

Review of Roy Harris' 'BJJ 201' DVD

By Mark Manning

Opening Comments: I would like to start this review with a few raving comments about the BJJ 201 DVD. This DVD is an outstanding single resource for anyone who is moving from a beginner-level game to an intermediate (and ultimately advanced) level game. It is obvious when mounted by a brand-new student vs. a black belt that, although to the untrained eye the two positions are exactly the same, there tends to be much 'more' to the black belt's mount. This DVD is a resource that helps you to develop your game to this higher level by pointing out technical tips, methods of developing attributes, development through combinations and drills, reinforcement of basic techniques and counters to the basics.

The DVD is broken down into 10 chapters, which are outlined in the technical content section of the review. The material is explained in that section, so I will not bore you with raving about it again. Take note that after each chapter, the DVD returns to the main menu. It may seem annoying at first, but it breaks up the DVD into definite sections.

One thing that makes me love this DVD (and all of Roy's DVDs) is that I prefer a fundamental game that is made effective by solid basics. I don't like flashy. I don't want to learn the newest upside-down single-X-butterfly-footlooping tumblesault sweep with astronomically weird grips because a 19-year-old champion from Brazil just won the Worlds with it. As a slightly older (and much busier) grappler, my priorities are different. On page 3 of any standard 'BJJ basics' book is the elbow escape from the mount. My philosophy is this: if I can't use the elbow escape from the mount, what am I doing on page 128? That's what Roy's about-he shows me what I need to do to get to page 4 (and beyond).

This DVD is nothing short of outstanding, and I think you will love it.

Production Quality: Very good, with some deficiencies. One thing I did not like about much of this DVD: there is a 'news ticker' that flashes constantly across the bottom of the screen. It's a cool effect, but it is annoying because you can barely read it. The view of it is like that of a movie that has been reduced to a full-screen version where a letterbox version is necessary to see the entire screen. The writing on the sides of the screen (the name of the technique) and the top are also partially cut off. Again, you can read it, but only the top halves of the letters are visible. There's also a paragraph that quickly flashes from down to up (matrix-style) that you cannot read. Again, it's neat as a special effect, but it can also be a distraction for those who are distractible (like myself) and it seems to have the effect of overstimulating the viewer.

Target Audience: Intermediate-level players. New blue belts can benefit tremendously from much of the material on here, and advanced players (I imagine, I'm not there yet) could use it to keep their basics solid.

Preliminary Content:

1. **Introduction:** Roy gives an overview of the DVD, gives the URL for the web resource, and gives thanks to those who helped him along the way. The DVD returns to the main menu after the introduction.

Technical Content:

1. **Review of 21 basic techniques-**Roy gives an overview of 21 fundamental techniques. He walks you through them quickly, expecting you to know them, but he also gives much of the detail that he is famous for. Techniques such as escapes from mount and side control, guard passing, positional dominance from side control and guard, armlocks, guillotine and rear naked choke, collar chokes, a hip throw, an ankle lock, sweeps from the guard, and a few other goodies are reviewed quickly.
2. **Tightening and Refining:** Roy discusses posture, the definition of it and how to flow from one position to another while maintaining posture. He also discusses good hip movement and head and shoulder movement. Roy runs through some finishing positions while performing arm locks and asks how well you know the 10 positions that he is showing. He moves very quickly through this and the viewer has to rewind the DVD once or twice to catch all the positions before he goes to the next

question. He actually goes as far as to create a table for evaluating your own performance, which I think is a great idea. It's (obviously) good to reflect on your performance to evaluate your game.

3. **Common Mistakes:** Roy discusses the most common mistakes beginners make when beginning BJJ, and he discusses posture, strength, awareness, hip movement, positioning, pace, rushing to the end of combos, etc. Some of the visuals/scenario demonstrations that they give are great.
4. **Theory:** Roy discusses intermediate-level theory and compares and contrasts fundamental and intermediate level theory, along with attributes, for BJJ. He gives you ideas of what you should be focusing on and what you should aspire for your game when moving from basic to intermediate level in BJJ. For example, Roy details basic and intermediate level guard passing formulae. He also discusses 4 training methods that you should focus on when training.
5. **Counters:** Roy demonstrates and explains counters to the 21 basic techniques shown in the first section of the DVD. The news ticker is still going, a distraction at this point when showing new material. Relative to how Roy usually teaches, the techniques are 'breezed over'. The counters, although shown quickly, are reasonably basic techniques, so anyone with an intermediate game and the body awareness that one should have at the intermediate level will not have a problem learning these techniques from these demonstrations.
6. **Combinations:** Roy demonstrates and teaches a series of combinations that combine the fundamental techniques. He also discusses how to train them (pace, pause, etc). There are some very nice combinations here. He also discusses training methods to develop combinations (position-position, position-submission, etc). Roy lists a full 100 combinations for you to drill. The first 50 are two-technique combinations, and the second 50 are three-technique combinations.
7. **Timing:** Roy discusses how to train timing. He breaks down the application of the techniques as beginning, middle, and end, and he goes ahead and explains how to develop timing through training combinations. He closes with some questions and some very interesting insight.
8. **Positioning:** Roy demonstrates and discusses how to use body positioning to prevent opponent from performing techniques on you or obtaining a superior position. Don't confuse with the examples of posture that Roy demonstrated in BJJ 101. There are some great defenses in this section.
9. **Grappling Matches:** a few rounds with Roy Harris and Roy Dean, and a few with Roy Harris and Brad Hirakawa.
10. **Extras:** Roy throws a few bonus concepts such as limb entanglement, training vs. the tap, vulnerabilities, and some funny outtakes. He ends the 'extras' section with a challenge to the viewer.
11. **Web Resource:** he gives the URL for the web resource