

. **History of Jiu-Jitsu.** The roots of the Jiu-Jitsu tree were said to have originated in the mountains of India 2500 years ago. They supposedly stretched throughout China and about 400 years ago settled in Japan where they found the soil to grow strong.

History of Gracie Jiu-Jitsu. In 1801, George Gracie arrived in Brazil from Scotland. He came to the new land looking for adventure and opportunity. One of George's grandchildren, Gastao Gracie, was being groomed to be a diplomat but became a businessman instead.

It wasn't until the early 1900s that a seed from the strong Japanese Jiu-Jitsu tree found its way to the Amazon region of South America. Mistuyo Maeda was a Jiu-Jitsu teacher who was aiding a Japanese immigration colony in northern Brazil. Maeda was known to have participated in no-rules challenge matches where he demonstrated the effectiveness of Jiu-Jitsu.

At this time, Gastao was living in the city Belem. Gastao helped Maeda get established in Brazil. To express his gratitude, Maeda introduced the principles of Japanese Jiu-Jitsu to Gastao's oldest son, Carlos Gracie.

Carlos was the oldest of eight children, (5 boys - 3 girls) and was in his early teens when he fell in love with Jiu-Jitsu. He devoted all his energy learning as much as he could until his family moved to Rio de Janeiro a few years later.

When the Gracie family settled in Rio, they fell on hard times financially. This led Carlos to look for additional sources of income for the family. He took this opportunity to make money doing what he enjoyed - Jiu-Jitsu. In order to establish credibility for his teachings, Carlos led his brothers in a series of challenges against all comers.

The youngest of the 5 boys was Helio. Helio was a physically frail child that couldn't even run up a flight of stairs without fainting. Nobody could figure out why. When Helio was 14 he moved in with his older brothers. He spent the next few years watching his brothers teach because the doctors recommended that he have any physical activity, including Jiu-Jitsu training.

One day, when Helio was sixteen years old, a student showed up for his class with Carlos. Only problem was that Carlos was not there. Helio had memorized all the moves of his older brother, offered to start the class and the student accepted. When the class was over, Carlos showed up and was very apologetic for being late. The student answered, "No problem. I enjoyed the

class with Helio very much. If you don't mind, I'd like to continue having classes with him from now on." Carlos agreed. That moment Helio was promoted to instructor level.

Helio soon realized that some of the techniques he memorized from watching his older brother were not very easy for him to do. Helio adapted the moves so that he could execute them despite his weak body. For only weighing 140 pounds, he had to experiment through trial and error and by incorporating leverage. This reduced the amount of strength necessary for completing the techniques.

When the Jiu-Jitsu world champion Masahiko Kimura arrived in Brazil on tour, Helio saw an opportunity to test his techniques against the very best. So he challenged the world champion. Because Helio was not ranked, Kimura said that Helio must defeat Kato who was the number two Jiu-Jitsu fighter in the world.

Kato who weighed more than 40 pounds more than Helio accepted the challenge. The two fought to a draw. A month later, during the rematch, Helio choked Kato unconscious in six minutes. This surprise victory put pressure on Kimura who was the Jiu-Jitsu world champion to defend his title and Japanese honor.

Kimura accepted the challenge and the fight took place in Brazil. During the fight Kimura choked Helio unconscious. Nobody knew because Helio had passed out with his eyes open. The fight continued for thirteen minutes and eventually Kimura caught Helio in his famous "Kimura" lock. Carlos, fearing that Helio would not tap and that Kimura would seriously injure his brother, he threw in the towel. Kimura was so impressed with Helio's performance that the day after the match, he went to the Gracie Academy in Rio to invite Helio to teach in Japan.

The world's longest fight came to Helio when he was forty-two years old. He came out of retirement to battle in an epic no-holds-barred battle against a former top student. Twenty-five year old Waldemar Santana challenged Helio. The battle lasted over three hours and ended when Helio took a kick that stunned him and his brother Carlos threw in the towel. Afterward, when asked why he didn't take longer to prepare for the fight. Helio responded with logical reasoning, "If a man insults you on the street, are you going to tell him to meet you in two months to settle the score? No you do it right then. For my entire life, I have taught Jiu-Jitsu for smaller people to defend themselves against larger ones at any time. How could I teach one thing and then do another?"