



AJA NEWSLETTER

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Summer 2019

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The Jujitsu Family: Jujitsu, Judo, Aikido, and Brazilian Jujitsu

by Dave Boesel

Japanese jujitsu is a progenitor martial art – one that has given rise to other martial arts. The number and range of jujitsu techniques (waza) is so large that founders of other arts were able to select, develop, and refine subsets of them to create their own distinct systems. Judo and aikido are among its progeny in Japan, and Brazilian jujitsu is an offshoot of judo. But let's start at the beginning.

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Summer AJA Events

The east and west coasts will both be hosting exciting events this summer! Both are open to non-AJA members.

West Coast: Budoshin Camp

Sensei George Kirby's annual summer training camp is in its fifteenth year. Over August 17th and 18th, eight seminars led by sensei from jujitsu and other arts will take place at the Old Orchard Park dojo in Santa Clarita, California. The camp is open to sankyu-level and above practitioners of any martial art. Participants have the option of registering for both days, either day individually, or for a half-day.

For more information and to register in advance, go to <http://www.budoshin.com/seminars.htm>.

East Coast: Northern Region Shiai and Seminars

The Northern Region's annual event will take place on Sunday, July 21st this year. The Orokawa YMCA in Towson, Maryland will be hosting four sensei for seminars in the morning, followed by an afternoon waza self-defense competition for all levels, including youth and adult divisions. Lunch will be provided to pre-registrants.

For more information and to register in advance, click [here](#) or go to tinyurl.com/Shiai2019.

From the Archive: Art or Way?

The AJA has an extensive online archive of back issues of the newsletter. This relevant article by Burrell I. Koepke, Jr. is from April 1992.

The Bugei or "martial arts" of Japan are not to be confused with Budo or "martial way." They are quite unlike in purpose, nature, and technique. The Bugei arts include what is known as jutsu forms, those systems that end in jutsu, e.g. kenjutsu, bojutsu, jojutsu, ninjutsu, iaijutsu. The Budo forms are iaido, kendo, judo, and aikido, and are largely a 20th century development. The Budo arts are more concerned with spiritual discipline, which could elevate one mentally and physically.

The Bugei forms were developed largely as a protection, and for developing the mind and technical skills to help defend one's superiors, family, and loved ones.

Bugei arts have a very wide spectrum of learning, like senjojutsu, "warrior deployment," or chikujojutsu, "fortification," because they were all for combat. The Budo arts are more for "higher aims" than for combat. Nowadays more and more Budo arts are going the way of competition, which is considered by many jutsu instructors to lose its effectiveness in combat. The more remote a Budo form remains from a sport, the more positively it reinforces the combat effectiveness of its art.

Any jutsu form which uses the kyu/dan ranking is not considered a classical jutsu form. There are some exceptions to this rule. Those are where a kyu/dan ranking is handed out by the head instructor of the ryu, who uses no preset test for rank. Rather, a student is graded by his actions, self-respect, knowledge, and willingness to pass on the art to others. In this respect the ranking are more like a menkyo licence system than a kyu/dan ranking system.

With most Budo ranking systems, prestige and title are more important than the teaching of the system.

As a last note on ranking, my teacher would never let himself be called a master, because if you were a master you were almost dead. He was always saying, "you start out a white belt, at each level you are then a white belt, and at the time of your death you are still a white belt — just learning."

You can find the April 1992 newsletter, along with over fifty other issues, at americanjijitsuassociation.org/about/newsletters. The archive is incomplete; if you happen to have an issue which is not currently listed, please contact Webmaster@AJA-email.org

Recent Yudansha Promotions

Name	Rank	Date	Dojo
Tim O'Shea	Shodan	March	Quest Academy
Amanda Diddlemeyer	Nidan	April	Kaiwan Budokai
Enrique Torres	Rokudan	May	Budoshin Jujitsu Yudanshakai
David W Racine	Sandan	June	Nintai Dojo
Steven Bowman	Nidan	June	Nintai Dojo
Coral Burke	Shodan	June	Arlington Budoshin Ju-Jitsu Dojo
Stewart Burke	Shodan	June	Arlington Budoshin Ju-Jitsu Dojo

Recent Mudansha Promotions

Name	Rank	Date	Dojo
Manny Toscana	Shichikyu	February	Kaiwan Budokai
Marisol Bovoso	Ikkyu	March	Full Circle Jujitsu
Keenan Morris	Yonkyu	March	Ho'on Dojo
Judah Lim	Gokyu	March	Budoshin Jujitsu Dojo
Caitlin Gaver	Shichikyu	March	Kaiwan Budokai
Kelly Quigley	Shichikyu	March	Kaiwan Budokai
Chase Shepard	Shichikyu	March	Kaiwan Budokai
Tyler Shepard	Shichikyu	March	Kaiwan Budokai
Ian Ho	Shichikyu	March	Kaiwan Budokai
Carson Zinkgraf	Shichikyu	March	Kaiwan Budokai
Julie Shepard	Shichikyu	May	Kaiwan Budokai
Tabitha Brewis	Shichikyu	May	Kaiwan Budokai
Erika Deckard	Ikkyu	June	Kaiwan Budokai
Lauren Carlgren	Rokyu	June	Kaiwan Budokai
Adam Slote	Shichikyu	June	Kaiwan Budokai

Sensei

To have your students' unregistered promotions featured in the newsletter, please send them to Newsletter@AJA-email.org

AJA Update

by Dave Boesel

At its meeting on June 29, 2019, AJA's Board of Directors made a number of consequential decisions:

1. The Board enacted a policy on sexual and other forms of harassment involving AJA members. Given a complaint to the AJA, the first step is to try to resolve the issue informally. Failing that, the issue may be taken up by the Board itself, by the dojo's host organization (YMCA, community center, college, etc.); and/or by law enforcement. AJA sanctions include censure and expulsion from the organization.

2. The National Standards and Certification Board (NSCB) has new responsibilities. It *must* review and approve or disapprove all applications for promotion to rokudan and above. It *may* review and approve or disapprove all yudansha (black belt) promotions, at its discretion.

3. For yudansha promotions up to rokudan, the required minimum time between promotions, in number of years, is the same as the number of the rank promoted to, e.g., two years for promotion from shodan to nidan, three years for promotion from nidan to sandan, etc. Beyond rokudan, the required minimum number of years is capped at six.

Content

If you would like to contribute content to the AJA newsletter, please send it to

Newsletter@AJA-email.org

We're always looking for

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

The Jujitsu Family

(continued from page 1)

Jujitsu

Jujitsu began to develop in Japan well over a thousand years ago as a collection of hand-to-hand fighting techniques used by the samurai. It is thought to have derived from sumai, an even more ancient form of combat, from which sumo also evolved. The samurai were a warrior caste that originated when local chieftains, in semi-anarchic conditions under weak emperors, recruited and trained men to fight for them. The samurai were “those who served” their chieftains, later called “daimyo.” Jujitsu (the “gentle” or “yielding” art) was one of many fighting arts that the samurai developed and used. Others included kenjitsu (sword art), kyujitsu (archery art), and bajitsu (art of horsemanship). Bujitsu (war art) was an overarching term that included all of these fighting systems. All were “how-to” arts – how to fight with a sword, use a bow and arrow, ride a horse in battle, etc. Over time practitioners added a philosophical dimension to these practical arts, integrating them into a way (do) of life – e.g., the way to behave, to interact with others, and more broadly, to live. Thus bujitsu was transformed into budo, kenjitsu into kendo, and jujitsu into judo.

The evolution of jujitsu, and more broadly bujitsu, is often divided into three different eras – medieval, Tokugawa, and modern.

The medieval or classical era (1185 - 1603)

Beginning late in the 12th century, the samurai became the predominant force in Japanese society. Fighting for their daimyo — chieftains who later became local and regional nobles — they were much like the knights of Europe who fought for princes and lesser nobles in the middle ages. They had a code of honor, bushido (war-noble-way), just as the European knights had a code of chivalry. But this code was of little comfort to the peasantry, over whom the samurai held sway. Their authority was so complete that they could kill any peasant whom they felt disrespected them — that is to say, almost any peasant for almost any reason. During the medieval era, military dictators called shoguns ruled, but power was widely dispersed among the daimyo. They often fought one another, as did the nobles in Europe, and for more than a century before the end of the classical era, internal warfare was almost constant. Samurai fighting skills were therefore highly valued and constantly being upgraded and honed. Given their skill, their loyalty to their daimyo, their power, and their disregard for death, the samurai were accorded high honor in Japanese society. Their hand-to-hand fighting techniques were widely used, but not yet articulated as a distinct martial art. The warriors were usually fighting in one battle or preparing for the next. In this

period, what later became jujitsu techniques were designed to defeat an enemy who was often armored and using weapons – especially the sword. Grappling, throwing, restraining, and killing or disabling an opponent were the goals of single combat.

The Tokugawa era (1603 - 1867)

This era — also called the Edo period because the seat of government was in Edo — put an end to most of this internal strife. After a long period of warfare, three daimyos in quick succession unified the country by force of arms, becoming shoguns. The first two died shortly after taking power. The third, Tokugawa Ieyasu, consolidated the national unification (much as Henry VIII did in England and Louis XIV did in France) and established a dynasty that would last 250 years. The Tokugawa Shogunate stopped the fighting and formalized the feudal social structure. There were four classes — peasants, artisans, merchants, and warriors — and everyone was confined to his or her own class. The Tokugawas also closed the country to foreigners to keep out influences that could cause change and instability, especially Christianity. All the daimyo owed their allegiance to the Tokugawas, and to keep them under control, the Shogunate required that they live for specified periods of time near the court in Edo, as did King Louis XIV in his court in France.

Without wars to fight, many samurai had to find other work. Some became soldiers in the shogun's army, used principally to put down occasional rebellions; some became administrators and scholars; and some started martial arts schools, or ryu. Each jujitsu ryu had its own special set of techniques, which were closely held secrets. Nevertheless, they shared basic principles, such as “softness” (using the enemy's force and momentum to defeat him) and strength against weakness (finding the opponent's weak spots and using strengths against them). Gradually, the emphasis on defeating an armored and armed enemy diminished. Among other changes, striking and kicking, of little use against an armored opponent, were introduced by a Chinese martial artist and quickly adopted by various ryu.

Despite Tokugawa efforts to freeze the feudal system in place, economic developments began to change it in the 1700s. The merchant and artisan classes grew, the country became more urbanized, and agricultural production, the basis of pay for the samurai, languished. Many became ronin (masterless samurai). Marginal and often impoverished, some of them roamed the cities and countryside causing mayhem — robbing, stealing, fighting, and killing.

By the mid-1800s, the Tokugawa Shogunate had become weak and hollow, and the Shogun himself was ill. Admiral Perry's incursion into Edo Bay with modern warships in 1853 and 1854 — designed to open Japanese ports to American trade, by force if necessary — was a humiliating blow to the system.

The shogun acquiesced in an unequal treaty that gave the Americans great advantages. Although emperors had been sidelined by shoguns for hundreds of years, a movement now grew to eliminate the Shogunate and restore the emperor. After a period of instability, the modernizing forces of Emperor Meiji defeated the Tokugawas and took control of the country in 1868. In 1871 they abolished the feudal system that sustained the samurai and forbade samurai to wear swords, the key symbol of their power and status. These reforms effectively eliminated the caste. Samurai in the outlying province of Satsuma rebelled in 1877 but were crushed by a new national army composed mainly of peasant draftees with rifles. This was the famous last stand of the samurai.

The Modern Era I: The Development of Judo

Meiji governments were ardent modernizers, borrowing heavily from the west to make Japan strong. Ancient customs, habits, and dress were cast off. Meiji officials wore suits and ties as symbols of modernity. Among the many things marginalized by Meiji society were the traditional martial arts, including jujitsu. By the 1870s, they widely regarded them as old, crude, reactionary, and violent, due in part to the bad behavior of the ronin in the Tokugawa era.

It was in this context that Jigoro Kano (1860-1938), son of a middle class family, grew to adulthood. He was academically inclined and an excellent student. A slight youth — he was only about 5'2" and 90 lbs. — Kano was often bullied in secondary school and college. He decided to embark on training in jujitsu to defend himself. However, since jujitsu was in decline, good teachers were hard to find. Eventually, while at Tokyo Imperial University, he found instruction in Tenjin Shinyo Ryu and Kito Ryu jujitsu. Kano proved to be a dedicated and outstanding student, and after about five years of training, he opened his own dojo in a Buddhist temple in 1882. This later became the Kodokan.

In keeping with the modernization of the times, Kano decided to make jujitsu more practical and efficient. He organized jujitsu techniques into categories, based on their dominant characteristics, and refined them according to his principle of "maximum efficiency and minimum effort." He emphasized randori (free sparring) as an effective way to learn how to use techniques, and shiai (competitions) as a way to test and hone skills. To make these encounters safe, he removed potentially dangerous techniques, such as striking and kicking (though he included them in kata). Instead he focused on manipulating kinetic elements such as balance, leverage, and momentum to defeat an opponent. Emphasizing "mutual benefit and cooperation" as the working principle for training, he advocated for its extension beyond the dojo as way of life both for judoka and society at large. Thus, he changed jujitsu from the "gentle art" to judo, the "gentle way."

Judo caught on rapidly in Japan. In a series of public contests between the practitioners of judo (judoka) and jujitsu (jujitsuka), the judoka usually won. The most famous was a shiai sponsored by the Tokyo police, in which the judoka were said to have won 12 of 15 matches. Thereupon the police adopted judo as its method of martial arts training. (The contests were fought according to the rules of judo, so those who practiced it regularly had the upper hand.) For a long time Kano's art was referred to as a form of jujitsu (e.g. "Kano jujitsu" or some variant), but in 1925 the Japanese government recognized it as a distinct martial art taught in public schools and called "judo."

Kano himself was an educator, serving as principal in a number of high schools, including one in Tokyo. He stressed the importance of physical education and sport, especially through judo, and the importance of mental discipline in the practice of judo. He was also an educator in another sense. An ardent proselytizer, he traveled to China and Europe to teach and explain his system. In the United States, President Theodore Roosevelt, a supporter of Japan in international relations, became interested in Japanese martial arts after reading a book on bushido. Around 1904, he invited various jujitsuka and judoka to come to the White House and demonstrate their arts. Among them was Yamashita Yoshitsugu, a student of Kano's and a superb practitioner. He was also a violent brawler, reprimanded by Kano and suspended from the Kodokan. Nevertheless, he was a pioneer of judo in America, and he secured a short-term job at the U.S. Naval Academy before returning to Japan to teach.

The Modern Era II: The Development of Aikido

Morihei Ueshiba (1883-1969), the founder of aikido, was a generation younger than Kano. His father was a prosperous businessman. Like Kano, Ueshiba was physically small (a little over 5' 1" tall), academically inclined, curious, and an intense reader. From a young age, he wanted to be a warrior, and he worked to strengthen his body. As the Russo-Japanese War approached in 1904, he tried to enlist in the army but was rejected because the required minimum height was 5' 2". Zealous in his desire to get into the fight, he hung from a tree with weights on his legs to stretch himself, and he increased his height just enough to enlist. At first assigned to the reserves, he insisted on being sent to the front and was finally included in a regiment sent to Manchuria, the focus of the land battle between Russia and Japan. However, there's no evidence that he actually fought.

Upon leaving the army, with its harsh training and conditions, Ueshiba was physically fit and powerfully built. He led an effort to create a logging and farming community on the northernmost island of Hokkaido. Winters were

cold and the work was demanding. The logging especially required strength and energy, but Ueshiba excelled at it. He was also an eager contestant in informal martial arts contests.

While in Hokkaido, Ueshiba met Sokaku Takeda, grandmaster of Daito Ryu Aikijujitsu. Sokaku's father — a samurai and a sumo champion — trained him and instilled in him a fierce warrior spirit. For centuries the Takeda family had been the home of Daito Ryu. One of the first articulated systems of jujitsu, it combined elements of other traditional systems with soft techniques that would later be incorporated in aikido. It emphasized ki, the flow of energy central to aikido; throwing and submitting with joint locks and chokes; and strikes to vital points to set up throws.

Takeda would certainly have been a samurai, had the caste not been abolished. His pattern of life was often similar to that of the ronin in the Tokugawa era. A violent man, he roamed cities and countryside looking for fights. He specialized in catching, beating, and killing bandits and gangsters, but his opponents (or victims) also included men whom he thought had not shown him enough deference or whom he simply disliked. A master of Daito Ryu, Takeda was also a superb and demanding teacher. Ueshiba became a student, training with him in Hokkaido and then, whenever possible, in other areas of Japan. In 1922 Takeda made Ueshiba a full sensei, and he continued to teach and train in Daito Ryu.

However, Ueshiba was a very different person from Takeda. He had long had a spiritual disposition, inclining him toward a mystical connection with nature and the universe. He often trained in natural settings, and his regimen was beyond rigorous and at times almost fanatical. He would, for example, stand in a cold waterfall swinging his sword for hours. In the 1920s, he joined the messianic cult of Onisaburo Deguchi, a martial artist and spiritual leader of the Omoto-kyo religion, which harked back to traditional Shinto and was devoted to peace, harmony, and understanding. Ueshiba was invited to become their martial arts instructor. Deguchi believed that humans were naturally at one with the universe but that the one-ness had been corrupted. He wanted to create a benevolent dictatorship that would restore the connection and bring about a new age of world peace. Frustrated by Japanese authorities, Deguchi led a group of men, including Ueshiba, to Mongolia to set up a utopian religious kingdom. In the process, however, Deguchi associated with right-wing Japanese ultranationalist groups (the Black Dragon Society and the Cherry Blossom Society) and with Chinese bandit leaders. They were arrested by Chinese authorities, who executed the bandits and sent the Japanese back to their home country.

Ueshiba's participation in Omoto-kyo was transformative. One day, while walking among trees, he had a vision. "I saw the divine," he said later, "and attained an enlightenment that was true, swift, and sure. All at once, I understood the nature of creation: the way of the warrior is to manifest divine love, a spirit that embraces and nurtures all things." From this experience, aikido evolved as a strictly defensive art, designed to control but not harm opponents. In 1931 Ueshiba started teaching in Tokyo in a style called Ueshiba Ryu Jujitsu (also, Aiki Budo). The term aikido evolved gradually but was in place by the time the Aikikai Foundation was established in 1940. Ai-ki-do ("harmony, spiritual energy, way") was based on ki — the spiritual energy of the universe — and on kinetic principles such as evasion, balance, blending (harmony with opponent's motion), and circularity. Violence disrupted universal harmony, and aikido enabled the practitioner to tame violence without harming the offender. The aim was always peaceful resolution and restoration of one-ness with the universe.

The Modern Era III: Brazilian Jujitsu

Mitsuyo Maeda (1878 – 1941) was a talented Kodokan student and instructor who brought "Kano jujitsu" to Brazil, where the Gracie family developed it into Brazilian jujitsu. Maeda was one of three judoka whom the Kodokan sent to the United States in 1904 to extend Yamashita's work. He gave demonstrations and defeated challengers at Princeton, West Point, and the New York Athletic Club. Together with Soishiro Satake, another of the three judoka, he toured cities in Rhode Island, North Carolina, Georgia and Alabama. Starting in 1908, further travels took him and Satake to Paris, Havana, and Mexico City and five years later, to several Central American countries and Colombia, Ecuador and Peru. In all of these places he fought and usually defeated challengers of all types and skill sets. In effect, he became a professional prizefighter in no-holds-barred competitions. He called himself "Count Combat" and earned a reputation as "the toughest man who ever lived."

Maeda came to Brazil in 1914, established a dojo in Belem, and became a lifelong citizen. In 1917, Carlos Gracie, then 14 years old, watched a demonstration by Maeda and quickly enrolled as his student. Carlos then taught jujitsu to his four younger brothers. One of them, Helio, focused on and refined judo ground techniques (ne waza). Over time, they became the cornerstone of the family fighting system. Carlos opened a jujitsu academy in 1925 and started issuing "Gracie Challenges" to all who wanted to fight. In taking on all comers, the Gracies learned the strengths and weaknesses of other styles and of street fighting, and they incorporated this knowledge into what later became Brazilian jujitsu.

The Gracies' jujitsu grew and swept across the Brazilian martial arts scene, but the family knew that to achieve worldwide recognition, they needed to start operations in the United States. In 1978, Helio's oldest son, Rorian, moved to Los Angeles and began teaching there. Failing at first to attract much of a following, he issued a Gracie Challenge to all of California. The Challenge caught people's attention, and by 1989 Rorian and three brothers opened the North American Headquarters of Gracie Jujitsu. Then Rorian and two business partners decided to start a martial arts tournament in which different styles would compete. Thus began American MMA and the Ultimate Fighting Championship. The brothers selected Royce Gracie to represent them in the early contests because he was relatively slight and highly skilled. If he could beat larger opponents, he would put Gracie jujitsu on the map. He did, of course, winning three of the first four UFC championships, most by submission. Thereafter, the Gracies franchised their operations in the United States and around the world.

The Modern Era IV: Japanese Martial Arts – Militarism and Beyond

The samurai who had lost their status in the early Meiji years did not disappear. Along with other aspiring warriors, they pushed for a revival of the traditional martial arts and in 1895 founded the All Nippon Butokukai to advance the values and skills of bujitsu (war arts). They promoted hard training, loyalty to the emperor, discipline, and self-sacrifice, among other things. The Butokukai included almost all of the old war arts plus judo and kendo — the modern forms of jujitsu and kenjitsu. Beginning around the time of the Russo-Japanese War (1904-05), the Japanese government approved and supported the Butokukai as a means of preparing young men for war. In 1911 the ministry of education included judo and kendo as curricular requirements for boys in middle school. Over the next several decades and into World War II, the government increasingly militarized Japanese society, and the Butokukai participated actively in that effort, especially in training and inspiring young men to fight. Judo and kendo became part of the war effort, much to Kano's distress. During the war, the fanaticism which the Japanese government had instilled in the military, and which included an emphasis on the samurai warrior spirit and methods, sometimes manifested as atrocities, such as beheading and splitting Chinese civilians with swords as a test of swordsmanship.

In 1945, after Japan was defeated in WWII, General McArthur's occupation authority, the Supreme Commander for the Allied Powers (SCAP), notified the Ministry of Education that "dissemination of militaristic and ultra-nationalistic ideology will be prohibited and all military education and drill will be discontinued." The following year, SCAP issued Directive 550, which required "the removal and exclusion from public life of militaristic and ultra-nationalistic

persons." The Ministry removed martial arts from the curriculum, and the Butokukai was closed.

Judo and kendo, as well as jujitsu and aikido, were not specifically named as prohibited arts, but they receded into the background, and training was conducted quietly, if at all. The ban was lifted five years later, with the beginning of the Korean War, and Japanese martial arts and ways began to grow again, though this time in a distinctly pacifist context.

Meanwhile, Japanese martial arts were developing slowly but surely in the United States. In the mid-twenties in Hawaii, Seihiro Okazaki developed Danzan Ryu Jujitsu, a blend of traditional jujitsu, boxing, wrestling, karate, and kung fu, combined with healing arts in a moral and philosophical context. He founded the American Jujitsu Institute in Hawaii in 1939 and is credited with being the first to teach jujitsu to non-Asians in the United States. Born in Fukushima Japan, Okazaki was one of more than a hundred thousand Japanese Americans swept into internment camps during the war. He was released and continued to teach in Hawaii. Among his best known students was Wally Jay, who developed Small Circle Jujitsu. Okazaki awarded him a certificate of mastery in Danzan Ryu Jujitsu in 1948.

Sanzo Jack Seki was another American jujitsuka of Japanese lineage, born in Los Angeles in 1914 to a Japanese father (a jujitsu master) and an Irish American mother. His family moved to Japan when he was a young boy, and his father sent him to be trained by Jigoro Kano. In the mid-thirties, as war fever mounted in Japan, Seki was given the choice of serving in the Japanese army or returning to the United States. He chose the latter, and during the war he trained Air Force recruits in hand-to-hand combat. Ranked in multiple martial arts, Seki taught jujitsu in Burbank, California in the early 1960s, then in the San Fernando Valley, and finally in Van Nuys until his retirement in 1986. Among his best known students was George Kirby, who began teaching in 1967. Kirby combined elements of judo, aikido, and karate in developing Budoshin Jujitsu. He founded the American Jujitsu Association in 1972, published prolifically, and taught and promoted jujitsu in other ways, thus becoming a leader in American martial arts.

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
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