

Metadata: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=URGwWYwdoAs>

Okay guys, I'm here today with Gordon Ryan, a huge honor for me. Guys, Gordon just shot an entire structure all about his guard retention system. And I'm a big fan, every time I watch him competing, he's on bottom, like, and nobody gets even close to pass his guard. And you recover the guard so comfortable, Gordon, that, like, I feel like the person on top is really, like, doing the best pushing, and you're just hanging over there. So, guys, Gordon is going to explain here to us a little more about what he does when he's playing his guard retention. So, first off, the thing with teaching guard retention is it's so hard to teach because there's almost an infinite amount of grips that your partner can make when they're passing your guard, right? So if you try to teach a reaction to every single different grip that your partner can make, number one, you wouldn't be able to do it because you would forget stuff. Number two, you'd be there forever because there's so many grips your partner can put their hand here versus your hand there, and there's so many different situations you can find yourself in, okay? So a guard retention instructional is going to be formatted like so. Instead of showing you what moves and what different transitions your partner will be going for, it's going to be a common theme, okay? And the common theme will then fall into place when we go over these specific positions. Whenever you're trying to retain guard, the first thing I want to think about is forming an initial stickiness to my partner, okay? So if Bernardo is standing above me, for example, Bernardo's whole game from here, if he's standing passing, is to get to my J point, the jeopardy point, where I'm in real jeopardy of getting my guard passed. So if he gets to a situation like so, now I have to really react or I'm going to get my guard passed, okay? So what I always want to do is to keep Bernardo in front of me and keep as much of a connection to him as I can. So if I'm in a situation like so, I want to start connecting myself to Bernardo, or I can start making grips on him. Or now if he goes to shoot past my legs, it's not an easy thing to do, and I can start going into attacks. If, for example, I'm in a Simpan position, I can't just allow Bernardo to grab my legs and shoot past, and now we're in some danger here. So I always want to create an initial stickiness to my partner. Where as Bernardo goes to engage me and put hands on my legs, we always can tie up my partner's legs in various ways and start to put my partner into situations where now, as he goes to just explode past my guard, it's not an easy thing to do from here, okay? So I want to create an initial stickiness from any position that we're in. If we're in a half guard, for example, and he comes down and he puts his knee on the floor, and we're in a half guard. I have this initial stickiness to Bernardo, where he feels tension running through his hip and through his leg. Where now, when he goes to engage me from here, he feels like he's constantly going to be off balance because of that tension and that stickiness running through his body with my grips. Yeah, man, I can even feel my leg here. It looks like she's going to cut my leg in half. Yeah, okay? So this is what we want. We want him to feel like he's uncomfortable the whole time, because at any point, the stickiness of my grips can lead to constant kazushi, okay? Constant off balancing. So whenever he goes to engage, he's constantly off balance. I'm pulling him, pushing, I'm pumping my legs, and I can always create this initial stickiness, which will keep him off balance and keep him in front of me. What I don't want is for Bernardo, whenever he's standing, to get to a position where he's past my hips, or even worse, past my head. Where he's off all the way to my shoulder line, and now he passes to north-south. So when he's in a situation where he's standing passing, I need to keep him in front of me. My primary goal is to keep him in front of me. When he goes to pass my legs, you have to understand that there is a major difference between passing your partner's legs and passing your partner's guard. We watch people get past the legs all the time, but for every time they get past the legs, for every ten times they get past the legs, maybe there's one guard pass. So if Bernardo just quickly throws my legs to the side, I'm sure he's past my legs from here. But now when he actually goes to pass my guard, that's a different story. He comes down and he goes to pass my guard, and now I can look to bring my knees back inside and put him back in front of me and get that initial

stickiness going back. You have to understand that the one chink in the armor to guard passing is Bernardo's ability to make a cranial shift when he goes from passing my legs to controlling my head. When he passes my legs, that's the first battle. Controlling my head is the second battle. If Bernardo passes my legs and controls my head, now he can pass my guard. If Bernardo goes to control my head from here and he goes to really put me inside control, because he doesn't control my head as he goes to settle down, I can always bring my knees back inside. So you have to understand that you need to keep your partner in front of you, and if they get an angle on you where they step to the J point past your hip line, you have to make sure that they don't control your head. We do this by keeping the inside position. If Bernardo can steal the battle for the inside position and get all the inside real estate, he's going to pass me easily from here. But if I can keep the inside position and deny him the ability to control my head, sure he can get past my legs, but he's never going to actually pass my guard. So when he's standing passing, I want to keep him in front of me and never let him step past my hip line. If he does step past the hip line, I never want him to control my head. Now, if he steps past my shoulder line, which is what we just talked about previously, this is the one exception to the guard passing rule, where now Bernardo does not need control of my head. He just needs to come forward to my hips to control my hips, and now even though my head can move, I still get my guard passed and I'm stuck from here. So when he passes my shoulder line, the whole thing is to keep his shoulders outside my knees and elbows. So if I can keep my knees and elbows inside of Bernardo's shoulders and collarbones, when he goes to pass my guard now, he can't, because I dominate all of the inside real estate. So when he's past my hip line and he's side-on to me, I never let him control my head. I cannot let him perform a cranial shift. When he gets past my shoulder line, I can never let him get his shoulders inside of my knees and elbows. And now from here, my whole goal is to move to a situation where I can put him back in front of me and re-guard. So you see these basic ideas when your partner's standing and passing, we can take these basic concepts and then overlay them with specific transitions that your partner will make. If your partner's in front of you, keep them in front of you, off-balance them constantly, and form sticky grips to them so that when they go to shoot past your legs, they can't get past your hip line. Provided they get past your hip line and get to the J point, it's important to not let them get to the head and go from passing the legs to controlling the head with a cranial shift. Provided they get past the shoulder line, now the rules change. Now they don't need to control the head. They need to get their shoulders inside of your knees and elbows. And if you can keep your knees and elbows inside of their shoulders and collarbones, they can't pass your guard. And then you can easily internally rotate inside of them and put them back in a guard. If your partner, on the other hand, is passing from a half-guard for example, now it's still a battle for inside position. If Bernardo controls my head and makes a cranial shift, now he controls my head. Now he can easily start to work past my guard and he can start to go into side control. So the rules remain the same when your partner is passing from their knees. You can never let your partner make a cranial shift. You need to control your partner's head at some point. We talked about our goals in our guard passing instructional. Either before you pass the legs or after you pass the legs, provided you're passing to side control or mount, you need to control your partner's head and shoulders. If Bernardo can never control my head and shoulders, there's no way he can ever pass me from half-guard into a side control or mount. If he comes forward and puts all of his pressure into me and tries to do whatever he can, if I just focus on not letting him control my head, there's no way he can pass me from here. And you have to have the confidence in this. So what we're going to do in this retention series is we're going to take these basic themes and then we're going to use those to look at specific given positions and ways to not only recover from situations where he's going to pass me, but go from a defensive cycle where he's just passing my guard to an offensive cycle where I recover not to a neutral position, but to an offensive position. Because there's nothing worse than having a guy for example, just hitting

toriandos on you side to side and you feel like for 30 seconds in a row, he's just constantly passing a guard. And every time you recover, he just goes into another guard pass and you just get exhausted after one or two minutes. The goal is to go from a situation where he's close to passing and you're in a purely defensive cycle into a situation where you not only recover, but you recover into an offensive cycle where you can go right into your own attacks and then he's in defense and you can start your offense after the recovery. So we take these basic ideas and then we start looking at the specific situations where my partner will pass me from a half guard, from standing, getting past my hip line, getting past my shoulder line, and then we'll work from there. I don't remember anybody in competition ever holding your head. And you're doing an amazing job with that. And that's why nobody passes their guard ever, right? Because they never get to your head, right? If you look at some of my earlier matches, especially in no time limit matches or submission only matches, I let guys pass my guard sometimes to make things happen. But if you ever look at any time where I legitimately got my guards, my guard passed and my guard almost passed, it's because my partner beat me in these situations. For example, when I fought Joao Rocha and my knee was hurt. When I couldn't high leg over, I couldn't bring my knees inside, I had to use different strategies because I couldn't get my knees inside of his shoulder when he was north-south. So I was fighting with one leg, I couldn't high leg over, I couldn't maintain the inside real estate. So if you look at times he did get close to passing me, he was either controlling my head or he was north-south and I couldn't bring my second leg in or over because I had a torn LCL. So he was beating me and I was fighting with one leg and then eventually he got his shoulders inside of my knees and I had to turtle and recover and then go from there. But if you look at any guard pass, I don't care what it is. If it's to side control or to mount. If you pass someone's legs and you don't control their head, sure, you maybe artificially pass their guard, but you don't have any control of them and you're not able to go into attacks. If you control their head and you make a cranial shift and you go from passing their legs to controlling their head and shoulders, you pass them and you have solidified control of your partner. Sure, if Bernardo's passed my legs and he's in a situation just from side control and he's like this, sure, he's going to score from this position. He's technically passed my guard. But when Bernardo actually goes to advance his position there's little he can do from here because he has to control my head at all. I can easily escape. If Bernardo mounts me, for example, sure, he'll score from here, but if he has no control of my head, I can easily start to knee-elbow escape and go into my escapes. So sure, in a scoring sense, your partner can pass your guard, but they can never really control or attack you unless they control your head off of the initial pass, provided they're passing to mount or side control. North-south, it's a different story. They have to get the inside position with their shoulders relative to your knees and elbows and control your hips instead. So I was just thinking here, when you mentioned that sometimes no time limits, you even let them pass in order to make something happen. So you let them pass without holding their head? I let them pass with holding their head too because I'm confident in my pin escapes. So a lot of times John always talks about giving a little to get a little. If guys are stalling and I feel like I can't make anything happen, especially in the old days when I wasn't nearly as equipped to deal with stallers, I would just let them mount me, for example, and then kip out and go into a heel hook. So you can let them control the head, provided you're confident in your escapes, where you know how to free the head once they pass your guard and they have control of your head. Got it, man, that's awesome. So guys, Guardi just showed this entire structure all about guard retention, where he explains all his systems for guard retention from everywhere, and it's going to be at bgifanatics.com very soon, so make sure to check that out, maybe by the time you're watching, it's already there. Thanks so much, Guardi. Awesome. Osu!