

# KICKING

In this five-part technique series, senior instructors of various martial arts present their different kicking methods for comparison. Here in part two, we take an in-depth look at the roundhouse-kicks of Kyokushin karate, muay Thai, Japanese sport karate and taekwondo, dissecting the differences in the execution, aims and training of each one.

## KYOKUSHIN KARATE *Brazilian Mawashi-geri (Roundhouse-kick)* With Trevor Tockar

### DO IT

There are three applications of the Kyokushin mawashi-geri: *shita kara* (from underneath), usually used *gedan* (low) to the inside thigh; *yoko kara* (from the side), usually used *chudan* (middle) to the ribs; and *ue kara* (from the top), usually used *jodan* (top) to the neck. Here we focus on Kyokushin's unique *jodan* application to the neck, which has been branded 'the Brazilian kick'.

The knee comes up to the front, creating the illusion of a straight front-kick [i.e. *mae-geri* — see last issue], but the leg then changes route from a straight line into a half circle. While executing the kick, it's important to push hard off the supporting leg while at the same time getting good rotation on the foot to bring the hip over. This creates speed and whip on the kick as well as forward momentum and reach.

During the second half of the kick (rotation), the knee will be pointing to the ground and the hip is completely turned over. The leg arcs above the opponent's guard and descends onto the neck.

As with most mawashi-geris, the striking surface is the lower shin (or, less commonly in Kyokushin, the bridge of the foot).

### APPLY IT

Due to its drastic change of direction mid-kick, this technique is renowned for its element of surprise and can be used in any situation, whether on a retreating or advancing opponent. The angle of the leg also makes it difficult to defend against because it's designed to kick over the opponent's guard and descend onto the target. If timed and landed correctly, this is purely and simply a knockout technique.

The favoured target area is the side of the neck (carotid artery) or side of the head (temple) but this kick can be used on any of the target levels for mawashi-geri: *chudan* (i.e. the ribs), or *gedan* (i.e. the thigh).

It is often used effectively with the front leg — surprising an advancing opponent by coming up from below his guard and from outside his field of vision, much like the boxer's left hook — but this requires good hip flexibility.

### TRAIN IT

This kick requires good hip flexibility, body torque, speed and accuracy. Kyokushin trains hip flexor strength (getting the knee up high and holding it) with isometric and multiple repetition exercises. Power is trained on a heavy bag, working at head height; speed is trained with focus-

pads (again high); and accuracy is trained on small focus-pads or paddles.

### WATCH IT

The Brazilian Kyokushin team fighters Glaube Feitosa, Ryuji Isobe and Eduardo Tanaka are all top exponents of this kick — see Feitosa's flawless knockout of Japan's Yoshihiro Tamura at the First World Weight-class Tournament in Japan in 1997. The kick was made famous by Brazil's Francisco Filho, who went from Kyokushin to K-1 kickboxing.

### SHITA KARA



The *shita kara* version of Kyokushin karate's roundhouse-kick comes directly up off the floor and into the thigh, inside or out.

### YOKO KARA



# BLITZ

## PART TWO

How many ways can you roundhouse-kick?



CLIVE GIRDHAM



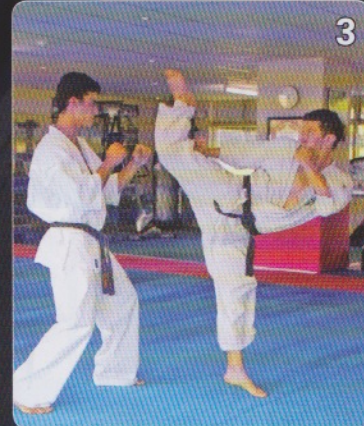
The *yoko kara* version of the roundhouse follows an even arc from the floor and strikes from the thigh up, impacting with the shin (ideally) or instep.



The knee comes up high to the front, creating the illusion that a straight front-kick is on its way...



...but the lower leg then changes route from a straight line into a half-circle as the supporting foot rotates (heel in) to bring the hip over.



As the hip turns completely over, the knee will point to the ground, whipping the shin over in an arc above the opponent's guard and down onto the neck.

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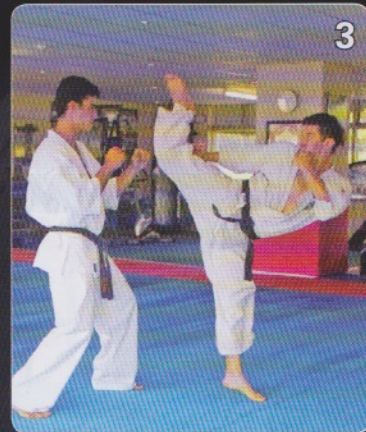
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