

## **Armbar Secrets Unclassified: Supercharged Roundhouse By Jon Engum Sr. RKC**

**"Give me your strongest most powerful kicker and you'll see the power of their kick improve by at least 15 %."**

**Speaking to a room full of Martial Artists who were skeptical of kettlebell training I was there to convince them that they too, could improve their sport of choice with kettlebells.**

**The volunteer had been kicking since a young age with several championship titles under his belt was ready to go and true to my word, in less than a minute, he had increased his power by not 15% but 30% according to the target holder, and I had a captive audience eagerly awaiting more top secret kettlebell magic. The magic had super-charged the destructive force of his roundhouse kick instantly with a little known side benefit of the RKC Arm-bar.**

**The Arm-bar may be one of the most powerful, life changing movements in the RKC arsenal. The effect of the Arm-bar on the shoulders, T-spine and all around posture is apparent as soon as you perform the movement. You can instantly feel a dramatic improvement and an opening throughout your entire body. What is not quite so evident is how the arm-bar can increase ones striking power.**

**First, let's examine the classic arm-bar technique. The RKC arm-bar starts out the same as it's more familiar cousin the Turkish Getup. I write this assuming you already know how to do the Getup, if you do not know the Getup then stop reading now and get thee to an RKC Instructor and learn the Getup.**

### **Arm-Bar Technique**

**Lie on the floor with a light kettlebell on your right side. Grab the kettlebell with a pistol grip, right hand on the inside and left on the outside, pull your elbow to your ribs then roll on to your back prying the kettlebell up as you go. Now using both arms press the bell into the firing range position just as you would for the getup. Things start to differ from the getup at this point. Your left arm goes over your head (horizontally) while you are keeping the kettlebell or "working" arm perpendicular to the ground (vertically.) To quote Pavel Tsatsouline from the HKC manual, "Using your left arm and leg as the axis of rotation and leaving the right arm with the kettlebell straight and vertical, bring your right knee towards your chest and roll to your left. Straighten out your right leg and lay it on the ground. Your feet should be a shoulders width apart or wider, your knees straight, your toes pointed."**

**At this point in the movement you will have 4 primary things to focus on.**

**Focus #1**

**The kettlebell and working arm must maintain vertical (keep the kettlebell's arm vertical in all planes without actually looking at the bell.) Rest your head on the left arm.**

**Focus #2**

**Rhythmically begin pumping your hips, trying to get the right hip, in this example, to the ground. It will help to contract the right glute, and breath, sighing into the extension. The timing should be one rep every two seconds.**

**Focus#3**

**Try to make your right collar bone or chest area longer.**

**Focus #4**

**Wiggle the left arm (the one on the ground) further and further behind your head, stretching the Lat.**



**When you have had enough sloooowly reverse the above process under full control. Now stand up and enjoy your new found posture.**

**An Uncommon Application of a Classic RKC Movement**

**As I played with the arm-bar, I begin to realize that the hip pumping phase of the arm-bar is almost identical to the end of a roundhouse kick. Furthermore, the arm position replicates the movement that the "kicking side" arm goes through when it does the counter rotation. (During a roundhouse kick the arm on the kicking side of the body is thrown back opposite of the kicks direction in order to maintain balance and add more whip-like rotational force to the kick.)**

**The end of the kick looks exactly like the arm-bar from a vertical prospective.**

**I am a big fan of [Pavel's Martial Power](#) series and one of the many things he mentions in the program is the way to use a static activity to perfect a dynamic movement. It is very hard to make critical adjustments to a dynamic activity such as a kick because things simply happen too fast. But if you can statically fix the beginning and end positions of the dynamic movement often the middle will take care of itself. Pavel illustrates this practice in the [Martial Power Series](#) by improving the operator's front kicks and punches and he explains the inner workings of this in an article in Blitz Magazine.**

**Some problems arise when you try to do this with a lateral movement such as the roundhouse kick. In my experience, it is just too hard to fix the ending position because so much focus and strength is blown on keeping the leg airborne and maintaining balance. There is just not enough focus on the pumping and zipping up of the specific kicking muscles.**

### **The Solution? The Arm-Bar**

**Since you are lying on the ground no extra effort is required to get into and maintain the ending position of the kick- at least as far as balance is concerned. Also our subject, a kinder and gentler term for the victim, does not gas out because he is straining to keep his leg air born. He is free to focus on opening up his hips, chest and mobilizing his T spine.**

### **HOW TO CONDUCT THE EXPERIMENT**

- 1. Have your training partner hold a kicking shield and then throw a couple full power roundhouse kicks, your partners job is to register how much impact he felt from the kicks.**
- 2. Do the Arm Bar. Pay particular attention to pumping the hip, elongating the collar bone (opening up the chest) and really, really contracting the glute of the hip that you are trying to stretch.**
- 3. Stand up, shake loose and without thinking fire off a couple more roundhouses into your partner. You and more likely your target holder will be amazed at the increase in power. By the way, this will improve your punches as well.**

**The arm-bar never fails to impress. Do your Arm-bars they are the single best move to unlock your kicking potential ---BAR NONE!**

**Grandmaster Jon Engum, Senior RKC currently holds a 7th Degree Blackbelt in Taekwondo (kukkiwon) a 4th Dan in Hapkido and a 4th Dan in Kumdo. He**

**owns and operates Engum's Taekwondo Association. He teaches ongoing Kettlebell Classes in Brainerd, MN and Detroit Lakes, MN as well as Kettlebell and Flexibility Seminars worldwide.**

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