

Soft Ukemi

Taste the floor

July 07, 2010

This morning, we were practicing *koshinage*, and my *uke* was doing some terrific *ukemi*, rolling forward out of the throw, smoothly.

I asked him how he did it.

"Simple," he replied. "Instead of grabbing nage's arm on the way down [in preparation for a break fall], just extend both your arms in front of you, and follow them forward. Try it."

We switched, and instead of forward, I kept finding myself vertical, landing more quietly than my usual crash-and-slam, but somewhat awkwardly.

"I'm having trouble projecting out enough to go forward," I told him.

He made another suggestion, but by this time, the instructor noticed our conversation, and walked over to us.

"What's going on?"

I explained about the soft *ukemi* out of *koshinage*, and how I was having trouble mastering it.

"Soft *ukemi*?" the instructor chortled sarcastically, albeit with a hint of a smile, "Just hit the ground!"

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