



AJA NEWSLETTER

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Direct Promotions by National Standards and Certification Board (NSCB)

AJA's Board of Directors has approved a set of guidelines that the National Standards and Certification Board (NSCB) will use in reviewing applications for direct promotion of yudansha whose senseis have died or are otherwise unable to promote. The guidelines are as follows:

Only current AJA yudansha shall be considered for direct promotion by the NSCB.

Only yudansha who are without an AJA sensei are eligible.

The NSCB shall meet (in person or electronically) as needed to consider direct promotion requests or direct promotion initiatives by the board.

In considering such promotions, NCSB may take into account factors such as teaching experience, technical proficiency, leadership, time-in-grade, contributions to the art of jujitsu, and other factors it deems appropriate under the circumstances.

The NSCB is chaired by Harold Zeidman and includes the three Regional Directors -- Paul Klara (Northern Region), Thomas Salander (Southern Region), and Tony D'Amigo (Western Region).

If you think you're eligible for promotion under these guidelines, please contact Harold <mailto:hizeidman@gmail.com> and request an application form.

2017 Yudansha Promotions

Name	Rank	Date	Dojo
Jesse Strom	Nidan	January	Reston Virginia YMCA Jujitsu Dojo
Kendrick Smith, ,	Shodan	April	
Boris Korol	Nidan	April	Reston Virginia YMCA Jujitsu Dojo

2017 Mudansha Promotions

Name	Rank	Date	Dojo
Ed Jakubowski	Shichikyu	January	Dojo
Robyna Hill	Shichikyu	February	Dojo
Bert Roepe	5th Kyu	March	Reston Virginia YMCA Jujitsu Dojo
Vince Mench	Shichikyu	March	
Erika Deckard	Rokyu,	April	Dojo

Japanese Jujitsu in the Era of MMA

By George Kirby

I was recently asked about the relevance of traditional Japanese-style jujitsu in this era of mixed martial arts (MMA). I could start out by making a stereotypical statement that MMA is an activity for young males to deal with their testosterone flow while proving their manhood. However, this is not a new phenomenon. Throughout history we've seen this take the form of boxing, wrestling, gladiator matches, etc. for young people to vent their energies. For lack of a more humane phrase it was "a way to separate the wheat from the chaff." But, as any experienced martial artist will tell you, especially those familiar with the yin-yang symbol, there is no simple black & white in life. Wheat and chaff may be hard to separate. As traditional martial artists, we'd be like ostriches sticking our heads in the sand (leaving our derrieres exposed) to simply say MMA is bad, evil, vicious, violent, and not a martial art.

So, let's try to look at MMA a bit more objectively.

First, MMA is what it says it is: the combination or mixing of several different traditional martial arts, each with a different emphasis dependent upon the training background of the instructor, the purpose of the instruction, and the goals of the student.

Second, MMA tends to attract mainly young males ages 15-25 (though there are also plenty of young females drawn to the sport). These participants may or may not be aggressive, but they want an aggressive fighting or self-defense system that works effectively for them. Again, there is nothing really wrong or inaccurate about this.

Third, MMA is mainly a commercial venture. Its "life" is dependent upon its popularity in the media & the image the media gives to it. Again, there's nothing particularly wrong here. This is America and almost anyone can create and sell anything the public "wants". But then again, what happened to all the commercial schools that became kung-fu/gung-fu schools and then Brazilian JJ schools, then MMA schools and who knows what else in between? Most pop up and die faster than you can fry an egg.

There are three factors that determine the viability of MMA, or any martial art, to survive more than 100 or even 50 years. First, there must be a common core of knowledge, accepted practice, and senior instructors who can perpetuate the art through several generations. MMA isn't there yet. Second, as people get older and their bodies wear out, they are less able to take the continued physical abuse that comes with high impact athletic activities. This is true for martial arts and many other sports. When was the last time you saw a football player over 40 who wasn't a placekicker? For MMA, it can be a serious limitation. Third, because MMA is currently more of a commercial venture, it's commercial life will be determined by the simple economic concept of "supply and demand." For more traditional martial arts the economic supply & demand may not be valid as many instructors teach for the love of the art (it's an avocation) rather than solely for monetary gain.

None of what is stated thus far should be taken as a negative or derogatory interpretation of MMA. MMA, as any other martial art, is what it is. (Continued on page 5)

Safety and Risk Management

by Kristine Wiscarson

Safety is a very high priority within the AJA. I am sure all senseis and instructors agree with this, and many dojos already have safety plans in place within their dojo.

Did you know our insurance requires that each student have a waiver on file as well as each instructor have concussion awareness training? Information regarding these is shown below.

In addition, AJA has compiled a list below on best practices for safety within the dojo. Please take a moment to review the checklist to ensure that your dojo is up to standards on safety.

Safety checklist: Instructors and black belts:

Instructors are certified in CPR and First Aid

If providing instruction through a community agency, instructors are aware of emergency procedures and First Aid practices of the agency

Required by insurance: Instructors are trained and certified in concussion awareness – this is done once.

Senseis and black belts can receive concussion training here:

<https://www.cdc.gov/concussion/HeadsUp/Training/index.html>

Instructors have been certified by the AJA

Instructors provide adequate supervision of students during training

Senseis review procedures to evaluate past injuries and prevent future injuries

Understanding of procedures and the contact person (if applicable) regarding potential safety hazards within the dojo

Equipment:

Mats and other gear are clean and in good repair

First aid kit is readily available, suitable for the dojo's needs. The kit is refilled regularly and reviewed periodically for appropriate supplies.

Dojo:

Required by insurance: Students have signed a waiver/release (and their parents for minors)

Students (and their parents) have been provided with information about concussion awareness

Exits are clearly posted and operable from inside the dojo

A posted and enforced set of safety rules which is periodically reviewed by instructors and students in class

Access to a phone for 911 calls

Procedure for removal of potential human contaminants from mats and workout areas (blood, etc.)

If you have any questions or concerns regarding this Risk Management Program, please contact Kristine Wiscarson at

membership@aja-email.org or 661.220.9090.

The American Ju-jitsu Association's Facebook Page!

By John M. Landry, Ph.D.

<https://www.facebook.com/americanjijitsuassociation/>

I took the page over on September 5, 2015 when I was appointed as the Communications Director for the AJA. That being said, when I discovered that we already had a Facebook page I then attempted to merge old with new. I eventually made that happen (not as easy as it may sound!!).

We have had a Facebook page for years but it was not utilized very much. I created a new page and once merged with our old one it formed a brand-new place for Facebook friends and members.

I have been featuring our member dojos and will continue to do so. If any members have any other news or information that they would like to share, in real time, then please send it to me via email and I will post it on our Facebook page.

Facebook offers a way to connect to people all over the world and if used properly can bring news and event information to members and potential members. I have completed social media courses as well as having used social media for business purposes for many years. The American Jujitsu Association can also benefit, and has benefited from, Facebook.

Please tell your students, friends, and family to like our page. We currently have 356 people liking our page but we would sure like more! Next, will be a concerted effort to be on Instagram, Padlet, Twitter and other social media outlets. Keep watching and reading!

Upcoming Events

American Ju-Jitsu Association's annual Seminar and Self Defense Competition (AKA AJA Northern Regional Shiai) is being held on July 23, 2017 at the Towson YMCA in Maryland.

All AJA dojos, yudansha, and students are invited to participate. Other dojos and martial artists are invited at the discretion of the AJA Northern Regional Director.

I hope that all are able to participate. If you have any questions please email or call me.

Paul Klara

410-823-8870

pcklara@verizon.net

<http://www.daitobukan.com>

Hosting an Event?

Please send pertinent info (what, when, where, cost, how to register) to:

Newsletter@AJA-email.org

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There is another way you can look at MMA as well and that is to compare it to traditional Japanese jujitsu . . . and there may be some surprising comparisons here:

First, jujitsu is a “parent art”. Judo, Aikido, and some ryu of Karate evolved from it. To some extent MMA contains all of these elements as well.

Second, jujitsu is oriented solely around self-defense. The concept of sport or competition is alien to a martial art where the goal is to do whatever is necessary to protect oneself from injury or death on the battlefield. Whereas there are rules about what you can and cannot do in MMA bouts (and most other martial art competitions), no such rules exist in jujitsu when it comes to self-defense. There is only one rule: survive. Your goal is to do whatever is necessary to protect yourself from further injury and safely remove yourself



STUDENTS & PARENTS: CONCUSSION AWARENESS

Injuries or concussions are very rare in AJA dojos. However, they do occasionally occur. Here is some really usable information on concussion awareness for you as a parent and as a student. Please download this information, read it, and keep it for future reference:

For students/athletes:

www.cdc.gov/headsup/youthsports/athletes.html

For parents:

www.cdc.gov/headsup/youthsports/parents.html

For general information:

www.cdc.gov/headsup/basics/index.html

SENSEI/INSTRUCTOR: CONCUSSION AWARENESS TRAINING & CERTIFICATION

If you're an instructor and NOT yet Concussion Awareness Training certified go to: <http://www.cdc.gov/headsup/youthsports/training/> take the FREE 30 minute course, pass the FREE exam, and secure your FREE Concussion Awareness Training Certificate. This is an insurance coverage requirement.

Also, make sure you're making the information presented above in Students & Parents: Concussion Awareness, available to your students and their parents on a regular basis, either by printing up the documents and handing them out in class or providing students and parents with the links so they can download the information themselves.

Content

If you have content you would like published in the AJA Newsletter, please send it to:

Newsletter@AJA-email.org

Types of content requested:

- Articles about jujitsu, your students, or your dojo
- Upcoming Events
- Personal Interest events

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Now you might be thinking jujitsu is all about control – and it is. There may be situations in which you may be able to secure compliance of an attacker simply by controlling him through some level of pain or discomfort with no resultant injury. However, you also have to realize that when “push comes to shove” all of those control holds, locks, throws, presses, etc., are ultimately designed to lead to serious injuries: fractures, joint dislocations and concussions as well as other more serious and devastating injuries as well as the possibility of permanent disabilities to the attacker.

Fortunately, because jujitsu training in the modern world is more “civilized”, we too have rules of engagement in the dojo – mainly because we want our training partners to show up at the next class so we can continue to practice. However, the “practice” of jujitsu today is vastly different than that of the 1960’s.

Most of these “courtesies” existed in the ‘60’s but we also had jujitsu tournaments. There was only one rule: No hits, attacks, or contact to the face. Everything else was fair game – and injuries were quite common. The protective gear consisted of padding for the forearms, knees and feet, a cup and an optional mouthpiece. The cup and padding were required in class as well – which is not usually true today. Injuries in the dojo were not uncommon and I had my share – but I accepted that as one of the “costs” of training and didn’t let that deter me from continuing to grow in the art. Whether good or bad, this situation has changed due to changing clientele, fear of liability, and other factors. However, if you look at MMA today is there really that much difference from the jujitsu competitions of the 1960’s?

So what is the difference between traditional Japanese jujitsu and MMA? We jujitsuka can say that MMA looks sloppy and there’s too much hitting going on and too much time on the ground. For comparison, there was a 10-15 second time limit for ground fighting in those old jujitsu tournaments. If a submission wasn’t achieved, the official would call break and the competitors stood up to resume the match from a standing position. In retrospect, it probably looked “sloppy” too. But that’s the way it can look in any martial art where you have two well-trained competitors fighting to win.

For those of you who still want traditional Japanese jujitsu to have an advantage over MMA here are a few:

Jujitsu has tradition. It’s been around for at least a few hundred years (arguably a few thousand years). It’s a proven system that has been the foundation for most other “modern” martial arts, probably including MMA.

A skilled jujitsuka is unpredictable. No one, perhaps not even the practitioner, knows what a jujitsuka’s response to a specific attack may be. A skilled jujitsuka also has the skill to set a control hold to minimize injury to his attacker or cause

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multiple disabling injuries if necessary.

Most street situations (from my students' experiences and mine) have been over in 5-7 seconds with the attacker down on the ground injured and the jujitsuka still standing. The only time one of my students (a black belt) had to go down to the ground was to set a shoulderlock pin on a purse snatcher and maintain it until the police arrived. He didn't feel dislocating the shoulder was necessary. He used good judgement there – which is another responsibility jujitsuka have on the street.

On the street, jujitsu has only one rule: survive. Your training should constantly be centered on succeeding in upholding this single rule.

Traditional Japanese jujitsu, as most other traditional martial arts, can be a lifelong activity and learning experience. Because of the depth of knowledge developed by students who continue in the art for decades, they can alter and use techniques that are suitable to the changing limitations of their bodies because they have a greater understanding of the art and its potential.

When examining all the martial arts objectively, one of the things you will learn is that all martial arts have strengths and weaknesses. Some people have physical characteristics that will make them more effective in one art than another. It is the practitioner that makes the martial art effective, rather than the other way around. In other words, whatever works for you, works for you, whether it be MMA or traditional Japanese jujitsu. It all depends on what you're after, what you hope to gain from your learning, and what impact the martial art will have upon your life.

I still think traditional Japanese jujitsu ultimately has an edge.

Budoshin Ju-Jitsu News...

Unfortunately, The August camp has been cancelled this year.

About the American Ju-Jitsu Association

The American Ju-Jitsu Association was founded in 1972, by George Kirby and William Fromm at the request of their sensei, Jack Seki, for the purpose of bringing different ryu of the art together in an atmosphere of mutual cooperation and respect. Since that time it has grown from two dojo to approximately twenty-four, plus international affiliates. The AJA has established itself as a reputable organization within the martial arts community and works closely with other major Ju-Jitsu organizations in the United States and internationally in areas of mutual concern.

The AJA is a non-profit amateur athletic association registered with both the state of California and the United States government [IRS code 501(c)(3)]. It is a non-profit corporation with a charitable foundation status. Although originally recognized by the IRS as a "social club" because there was no other way to recognize the AJA as an amateur athletic association, formal recognition of the AJA as a true amateur athletic association, according to the criteria of the United States government, was secured in 1976 under the Sports Act of that year. To our knowledge, the AJA is the only martial arts organization in the U.S. that is classified by the IRS as an amateur athletic association.

Board of Directors

Position	Name	Email
President & Chairman	David Boesel	President@AJA-email.org
Vice President	Jeff Wynn	VP@AJA-email.org
Secretary	Kristine Wiscarson	Secretary@AJA-email.org
Treasurer	Marc Tucker	Treasurer@AJA-email.org
Western Region Director	Tony Damigo	WRDirector@AJA-email.org
Southern Region Director & International Competition Coordinator	Thomas Salander	SRDirector@AJA-email.org
Northern Region Director	Paul Klara	NRDirector@AJA-email.org
Director	Gene Roos	Director@AJA-email.org

Administrative Staff

Position	Name	Email
Certificates Coordinator	Barry Stebbins	Certificates@AJA-email.org
Communication Director / Newsletter Editor & Publisher	John M. Landry, Ph.D.	Communications@AJA-email.org
Historian	Mike Balog	Historian@AJA-email.org
Materials Coordinator	Jeff Rice	Materials@AJA-email.org
Membership	Kristine Wiscarson	Membership@AJA-email.org
National Awards	Vacant	Awards@AJA-email.org
National Standards & Certification Board	Harold Zeidman	NSCB@AJA-email.org
Recruitment	Sherry Gibson	Recruitment@AJA-email.org
Webmaster	Scott Finley	Webmaster@AJA-email.org

