

LETTERS TO THE LEGION XXVIII

OCTOBER 2026

Dear Legion,

The newsletter this month is a little bit late. Please excuse me, I was busy getting immolated every time I stepped out the door. But speaking of being on fire, in honor of Paige's performance at the ADCC World Championships, we will start off the newsletter with a recap of that instead of the usual main column concepts, which will follow as the second item.

We're going to have a look at mat awareness, with some tips on how to prevent collisions on the mats. We have a slightly different Matches of the Month segment, three events that are very different from each other. We have a very exciting leaderboard recap for the month, a little bit of new merch, and more. But first, let's go to Krakow.

ADCC WORLD CHAMPIONSHIPS

COACH PAIGE MEDALS AT ADCC WORLDS

Coach Paige Ivette Clymer is an ADCC World Championship medalist. She went to Krakow as a trials winner in the +65 kg division, the deepest women's bracket in the tournament, and came home with the bronze.

In her first match, the quarterfinal, she kneebarred Yara Soares at 5:17 after a nice entry into the legs from the turtle position, something Paige is exceptional at.

In the semifinal she lost a tight 3-0 decision to Anabel Lopez, who went on to take silver behind Helena Crevar, unfortunately preventing Paige's rematch with Helena, which will have to wait.

Then in the bronze medal match she armbarred Elizabeth Mitrović in 1:52, her second submission of the weekend in a division where most matches went the distance. She now has hardware from the biggest grappling tournament in the world, the same as Coach Rafaela in 2024. **Congratulations, Coach.**

Podium photo in the email version or online at legionsandiego.com/newsletters.

MAIN COLUMN

TRIANGLE CONCEPTS

In the last edition I shared how one of my legs is currently out of commission with an injury. One of the things I've been missing a lot is using my legs to squeeze people's necks into submission, so I plan to live vicariously through you by sharing three concepts about triangle chokes, the third being a general one that is especially useful for triangles.

FINISH ANY TRIANGLE BY MAKING IT SMALLER

If you are in a place that allows you to do so, lie down with your back on the floor and lock the legs as you would for a triangle choke. What do you see when you look through your legs? They form a triangle!

If this is completely obvious to you, congratulations. Some of us only got this memo many years into our jiu-jitsu careers, long after we had somehow won many matches by way of the triangle choke.

The key to finishing triangle chokes is making that triangle smaller.

With the conventional triangle from guard, that's done by sliding the back of the knee of the "top" leg along the shin of the other, while that leg gets clamped down on the back of the neck.

Take a moment to think about the other triangles you know and use, including arm triangles. How can you make those smaller the next time you get to use them?

THERE ARE TWO PATHS TO ESCAPING TRIANGLES

Triangle chokes with the legs exploit or create a one-arm-in, one-arm-out situation. Almost everyone has the right idea for escaping front triangles: pull the arm or the head out from between the legs.

That can be difficult because the opponent is expecting this strategy and probably holding on to the arm or having it cinched up between the legs.

A lot of people forget about the other option, which is putting the other arm in. This doesn't feel instinctive, but it prevents the triangle just as well, since the condition is no longer met. Putting the other hand in also alleviates the choke by protecting one side of the neck.

My favorite way to defend triangles is not allowing people to get me stuck in them. My second favorite way is pushing into the opponent to stack them, then finding the space to insert my free hand. From there, I get my forearm and wrist to block the inside of the opponent's thigh, go palm to palm, and spread my elbows and shoulders. Now I'm safe from the choke and mindful of armbar attacks, and I can decide whether to pull out of the choke or push the other arm all the way in and let the opponent have guard.

DON'T SQUEEZE AND RELEASE

Apply the choke evenly and make it tighter and tighter.

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I can tell you from first-hand black belt experience that I've had many moments in my career where I was very relieved that my opponent ignored this advice. Moments where I was preparing to tap, only to realize that my opponent was giving me the space to survive and escape.

This typically happens for two reasons. Number one, the choke is applied in bursts, typically accompanied by teeth grinding and veins popping on the forehead of the attacker. Number two, the choke gets one all-or-nothing squeeze, no gradual adjustments, just full send.

The first leads to frustration and the second to exhaustion.

The correct approach is to apply an even squeeze with room to adjust and make the strangle tighter and tighter. This offers the opponent no respite, just a feeling that things are getting worse and worse, and that tapping is the only way to get out of this.

ACADEMY CULTURE

MAT AWARENESS

We've had a few collisions on the mats lately. Nothing serious so far, but a knee into the back of someone's head during a scramble is never fun, so I want to say a few things about it and offer some tips.

Spatial awareness is a big part of jiu-jitsu. In competition, matches can be won or lost because of it, as going out of bounds impacts scoring. In the gym, it's about having a safe environment.

We have a luxurious amount of space at Legion, even at busy times. This is not something someone who started at Legion can fully appreciate, but the majority of gyms have to think far more about space on the mats, to the point where lots of them have to start sparring on the knees (yuck!).

But it's still very important for all of us to be mindful of the space around us and how far we're traveling with our partner. Being locked in and only thinking about the round is one of the easiest ways to get better faster, and one of the biggest benefits of jiu-jitsu, but the caveat is that we need to have spatial awareness and stop an action if it's going to lead into the next pair.

WHO SHOULD MOVE?

Some academies have strict rules about lower belts always having to move. I'll be honest and just speak for myself: it is nice to have people move out of the way, but I wouldn't go as far as making it a rule. One, it's a little too old-school hierarchical, and two, it's not always practical. During no-gi, for example,

there's no time to do a pop quiz of four people to determine their belt ranks.

A more practical thing to do is for the **encroaching pair** to move. If two people are just minding their own business in their spot and two oblivious people roll into them as a tumbleweed made of limbs, it's silly for the stationary pair to move.

However, sometimes it's a nice courtesy for a pair to move out of the way if they are in a very easily replicable position. For example, if one pair is in the middle of a gray position, locked in a battle to see who will come out on top while somewhat stationary, and the other pair is in closed guard, it's far easier for the closed guard pair to move, especially if their space wasn't aggressively encroached on.

These are just some musings and scenarios. We have a really good culture of people caring about their training partners, so I'm sure everyone can do their part to decrease the chances of bumping into others or getting bumped by others.

The last thing worth pointing out is that having an insane amount of space to roll feels freaking fantastic sometimes. The best way to get that reliably is to come to some morning classes. We have **6:15 AM** (gi MWF, no-gi TT) with Coach Sunshine, **11 AM** no-gi with Coach Sloan, and **12 PM** gi MWF with Sunshine and Eric.

WATCH & LEARN

MATCHES OF THE MONTH

I don't have matches of the month for you this time because I am choosing entertainment value over following the pattern.

NO-GI: THE ULTIMATE ADCC 2026 HIGHLIGHT

For no-gi I have a highlight of ADCC 2026, which does a good job recapping the event and will hopefully get you excited to watch some of the matches in full.

Search YouTube for: **Ultimate 2026 ADCC World Championship Highlight**

GI: NEVER GIVE UP, THE ADAM WARDZINSKI STORY

In the gi I actually have a documentary for you about a buddy of mine from Poland. His name is Adam Wardzinski. I crossed paths with him in competition back when I lived in Poland, and I have already featured Keenan's matches with him in this section. Keenan won both of those, but Adam's story is very interesting and honestly inspiring: how he made his way to the top of the sport after many, many setbacks. FloGrappling did an amazing job with this documentary, making it a rare piece of highly interesting content in the sport. Have a look.

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Search YouTube for: **Never Give Up The Adam Wardzinski Story**

EVENTS

JJWL SAN DIEGO XIX

Saturday, October 10th · Del Mar Fairgrounds, 2260 Jimmy Durante Blvd

I think we're coming up on the 20th Jiu-Jitsu World League that we've done as a team. This Saturday's event is sold out and we have some good matches ahead of us. If you're competing, talk to your coach about the game plan and any tips if you feel like you need them, and we'll see you there. If you're not competing but want to support your training partners, we'll see you there too.

Details: jjworldleague.com

SUPER FIGHTS · SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 14TH

JIU-JITSU ON A BATTLESHIP

Battleship Iowa, 250 S Harbor Blvd, San Pedro

Quick reminder from last month: on Saturday, November 14th there is a submission-only super fight card on the deck of the USS Iowa, a World War II battleship that is now a museum in the LA harbor.

I will be teaching a seminar on **Friday the 13th** along with three other instructors selected by We Defy. On Saturday we have a couple of our students competing in the Finishers event. Jiu-jitsu on a WW2-era battleship is not something that happens every day, so it's worth a trip up the I-5.

Tickets and details: wedefyfoundation.org

SEMINAR · SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 29TH · 12 TO 3 PM

FINISH EVERYONE: DIMA MUROVANNI

At Legion

If you don't know the name, you know his students. Dima is a black belt out of Berlin who has become one of the most sought-after coaches in no-gi over the last few years. He's the coach behind Jozef Chen, who just took bronze at -88 kg in Krakow after beating Chris Wojcik and running up a 13-0 score in the bronze medal match, and Declan Moody, who won both the ADCC European Trials and the CJI trials at -99 kg last year. B-Team brought him to Austin to run their whole room for the 2024 ADCC and CJI camps, and he's also worked with Owen Jones, Margot Ciccarelli and Brianna Ste-Marie. Dima is not a competitor. He's a coach, and a very good one, with an eye for

mechanics that most people with ten times his medal count don't have. That's exactly why we wanted him here.

We're closing out November with a seminar from Dima Murovanni. The title is Finish Everyone, and it's open to everyone from white belt to black belt.

Early bird pricing is **\$60 for members and \$80 for non-members** for the first 25 spots. After that it goes to \$80 and \$100. Space is limited, so grab the early bird while it's there.

Details and sign-up: legionsandiego.com/dima-murovanni-seminar

ON THE MATS

ATTENDANCE LEADERS, SEPTEMBER 2026

1ST PLACE · 38 CLASSES

KRISTINA ROGOVOYA · purple

2ND PLACE · 36 CLASSES

JASON BUNCH · black

3RD PLACE · 28 CLASSES

JIMMY WANG · brown

4TH TO 10TH

4. Andrew Nguyen (purple) 27 · 5. Eric Schaumburg (brown) 26 · 6. Morgan Walker (black) 23 · 7. Alexis Roncevich (white, 4 stripes) 20 · 8. Alexander Shih (brown) 18 · 9. Luis Bermudez (purple) 18 · 10. Rigo Valdovinos (white) 18

Kristina has had an absolutely historic month. Not only did she beat the long-standing attendance GOAT, Jason, she did it with **38 classes**. Think about it: you know how many days there are in a month. Kristina did a class every single day, and for a week she did two per day. I've seen her on the attendance log for the 6 AM and the 11 AM class on the same day. I guess she's training for two, as her husband is currently dealing with a knee injury. To top it all off, she got promoted to purple belt, which absolutely no one could dispute with these kinds of numbers.

Jason put in an effort that would be enough for the win in just about any month and Jimmy solidifies himself as a perennial contender, a name that is etched into the top 3 almost every single month.

I also want to highlight two white belts who made this list. Alexis has been a force to be reckoned with in the no-gi and women's classes, and at #10 we have Rigo, a fresh beginner course graduate doing an incredible job of making the jump into fundamentals and the no-gi classes. Keep up the good

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work everyone, and remember, the leaderboard resets on the 1st of the month!

PRO SHOP

NEW MERCH

We don't have too much on the way this month. Our rashguard stock is depleted, so we have a favorite from a few years ago making a return: the **Human Chess Club** rashguard.

We also have some hoodies and sweatpants in the works. They feel a bit delayed for a "fall collection," but it's 100 degrees outside, so who needs them! They'll be making an appearance in November along with a new white Legion gi!

That's October. A bronze medal in Krakow, a leaderboard record, a sold-out tournament this weekend, and a battleship and a seminar to look forward to next month. Not bad for a month in which I couldn't use one of my legs. Keep an eye on the pair next to you, squeeze your triangles evenly, and come find me on the mats if you want to argue about any of it.

That does it for another edition. I hope you enjoyed it. As always, feel free to hit reply and let me know what you'd like me to write about in the next one.

Written by Miha Perhavec