



## **How to Combine Underground Training with Your MMA and BJJ Training**

This has been a hot topic on our forum so I am going to cover this as best as I can 😊

The first thing you want to look at is how you feel when you perform. Analyze your strengths / weaknesses and identify what needs to get the attention.

If your skills lack then you need to focus on your skill training.

If guys are out-muscling you, which in BJJ doesn't need to happen, but strength is still a factor, improve your strength.

If conditioning is poor, I'll say this much: I've found the guys who are in the best shape spend a lot of time drilling intensely, sparring for extended periods with no breaks AND include some extra form of energy system training on their own.

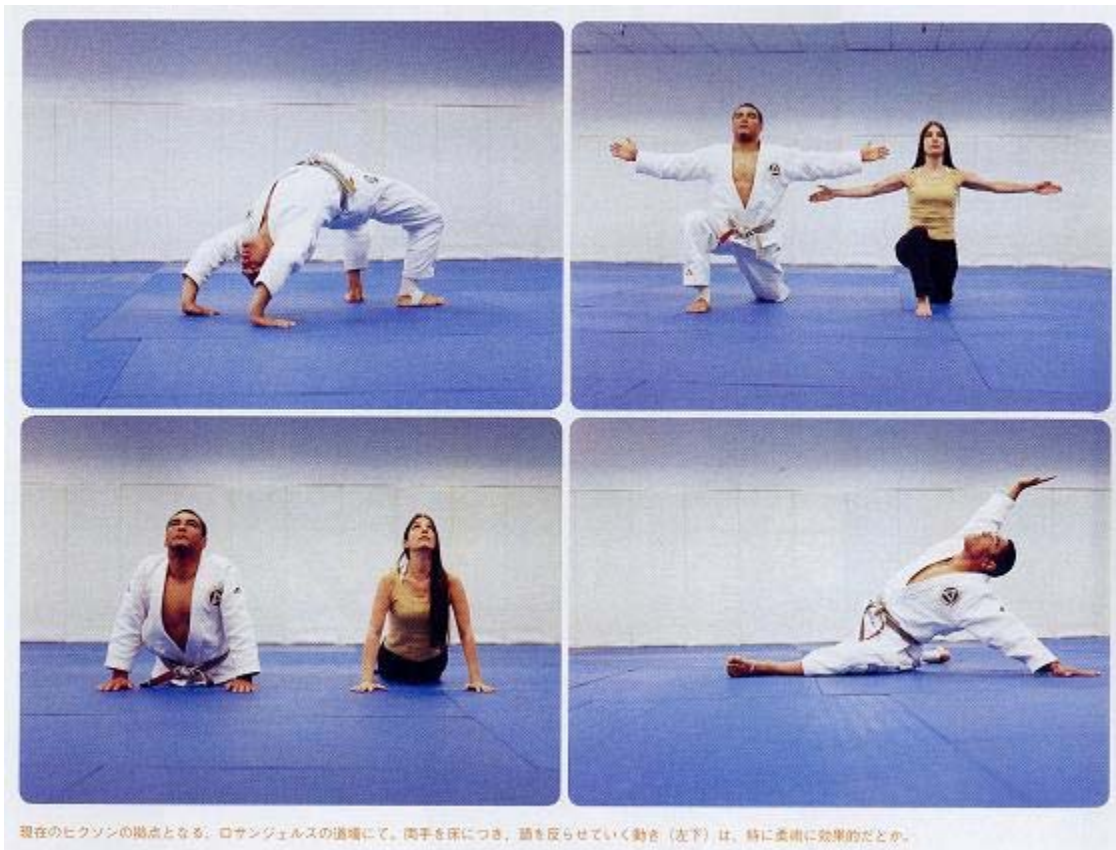
Jon Hinds used to teach an entire class for 2 hours, then he would roll with the entire class twice until he tapped them all out! Reminds you of Rickson Gracie right? Well, I'm sure Jon was heavily influenced by Rickson while training under him! Still, Jon told me his conditioning was insane! I believe it!

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What else should you analyze?

**If you train 4 or 5 days a week, you don't want to do your strength and performance work on the others days because now you will have NO rest days. This will likely decrease your performance!**



**Above, Rickson Gracie performing Yoga and various natural body movements**

If possible, find 2 days where you can train twice a day with at least 4 hours between your combat training and your performance training.

Now, I want to look at this realistically. I don't know too many people with a schedule so flexible that they can train twice a day with split sessions unless they are professional.

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If you can do this, then this is optimal for recovery and performance enhancement. If not, you will need to experiment with how many days of combat and performance work need to be performed.



**Backwards sled drags towards the end of a tough energy system circuit**

If I was training 4 – 5 x week with BJJ, I would split like this:

BJJ on Mon, Tues, Thur. and Fri.

I would then perform 2 days of heavy to moderate circuits or bodyweight circuits. If the weather is nice enough, then these circuits would become energy system days.

Why energy system work? Because my weakness is conditioning, NOT strength. It comes down to you asking yourself a question that Martin Rooney asks to many guys who worry about losing “strength” as they begin BJJ and lessen their gym time.

**“What’s Important Now?” aka W.I.N.**

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You must understand that once the focus is NOT your gym training, your numbers in the bench, squat, dead, etc. will likely decrease.

If you are on more of the recreational level with BJJ or any other combat sport, then shoot for 2 sessions of combat per week and 2 – 4 sessions of strength and energy system training per week.

Personal schedules differ from person to person so it's tough to outline EXACTLY what you need to do. The process of a needs analysis is what you must do and be honest with yourself when creating a training program for yourself.

I don't have the luxury (yet) to do double training sessions, but, through listening to my body, I like to have 2 and sometimes even 3 full rest days per week. If I'm feeling energetic, I may only have 1 rest day that week, but, not all workouts are of the same intensity. The time, intensity, and style of training differs which allows me to avoid constant heavy weights and high intensity. This "Never back down" mentality leads to overuse injuries and lack of progress.

Workouts seem best if they are either split into upper / lower body days, or full body days w/energy system training.

Here are some sample workouts I might perform during the week, all with a different focus:

### **Full Body Circuit**

**Focus: Muscular Endurance and Overall Conditioning**

**Perform as many rounds as possible in 15 minutes:**

1A) 40 lb D Ball: Burpee + Close grip Push Up + Shoulder x 10 reps

1B) recline rows with thick rope x 10 reps

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- 1C) plyo lunges x 20 reps
- 1D) power wheel kneeling roll outs x 10 reps
- 1E) plyo push ups over d ball x 10 reps

### **Energy System Workout / Full Body**

**Focus: Improving Overall Endurance and Conditioning**

**3 – 4 Rounds, 1 Minute rest after each round**

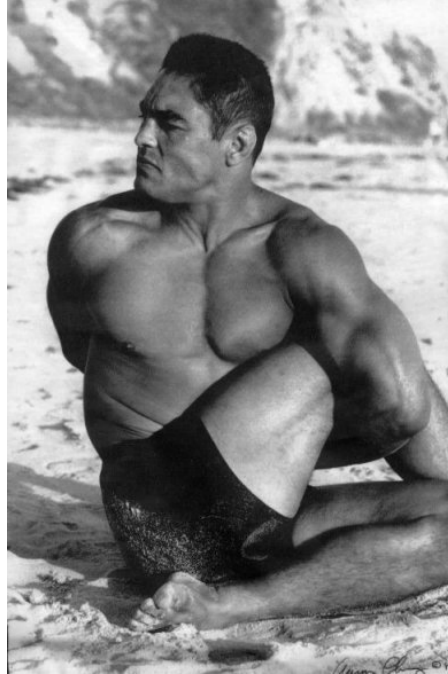
- 1A) forward sled drag x 100 ft.
- 1B) sprint x 100 ft.
- 1C) picnic table military press x 10 reps
- 1D) pull ups x max reps
- 1E) sprint x 100 ft.
- 1F) Sled rows x 6 reps
- 1G) backwards sled drag x 75 ft.
- 1H) forward sled sprint x 30 ft.

### **Full Body Workout**

**Focus: Full Body Strength Endurance & Overall Conditioning**

**5 rounds or as many rounds as possible in 20 minutes**

- 1A) alternating flat DB benching x 6 – 8 reps
- 1B) bent over double kettlebell rows x 6 reps
- 1C) double kettlebell high pulls x 6 reps
- 1D) mixed grip chins x 6 – 8 reps
- 1E) skater squats x 10 reps ea.



**Rickson Gracie demonstrating working on his flexibility**

Each workout has a slightly different focus, but overall, notice how I use a lot of circuit work. My strength compared to others is not a problem, so I don't worry about deadlifting 500 lbs for reps, although heavy deadlifting still takes place in my training, it is not the priority.

Ask yourself again, what is your priority and what must you do to achieve your goals. Write out an action plan and break it down into parts. Every 2 weeks analyze your plan, look at the results and then adjust as necessary.

Underground training does not necessitate you to stray from certain tools and only use certain tools. For example, many people mistake us for only using odd objects in our training, truth of the matter is that we are all open minded and use a variety of tools, but we focus on results!

The best skill I ever learned and applied in training was to simply listen to my own body and I always emphasize this to others. This allows you to use "periodization" completely according to your own day to day energy levels!

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Last, I would like to emphasize how excellent it is to mix in your energy system work with skill work. This can also combat the time or scheduling differences many of you have.



**Driving the prowler (loaded with KB's) during an energy system workout at the playground**

Bring a dumbbell, kettlebell or sandbag to the class. A heavy bag is also excellent.

Set the timer for 5 minutes and move from one station to the next by working for 30 seconds, transition for 15 seconds. Choose 5 or 6 drills and work the heck out of them with super high intensity.

You can perform the same circuit for 2 – 4 rounds, or choose a new circuit for every 5 minute round

**Here's a sample for BJJ / Grappling:**

**Focus: Energy Sytem work / Improve Overall Conditioning**

s = seconds

1A) Kimura drill x 30 s

1B) 2 hand Kb swings x 30 s

1C) Heavy bag slams x 30 s

1D) Guard Pass drills x 30 s (partner gives 75 % resistance)

1E) takedown drill with lift & guard pass x 30 s

1F) Kb burpee + high pull x 30 s

Truly, your options are endless, and in the end, the most important factor is your skill. If your skills are poor, your strength and conditioning can only help you so much.

Be true to yourself and work on your weak areas but also remember to only train the way you enjoy most. In the end, longevity is the goal so you can live a healthy and fit lifestyle forever!

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