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Okay, we're going through a general theory of guard retention. What we're trying to do is give you all of the major concepts that make guard retention possible. Later on, we'll be going on to the specific theory of guard retention when we actually look at our opponent using a particular form of guard pass and how we negate and overcome that. But we've got to start with this general theory. And we're looking at the big picture, which enables you to hold someone off. One of the most important elements of the general theory of guard retention concerns our head in two particular ways. What I want to do to my opponent's head as he goes to pass my guard, and also how I can stop him controlling my head when it's time for him to pass my guard. Let's look at it first from Mateus' perspective as the guard passer. Let's understand something. If Mateus can control my head, the task of passing my guard becomes radically easier for him. Head control is a big, big part of guard passing. Now when I say head control, understand that we're wearing a jacket here. So Mateus has different ways in which he can control my head. He can control my head directly with cross-face grips, but he can also control my head indirectly with lapel grips. Why? Because the lapel is a rope around my head. And if he controls the rope, he also controls the head inside that rope. So he can go direct and grab scapular grips over my back, and now he has direct control of my head. If he controls my legs now and throws his body around, he has control of my head through his left arm and control of my lower body through his right arm. And so he's got an excellent chance of passing my guard. Conversely, he could take a lapel grip, take a panty grip on this side and go into a classic long step action, and now he's controlling my head through the rope around my head. It's not a very direct form of control, but it's an effective control of my head. When I try to move my head away from him, my ki is preventing me from doing so. And now he can walk around my legs, bring his knee into my hip line, and now he's got a nice guard pass, scores his points. So from Matthias' perspective, his ability to control my head is a huge part of his ability to control me. Most of his grips will involve either lapel grips, like so, or what we call scapular grips, where he goes over my back and grips my gi and holds the scapula. Whether he opts for scapular grips or lapel grips is his choice, but they both offer control of my head. One is a very direct form of control that puts his shoulder right on my head itself, and the other is an indirect form of control through my lapel like this. As long as my opponent controls my head, he's got an excellent chance of passing my guard. So this is something I always want to deny to my opponent. I never want to give him head control for free, because it's a serious threat. Once he gets control of my head, he's got a very, very good chance of passing. Now understand that head control for him has to be carefully worked out. If Matthias was naive and he tried to control my head while my legs were around him, with say for example a scapular grip, this would be a foolish thing on Matthias' part, because he's given me very good ways to attack from here. He's overextended his arms and way to lead directly into counter-offense on my part. So Matthias has to be smart about head control. The general rule of thumb is this. If Matthias can overcome or pass one of my knees, then he can go to control my head. So if we have Matthias here, and he gets a grip on my gi pants and stuffs my knee down on two knees, he's beaten my knee. As his knee comes forward and passes my knee, it now becomes safe for him to reach for my head. And now he controls my head, he's got an excellent chance of passing my guard from here. So from Matthias' perspective, he can't be naive in the fashion in which he goes to control my head. He's got to either beat my knee with his front leg, or beat my hip with his rear leg. In these kinds of situations, when he goes to control my head now, there's many ways for him, say for example, to long step from here, and from here, he's going to strong guard pass. This is true regardless of whether he opts to control my head directly with scapular grips or indirectly with lapel grips. From here, as he pops his right knee up in the middle, holds on to the lapel, and from here, he could go into long step passes from situations like this, and do a fine job of passing my guard. So as much as possible, I always want to deny this kind of direct head control to

my opponent. The way we do this is through inside positioning. So as soon as I see my opponent pass my knee in situations like this, it becomes important for me to always position my hand close to my own head. This is a boxer goes to defend his jaw by having his hands high, a good Jiu Jitsu player defends his jaw and head in the same fashion. Now when my opponent goes to the scapular grip, it's difficult for him to use it. I have the inside position with my hand. Now even as he goes into a long step or something of this magnitude, it's still easy for me to maintain the inside position and bring knees back inside, but I couldn't do that if I didn't have the inside position. Conversely, if my opponent holds a lapel, my hand in the inside position means when he goes to a long step out of here, you still have an ability to go inside of your training partner's hand, sorry, inside of his arm, and the control of the head is minimal now. And as a result, as he tries to come in and solidify the pass, it's going to be a lot easier for us now to work our way back inside and get back into counter-offense. So always it's up to us as the defensive athlete to never surrender control of our head without a fight. Whenever someone gets quick head control, that's always a serious issue. So we always want our hand in the inside position. As he comes around the corner now, even if he goes in to cross our legs, we're going to get opportunities from here to be able to get back inside and get our guard retention to work. So that's the first form of head control in guard retention, denying head control to our opponent. Now let's look at the flip side of this. My opponent has a head too, and I want to control his head as much as possible as the defensive retaining player. Let's understand something. When Mateus goes to pass my guard, he must create a situation where his head goes to one side of my body and his hips go to the other, so that he forms a cross-body position. Look how Mateus' head is on my left-hand side and his hips are on my right-hand side. And as a result, I'm pinned, and it's going to be hard for me to get out from here. Let's look now at a situation where Mateus passes my legs, and from here I put a hand on Mateus' head, so that as he goes to pass my guard, I keep his head and hips on one side of my body. Now when he comes to cross my side, he can't get what he wants, because he couldn't form the critical cross-body position. From his perspective, he's always looking to get the head on one side of my body, on my left-hand side, and his hips on the other. So our whole thing is always to keep his head and his hips on the same side of my body. We're always looking to create a situation where the head and the hips are on the same side, and as a result, guard retention becomes pretty easy. If I cannot create situations where the head and the hips are on the same side, then I at the very least must prevent his head from coming down to my chest and shoulders. Because when the head comes down to the chest and shoulders, that's when you get pinned. So if I cannot keep the head and the hips on the same side, at the very least I've got to be able to keep his head from coming down to me, and maximize the distance of his head to my head. In situations like this, I can always go to put my opponent back in guard. So let's quickly summarize the key role that the head plays in guard retention. From Matanus' perspective as the guard passer, his whole thing is to control my head. If he can get a hold of my head and control it, either through my lapels or directly through the head itself, that's money in the bank for him. So I will never let someone just effortlessly control my head. If he controls my head, it's because he earned it, not because I gave it to him for free. So whenever someone's down here and I see them go to control my head, you can believe I'll always have my hand in the inside position whenever I can. If they do get around us in situations like this, that's a serious issue. We've got to start getting inside. And now in this fashion, we can start bringing everything back inside and putting people back in guard. But we'll never just let them get a good grip on our head. If they grip for a lapel, even here, I'm always looking to get the inside position on my opponent. So as they go past my legs, at least I'll be able to prevent them from graduating up to the head. And as a result, we'll be able to stuff heads, sit up, and go back to retain guard, etc. But we'll never just surrender head control for free. My opponent's going to have to earn that. Secondly, my opponent's head has to be a part of my concerns. He wants his head coming closer and closer towards mine. He

wants his head on one side of his body and his hips on the other. I will always fight to deny those two things to him. So as Mateus works his way past my guard, I'm always looking in these situations to prevent head on my left side, hips on my right. We're always looking to keep the head and the hips on the same side of my body. And in this way, it's a lot easier to put people back in guard. If that turns out to be untenable, I just physically can't do it, I couldn't move his head to the same side as the hips, then at the very least, I should be able to prevent his head coming to me. As his head comes closer and closer to me, it gets harder and harder to hold my opponent off. So we're always looking to keep the head away. And as a result, from here, we can start putting our training partner back into a situation where we're lined up, we're back in an offensive cycle, and from here, so many ways for us to go to work. So this general insight of the critical importance of heads in the guard retention game, denies denial of my opponent's attempts to control my head and my positive attempts to control his head, either keeping it away from me or keeping his head and hips on the same side, this is a big, big part of our ability to retain a guard against a strong passer.