

# 柔道

## The Gentle Path

The history of Judo by Lynda Morris

The year was 1878 when an 18 year old man forever changed the course of martial arts. By entering the Tokyo Imperial University in Japan and continuing an interest in Ju Jitsu, the ancient Japanese art of hand-to-hand combat that he had studied from boyhood. This man was Jigaro KANO (1860-1938).

KANO was slight by today's standards, who probably weighed no more than 45Kg. Although he came across some problems initially he was to train under some now famous masters in differing forms of Ju Jitsu; including Fukuda Hachinosuke (c.1828-c.1880), a master of the *Tenjin Shin'yō-ryū*, Iso Masatomo (c.1820-c.1881), master of *Tenjin Shin'yō-ryū* school under who's tutelage and with dedication, Kano quickly earned the title of master instructor (*shihan*) becoming assistant instructor to Iso at the age of 21. When Iso soon became seriously ill KANO, feeling that he still had much to learn, took up yet another style, becoming a student of Iikubo Tsunetoshi (1835-1889) of *Kitō-ryū*

KANO thrived in the sport of Ju Jitsu quickly becoming an expert in the forms of the Art. KANO was adept at understanding form and movement. In 1882 he combined those skills with his deep sense of honour and integrity to develop a kernel of an idea. He took those techniques from Ju Jitsu that were less dangerous and developed some techniques of his own such as the "shoulder wheel" *kata-guruma* and the "floating hip" *uki goshi* throw which he developed into a series of flowing forms known as Kata's. He placed emphasis on techniques based on scientific principles, and focused on development of the body, mind and character in addition to development of martial prowess. The result was the beginning a new martial art which was originally called *Kano Jiu-Jitsu* or *Kano Jiu-Do* later being simplified to '*Judo*', and founded his first 'Kodokan' (school to learn the way).

The name Judo is derived from two Chinese Kanji or characters.

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'Ju' has the literal meaning gentle, flexible or yielding. It has been translated by some as meaning the "heart of Judo"

道

'Do' meaning way or path of softness

Kano saw judo as a means for governing and improving oneself physically, mentally, emotionally and morally extending the physical principle of maximum efficiency into daily life. Ju jutsu means the "art" or "science" of softness, judo means the "way" of softness. This gives us an insight into KANO's developing philosophies. Use of this word was a deliberate departure from ancient martial arts, whose sole purpose was for killing, evolving it into what he referred to as "mutual prosperity". In this way, judo can be seen as a way to live beyond the confines of the dojo, something that should be as important today as it was in the beginning.

He built the system around three major sets of techniques:

Throwing (nage waza)

Groundwork (katame waza)

Striking (atemi waza)

Each of these major sets has within them a number of techniques developed by KANO. There are also transitional techniques developed to move between these sets.

Kano having now formed this new martial art adopted into the Gentle Way the following principles and philosophies mentioned earlier;

1. The use of negative resistance to opposing strength, meaning to push an opponent when you are being pulled, and pull when you are being pushed.
2. The principle of mutual warfare. Kano believed that by practising the art of judo, could and should affect the spiritual and mental well being, as well as the physical well being of a person
3. The principle of maximum efficiency with minimum effort, included in this study was the strengths and weaknesses of the body, when applying different techniques, thus allowing the most appropriate technique to be used at the most effective time, so that energy is not wasted.

Kano also added a strict code of ethics to this newly formed system. Kodokan instructors and students from the very beginning were expected to be fine examples of good character and honest conduct. Anything done outside of the dojo that might bring shame onto the school, could lead to suspension or expulsion from the Kodokan.

In 1889 KANO visited many countries in Europe and America to spread his art. In 1909 he became the first Japanese member of the International Olympic Committee.

KANO travelled abroad many times to spread his knowledge in the art of Judo, on his last voyage in 1938 he died on his way home from an Olympics Committee in Cairo, how ironic it was that Tokyo had just been nominated and approved as the hosts for the next Olympic games.

The art of judo was never intended to be to be a competitive sport; KANO intended it to be more of a way of life believing that if you had harmony with the spiritual, physical and mental side of training then this would be emphasized throughout your whole lifestyle.

By 1956 judo was being taught in many schools across Japan, it just seems so very wrong that KANO was not alive to see the success of his art.

As judo spread throughout the western world it gained the form of a sport, building its popularity so it was included into the 1964 Olympic Games.

The ideals of KANO's art has evolved, it is now a well defined sport as well as a method of self-defence, showing that there is no divide between race, gender, size or age. The practice of Judo gives the judoka (practioner of judo) an inner confidence, which is why it is recommended for people especially children who have low self esteem, as KANO was as a child.

Between 1912 and 1952 when the International Judo Federation (IJF) was founded, several Japanese experts went to other countries to teach the art. Sensei Gunji Koizumi, 7<sup>th</sup> Dan came to Great Britain, and founded the London Budokwai in 1918.

Gunji Koizumi, a Japanese immigrant, who thought the promotion of ju-jitsu and ken-jutsu (sword fighting) might help his adopted country, then immersed in the First World War. Koizumi subsequently wrote: "I hoped that rendering my service in promoting such training would be a means of pacifying my conscience, which was pricked by the fact that we Japanese, especially students, had been recipients of the kindness and hospitality generously bestowed by the people of this country, without making any tangible return."

In 1920 Koizumi and another Japanese immigrant, Yukio Tani were teaching their Jujutsu method when Jigoro Kano, the founder of Kodokan Judo, visited the club in whilst on route to the Olympic Games in Antwerp.

Hikoichi Aida and E.J.Harrison, both Kodokan Dan grades and members of the Budokwai, persuaded Koizumi and Tani to convert to Judo. This was agreed to and both Tani and Koizumi were awarded their Kodokan Judo Nidan (2nd Dans) certification, in recognition of their technique and status. During this visit a Budokwai member by the name of Tanabe was awarded his 1st Dan (Shodan), making him the first person to receive a Dan grading in England.

The Budokwai (The Way of Knighthood Society) was the first Judo club in Europe with membership open to the general public. From there on Judo was formally taught at the Budokwai and this can be recognised as the starting point of British Judo.

On 15<sup>th</sup> April 1965, the nearly 80 year old Koizumi (by now an 8th Dan), having deciding that he had no longer had the strength to do more for British Judo and not wishing to be a burden, took his own life.

He had been on The Budokwai's mat teaching the previous day. When asked that evening, while being driven home, what he would most like to happen, he replied, "To see people think for themselves and not be led like sheep."

There is a Japanese Cherry Tree dedicated to Koizumi in Roper's Garden on the Chelsea Embankment, London.

## THE SPIRIT OF KANO LIVES TODAY

NOT PROTECTIVELY MARKED

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