Thai into his school's training regimen. During this time, Jackson also trained Albuquerque police officers, SWAT, and Air Force personal.

FIGHT! Magazine ranked Jackson number eight in this year's most influential people in MMA, and his fight team is ranked number one in winning percentage by Sherdog.com.

In this issue of FIGHT!, Jackson shares some of his knowledge regarding the Thai clinch combo in this exclusive excerpt from his new book *Jackson's Mixed Martial Arts Book—The Stand Up Game*, which explores his arsenal of striking techniques.



## ▶ UPPERCUT TO DOUBLE UNDER CLINCH

The over-under clinch is a position almost every fighter finds himself in, especially when grappling against a cage wall, yet it is so underrated because many fighters prefer to use it only as a transition to the Muay Thai clinch. Here are two ways to use the over-under clinch to your advantage by using it to set up strikes.

When inside an over-under clinch, your opponent will frequently hold his head in a downward position to protect it. You can use this to your advantage because it opens him up to the uppercut. This strike alone won't end a fight, but it can stun your opponent long enough to give you the opportunity to secure a double-under clinch, which is a more dominant position.

**1)** 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.



**2)** I slide my right hand down to his left wrist to isolate his arm while maintaining the underhook with my left arm.



**3)** I put pressure on his wrist and bend his arm downward. This will create space for the strike, make it difficult for him to block it, and deceive him from my true intention.



**4)** In one quick motion I rotate my hips, let go of his wrist and throw an uppercut into his face. I also rotate my head so he can't bring his left hand up and do the same strike to me. This will stun him long enough for the final step.



**5)** While Keith is still trying to regain his defenses, I slip my right arm underneath his left armpit and grasp my hands together behind his back to establish the double under clinch.

➤ STRIKING COMBINATION TO DISENGAGE FROM OVER-UNDER CLINCH

Even when you have your opponent trapped up against a cage wall, you may feel the need to disengage and return to a neutral position facing him on your feet. Pushing away and resuming a starting position is too easy. Use your over-under

clinch to inflict damage before breaking contact. The back and forth motion of this move will create the space you need for the striking combination.



**1)** I am in an over-under clinch facing Keith. My left arm is under his right armpit and my right arm is over his left arm. Notice that I've got a grip on his tricep to make it difficult for him to pull it out and strike.

**2)** I bump him with my left shoulder to throw his balance off.



**3)** I then bump him with my right shoulder to get him rocking back the other way and create space between us.

**4)** At this point Keith is off balance and his weight is going backwards. I break the clinch, twist my hips, and chamber my right hand for a strike.



**5)** I pivot again in the opposite direction and throw a right cross into his chin.

**6)** I follow it up with a left cross. From here I can either pursue Keith and continue striking or back away to ensure he doesn't lunge forward and try to reestablish the clinch. ■