

MASTERS JUI JITSU

PROVEN SECRETS FOR **WINNING**

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MASTERS JIU JITSU

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BY DANIEL BEATTY

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INTRODUCTION

It all began more than 25 years ago at a kung fu academy in Champaign, Illinois. I found myself sparring with an “elderly” gentleman in his early forties (yeah I am older than that now) who chose to try a drop-down spinning leg sweep. I felt confident in my youth, quickness, and wit, thinking, “I’ve got this!”—so I dropped down to perform my own spinning sweep, knowing I would beat him to it. Technically, I did. But when I made contact with the heel of his standing leg, the momentum forced his sweeping leg to rise up. The next thing I knew, the heel of his sweeping leg impacted with my jaw with such force that it fractured straight down the middle. Six weeks of having my jaw wired shut and eating through a straw taught me a valuable lesson—not only about martial arts, but also about humility. My wife at the time strongly suggested I abandon martial arts due to the high risks and medical costs we could not afford, so I reluctantly did just that.



Fast forward to October 2016. As a way to help with focus, we enrolled my autistic son in a martial arts facility—a reputable BJJ and MMA gym. I experienced a wave of nostalgia as we ascended the cement and metal steps to the third floor of a fitness and sports complex in Crown Point, Indiana. The intensity, the atmosphere—it all reminded me of the kung fu academy I left so long ago. Watching my son on the mats rekindled a flame I hadn’t felt in decades. Within a month, I was unable to resist any longer. I decided to join. Under the tutelage of Steve Colón and Malik Elliot, I began my own jiu-jitsu adventure, and Team Colón became my home—my anchor—and will always be my home, even if life’s road were to pull me in a different direction.

My journey with jiu-jitsu did not begin in my twenties. Like many of you, I discovered this love later in life, after balancing a career, a family, and a slew of other obligations. But, as everyone who has walked onto the mat knows, jiu-jitsu is more than simply a sport; it is a transformative lifestyle with benefits that go far beyond being physically fit.



Starting jiu-jitsu later in life provides unique views and benefits. There's a profound sense of accomplishment in challenging oneself at an age when most people are content to just sit on the couch and watch a digital screen; demonstrating that new talents and achievements aren't just for the young. This experience has been uplifting in unexpected ways, pushing me beyond what I thought were my age-related limitations.

However, this journey is not without its challenges. Balancing family, job, and personal responsibilities while participating in this demanding sport necessitates careful preparation and priority. For many of us, this means changing our schedules, finding assistance, and setting aside time for training. The benefits, on the other hand, have been immeasurable: increased physical strength, mental clarity, the satisfaction

of continuous growth and development, and an astonishingly improved ability to deal with failure.

This book contains the hard-earned secrets I acquired on my way to success in Masters Jiu-Jitsu (over 30 years of age) competition. Even if you don't compete, these insights will help you improve your body and mind, allowing you to stick with this lifestyle longer and enjoy it more. It's a guide to excelling as a mature competitor, showcasing tactics for overcoming common hurdles, increasing training effectiveness, and, eventually, stepping on the mat with the mindset and tools to win. Whether your objective is to compete at the highest level or simply to reach your personal best, these insights will assist you in mastering the art and achieving success according to your own terms.

SELECTING THE RIGHT TRAINING ENVIRONMENT

As a mature jiu-jitsu competitor, success takes more than simply mastering techniques; it is also about adapting to how your body evolves over time. Recovery times are longer, and it's more important to pay attention to how your body reacts to tough training sessions. The importance of balancing intensity and safety is clear: pushing through discomfort is not always the best option. Instead, investing in good warm-ups and cool-downs is vital, and listening to my body's cues has helped me prevent numerous injuries, keeping me on the mats rather than the sidelines.

Competing as an older athlete can also present psychological hurdles, but it is also extremely rewarding. Adopting the appropriate tempo and mindset is critical, as the stakes can feel different. Focusing on technique, cultivating mindfulness, and remembering why you started are critical. For me, this path is about both winning and personal development.



Testing your limitations is part of the process, but it's also vital to be honest about them. Strategic rest intervals and altering training intensity according to how you feel are effective techniques to maintain longevity in the activity. Embracing these differences can make your jiu-jitsu experience more enjoyable and competitive without jeopardizing your health.

Finding the ideal gym atmosphere is critical, especially if your needs differ from those of younger competitors. Ask yourself, "Does this gym really serve my unique competitive aspirations as an older athlete?"

Finding the right training environment is essential for managing these unique needs of an older athlete, including recovery, mindset, and training intensity. The gym you choose can either support your longevity in the sport or work against it. For Masters athletes, the ideal training space is one that not only sharpens technique but also considers the balance between pushing limits and preserving longevity. With this in mind, selecting a gym that aligns with your goals—whether for competition or personal growth—becomes an essential step in your journey.

If your goal is competition, a gym that specializes in competitive training can significantly enhance your experience. Experienced instructors who understand the demands of competition may provide insights beyond techniques, advising you on mindset and strategy as well.

My teammate, Adrienne Einikis, a purple belt at the time, made her Master Worlds debut in 2017. I wasn't there—I was a white belt, riveted to my screen, watching FloGrappling. She was in the finals, had her opponent's back, and was attempting a bow and arrow choke. The opponent was defending as if her life depended on it and refused to tap. I was on my feet, yelling at the computer like a crazy person (as if she could hear me): "Come on, Adrienne!" You have got this! Choke her out!" Looking back, I can only imagine how my neighbors must have thought! Adrienne readjusted her position—once, twice, three times—and finally, the opponent tapped. I totally lost it. I was jumping up and down, tears flowing down my cheeks (don't judge—I get emotional like that). When she went to hug our coach, Steve, the pride and delight from both of them was overpowering. Watching her win the Master Worlds championship was an unforgettable experience. Knowing the training, Adrienne's dedication, and the results that occurred because of our coach and team, I knew I had chosen the correct team and the ideal gym.



Not every gym has a specific competition team, which is OK if you aren't interested in competing. However, if you are interested in competition but still like your gym for other reasons, flexibility is essential. You can augment your training by going to open mats or cross-training in gyms with competitive experience.

In my instance, despite its small size, my home gym has a significant amount of competitive experience. Training alongside Master World and Pan American Champions inspires me to keep improving. Despite the fact that my home gym has a strong competition team, I have supplemented my training by attending open mats at other competition teams and visiting some of the best competition teams in the Midwest, where I live.

In February 2017, after only three months of training, I competed in my first local event. To my astonishment, I finished second—an incredible accomplishment for someone so new to the sport! But what really stuck with me wasn't the medal—it was my match against Devin Dallaire from Tac Team's Newbreed. Devin had been training for a year and a half and caught me with an Americana lock that caused my elbow to pop. He paused, wide-eyed, and asked, "Are you okay?!?" I shook it off with a short, "Oh yes," and we carried on till I tapped a second later. That match spawned something unique: a friendly rivalry and a jiu-jitsu connection that has lasted nearly a decade. From that point forward, we'd check in with each other during tournaments, whether we were competing or just rooting for our teams.



I've never beaten Devin in competition, although I came close once at the Chicago Open when we were both blue belts. Devin was invincible that year, capturing all major championships. In our match, I locked him in a reverse triangle, but my legs were not in the proper position to strangle him. All I needed to do was attack his arm; he knew it since his hand was poised to tap, but I had tunnel vision and was focused solely on the choke. The moment I adjusted my legs to reposition, Devin escaped and went on to win the match on points. That was the closest he came to losing that year, and the memory still haunts me! Regardless of our rivalry, Devin and his team, lead by their excellent coach, Mark Vives, always welcomed me to their gym for open mats and seminars. The camaraderie and open-door policy served as powerful reminders of how the jiu-jitsu community flourishes when we share knowledge and grow together, rather than protecting secrets or fearing student loss.

Visiting other gyms has allowed me to expand my circle of friends and build my personal support team. One of the most significant advantages I've noticed is the increased support I receive. I've competed in events where my home team was not present, but thanks to visiting and training with

other teams, I had the other competition teams cheering for me and even helping to coach my matches. It is amazing to have several other gyms rooting for you!

It's crucial to note that this could be unique to the small gym culture in the Midwest as compared to other parts of the country. If you're at a large competition gym, this may not apply and may even be against their rules. Even at a smaller gym, it's a good idea to ask your professor if they have any issues to you training at other gyms. Personally, I have benefited greatly from cross-training, therefore I would seek out a gym that allows it. My professor greatly believes in cross-training, therefore our open mats are truly open to everyone, and other gyms are welcomed to attend. He's even set up cross-training MMA sessions with other teams.

Most competitive teams, particularly MMA gyms, have younger competitors. Training with younger partners can be frightening, but don't be afraid to try. Their pace and enthusiasm can be quite inspiring, encouraging you to perform at your peak. In exchange, you offer mature experience and perspective, resulting in a mutually beneficial dynamic that promotes progress for both sides. If safety is a concern, select your younger training partners carefully and, if required, tap early. Remember, the training mat is not a competition; it is a place to learn. Do not let your ego lead to injury.

Ultimately, your training environment should promote both personal and competitive development. Look for a gym that will help you achieve your goals while also offering cross-training opportunities. The support system you create is just as vital as the technical abilities you practice on the mats. Surround yourself with a staff that understands and appreciates the specific requirements of a mature competitor. This solid foundation will motivate you to succeed in your jiu-jitsu adventure.

MAKING TIME FOR CONSISTENT TRAINING

Balancing a busy schedule with jiu-jitsu training necessitates effective time management. It's about balancing training with other commitments like work, family, and personal time. Here, realistic planning is your most powerful ally. Determine how much time you can truly devote each week and develop a schedule that fits your lifestyle.

A disciplined strategy is critical for maintaining commitment.

If you're preparing for a competition, consider starting an eight-week countdown and creating a training regimen that fits into your regular routine. Aim to spend at least six hours each week on the mat. Though it may seem ambitious at first, you'll find that once you settle into a rhythm, this practice becomes an essential, energizing part of your week. To give you an idea, when I was training for Master Worlds, I spent 10 hours each week on the mats and a little extra time outside the gym focusing on cardio and strength.

Determine which times of day or week are optimal for training. Early mornings, late nights, and weekends, if possible, can provide excellent chances. This may include getting up earlier or foregoing a

relaxing weekend morning in favor of a training session, but the effort is worthwhile in terms of steady growth.

Maximize the worth of every minute spent training. If you're dedicating six hours per week, make sure those hours are productive; you are training, not just practicing. Integrating one competition-focused class per week can help imitate the high-intensity environment of a genuine match, whilst an open mat session allows you to try out new tactics or roll with various partners. Tailoring your sessions to meet your individual needs guarantees that each one brings you closer to your goals.

Tracking your milestones is critical for tracking progress and staying on track. If something is not working, be willing to change your schedule or routine. Consistency does not imply rigidity; it means training smartly and adapting to the limits of your life.

Remember, every step you take toward consistent training adds up over time, laying a solid foundation for success. You're not alone in navigating this path—many other masters competitors are on the same journey, finding ways to make jiu-jitsu work within their lives. Stay devoted and adaptable, and the rewards will follow.

COMPETITION PREPARATION WORKSHEET

SET YOUR GOAL

What is your main goal for this competition? (e.g., improve takedowns, win gold, refine guard passes) Write down your goal and motivations.

WEEKLY TRAINING PLAN

How many hours can you realistically dedicate to training each week? Outline your weekly schedule (e.g., Monday: 6-7 PM, Comp Class, Saturday 10-11:30 Open Mat).

Create a detailed weekly plan, including specific class types (e.g., competition-focused, open mat).

MONDAY

TUESDAY

WEDNESDAY

THURSDAY

FRIDAY

SATURDAY

SUNDAY

COMPETITION COUNTDOWN PLAN

Mark the number of weeks remaining and outline what you will focus on each week (e.g., Week 8: Cardio and drills, Week 7: Situational Rolling (Escapes)).

Break your training into 8-week blocks leading up to the event and set focus points for each.

KEY PERFORMANCE TRACKING

What metrics will you use to track progress? (e.g., rounds sparred, new techniques drilled, weight class goals). Record milestones here.

Log key metrics: number of sparring rounds, techniques practiced, strength/cardio improvements, etc.

ADJUSTMENTS AND REFLECTIONS

Reflect weekly: What worked well? What needs improvement? How can you adapt for better results next week?

Write reflections after each week: strengths, challenges, adjustments needed.

COMPETITION WEIGHT CLASS — BE REALISTIC

In jiu-jitsu competition, selecting the appropriate weight class can make all the difference. It can have a significant impact on how you perform, fight, and feel in both competition and training.

For mature competitors, being realistic about your weight class is critical to maximize your potential.

Drastic weight drops may appear to be a tempting shortcut, giving the impression of being the biggest and strongest in a lighter class. However, rapid weight loss might deplete your power and stamina, particularly as we age. Extreme weight cuts are frequently detrimental to persons over 40, threatening muscle loss and requiring longer recovery times. Most of the time, the trade-off is not worthwhile.

Instead, concentrate on developing lasting strength, endurance, and mobility. Rather than stressing over the numbers on the scale, focus on routines that strengthen your core, promote flexibility, and improve your current muscle tone. This method will benefit you in the long run by keeping you strong, nimble, and prepared for competition without making excessive sacrifices. Focus on this and wherever your weight is that is your weight class.



To keep things manageable, throughout the year, aim to stay within 10 pounds of your ideal weight class. This range is both sustainable and practical, allowing you to enter competition feeling strong, energized, and stress-free.

For example, I keep a consistent weight of 195-200 pounds. Looking at the IBJJF standards, I can either lose a few pounds to compete at medium-

heavy or gain a few to compete at heavyweight. Can I starve myself and compete at middleweight? I could, but I'd lose more than I gain. Now that I'm in my fifties, it's easier for me to grow muscle and maintain a heavy weight than it is to obsess about reducing weight to reach medium-heavy. The idea is not to focus on a precise figure, but rather on feeling fit, agile, and ready.

Choosing the correct weight class is all about striking a balance between performance and well-being so you may approach the mat feeling confident, capable, and ready to give it your all.

Train consistently for a few months before your competition, and let the scale guide you—the class you should compete in is determined by your natural weight. Remember: this is a marathon, not a sprint. If you're not fully satisfied with your weight—whether you want to go up or down—don't worry. Compete at your current weight and work toward your goals gradually as you grow through your jiu-jitsu adventure.

For many people, jiu-jitsu is more than just a sport; it's a way to improve their health, wellness, and even lose weight. Your strategy should be guided by your goals. If you're a competitor, don't force a drastic weight loss. Achieving your desired weight requires time, patience, and consistency, just as mastering jiu-jitsu techniques does. Do it the proper way—slowly and steadily—and you'll lay a firm basis for your performance and overall health.

THE CHAMPIONS MINDSET

Visualization is an effective strategy for mastering jiu-jitsu. In the high-stakes environment of competition, envisioning yourself as a winner before you ever walk onto the mat can pave the way for success. Imagine that gold medal around your neck, your hand raised by the referee—these mental images can push you beyond your perceived physical limits.

Doubt is one of your most formidable opponents, and it has no place in your thinking, particularly during competition. Visualize your success so clearly that it becomes a part of your mental reality. You must crown yourself the champion before anyone else does.

Winning is more than just having steadfast confidence; it also requires adaptability. Jiu-jitsu is full of unexpected twists and turns, necessitating a focused yet fluid mindset that is willing to pivot when things don't go as planned. The mix of confidence and flexibility is what elevates skill to mastery. I call it controlled chaos.

Above all, remember that jiu-jitsu is a game you love. This perspective is critical for creating a balanced attitude. Even on the toughest days, the core of this art is enjoyment and passion—not merely medals or titles. Embracing this champion's mindset involves raising your competitive spirit while also cherishing every moment on the mat, learning from both wins and losses.

Embracing Challenges: Handling Pre-Competition Anxiety

Most jiu-jitsu competitors have some pre-competition nervousness. Personally, I feel major pre-comp anxiety, but I've learned to control it with time. The more I compete, the less anxious I become, but feeling nervous is normal—it just shows how much you care about your performance.

November 2021, Las Vegas, NV—finals of the Master World Championships, medium-heavy Master 5 purple belt division. After winning my semi-final match, I had to wait an hour for the finals. My side of the bracket moved quickly, but the other side faced delays when a competitor no-showed. The extra time allowed my anxiety to sneak back in.

Sitting in the bullpen, I tried to clear my mind when Coach Steve approached.

"Okay, the Italian guy beat the American wrestler," he said. "It's a better matchup for you. The Italian is methodical, plays from his back—just like you. Stick to your top game and don't make mistakes. You do that, and you win. Remember, no mistakes!"

You might think hearing that would have added pressure, but Coach Steve knew exactly what I needed: direction. His words gave me something to focus on, bringing me out of the "what-ifs" spiral and back to my game plan. Simple, clear instructions—execute my top game, nothing fancy or flashy.

With that focus, I mentally rehearsed my attacks and passes to side control as my opponent rested. Although he was given 10 minutes to recover, it didn't bother me; I had an hour. If the roles were reversed, I'd want the same.

The match was tough. My opponent pulled guard and worked for sweeps. When he shifted to half guard, I attempted a knee-cut pass before switching to a collar choke attempt. It wasn't enough to complete, but it forced him to defend, giving me an advantage.

Later, he moved into De La Riva and X-guard, successfully sweeping me—but I immediately countered by sweeping him back, he earned an advantage making us even. We ended in half guard, with him still attempting sweeps. By the end, I had him flattened out, controlling the position. If I could just get my leg free, I'd pass! Time ran out. The referee did not give me the advantage for flattening him, which would have put me up two advantages to his one. He just raised my hand and I won by ref's decision.

The secret to winning was not dazzle; it was focus.

I persisted, fixed my mistakes quickly, and kept to the strategy. Mindset and execution prevailed in that match.

Managing anxiety begins with an attitude shift: consider competition as an opportunity to learn, regardless of the outcome. Accepting that the outcome does not determine your worth can be extremely liberating. Visualize each movement and transition as part of your mental game plan. This preparation is about more than just imagining the match; it's about mentally rehearsing every conceivable move so you're prepared and confident.

Another key to managing nerves is channeling them productively. Concentrate your nervous energy on your performance, and it will help you concentrate better. The adrenaline rush can be a great ally, allowing you to respond fast and adjust in the moment.

After each competition, take some time to reflect. Use the event as a learning opportunity, regardless of the outcome. Accept each lesson and let it shape your future training and tournaments. This is where actual growth occurs.

Most importantly, remember to enjoy the journey and the craft. Jiu-jitsu is more about the experience than it is about medals. Balancing competition with personal enjoyment is essential for longevity and fulfillment in the sport.

BODY CARE, NUTRITION, AND SUPPLEMENTS

Taking care of our bodies becomes increasingly important as we spend more time on the mat. Recovery is more than just a buzzword; it's a requirement. To perform well and stay injury-free, a strategic approach to body care, nutrition, and supplements is essential. Learning to recuperate smart can help you become stronger and stay in the game longer.

Listen to your body—it knows best. When weariness sets in, your body is telling that it needs a break. Taking time for recovery allows muscles to repair and grow, priming you for the next session. Techniques like cold plunges and cryotherapy may sound horrible, yet they work. I take a cold shower three to four times per week to reduce muscle inflammation, which can give you an edge on your next roll on the mat.

Sleep is one of the most overlooked restorative mechanisms. During deep sleep, your body enters full repair mode, repairing damaged tissues and promoting cell development. While seven to nine hours is optimum, even six hours can improve recovery. Any less and you are taking away from your body's natural ability to heal. Specifically when a competition is on the horizon, obtaining extra sleep is critical.

As we age, recuperation times can increase and disturb routines. Tools like foam rollers are game changers. Foam rolling accelerates muscle recovery by improving blood flow and reducing stiffness, leaving you feeling stronger and better prepared for practice. Recovery should be seen as part of your training regimen; it is not a sign of weakness, but rather a wise plan. You'll thank yourself when you feel more confident on the mats.



Training Off the Mats

For Masters athletes especially, off-the-mat training is the key to staying competitive, resilient, and injury-free. You need more than just grit and mat time — you need a strong foundation.

That means building core strength to stabilize every movement, prioritizing functional exercises that mimic the demands of grappling, and maintaining the mobility and conditioning to recover faster and roll longer. Here is a weekly structure that balances strength, flexibility, and cardio — designed specifically for the needs of the aging, but still savage, Jiu Jitsu athlete.



FUNCTIONAL STRENGTH TRAINING (1–2X/WEEK)

Lifting weights isn't about getting bulky — it's about staying strong and resilient. Focus on compound movements like deadlifts, squats, pull-ups, and overhead presses. These build core stability, joint strength, and explosive power — all essential for takedowns, guard retention, and escapes. Stick to 1–2 sessions per week with an emphasis on quality over quantity. Functional lifts with proper form trump heavy max lifts every time.

FLEXIBILITY AND MOBILITY (3–7X/WEEK)

Flexibility and mobility are crucial for injury prevention and flow on the mats. Make this a daily ritual, even if it's just 10–15 minutes. Target the hips, hamstrings, shoulders, and spine — the areas that take the most abuse in Jiu Jitsu. Techniques like dynamic stretching, foam rolling, and mobility drills will help keep your body supple and reactive.

CONDITIONING WITH PURPOSE (1X/WEEK HIIT)

Jiu Jitsu-specific cardio mostly comes from rolling — that's where you learn to control your breathing, pace, and movement efficiency. But supplemental cardio still has a place in keeping you in top shape. I recommend a HIIT (High-Intensity Interval Training) session once per week to boost anaerobic endurance and recovery. Use tools like the Assault Bike, rower, or circuit sprints. Keep it short and intense — 10–20 minutes is plenty.

Balanced Nutrition and Supplements for Long-Term Performance

Fueling a mature jiu-jitsu body necessitates meticulous attention to detail. Your diet should complement your training, supporting you every step of the way.

Building a Solid Nutritional Foundation

As we approach middle age, our metabolism naturally slows and our nutritional needs shift. Reducing processed sweets and increasing fiber-rich foods such as vegetables and whole grains helps to maintain energy levels, avoiding the dreaded mid-roll energy collapse. Protein, the

building block of muscle, becomes even more important. Lean types of protein, beef, chicken, fish, and plant-based choices, fuel training and promote recovery; aim to incorporate some sort of protein in every meal.

Aside from macronutrients, vitamins and minerals have an important impact. Calcium and vitamin D promote bone health, and omega-3 fatty acids minimize joint inflammation. These nutrients are vital for people who routinely hit the mats, as they assist to avoid injuries and keep the body supplied.

Essential Supplements for Masters Athletes

Age-appropriate supplements can make a significant difference. Here's an overview of the supplements I use to maintain my health and fitness:

CREATINE

Improvements in strength, energy, and mental acuity, allowing you to maintain power and endurance.

OMEGA-3 FATTY ACIDS

Reduce joint inflammation and promote heart health, which is essential for constant performance.

MAGNESIUM

Relieves muscle cramps and promotes healing; aim for 200-400 mg per day for optimal results.

VITAMIN D

Strengthens bones and muscles, and assists in metabolic function.

NAD/NR (NICOTINAMIDE RIBOSIDE) OR NMN (NICOTINAMIDE MONONUCLEOTIDE)

Increases cellular energy and aids in recuperation; especially useful as we age.

MUSHROOMS, PARTICULARLY CORDYCEPS

Provide numerous benefits, specifically cordyceps boosts endurance and oxygen use, promoting long-term performance.

ELECTROLYTES

Keep you hydrated and help your muscles operate properly, minimizing cramping and weariness.

HYDROGEN-RICH WATER

Reduces oxidative stress, improves joint health, and reduces recovery time.

PEPTIDES

Notably BPC-157 and Thymosin Beta 4, can help heal lingering injuries.

For a more in-depth look at the supplements I use and how they can help you perform and recover, check out my upcoming ebook, *Ultimate Guide to Recovery and Peak Performance for Masters Jiu Jitsu Athletes*. In this guide, I explain the optimal doses, timing, and specific benefits of each supplement, along with practical tips to integrate them into a balanced diet and recovery routine. If you want to push your training and results to the next level, this ebook will be a valuable resource.

Every bite you take should work as hard as you do on the mat. With the correct diet and recuperation strategy, you'll notice a change not only in performance but also in your entire life. This chapter provides an overview, but for a more in-depth approach tailored specifically to mature jiu-jitsu athletes, consider reading the full guide for comprehensive insights on body care, nutrition, and supplements to help you thrive on your journey.

Optimal Hormonal Health for Peak Performance

As an older athlete, you must understand how natural aging processes affect your body. Male athletes must monitor their testosterone levels. Fortunately, my total testosterone level was 770, with a free testosterone level of 73, therefore I did not need testosterone replacement therapy (TRT). However, it is estimated that half of Master 4 and older competitors are using TRT to restore testosterone levels to normal. If you have signs of low testosterone, such as fatigue, decreased muscle mass, impaired recovery capacity, low libido, or mood problems, you should have your levels tested. For those with proven low testosterone, TRT can considerably improve recovery and performance, making it an important tool for thriving in the physically demanding world of Jiu Jitsu competition.

Hormonal changes can also have an impact on performance and recovery for older female competitors. As estrogen, progesterone, and even testosterone levels normally fall with age, it is critical to monitor them as part of your overall health plan. Fatigue, decreased physical strength, mood changes, sleep difficulties, and long

recovery times are all possible signs of a hormone imbalance. Consulting with a healthcare practitioner to assess your hormone levels can help you determine whether therapies such as hormone replacement therapy (HRT) or tailored supplementation can improve your performance and recuperation. Older female athletes, like their male counterparts, can thrive in Jiu Jitsu by taking proactive steps to overcome age-related changes.

As a Masters Jiu Jitsu competitor, your success on the mats depends on more than simply technique; it also involves a dedication to recognizing and supporting your body's changing needs. Recovery, nutrition, and supplements are not optional add-ons; they are critical instruments for maintaining peak performance and longevity in the sport.

From listening to your body's cues to maximizing your hormonal health and feeding with the correct nutrients, every facet of your routine contributes to your overall success. By combining these methods with the correct mentality and resources, you can continue to learn, compete, and thrive on the mats for many years to come.

CREATING A TECHNICAL ARSENAL

Jiu-Jitsu evolves as you age. For mature competitors, success often hinges less on pure speed and power and more on efficiency and strategy. Cliché to say, but the truth is technique is critical. With age, the need for precision over brute power becomes clear, allowing seasoned practitioners to fully flourish.

One frequently underestimated benefit is the life experience and emotional maturity you bring to the mat. This results in a calmer, more planned approach to both sparring and competition. Older competitors are more likely to excel in discipline, patience, and tactical thinking—all of which are necessary for Jiu-Jitsu success.

When improving your game, it's critical to select strategies that match your physical ability. While you may not have the flexibility or speed you once had, this is not a barrier to success. Instead, concentrate on understanding leverage, weight distribution, and timing. Safe and

efficient practices not only improve performance but also lower the danger of injury, which is critical for longevity in the sport.

Creating a reliable technique arsenal can be game-changing. Mastering your go-to moves enables you to approach matches with confidence and consistency.

Personally, I use the lasso guard as a cornerstone of my game. It allows me to regulate the speed, create space, and set up smooth transitions to sweeps. Whether it's the lasso guard or another method you excel at, having a reliable plan in your toolbox is priceless.

The beauty of mastering specific techniques lies in the depth they add to your skill set. Whether you're working on guard passes, retaining side control, or moving between positions, establishing a foundation of dependable skills prepares you for a range of situations. Even if your first attempt fails, a well-developed skill set gives you a variety of strategies from which to choose.

This isn't about overloading yourself with techniques; it's about honing a few dependable moves that fit your style and abilities. Begin with the basics. Once

you've laid a firm foundation, increasing your repertory becomes lot easier and more successful.

I follow a methodical program to plan my pathway to victory, step by step. For example, I might concentrate on the following sequence: takedown, pass guard, establish side control, then go for submission. Alternatively, I may begin by pulling guard, shifting to my preferred position, attacking with a submission or sweep, passing guard as appropriate, and then transitioning into side control to set up the finish. Typically, I chart out 2-3 of these paths while also ensuring that I have the fundamental skills to adapt when things don't go as planned.

One of the sequences I focused on leading up to Pans in September 2021 was a collar drag trip, to back take to choke. Following the trip, the majority of opponents land in a turtle position on their knees, allowing for a circle-around to take the back, followed by a collar choke or bow-and-arrow choke. Here's how it went down in one of

my matches that year.

My opponent was hand-fighting effectively, making it difficult to grab his collar. I had to improvise by switching to just his sleeves. I dragged, tripped, and, as expected, he went to his knees. As he tried to get back up, I was already circling to take his back. I secured a half-back position with my arm across his throat and finished the match with a one-arm choke from the back in just over a minute.

Was it precisely how I had planned? No. However, planning made all the difference. After the fight, my opponent approached me and stated, "That was the fastest anyone has ever taken my back." The reason? I had practiced that sequence numerous times, both on the mats and in my thoughts. Repetition made it second nature. The key to winning that match was to have a pre-planned sequence in place, supported by foundational techniques to adapt when things didn't go as planned.



LEARNING WITH VARIOUS RESOURCES

Learning to improve in jiu-jitsu as a mature fighter is similar to fine-tuning an instrument. While our body may not respond as they did when we were younger, maturity brings a distinct strength. Success requires a balance of physical ability and mental stamina. Understanding your own boundaries and potential can be revolutionary, particularly in a high-intensity discipline like jiu-jitsu.

Traditional jiu-jitsu schools and training gyms are crucial to this growth and should serve as the foundation, but they are not the only option accessible. Online courses, community groups, and blogs provide more flexibility, allowing you to learn at your own speed. These platforms let you revisit techniques until they become second nature while also connecting you to a broader community of practitioners. Peers share their experiences, insights, and advice in these settings, which promotes both personal and collective growth.

When developing your skill set, it is critical to begin with the foundations.

Online programs from experts such as Henry Akins, Kit Dale, Marcos Tinoco, and Lachlan Giles are ideal for polishing core skills through their extensive video series. Coaches such as Bernardo Faria, Gordon Ryan, Adam Wardzinski, JT Torres, and John Danaher (listen to him at 1.5x speed—trust me!) emphasize adaptation and efficiency in technique, which are key traits for being effective. Combining these tools into your training regimen results in a more varied approach to learning jiu-jitsu allowing you to have options and a wider base of knowledge. **A word of caution: You need a foundation first, from your home gym!**

With that said, combining diverse formats—seminars, classes, and online videos—can greatly speed up your advancement. Seminars give live interaction and the opportunity to witness techniques taught firsthand, whereas videos allow you to revisit and critique techniques in depth. I recall being a purple belt and painstakingly watching video tutorials to break down complex moves and modify them for the mats. Similarly, attending seminars provided me with a variety of technical insights as well as opportunities to form friendships within the jiu-jitsu community. By combining these strategies, you can design a dynamic and effective learning experience that is personalized to your specific requirements.

Visiting instructors like Carlson Gracie, Jr., Sergio "Canudo" Zimmermann, Bobby Emmons, and David Overfield have all helped me improve my Jiu-Jitsu skills. However, one of my most transforming experiences was attending a Pedigo Submission Fighting Team seminar at a gym in Fort Wayne, IN, which not only sharpened my skills, but also fostered a long-lasting bond and a great admiration for a team outside of my home gym.



What struck me most about the Pedigo team was their contagious enthusiasm, great skill, steadfast dedication, and the way they treated one another like family. Their stories were equally inspiring—many of these athletes came from humble beginnings, but they thrived under the guidance of Heath Pedigo, a coach with a remarkable ability to see potential in every individual. Heath and his crew have created something absolutely remarkable, and it is just growing stronger.



Their warm demeanor created a lasting impact. When I demonstrated enthusiasm, determination, and a willingness to work hard, they welcomed me, just as they do for everyone who attends their seminars. That initial seminar prompted several visits to their gym in Mt. Vernon, IL, where I always departed with important techniques, great insights, and an even deeper sense of camaraderie. This team illustrates why Jiu-Jitsu is such a powerful and unifying art, as well as a wonderful community to be a part of. Except for Jacob "Spatch" Brooks, that koala hugger is an Aussie bogan, and Alita is a saint for putting up with him! Love you, Spatchy!



GEAR, PREPARATION, AND TRAVEL

The proper equipment is critical for the masters jiu-jitsu athlete. Choosing the correct gi is more than just style; it's also about comfort, flexibility, and utility. A well-fitted gi allows you to move smoothly with minimal restriction, enhancing your performance and helping you stay focused on your game rather than adjusting your gear.

My best suggestions for gis include high-end brands like Origin and Shoyoroll, mid-range options like Fuji, and low-cost ones like Elite. I frequently wear my Origin gis because they're lightweight, comfy, and don't retain sweat, making them ideal for training. I won multiple competitions while wearing one. Unfortunately, Origin does not currently sell an IBJJF-legal gi for competition, so I'll be using a new Shoyoroll and keeping my Fuji as back up. Surprisingly, my next most-used gi comes from Elite. Despite its low price, it has good quality, fits well, and hasn't shrunk or faded much after numerous washes. In terms of fading, it outperformed my Origin pants.

A sturdy rash guard is another useful piece of equipment when training. A solid rash guard controls sweat and protects your skin, which I've come to enjoy as I've become older. The appropriate material and fit make a difference, ensuring long-term comfort throughout strenuous rolls. This is even more of a personal choice than a gi. My advice is to avoid purchasing inexpensive ones; they are not worth the money. They usually do not fit properly and will shred if you roll with aggressive gripping partners. Elite rashguards fit well for me, but being a cheaper brand they do not last as long. If you get the Gold brand, which are excellent wearing rashguards, get the next size up from what you typically wear. I have had trouble pulling them off when I sweat a lot.

Accessories play an important role in your whole training experience. Investing in high-quality protective equipment, such as padding, mouthguards, and finger tape, can help prevent common minor injuries. While these items may seem like small considerations, they are not to be overlooked, allowing you to train regularly without setbacks. Monkey tape is hands-down the greatest tape on the market. I use the white 0.3" tape. I purchased my custom mouthguard from my dentist.

Smart gadgets are great for folks who like to track their performance. Wearable gadgets that monitor health indicators, as well as apps like MyFitnessPal that help with nutrition management, enable you to stay on track with your goals. Tracking metrics such as heart rate, recuperation, and diet ensures that you're continuously striving for peak health and performance.

CONCLUSION

Creating the ideal setting for yourself is critical. Find a gym that welcomes and supports older students, rather than just younger, competition-driven competitors. A training gym with teachers that respect your speed and support your progress can make all the difference.

Consistency is the foundation of growth. It is about consistent growth rather than instant wins. Establish a regular training routine, even if it starts small. Over time, sticking to this pattern becomes simpler, and you'll find yourself devoting more energy to it. Remember that this journey is a marathon, not a sprint.

Setting realistic goals, particularly for weight classes, keeps you motivated while maintaining your health. Being honest about your skills and working within them prevents frustration and damage, allowing you to make steady improvement.

Cultivating the appropriate mindset is critical. Jiu-jitsu necessitates perseverance and a commitment to learn from every experience on the mat. Every roll, whether a victory or a learning experience, contributes to personal development. Maintaining an open mind and enjoying the learning process is gratifying in and of itself.

Nutrition and body care become increasingly important as people become older and their training needs rise. Pay attention to how you fuel and nourish your body. Balanced meals, water, and supplements customized to your specific needs improve both performance and recuperation.

Finally, increasing your knowledge beyond your home gym with resources like online courses, videos, and seminars will enhance your experience. These products help you improve your skills and provide viewpoints that may not be available locally.

Jiu-jitsu is more than a sport; it is a lifelong journey of development, resilience, and skill. Whether you're competing or training for personal enjoyment, stay committed, disciplined, and most importantly, enjoy the trip.



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Daniel Beatty is a distinguished figure in the martial arts community, celebrated for his exceptional achievements in Brazilian Jiu-Jitsu (BJJ). As a multiple-time IBJJF Champion, Beatty has demonstrated that age is no barrier to success on the mats. His journey is a testament to the power of dedication, strategic training, and a holistic approach to health and fitness.

Beyond his accomplishments in BJJ, Dr Dan Beatty, the Biohacking Vet, is a seasoned holistic veterinarian with over 25 years of experience. He founded Balanced Motion Veterinary Services in Northwest Indiana, near Chicago, where he integrates traditional veterinary practices with innovative biohacking techniques to enhance canine health and longevity. His expertise in both fields provides him with a unique perspective on optimizing performance and well-being.

