



## The Kano Society Bulletin



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### In This Edition

The main article in this issue of “*The Bulletin*” (produced by guest editor Llyr Jones) is a tribute, by John Bowen, to the esteemed Ichiro Abe *Kodokan* 10<sup>th</sup> *dan* who died in February. Also featuring are profiles by Brian Watson on the great champions and *judo* leaders Kosei Inoue and Anton Geesink, and shorter items by Richard Riehle and Brian Watson on getting countered, and the *Kodokan*'s 140<sup>th</sup> anniversary, respectively.

### Publisher's Comments

The Kano Society along with the entire *judo* family mourns the passing of another great figure of *judo* – Ichiro Abe *Kodokan* 10<sup>th</sup> *dan* after a long and distinguished life in *judo*. We offer our deepest condolences to Abe-sensei's family and friends around the world, to the *Kodokan Judo* Institute and to the entire Japanese *judo* community. An outstanding technician, Abe-sensei made a remarkable contribution to the global development of *judo* for decades.

### Contributions

The backbone of the Kano Society's activities is this on-line publication. We welcome contributions in the form of articles or photographs etc. to “*The Bulletin*”.

Diana Birch

## In Memoriam: Ichiro Abe *Kodokan* 10<sup>th</sup> *dan* (1922 – 2022) John Bowen



Ichiro Abe *Kodokan* 10<sup>th</sup> *dan* died on 27 February 2022, aged 99. He was perhaps the most eminent of a small group of *Kodokan judoka* who were dispatched to various countries to educate the *judo* fraternity in the ways of *Kodokan judo*.

A *randori* [free practice] with Abe-sensei was always pleasant as well as instructive. He moved around the mat with the utmost grace and smoothness. He was about 167 cm tall (five feet six), with a listed weight of 73 kg. In photos of demonstrations and displays taken during the years he spent in Europe, he looks angular, with wide, level shoulders tapering down to a small waist. When he was thrown as *Uke* during a display, he looked tidy and in control, legs straight, picture-perfect *ukemi*. As *Tori* his movements were crisp and precise, nothing out of place. He was a sixth *dan* in most of his early photographs, and when I practiced with him, he was like a smooth, well-oiled machine. I just couldn't imagine him as a first or second *dan*. It was like he was born a sixth *dan* with all the techniques and moves imprinted in muscle-memory. On the mat he was all business, carefully observing his opponents.

Ichiro Abe was born in Akita Prefecture, in the north of Honshu, on 12 November 1922. Due to his father's work in what is now the Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries, the family had to move several times, so the young Ichiro lived in several different prefectures. When he was twelve the family was living in the city of Maebashi, in Gunma Prefecture, so he entered Maebashi Middle School. When it came to military training, he had to choose between *judo* and *kendo*. Although

Abe thought kendo was the better choice for someone with his physique, he opted for *judo* since *kendo* would have been more of a financial burden on his parents due to the need to purchase the required *bōgu* [armour], an example of the careful thought he gave to his decisions.

This was his introduction to *judo*, but he just went through the motions during the first year's lessons. That all changed the next year, when a new and more capable teacher, Shigeru Sato, who had just graduated from Tokyo Higher Normal School (now the University of Tsukuba), took over the classes and made it all come alive for the young Ichiro. He joined the school's *judo* club, practiced hard and started to do well in competitions. His favourite technique had been *seoinage* [shoulder throw], but he decided to change to *osoto-gari* [major outer reaping], *tai-otoshi* [body-drop], and *harai-goshi* [hip-sweep], saying those techniques were more suited to his physique.

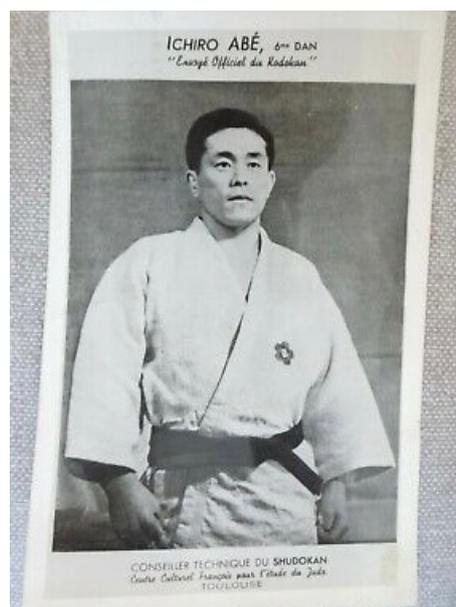
After graduating from high school in 1941 Abe entered the physical education department of Tokyo Higher Normal School. At first, he was able to continue with his studies and practice *judo*, but as the war got fully under way, that was no longer the case. As for his *judo*, he had become a member of the *Kodokan* in July 1938 and was promoted to 1<sup>st</sup> *dan* in August. At the beginning of 1944 he got his 4<sup>th</sup> *dan*.

After the war, in 1946 Abe started working in the Secretarial Section of the *Kodokan*, and in July that year was promoted to 5<sup>th</sup> *dan*. He left the *Kodokan* after one year and moved to Osaka where he taught at high schools during 1947 and 1948, and in 1949 was *judo* instructor at the Sakai City Police Headquarters. He also took part in Osaka prefectural *judo* tournaments in which he did very well.

The great change in his life started around this time, when the French *Judo* Federation asked the *Kodokan* to send them an instructor, and the *Kodokan* asked Abe, at the time a 29-year-old 6<sup>th</sup> *dan*, if he was interested. He was indeed. Abe was deeply interested in teaching *judo* and had taught US soldiers at the *Kodokan*. A two-year contract was negotiated, and Abe sailed from Yokohama in October 1951, bound for France.

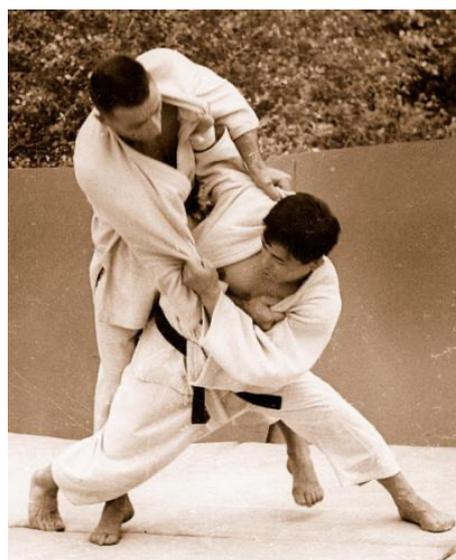
Mikinosuke Kawaishi was leading the development of *judo* in France, and while he was certainly a competent *judoka*, he was not teaching *Kodokan judo* the way the *Kodokan* desired. Kawaishi numbered the techniques and used French names instead of Japanese, as part of the "Kawaishi Method". The teaching of *kuzushi* [breaking the balance], *tsukuri* [set-up] and *kake* [execution] was largely ignored. Referees used French terminology instead of Japanese, and so forth.

After working out his two-year contract teaching *judo* at the *Shudokan* [Place to learn the way] in Toulouse, the Belgian *Judo* Federation asked Abe to become their Technical Director. In 1955, he was appointed Technical Advisor to the European *Judo* Union (EJU), and in the ensuing years, from his Brussels base, he travelled to many European countries to hold *judo* classes.



Ichiro Abe in France

Abe worked hard, and ultimately with great success, to get *judo* teachers and practitioners throughout Europe to emphasise the tenets of *Kodokan judo* and the importance of *kata*, and to standardise the use of Japanese terminology. In this he was aided by other Japanese *Kodokan* teachers in Europe, one particularly notable example being Teizo Kawamura, who was then a Technical Advisor to the International *Judo* Federation (IJF) and who from 1953 to 1955 had been chief instructor at The *Budokwai*. They had both studied at the Tokyo Higher Normal School and over the years became fast friends as well as colleagues. Nearly 40 years later they were elevated to 9<sup>th</sup> *dan* on the same day (along with Toshiro Daigo and Yoshimi Osawa).



Ichiro Abe performs *tai-otoshi*

After 18 years in Europe Abe felt that he had accomplished what he came to do, and he returned to Japan at the start of

1969. The divide between Kawaishi's legacy and the *Kodokan* faded with the formal adoption of Kodokan *judo* and the active cooperation of the French *Judo* Federation.

In April Abe became chief of the *Kodokan*'s International Department. He was a stickler for protocol and ruffled feathers among some of the foreign *judoka* by strictly enforcing existing rules and instituting new ones. Donn Draeger, for example, found he could no longer use the *Kodokan* as a drop box for his mail. Abe was affable and soft-spoken, but firm. Willem Ruska turned up one day in the main dojo during his pro-wrestling days. When Daigo told him in Japanese to leave, Ruska pretended he didn't understand, but when Abe was summoned and told him in French to leave, he left.

Ichiro Abe's main positions of responsibility included:

- 1977: Member of the national team committee of the All-Japan *Judo* Federation (AJJF);
- 1980: President of the Pacific Rim Judo Organization; Director of the Kodokan International Department; member of the Board of Directors of the AJJF;
- 1983: General Secretary of the *Judo* Union of Asia;
- 1985: Member of the Japanese Olympic Committee; Chairman of the International Committee of the AJJF;
- 1996: Senior Counsellor of the *Kodokan*;
- 1997: Director of the Grading Department of the *Kodokan*

One of his many technical accomplishments was the work he did to clarify the *Kodokan*'s ambiguous promotion rules. He himself received his 8<sup>th</sup> *dan* in 1971 and his 9<sup>th</sup> *dan* in 1992, along with Daigo and Osawa, as mentioned above, and all three were promoted to 10<sup>th</sup> *dan* in 2006, only learning about it two days before it happened. Abe said he was "stunned" by the news. Abe, Daigo and Osawa went on to become by far the longest living 10<sup>th</sup> *dan* holders.



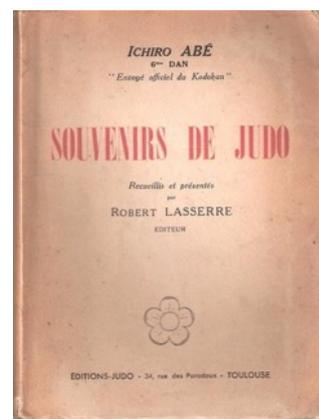
Ichiro Abe, Yoshimi Osawa and Toshiro Daigo on their promotion to *Kodokan* 10<sup>th</sup> *dan*

Ichiro Abe's books, mainly in French, include "*Le Judo du Kodokan*" ["*Kodokan Judo*"] by Jean Pujol and Ichiro Abe, published in 1952 and interesting for its many photos – 500 in all; "*Souvenirs de Judo*" ["*Memories of Judo*"] published in 1953; and "*Judo par Ichiro Abe*" ["*Judo by Ichiro Abe*"] – in

collaboration with J. M. Falise and G. Ravinet - first published in 1967.



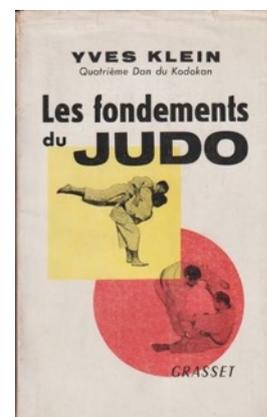
"*Le Judo du Kodokan*" - 1952



"*Souvenirs de Judo*" - 1953



"*Judo par Ichiro Abe*" - 1967



"*Les Fondements du Judo*" - 1954

In the 1953 book, Abe describes how he first became interested in *judo*, and his *judo* training and career up until he is offered a job by the *Kodokan* after the war. He also writes about his contests and the hard training. At his high school in Tokyo, first-year students had to know and greet second year students on all occasions. Sounds like some English schools, but "greet" in a Japanese context probably involved the student smartly whipping off his cap and screaming a greeting as he bows and is pointedly ignored by the second-year boy sauntering past.

Abe never failed to emphasize the importance of *kata*. The longer YouTube videos of Ichiro Abe always include one or two complete *kata*. When he first went to Europe, he thought the weak point of European *judo* was the *kata*. In 1954 the French artist and 4<sup>th</sup> *dan* Yves Klein wrote "*Les Fondements du Judo*" ["*The Foundations of Judo*"] a book about *kata*. Abe wrote an excellent preface in which he, after Kano-shihan, likened *kata* to grammar, and *randori* to creative writing, stating that "*To practice Randori well, we must know the Kata well*". When the great champion Yasuhiro Yamashita was required to perform *Koshiki-no-kata* [Antique forms] as a vital part of his promotion to *Kodokan* 8<sup>th</sup> *dan*, and subsequently demonstrate it at the 2005 All-Japan

Championships, it was Abe, then a 9<sup>th</sup> *dan*, that provided the finer points of instruction.



Ichiro Abe performing *Itsutsu-no-Kata*

Ichiro Abe was a hardy, dedicated gentleman, tough to the end. At the age of 97 he took part in the 2020 *Kangeiko* [Mid-winter training]. Occasionally I used to visit Saburo Matsushita in his office on the fourth floor of the *Kodokan*. It was also Abe's office, and whenever Abe was there, I used to marvel at the fluidity of his moves, brisk and upright. This was just a few years ago when he was already well into his nineties. He always had a notebook in his pocket, the pages covered with quick scribbles, which were notes about his busy schedule, according to his daughter. He always looked in better condition than the other 10<sup>th</sup> *dan* holders, which I put down to the fact that Daigo and Osawa had been battered by years of high-level contests. In a way, he was still teaching me by example.



97-year-old Ichiro Abe does light *uchi-komi* during the 2020 *Kangeiko* at the *Kodokan*

The funeral service for Abe was a private occasion attended only by his relatives. On 26 March 2022 a "Thank You and Farewell Party" was held at the *Kodokan*.



Memorial Display at the Farewell Party for Ichiro Abe

With the death of Toshiro Daigo at the beginning of October 2021, Yoshimi Osawa now remains the only living *Kodokan* 10<sup>th</sup> *dan*.



Ichiro Abe at the *Kodokan*



The author with Ichiro Abe in Tokyo

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## Ichiro Abe – Special Exhibition at the Kodokan Museum

To commemorate the remarkable life in *judo* of Ichiro Abe, a special exhibition was held at the *Kodokan* Museum. Photographs of this exhibition and some of its exhibits follow next.



Ichiro Abe Special Exhibition – 1 of 3



Ichiro Abe Special Exhibition – 2 of 3



Ichiro Abe Special Exhibition – 3 of 3



イギリスBBC放送で在英の小泉軍治先生と柔道を語る

Undated – Ichiro Abe with Gunji Koizumi at the BBC



昭和35年  
外務省派遣使節団をブリュッセルに迎える  
前列 左から大沢慶己, 川村禎三, 神永昭夫  
後列 安部, 平野時男(在ベルギー)の諸先生

1960 – L→R Front Row: Yoshimi Osawa, Teizo Kawamura, Akio Kaminaga; L→R Back Row: Ichiro Abe, Tokio Hirano – in Belgium



昭和36年 IOCブランデー会長訪問  
右から川村禎三先生、安部先生、嘉納履正国際柔道  
連盟会長(講道館長)、ブランデー会長

1961 - From R→L Teizo Kawamura, Ichiro Abe, Rsei Kano, and Avery Brundage (no names for the other two)



昭和56年 国際部忘年会

1981 - Kodokan International Department End-of-Year Party - Toshiro Daigo, Ichiro Abe and Yoshimi Osawa



昭和39年 東京オリンピックで帰国  
講道館前で醍醐敏郎先生と

1964 - Ichiro Abe and Toshiro Daigo among the cars in front of the Kodokan



昭和56年 講道館忘年会にて

1981 - Kodokan End-of-Year Party - Toshiro Daigo and Ichiro Abe



昭和56年 中国訪問

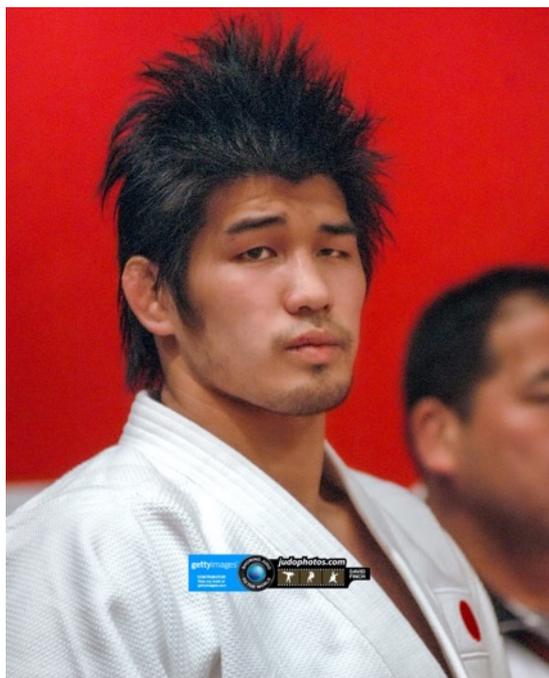
1981 - Visit to China - Toshiro Daigo and Ichiro Abe



Ichiro Abe judogi and aka obi

## Kosei Inoue – Judo Superstar

### Brian Watson



Kosei Inoue at the 2003 Judo Otto World Cup, Hamburg, Germany

Kosei Inoue (pronounced “ko-say/in-no-way”) was born in Miyakonojo City, Miyazaki Prefecture, Kyushu, Japan, on 15 May 1978, the youngest of three brothers, Masaaki, Tomokazu and Kosei. He remarked that from the age of five his father was influential in teaching him and his elder brother Tomokazu not only the basics of *judo* but also the attitude one should adopt and how to behave as a *judoka*. From this we can deduce that his father is of the same mind as the founder in that Kano’s *judo*, if taught correctly, is a method of fostering good character.

Inoue won his first children’s *judo* championship aged 12. He later entered Tokai High School. It was there that *judo* training started to have a big impact on his life. Some of his *judo*-mates had, along with Inoue, a strong desire to eventually enter Tokai University, the educational institute affiliated to their high school. The main reason for their desire was that both Yasuhiro Yamashita and Nobuyuki Sato were leading the *judo* training there and as such, the Tokai University *judo* team had become one of the strongest in the nation.

I saw Inoue in contest during his high school days. I knew then that he had potential. What impressed me most was not so much his *o-uchi-gari* or his *uchi-mata*, it was in seeing a big boy performing such skillful *seoi-nage* techniques. He was then around 180 cm tall and weighed some 75 kg, so he was among the heavier group of high school boys, most of whom favoured only *o-soto-gari* and *uchi-mata*, rarely *seoi-nage*. Therefore, they sometimes had difficulty throwing their taller, long-legged rivals; Inoue, however, had some success against taller opponents when attacking with *seoi-nage*. He would occasionally perform this technique by dropping onto one or both knees, like the lightweights.

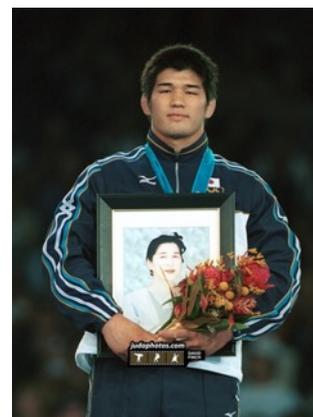
Yamashita and Sato were keen for Kosei to enter Tokai University, especially so after he was invited to join a *judo* group tour of Europe where in Austria, he won his first international championship medal at the age of 17. In 1996, upon graduation from Tokai High School, he passed the university entrance examination and began four years of study at Tokai University. Already accustomed to a fairly hard *judo* training schedule at high school, Inoue found the regular chores of cleaning, washing and cooking, plus his training and studies were in totality a great strain.

When aged 19, he gained his first nation-wide publicity by reaching the final of the NHK televised 1998 All Japan *Judo* Championship. His much heavier and well-experienced opponent in the final bout was the formidable Shinichi Shinohara (135 kg, 190 cm tall). Although Inoue put up a spirited fight, his techniques had little effect against the winner, Shinohara, who thus gained this illustrious title for the first time. In the 2000 All Japan *Judo* Championship final they met a second time with Shinohara again emerging as champion following a hard-fought clash.

Later in that year, however, Inoue was elated when selected to compete in the -100kg category at the 2000 Sydney Olympic Games where he succeeded in capturing gold. At the subsequent medal-awarding ceremony, he carried onto the victor’s podium a framed photograph of his 51-year-old, deceased mother. This was a fitting gesture, for she had given him unstinting support and wise guidance throughout his early contest career. On one occasion, for instance, he came second in a *judo* competition. When he proudly showed his mother his runner-up certificate, she took it and ripped it up saying, “Losing doesn’t suit you! Show me only when you win!”



Kosei Inoue throws Ariel Zeevi of Israel for *ippon* with *uchi-mata* on his way to the -100kg *judo* gold medal at the 2000 Sydney Olympic Games



-100kg *judo* gold medallist, Kosei Inoue proudly holding a picture in honour of his recently deceased mother at the 2000 Sydney Olympics

And win he did. Since Inoue’s full list of medals is too long to display here, I’ll mention only the most prestigious string of major conquests starting from 1998: Asian Games gold in 1998 and 2002; three world championship gold medals; 1999, 2001, and 2003. The aforementioned Sydney Olympic gold in 2000. All-Japan *Judo* Championship (open weight) victories in 2001, 2002 and 2003, followed by the

2005 Jigoro Kano Cup International gold. Apart from this Kano Cup triumph, however, the year 2005 proved to be a problematical year for him.

The sudden loss of his eldest brother Masaaki (1973-2005) was an immense shock. Another worry in 2005 was having to undergo surgery after suffering a torn shoulder muscle that sidelined him for a full 18 months. Although he re-started his contest career in 2007, I cannot recall ever seeing him perform his *seoi-nage* techniques again. Perhaps this was a result of lingering aftereffects of his injury, for he failed to regain the pinnacle of his former skills. His gold medal at the Paris Super World Cup on 11 February 2007 and his grasp of gold at the 2008 All-Japan Weight Class Championships were his two concluding major victories before retiring from contest *judo*. In this same year, 2008, he married TV personality Aki Higashihara. They have two children, a daughter born in 2009, and a son born in 2010. Following Inoue's retirement from competitive *judo*, he was selected by the Japan Olympic Committee to travel to the United Kingdom (2009/10) to gain international coaching experience. This included periods teaching at the Edinburgh *Judo Club* in Scotland and at The *Budokwai* in London. The International *Judo Federation* honoured Kosei in 2013 by inducting him into the IJF Hall of Fame. Also in 2013, he was appointed an Associate Professor in the Faculty of Education at Tokai University.



2000 Olympic champion, Kosei Inoue (white) demonstrates a throw at The *Budokwai*, London, July 2010

Following the dismal performance of the Japan *judo* team at the 2012 London Olympics, Inoue was subsequently chosen head coach to the national team. His enthusiasm and leadership proved to be a source of great encouragement that resulted in the team's ensuing successes in all seven categories at the 2016 Rio de Janeiro Olympics and later culminated in a haul of 13 medals, including nine gold, at the 2020 Tokyo Olympics.

In September 2021, Inoue announced his retirement as head coach of Japan's national team. Shortly thereafter, Keiji Suzuki, a two-time world and 2004 Athens Olympic champion was appointed as his successor.

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## Getting Countered Richard Riehle

*Kuzushi* [balance breaking] is still the most important and central tenet of *Kodokan Judo*. It should be a part of every *judo* training session. Failure to practice *kuzushi* as part of *randori* [free practice] is a common reason for getting countered, even in one's *tokui-waza* [favourite/best technique].

The late Toshiro Daigo *Kodokan* 10<sup>th</sup> *dan* once noted that, for most *waza* such as *tai-otoshi*, *seoi-nage*, and *tsurikomi-goshi*, *Uke's* heel need not be off the *tatami* more than enough to slide a piece of paper easily. However, *Uke's* heel must not be touching the *tatami* at all.

*Tori* getting countered by *Uke's* *ko-soto-gake* while executing a *tai-otoshi* can only happen when *Uke's* heel is still solidly on the *tatami*. This is true of most counters.

In a Japanese *machi-dojo* [privately owned dojo built to serve a local community], the *sensei* does not simply turn the students loose to randomly jostle a *randori* partner. Instead, the *kuzushi* principle is part of the training, part of the *randori* training.

There are dozens of *kuzushi* techniques. For some reason, many instructors either never learned them or forget to teach them. Yet attempting to execute a technique without *kuzushi* is an easy thing to counter — unless *Tori* can overpower *Uke*.



Kosei Inoue – a true Londoner, cycling to The *Budokwai*, July 2010

*Kuzushi* typically involves clever use of the hands. We spend a lot of time teaching different kinds of grips, but not much time teaching how to use a given grip once we have it.

How many *judoka* know the importance of curling the last three fingers to achieve torque — an almost imperceptible torque that no spectator can see because it is a tiny move? There are other subtle moves with the hands that are rarely used because they are rarely taught. When discussing the so-called “secrets” of *judo*, the tiny, hardly noticed actions that produce decisive *kuzushi*, are rarely discussed — rarely known.

One of my favourite *randori* partners at the *Kodokan* (now deceased) was a *shichidan* (7<sup>th</sup> dan) *judoka* who had a wonderful assortment of *kuzushi* techniques — all of them effortless and all with subtle use of his hands. He noted that big throws can start with little movements, that *Uke* may not realise have happened, until it is too late.

While *tsukuri* [positioning] is important, it should not be premature. When I am balanced on my toes for the instant you need to *Sasae* to the left and block my advancing ankle with your foot, it is too late for me to counter. When I am leaning backward on my heels with my toes raised two centimetres from the *tatami*, I have few options for a counter.

There are dozens of ways to effect *kuzushi* during *randori*. It is worth taking the time to learn them.

There is a concept that precedes *kuzushi* called *dehana* [instant of opportunity]. This is where your opponent changes their posture or position in some kind of motion.

Example, *Uke* steps to the left. The foot slides to the left. This is a moment of opportunity for *Tori*. It happens very fast. How do we disturb *Uke*'s balance if we have a grip somewhere on the *judogi*? Think of all the kinds of actions that could work

Watch for pattern-based moments of opportunity. Everyone has their own patterns. *Randori* — lots of *randori* — is where we learn how to recognise patterns.

Then learn your own habitual patterns. Here is one of my favourite *kuzushi* techniques. With a grip at *Uke*'s elbow, instead of pulling the arm, push the elbow toward *Uke*'s abdomen, especially when they are taking a step.

Watch how *Uke* tries to recover and help them in that recovery with a follow-on *kuzushi*. I have a secret *kuzushi* that I invented for setting-up *uchi-mata*. I sometimes teach it when visiting a new *dojo* or when meeting a new person on the *mat*. It is not obvious until the person learns it. You can also invent your own *kuzushi* techniques, but that requires careful study.

In any case, the *kuzushi* for every throw is as important as the throw itself. Often, that *kuzushi* is hardly noticed by an observer.

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## Anton Geesink (1934 – 2010) Brian Watson



Anton Geesink in 1961  
(Source – Dutch National Archive)

Sixty years have now passed since Anton Geesink achieved world fame by becoming the first non-Japanese to capture the World *Judo* Championship (an open-weight event featuring 57 men from 25 countries) held in Paris, France, on 2 December 1961. Anton's feat was awesome in demolishing the myth of Japanese invincibility. He was, on that occasion, at the peak of his prowess. For his efforts, however, he was not presented with a gold medal, for *judo* medals were not awarded in those days. An ornamental blue flower vase was the trophy he gained for his remarkable victory, I say remarkable, because he had completely dominated all his opponents up to and including in the final bout, when he overwhelmed the reigning 1958 world champion and 1958 All Japan *Judo* Champion, Koji Sone (1928–1983) 98 kg.



The finalists at the 1961 World *Judo* Championship, from L-R Koji Sone and Anton Geesink. Also pictured, first from R, is Akio Kaminaga (1936–1993), All Japan *Judo* Champion 1960, 1961, and 1964, and next to him is the US representative George Harris (1933–2011)

Born on 6 April 1934 in Utrecht, the Netherlands, Antonius Johannes (Anton) Geesink started his working life in the building trade at the age of twelve. He took up *judo* two years later and progressed rapidly. By the time of his seventeenth year, he began competing internationally. In 1957, he won his first European *Judo* Championship medal (silver) and went on to garner 21 European titles by the time of his retirement from contest *judo* in 1967 following a leg injury. He later underwent two knee joint replacement operations.

In his prime the muscular Geesink stood 6ft. 6ins. (1.98 m) and weighed 120 kg. He made his acting debut in 1962, appearing as a detective in the film "Rififi in Amsterdam" and later in several Dutch TV drama series. He also appeared regularly in Fyffes's banana TV commercials and was cast as Samson in the 1965 Italian film Gideon and Samson.



Anton Geesink (right) in "Rififi in Amsterdam"

Undoubtedly the highlights of his career were as flagbearer for the Dutch Olympic team at the 1964 Tokyo Olympic Games, the first Games to be televised internationally, and when he convincingly defeated Akio Kaminaga (1936-1993) 102 kg in the final of the prestigious open-weight category event staged at the Nippon *Budokan* in the presence of Emperor Hirohito.

In October, the following year, he gained the heavyweight class gold medal at the 1965 World *Judo* Championships held in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil. He was elected four times Dutch Sports Personality of the Year in 1957, 1961, 1964 and 1965. The Japanese government awarded Geesink the same honour as that given in 1984 to Trevor P. Leggett; namely, the Order of the Sacred Treasure for services to *judo*. Geesink published several *judo* books in both Dutch and English. In January 2000 he was granted an Honorary Doctorate by *Kokushikan* University for his contributions to the worldwide diffusion of *judo*. Geesink served as a member of the IOC (International Olympic Committee) for twenty-three years, 1987-2010. He was in addition education director for the IJF (International *Judo* Federation) and in 1997 was graded 10<sup>th</sup> *dan* by the IJF. Geesink lived on the street in Utrecht that bears a statue of him and is named in his honour as Anton Geesinkstraat.



Anton Geesink's visit to the Marunouchi Police Dojo in Tokyo on 25 June 1999. Seated 1<sup>st</sup> from left Geesink, kneeling 1<sup>st</sup> from left Kisaburo Watanabe, 3<sup>rd</sup> from left is the author, Brian Watson

Geesink died, following three weeks of intensive hospital care, on 27 August 2010, aged 76, leaving wife Jans, two daughters Willy and Leni, and one son Anton Junior. He will be long remembered as a pioneer who changed contest *judo* forever. Until he broke the grip that Japanese judoka had previously maintained over *judo*, it was largely regarded internationally as a 'Japanese-only' sport. Geesink's successes against leading Japanese contestants stimulated confidence in non-Japanese *judoka* and this in turn instigated a tsunami of global interest in *judo*, especially so following his championship victories in the 1960s.



Anton Geesink and his wife Jans, pictured at a dinner in Tokyo, 25 June 1999

In recognition of his accomplishments the Dutch Ministry of Finance commissioned, in 2021, the Royal Dutch Mint to mint official commemorative coins engraved with his name and facial likeness.



The Anton Geesink 10 Euro and 5 Euro Coins

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## The Kodokan's 140<sup>th</sup> Anniversary

### Brian Watson



The *Eisho-ji* Temple in Higashi Ueno, Taito-ku, Tōkyō



The author, Brian Watson in the garden of the *Eisho-ji* Temple. The memorial stone is inscribed with the wording “*Kōdōkan – Birthplace of Jūdō*”

In the spring of 1882, Jigorō Kanō founded the *Kōdōkan* at *Eishō-ji* Temple, Tōkyō. This name consists of three characters, simply expressed as: 講 *kō* ‘lecture’, 道 *dō* ‘path’, and 館 *kan* ‘building’. However, the ‘*dō*’ is the character that gives the name *Kōdōkan* special essence, for it may be translated as ‘the road a person travels in life’. It also has religious connotations such as ‘moral doctrine’. Kanō was intensely aware of the ills that afflicted society during his lifetime 1860-1938. It’s clear that he wished to help the young achieve in life and so improve not only their own characters through *jūdō* and education but also by extension, help rid society of poverty, disease, ignorance, and suchlike. As Kano further developed the *Kōdōkan* in succeeding decades, he focused increasing attention in his writings in the *Kōdōkan* magazines on the spiritual, moral, and cultural aspects of his *jūdō*. Therefore, ‘the institute where one receives guidance on the way to live one’s life’ is a possible English rendering of the meaning of ‘*Kōdōkan*’.

In later years, as the *Kōdōkan* attracted a rapidly expanding membership, it was re-located several times to larger premises in Tōkyō; and finally in 1958 to its present site, Kasuga, Bunkyo-ku, Tōkyō. To mark the 100<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of its establishment, parts of the *Kōdōkan* building were demolished, re-built, and in 1984 the *Kōdōkan* was re-opened and re-named the *Kōdōkan* International *Jūdō* Center.

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## Points to Ponder

*“Perfecting oneself and helping improve society – this is the dual purpose of judo”*

Jigoro Kano (1860-1938)

*“The greatest warrior is he who wins without fighting”*

Sun Tzu (544-496) BC

*“Cooperation is preferable to confrontation, especially so when combatting pandemics”*

Brian N. Watson

*“The wise man covets good health more than gold”*

Proverb

*“Judo is preserved. Strength ends, speed ends, the body ends, everything ends. But judo remains – judo can be transmitted.”*

Hipolito Elias

*“Wars are easy to start but difficult to end.”*

Brian N. Watson

*“Because they find their own paths, those who practice judo and who follow the principle of ‘seiryoku zenyō, jita kyōei’ [Maximum efficient use of one’s energy and mutual prosperity for self and others] always have a calm spirit, enjoy life, and are enterprising.”*

Jigoro Kano (1860-1938)

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## Judo Collections



The “Bowen Collection” at the University of Bath Library, contains the extensive *judo* archive amassed by *judoka* and scholar Richard Bowen during the course of individual research for his many books and publications.

Alongside the “Bowen Collection” is the personal book collection of Syd Hoare which includes many rare texts, some in the Japanese language, given to Syd by Trevor Leggett. As well as the books, there is a bound compendium of the educational articles and lectures written and delivered by Syd.

Also residing at Bath is the “Woodard (*Judo*) Collection” – a compilation of archival material relating to the history of women’s *judo* assembled by Marion and Graham Woodard.

All of these collections represent a wonderful resource for present and future *judo* researchers. They are for reference use only (not available for loan) and can be viewed between 0900 and 1700 hrs.