

JUDO FOR AMERICA



May-June 1969



THE STORY OF THE UNITED STATES JUDO ASSOCIATION



by George Bass

AMERICAN JUDO GROWS UP

At 11:16 a.m. on Tuesday, April 22, 1969, American Judo grew up. At that moment, the Board of the AFJA voted unanimously to change the name of our organization to the United States Judo Association. Then, with a short prayer, we asked the guidance of Divine Providence and set about planning a completely independent and truly American Judo movement.

There are moments in history when one group of people, in full knowledge of the consequences, are determined to strike out on their own to work for the ideals in which they believe. Such a moment is at hand. We, the duly elected Board of Governors of the United States Judo Association, and the hundreds of USJA club instructors who voted unanimously on this matter, hereby declare our complete independence, under the laws of our Country and our God, from any hinderance or domination, foreign or domestic, to henceforth conduct our affairs as an independent association for the betterment of Judo.

What is the Purpose of the USJA? The purpose of the USJA is to build American Judo in efficient, fair, sound business-like American ways. We feel that we cannot do so as a member group of any other organization, and so have declared our independence.

Now that we are independent, we know that there is no need for conflict between our organization and any other. We have life long friends in each and every Judo association of the JBBF. We intend to keep and encourage these friendships. We know of the long and faithful service of these people to our sport, and we will to continue work with them to develop Judo.

USJA Independence A Healthy Improvement

We know that the independence of the USJA is the most beneficial event in the history of American Judo. We are now free to carry on our programs and to work with others who share the same goals. Healthy, friendly, free and open competition is the foundation of the American way of life. The application of this principle to American Judo will immediately produce good and lasting effects.

There is good in every organization. An independent USJA can applaud and encourage the good programs of other Judo organizations, without being hindered in carving out our many excellent USJA development plans.

Why Have We Renamed the AFJA?

The AFJA started to become the USJA in 1964 when we asked to have no civilian members and to have all military people join the AFJA. This request was refused, and for nearly two years anyone could join any group. It was a misguided course of action, in our humble opinion. It impelled us to take in civilian members as a counter balance of the actions of some groups who took in large numbers of military people or who were formed at the time primarily of military people from the President on down, although claiming to be civilian yudanshakai.

Once started on this path, the efficiency and fairness of our services attracted more and more civilian members. Further, those civilians who joined us during the open registration period from 1964 to 1966 could not later be forced to join another organization. They refused to do so. Experience proved that attempting to coerce them into changing to another group only drove them from affiliating with anyone.

Thus, as we increased our size and efficiency we were thought by some to be a threat to the organization to which we belonged. Increasingly, restrictions were placed on our growth and our programs were hampered. At the same time, there were virtually no benefits from belonging to any other organization except the AAU of the U. S. the American governing body for Judo.

Now that we are free, we can be friends with all Judoka everywhere. We seek only to build Judo, not to hurt or hinder anyone. We will welcome any sincere person who practices the martial-arts whether or not they are members of any other organization.

USJA Ranks Are American Ranks

We have just printed and will soon distribute the new black belt rank certificates of the USJA. These certificates are signed by some of the members of our USJA Board of Examiners such as: George Harris, 5th Dan, Chairman; Sadaki Nakabayashi, 8th Dan; Robey Reed, 5th Dan; Jim Bregman, 4th Dan; Phil Porter, 4th Dan; George Bass, 3rd Dan, President; and Rick Mertens, 4th Dan, Executive Secretary. This Board contains half of the first and only U. S. Olympic Judo team. Its members possess a total Judo experience of over 100 years of hard and demanding practice. These men, though gentle on the outside, are rock hard and hickory tough on the inside. They carefully consider and vote on every black belt promotion made by our USJA. They are exceedingly capable of determining and awarding Judo ranks. If they are not, American Judo has come to nothing so far.

Our new motto for our USJA is: "Judo For America." We have chosen our own way to bring Judo to our country, and we cannot fail to do so if we follow programs already in motion.

George Bass, the writer of the concise editorial in this issue, should need no introduction to USJA members. He is President of the United States Judo Association, and as such has the tremendous responsibility of guiding our Association through the difficult but exciting development years ahead.



JUDO FOR AMERICA —

THE STORY OF THE UNITED STATES JUDO ASSOCIATION

The largest Judo organization in America, the United States Judo Association (USJA) is dedicated to building Judo throughout the United States. The USJA Board of Governors, officers, National Staff, district associations and the dedicated instructors in over 600 clubs are interested in cooperating in every way with any and all organizations truly interested in Judo development.

PURPOSE OF THE USJA

The purposes of the USJA are stated fully in our Constitution, a copy of which is available upon request. Here is a brief summary of our aims.

TECHNICAL DEVELOPMENT. The primary purpose of the USJA is to develop Judo in the United States among its many members, clubs and district associations. The instructors of the USJA constitute a vast pool of trained physical educators who are determined to use the best methods of American physical education to pull American Judo up from the 9th or 10th place position we now hold in World Judo.

ADMINISTRATION EFFICIENCY. Judo development is impossible without proper administration of Judo registration and promotions. Bringing efficient American business procedures to the administration of Judo is therefore another purpose of the USJA.

BRIEF HISTORY OF THE ASSOCIATION

Formerly known as the Armed Forces Judo Association, the USJA had its beginnings in 1954 when Mr. Mel Bruno, highest ranking Caucasian Judoist in the U.S., organized an Air Force Judo program under the direction of Generals Curtis E. LeMay and Thomas S. Power, both black belt Judoists. Gradually expanding to an all service organization (1961), the Association was requested repeatedly to admit civilian members. This was done beginning in 1964. As leaders from school, college and YMCA Judo Clubs joined the Association, they made possible the first truly American Judo Association of national scope. The result was the creation of the United States Judo Association, a completely independent national Judo organization, from the old AFJA, in 1969.

ORGANIZATION OF THE USJA

The USJA is a private non-profit association of individuals, clubs and district associations. There are over 10,000 registered members in more than 600 clubs affiliated with the USJA both in the United States and in many overseas countries where members of the U.S. Armed Forces are stationed. Our national membership policy makes AFJA membership available to any individual or club in the country. USJA clubs are found in schools, colleges, YMCA's, Community Centers, and Armed Forces bases everywhere. Together they are larger than all the rest of American Judo put together.

ADVANTAGES OF USJA MEMBERSHIP

The beginner in Judo is always interested in what he can get "out of" USJA membership, and for this reason membership benefits are listed below. However, as the student gains more and more of the Judo spirit he becomes interested in contributing to Judo development and welcomes an opportunity to pay dues to an organization which is completely dedicated to developing Judo in the U.S. and making America a world power in our sport. For this reason, most USJA members say, to paraphrase our late and beloved John F. Kennedy: "Ask not what the USJA can do for you, ask what you can do for American Judo." Here is what every member of the USJA can expect to receive for his 43 cents a month (Juniors and Brown and Black Belts) or 86 cents a month (Senior White Belts):

A CHANCE TO BUILD JUDO. Members of the USJA play a part in the development of the great sport of Judo by contributing to an organization which is made up of Judomen and is dedicated completely to one purpose alone: That of spreading our sport until it becomes the strongest sport in America; available to every American young and old; and making the U.S. Judo Team world champions.

YOUR JUDO MAGAZINE. USJA members receive a free subscription to America's finest Judo magazine, "The American Judoman." Our magazine carries both news on Judo and technical material written by the foremost American Judoists.

COMPLETE REGISTRATION SERVICE. As an USJA member you will get full registration of your Judo ranks by receiving the beautiful USJA plastic membership card. Cards are mailed direct to each member by return mail and new plastic cards are received by every member each year.

A FAIR AND EFFICIENT PROMOTION SERVICE. USJA members have a chance for Judo rank promotions as soon as they are ready for them through the USJA Junior and Senior Judo Rank Systems. The instructors and Board of Examiners of the USJA are dedicated to making Judo promotions available on a fair and efficient basis.

USJA JUDO CLINICS. Members have an opportunity to attend one or more of the many USJA Judo clinics given by top Judoists each year. These clinics are held throughout the country by the USJA National Coaching Staff and invited technicians from other countries such as Professor S. Kotani, 9th Degree and head of the Foreign Section of the Kodokan Judo Institute in Tokyo. Kotani Sensei has made several national tours for the USJA, visiting many USJA Clubs from Washington, D.C. to Seattle, Washington. Any club of the USJA may request the USJA Director of Development to schedule a clinic for his club or area. In most cases USJA instructors are flown to the clinic site by the USJA. The only charge to persons who attend is a flat rate of \$2.00 per day which is used to defray the cost of the clinic program.

WHO RUNS THE USJA?

The USJA is a highly democratic organization directed by the USJA Board of Governors. The President of the USJA is in turn elected by the Board. Every senior member of the Association receives a mail ballot and has a vote in the elections. The USJA Board normally has two full meetings per year.

WHAT ABOUT USJA FINANCES?

The USJA is a non-profit organization whose financial records are open to any member upon request. The full income and expenditure records of the Association are published twice every year in a status memo sent to all club instructors.

MEMBERSHIP THE SOURCE OF USJA INCOME. Membership fees are the primary source of income for the USJA. Although the USJA receives a small income from promotions, publications, sales, book sales, insignia items sales and advertising, these programs are often specifically designed only to "break even" financially so that they will be available to members at the lowest possible expense. All development funds for the advancement of U.S. Judo must come from increased membership. For this reason, the USJA Board places great emphasis on constantly increasing membership in every club.

USJA CLUB CHARTERS

There is no charge for club charters in the USJA. The club charter for each type of USJA Club is automatically mailed to the instructor when his club fulfills the club charter requirements. Here are the types of USJA clubs and the number of members required for each type of charter:

- Class C Club:** Charter automatically mailed when 10 members from the club have been registered.
- Class B Club:** Charter automatically mailed when 25 members of the club have been registered.
- Class A Club:** Charter automatically mailed when 50 members have been registered.
- 100 Member Club:** Charter automatically mailed when 100 members have been registered.
- 200 Member Club:** Charter automatically mailed when 200 members have been registered.

THE USJA SENIOR JUDO RANK SYSTEM

The USJA uses the six "class" or "kyu" ranks of Judo, followed by the "dan" or black belt ranks. The full USJA rank requirements are outlined in the Student's Handbook for the USJA Senior Judo Rank System.

WHO CAN PROMOTE TO THE KYU RANKS?

Rank certificates for the six class ranks of Judo are issued direct to members who are recommended for promotion by their instructors. Black belt instructors have full authority to examine and promote students up through the six class ranks. The class rank promotion fee is \$3.00, which is forwarded direct to the USJA Central Office by the club instructor with the promotion recommendation form. The member then receives his new rank registration form and certificate of rank direct to his home.

BLACK BELT RANKS

Recommendations for promotion to the Black Belt ranks of Judo are made by instructors to the Central Office on the promotion recommendation form. The fee is \$5.00. All black belt promotions are considered and approved by the USJA National Board of Examiners, and the proper credentials are then issued to the member concerned. There are nearly 400 experts of Black Belt rank in the USJA. Full details of the USJA Senior Judo Rank System are published in the appropriate USJA Handbooks, a list of which is available on request.

THE USJA JUNIOR JUDO RANK SYSTEM

The USJA Junior Judo Rank System is one of the most important technical projects ever undertaken to develop American Judo. It represents the work of many of America's top Judoists who have sent in their ideas on a junior rank system and have participated in countless large and small clinics where the junior system was discussed and worked out. It will gradually solve the confusion which exists in American Junior Judo.

Briefly, the USJA Junior Judo Rank System consists of 12 junior ranks. They are Junior First through Junior Twelfth Degree. When a junior completes the requirements for promotion his instructor forwards the promotion recommendation with the completed exam to the USJA Central Office with the \$2.00 fee. The student then receives direct to his home a new rank registration card, an attractive Swiss embroidered patch showing his degree, a beautiful promotion certificate, and a free copy of the exam for his next higher degree.

COMPLETE EXAMS FURNISHED. For the first time in the history of American Judo, a complete set of carefully worked out exams is available to all U. S. Judo instructors. A separate exam is available for each of the 12 USJA Junior Degrees. Every exam contains all of the requirements for all of the degrees which come before so the cumulative effect is to check the student out again each time he takes an exam for a higher degree. Complete detailed instructions on the USJA Junior Rank System are available in the Instructor's Handbook.

WHO CAN USE THE USJA JUNIOR RANK SYSTEM?

Any Judo instructor can use the USJA Junior Judo Rank System, even if his club is affiliated with another Judo group. USJA Junior Judo Ranks are nationally registered at the USJA Central Office. The USJA is the only U. S. organization which registers Junior Judo Ranks at the national level.

The USJA Junior system is primarily an incentive system. It is a service available to any instructor who wishes to use it for his junior students. USJA ranks do not interfere with other registrations, but assist the instructor in keeping the motivation of his students high throughout their junior years.

Support the USJA Junior Nationals

August 16th is the tentative date for the First USJA Junior Nationals in Detroit. Write to Mr. Frank Hubbard, 14310 Michigan Avenue, Dearborn, Michigan 48126, for further information and plan to attend.