

## Push-Pull

In judo, the referee's verdict for a match in which there is no victor is "*hikiwake*" or what English-speaking people would call a "draw". How did the word "draw" come to mean a "tie"? You can imagine that when two people "tied" together, neither is the victor, although I seem to remember The Lone Ranger taking on the nasty son of the good Indian chief in a hands tied battle which, of course, was decided in the ranger's favor. But why is a tie equivalent to a draw?

Some say that "draw" is short for "withdraw" in which one or both opponents yield thus withdraw from the contest. Okay, sounds reasonable. But what about *hikiwake*? The Japanese could not have had the same derivation, but as it turns out the thinking is similar since *hikiwake* literally means, "to pull apart" or "separate".

My budo-ized brain, always looking for hidden meaning, even if there need be none, pictured a Japanese archer performing *hikiwake*. In Kyudo, part of the drawing of the bow is termed "dai-san" or "great-three". The theory, according to the late Onuma Hideharu, is that one must push great(ly) and pull one-third. This conforms to the idea of separation in that both hands are separating from one another albeit at different intensities. In Kyudo, one does not simply draw while separating; one pushes and pulls.

This in turn called to mind the Western boxing term "give-and-take" in which the boxer offers a target and then takes it away in order to draw the opponent into an ambush. Similar strategies were used by generals of every age in nearly every kind of battle, but their strategies were not intended to end in a "draw" but to "draw" the opponent into his own defeat. Aikido takes advantage of a similar idea by allowing uke's attack to develop even more than uke had intended, thus overextending him.

I recall my second judo match circa 1964 or 1965 against Jimmy Pedro of Massasoit Judo (who went on to train his son to a World Championship victory and bronze medals in the Olympics, and co-trained Olympic Gold Medalist Kayla Harrison, as well). In double overtime Jimmy won on a decision. It could easily have been called a tie, I suppose, but he was either more aggressive or threw more techniques. I have no problem with the results, but I wonder how I might have used either dai-san or give-and-take to bring the match at least to a *hikiwake*. Could I have held back a third of my energy? Not if they were looking for aggressive judo. Could I have baited Jimmy into my well-developed *sasae-tsuri-komi-ashi* with which I had won my first match? Nope. Tried that. He wasn't having it. In fact, there was nothing I could have done with beginner's level of judo I had at the time, and in fact, probably nothing I could have done even with more experience. Oh sure, I could imagine that next time I might win the decision, but we were then so evenly matched that only a decision or a draw could have possibly been the result.

Today Jimmy Pedro not only knows more judo than I, but also knows more competitive strategy. And that was the key to the revelation my budo-ized brain was seeking. In those days, I was doing sport Judo. Now I am doing self-development *budo* that I hope can be converted to self-defense *bu-jutsu* at the drop of a *shuto*.

I am sure that Judo authorities did not have Kyudo in mind when choosing the common word *hikiwake* for an undecided contest, but the Kyudo use of the term makes one think about drawing, withdrawing, pushing and pulling, as well as to what extent a declared draw is really “even”.

Funakoshi, a man who was endlessly respectful of Jigoro Kano, the founder of Judo, said, “You do not need to think of winning, but think of not losing.” In self-development and self-defense, *hikiwake* can be a win.