

# Old School

In the beginning of my jiu-jitsu career, pretty much the only move I knew was the Twister. When I got an opponent's back, I nailed it a high percentage of the time. The problem was I had a hard time getting my opponent's back to pull it off. I spent a considerable amount of time working on setting up the Twister from the other positions, which paid off in the long run, but at the time it resulted in the other parts of my game being quite weak. I didn't have a strong guard, and my side control was nothing to write home about. Needless to say, opponents were passing my guard at will. My only defense was to pull them into my half guard. I had already discovered the Lockdown, but I didn't yet know what to do with it. I'd just squeeze my opponent's leg and hold on for dear life.

During one of these agonizing stalemates in the half guard, I started searching for something to grab onto, something to trap. Then I saw my opponent's foot sitting right there. I thought, "Hmmm, I wonder what would happen if I were to latch onto it?" It seemed to me that if I grabbed his far foot and pulled on it as hard as I could, I might be able to sweep him over. Just snatch it and run. So that is what I did, and it worked flawlessly. In the next couple of tournaments, the Old School Sweep was all that I did. I would just sit in half guard and wait for it. If there was a minute left on the clock, I would hold on for another thirty seconds, pull Old School to get on top, and then latch onto my opponent and try to stall my way to victory.

This was all back in '96. I was training with the Machados at the time, and they had never seen the Old School Sweep. They were virtually unstoppable in the competition circuit during the 80's, and I thought if they had never seen the move before, I must have made it up. They thought I had made it up. I didn't think I had invented the best move ever, but it worked pretty darn well. I continued to pull it off at tournaments all over Southern California. There were some pretty big players attending these tournaments, guys like Rickson Gracie, but I never thought any of them were watching me during my matches. Apparently some of them were.

Six years after Old School had first come to my rescue while in the half guard, I heard that Carlos Gracie Jr. was putting on a seminar at Rigan Machado's school in Torrance, California. Carlos was the son of the man who had invented Brazilian Jiu-Jitsu, the guy who brought the Machados under his wing and taught them. Knowing I had to check out this seminar, I threw my gi and brown belt in the trunk of my car and headed down there the day of the event. I ended up arriving a few minutes late and quickly got out onto the mat. While Carlos Jr. was doing his thing, showing everyone in attendance some kick ass moves, Jean Jacques and Rigan Machado came up to me and started asking about a new Twister set-up I had discovered off the sprawl. It absolutely blew my mind. Carlos Gracie Jr., one of the founders of Brazilian Jiu-Jitsu, was giving a seminar, and here the Machado brothers were inquiring about some Twister set-up I hardly ever did. So I started showing them. Right in the middle of it, Fabio Vinelli came up and shushed the three of us. I couldn't believe it. The guy actually shushed the Machado brothers in their own academy. It was hilarious.

He directed our attention back to Carlos Gracie Jr., who was communicating with us through a translator. "This next move everyone now playing in half guard," the translator said in his broken English. "This new move everyone now playing in Brazil. Very popular new move."

The Machados and I looked at each other. We had completely forgotten about the Twister set-up. Immediately we were all wondering about this crazy new move everyone was doing down in Brazil. I was thinking that it had to be something sick, totally off the hook. So I'm sitting there watching, hanging off the edge of my seat, and all of a sudden Carlos Gracie Jr. shows Old School. The Machados glanced back at me, and the look they gave was, "What just happened there? That move isn't new. That is your move, Eddie."

Over the years I have taken a lot of flack over Old School. There are a lot of people claiming that Old School has been around for ages, that some guy named Gordo has been doing it since the dawn of time. I don't know this guy Gordo and I have never seen him pull off Old School, but I'm pretty sure he doesn't execute Old School using the Lockdown. I believe this because I had never seen a Brazilian Jiu-Jitsu player use the Lockdown before 2000. But that is neither here nor there. Truthfully, I don't really care if I made up Old School or not. It's a high percentage move that lands you in a favorable position. It was my bread and butter when I started out in jiu-jitsu, and it's still my bread and butter, especially when I'm rolling with guys who are familiar with my system. It's called Old School because that's exactly what it is.



Here I have already secured the Lock-down, established the double under-hooks, and whipped up to my side. I'm now in a position to set-up an attack on Joe.



Immediately noticing that Joe's foot is within reach, I use the momentum from the Whip Up to reach my right hand between his legs and latch onto his left foot. It's important to notice that I haven't let go of the Lock-down and that I'm gripping just above Joe's hip with my left under-hook.



Releasing the Lock-down, I turn more onto my right side. It is important that you keep your under-hook tight, as well as maintain a firm grasp on your opponent's foot.





Continuing to rotate my body, I come up to my knees and drive my weight forward into Joe. As I do this, I pull Joe's left foot out from underneath him with my right hand, destroying his base.



Still driving my weight into Joe, I step over his right leg and circle to my left to avoid being pulled into his half guard.



To assume the side control position, I drive my right knee into Joe's right hip and dig my left knee underneath his right shoulder. I then wrap my left arm underneath his head and my right arm underneath his left arm. Clasping my hands together underneath his left shoulder, I gain head and arm control. To keep Joe pinned to the mat, I drive my weight down into him.

