



# The Bulletin

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## The Kano Society

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### The Bulletin - Editor's comment

Welcome to the eighth edition of the 'Bulletin'. In this edition we publish part two of a historical article on the origins of Judo and the links with Japanese politics and society—'Making Way'

**News** - The Society held a Kagami Biraki film show in January 2003 at the Budokwai. Please look at the web site for details of future events—there will be further film shows, kata courses and our AGM in April.

The website is now reachable on [www.KanoSociety.com](http://www.KanoSociety.com) as well as [www.KanoSociety.org](http://www.KanoSociety.org) so connection should be easier.

We look forward to seeing you all at the AGM.

Regards to all Diana Birch



Women Samurai

### Leonard Hunt—Larry Ralph

Leonard Hunt (1908 – 1994)

Len Hunt, 7th Dan, passed away peacefully after a short illness on Wednesday 6th July 1994 at the age of 85. During the last years of his life fellow Dan grade Larry Ralph took Len around all the clubs who still wanted to benefit from Len's instruction besides taking him to all the major judo events Len continued to take interest in. Larry writes as follows:

Len was a very popular man. A gentleman of the old school. The sort of judo man you would read about in books. He was still practising and teaching judo at the age of 81. When I say 'practising' I mean just that - he never asked for or gave any quarter.

Len had practised and taught judo for some 60 years. He started in 1927 at the age of 18 after reading an advertisement on the back page of a boy's magazine known as 'The Magnet'. With a photograph of the then very famous Yukio Tani the advertisement was for a 'Judo/Ju-jitsu' club run by a Mr W.H. Garrud in Golden Square, London. Mr Garrud had been taught by Yukio Tani and another famous Japanese of that time, 'Raku' Uyenishi. It was not long however before Len had joined the Budokwai and was receiving instruction from Yukio Tani himself who was Chief Instructor and Gunji Koizumi. Koizumi was the founder of the club and became known as 'The Father of Judo in Europe'.

Len was awarded his 1st Dan black belt in 1936, a year after T.P. Leggett was awarded his. A black belt was not easily obtained in those days and it was indeed a great honour. Len was to later become an Instructor at the Budokwai and later still at the old London Judo Society situated south of the river Thames in Stockwell.

It has to be said that Len's forte was newaza in which in those days many Ju-jitsu techniques such as leg locks, wrist locks and certain neck locks not now permitted in judo were then allowed. Even without such techniques in modern judo Len's new waza was extremely effective as many a younger, stronger and fitter judoka was amazed to find. When he was in his late 60's Len was invited to a number of National Squad training sessions to show his extensive range of newaza. Not satisfied to just teach he invited Squad members to, not so much practice, but to compete against him. They were astonished to find he could strangle, arm-lock or immobilise them almost at will. Around the clubs it was common for wrestlers to visit to gain experience from the newaza practice. Many of them were quite heavier than Len who at just 10½ stone and 5' 7" tall would soon have them in trouble. He took great delight in pitting himself against such athletes.

During World War II Len was in the Army and based in Egypt. It was not long before he started a judo club

there for other servicemen and in his off-duty periods taught the locals. In fact, it is said that he introduced judo to the Egyptians.

As a young man Len had other sporting interests.' He played amateur football for Clapton in the old Ishmian League which was the equivalent of the Premier League in amateur football.

As for his judo I would go so far as to say Len Hunt was probably the best newaza teacher in the country and he could always reinforce his teaching by proving its effectiveness himself. He always said that most of his techniques were as taught to him by Yukio Tani himself and if young aspiring judoka have any doubts about the effectiveness of the old style, they just have to see for themselves. Fortunately his newaza was recorded on film and video.

In the latter years Len practised and taught at Romford and Hornchurch Judo Club which is one of the oldest clubs in the BJA. He was very proud of the fact that he was made President of that club which has a trophy named after him.



## Trevor Leggett - reminiscences

**Trevor Leggett 1914 - 2000**

Trevor Leggett was a familiar and much-loved figure at both the Buddhist Society and the Summer Schools, Not only did he attend our annual residential celebration of the Dharma but he also gave talks in both weeks, latterly despite failing health and sight. Between classes he would typically be found sitting amid an interested and enthusiastic group answering and asking questions, always curious. He would make a point from the teachings by recounting stories from his life or from his wide and varied readings, always with humour, liveliness and affection. He would have been 86 years old by the time of this year's Summer School.

Mr Leggett was a multifaceted man, gifted in many ways. When still a young man he could have become a concert pianist; but his father, a prominent musician, dissuaded him, feeling that

he would not have been able to earn a living. He took up the law instead, but after qualifying he found his interests taking him elsewhere. He trained in judo and learnt Japanese. Being in Japan when war broke out he was interned. It is said that he taught even his guards judo.

After the war he joined the overseas service of the BBC at Bush House, eventually becoming head of the Japanese service, which broadcast regularly to Japan. When struck down by a serious illness, he was advised to give up judo. He refused his doctor's advice and was instrumental in transforming the way judo was taught in this country. He was given an award by the Japanese government for his contribution to the introduction of Japanese culture to England. He was feared as a teacher of judo for his toughness and his gruelling classes. There was

another side to his character however, and that concerned his devotion to spiritual development and its many paths.

In the fifties he suddenly gave up serious judo training and devoted the rest of his life to writing and the spiritual way. He learnt Sanskrit and eventually produced a substantial original translation. He is perhaps best known for his *Zen and the Ways* and *The First Zen Reader*, both classics in their own way and yet to be surpassed. Despite failing health he continued giving talks at the Society and around the country. He set up his own website just a few years ago and was full of enthusiasm for modern technology, particularly as so many people could be reached by it. He recently brought out a book of his stories, nearly all from talks given at the Society and was full of plans for

future publishing ventures. He was an inspiration to all who had contact with him, and of those there were few whom he did not in some way influence. He not only taught the way, but lived it; and through that living of it, all who had contact with him were strengthened by it.

## Making Way—Kevin Grey Carr (part two)

**Making Way: War, Philosophy and Sport In Japanese Judo**

*Kevin Gray Carr Amherst College*

For a great many people, the name Kanō Jigorō conjures up romantic images of a man selflessly devoted to the promotion of physical, moral, and spiritual development of the world. Unlike many halfway-deified founding figures, Dr. Kanō was probably as great a man as he is generally made out to be. He was born on October 28, 1860, in Hyōgo prefecture in Japan. The new Meiji government came to power when he was eight years old. With its rise came a period of intense industrialization and modernization that laid the foundation of Japan's current economic ascendancy. People of this time constantly kept an eye out for anything that was inefficient or antiquated. Kanō himself was no exception. In Tōkyō University's Political Science and Economics Department (class of 1881), he studied, among other things, utilitarian thought of the West. This philosophy was to have great influence on his later reformulation of judo. While Kano was committed to modernization, he firmly believed in tradition, but only where it was functional. He saw the decline of many native traditions that went with the country's mania for and blind acceptance of things Western. This made the Japanese abandon much of what was distinctive to their culture. Within this milieu, Kano began his study of *jujutsu*. After a difficult search for qualified teachers, he

studied at two schools, Kitō-ryū and Tenshin Shin'yo-ryū. After practicing in these schools for about four years, he came to the conclusion that no teacher had grasped the total concept of *jūdō* that is, the *jujutsu* teachers of the time only knew "tricks" and had no appreciation of the underlying theory of the art.

In order to rectify this problem, Kano founded his own school, the *Kodōkan*, in February of the 15th year of Meiji (1882) at the age of 23.50 This first school, in a spare room at Eishoji temple in Tokyo, was a tiny room of only 10 mats (about 1 50ft<sup>2</sup>) in which nine trainees studied. This is in sharp contrast to the present-day Kodokan International Jūdō Center, which is a modern, seven-story building, containing several practice halls, lodging, conference and exhibition facilities, administration offices, *judo* hail of fame, and a 500-seat viewing area. Though one would not know it from looking at this latter structure, the original Kodokan was identified with ruffian *jujutsu* and the students there had to pretend that they were taking English lessons from Dr. Kano.

Despite some initial snags, the *judo* movement grew astonishingly rapidly. The Peers' School (Gakushūin University) was the first to include *judo* in its curriculum in 1883, and

the Ministry of Education made judo compulsory for middle-school students in 1911. Competing *jujutsu* schools were quickly quieted when Kanō's students won easily in a contest in 1886. By 1905, the majority of the *jujutsu* schools had merged with the Kodokan. The steady ascent of *judo* was only temporarily set back when all of the martial arts were prohibited by the Occupation after WWII. In 1951, school judo was revived and the servicemen of the occupying forces took *jūdō* back to their homes around the world. In the next year, the International Judo Federation was established with 17 participating countries, and by 1956, the first world *judo* championships were held in Tokyo. The outbreak of war in 1937 was heartbreaking for Kano. His hopes of making *judo* an Olympic sport seemed thwarted, and the international education which he had so hoped for seemed doomed. In 1938, Kanō Jigoro died of pneumonia at the age of 78, en route home from the Cairo IOC meeting.

The original *judo* movement, as envisioned by Dr. Kano had three explicit aims: to bring Japan up to speed with the West (by overcoming the perceived military and physical inferiority), to disseminate the ideals *judo* internationally, and to educate the practitioners. I shall focus on this last goal. Kanō said, "Nothing under the sun is greater

than education." To this aim, he established a program of physical, moral, and philosophical development that was meant to heighten self-awareness and understanding of human interaction and inculcate the "classic values" of the *bushī* (such as loyalty and hard work). Physical education was an important consideration in selecting the *jujutsu* techniques which became a part of the *judo* canon. Kanō modified the *jujutsu* forms "so that they fulfill the conditions necessary for the harmonious development of the body." He eliminated or modified hazardous holds and techniques and introduced *randori*, or free-style wrestling, so that the students could practice hard, but would not be beset by the constant injuries that plagued the old *jujutsu* schools. "But Mr. Kano modified *Jujitsu* to such an extent as to make it more suitable for physical culture than for breaking the legs or twisting the arms of an enemy.

Kano felt that the aesthetic, healthful, and practical dimensions of the techniques were equally important for *judo* as a viable method of physical education. Dr. Kano made several technical modifications that were to have profound effects on later *judo*. Most prominent among these was the rejection of the traditional *menkyo* (license) system in favor of a belt system which he developed around 1867. Kano's practice of dividing the *judo* practitioners into various levels was re-

## Making Way (continued)

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flected by different colored belts. His belts were originally of only three colors white, brown, and black. But by the time judo, arrived in Europe, this had become the veritable rainbow that is the present system white, yellow, orange, green, blue, brown, black, and red and white belts. This system was quickly adopted by other schools of martial arts.

Despite Dr. Kanō's efforts at modernizing the art, he did *not* reject the old forms completely. Up to the present day, some schools still teach *atemi* (striking to specific parts of the body), *katsu* ("resuscitation" techniques for strangled victims), and *kata*. The last is a very formal set of prearranged techniques which stress proper form and mental composure. Kanō placed as much or more emphasis on these *kata* as he did on competition. It is clear that he never wished the sportive elements to dominate, but relegated them to a clearly secondary position. One should not forget that the revolution that was *judo* involved far more than just changes in the outward form and technique. As one of the most important leaders of the art asserted, "To master an actual trick [*waza*], mental culture should come first." Thus, a great deal of stress was placed on the mental education of the judo practitioner.

From the start, Dr. Kanō identified *judo* with a rigorous moral culture: The training in Judo has a special moral import in Japan because Judo together with other martial exercises, was practiced by our Samurai, who had a high code of honor, the spirit of which has been bequeathed to us through the teaching of the art. Here, we see clearly how Kanō "nudged" history to lend credence to his art and glorify the nation's martial past. Regardless, many people accepted this interpretation and sought to emulate what they thought of as the classical warrior ideal. The *bushi* of this time were supposed to be models of politeness, veracity, honor, and loyalty. Whether this had any significant basis in fact became immaterial. As Kano worked towards the idea of the "Way of softness," he Voiced many concepts that quickly took hold in the popular consciousness. Again, we can turn to Shindachi for a list of the virtues of jūjutsu

(judo): "respect and kindness, fidelity and sincerity, calm, prudence, temperance, perseverance, presence of mind, quick discernment, decision after deliberation, self-respect and self-control, greatness of mind, obedience to duty, abhorrence of extravagance, and increased powers of memorization, attention, concentration, imagination and speculation .... Kano and others believed that by practicing under a suitable master, one comes naturally to honor one's temperament and foster a noble and vigorous character." Thus, *judo* was seen as inherently moral and worthwhile.

Akira Kurosawa's 1942 movie, *Sugata Sanshiro*, chronicles the philosophic maturation of the title character under the tutelage of a *judo* teacher named Yano (Kano). As one of the characters states, "Yano taught him what life is." Increasingly Sanshiro realized that physical prowess is not enough. He had to understand the depths of the *philosophy* of the martial arts in order to be a true practitioner. Ironically, the lotus, a Buddhist symbol of peace, became the symbol of the heart of the warrior for him. His teacher told him unequivocally, "It is nature's rule by which we live and die Only through this truth can you die peacefully. This is the essence of any life Judo too." Herein we see that, at least in the early years of the movement, no one could be a student of just the techniques judo the philosophy was an essential and inseparable part of the whole concept.

Dr. Kanō's philosophical additions to the art are just as innovative and sweeping as his revision of the physical and moral techniques. He strongly espoused practice of the art as an all-encompassing way of life: The object of physical training in judo is not only to develop the body but to enable a man or woman to have a perfect control over mind or body. While the ideas that Kanō developed later came to be referred to by many as "an obfuscatory aura of feudalistic mumbo-jumbo," they remain an essential part of Kanō's original vision. Yet, it should not be thought that the philosophic concepts necessarily were present, as Kanō and others claim. throughout Japan's martial history. When Kanō Jigorō opened the Kōdōkan Cultural Center in January 1922, he announced the two great principles of

jūdō as "improvement through spiritual strength and the mutual benefit of oneself and others." These two points became the center of much of Kanō's later philosophical and social writing:

The actual facts prove that our society is lacking in something which, if brought to light and universally acknowledged, can remodel the present society and bring greater happiness and satisfaction to this world. This is the teaching of maximum efficiency and mutual welfare and benefit.

The first of these two concepts is *jita kyoei* ("self perfection and mutual welfare and benefit"). Kanō felt it involved a perfectly natural progression: from perfection of the self, to bettering individual human relations, to an improvement of society at large. Through the study of *judo*, Kanō claimed that one not only raises one's own moral and spiritual state, but one also. contributes to happiness of mankind and its peaceful development to add to the welfare of the world." Thus, Kano linked his conception of the dc5 to social as well as personal development.

The second principle, *seiryoku-zen'yo* ("maximum efficiency"), guided much of Kanō's innovative development of technique. Drawing on pragmatic utilitarianism, he saw the "flexibility" of ju (in *judo* and *ju-jutsu*) as making sense because it minimizes the expenditure of force by not meeting the force head on, but strategically directing it. Every element of every technique was clearly analyzed—"The true feature of Judo is to show justice through reason that no action is to be done without reason is most important. Thus, *judo*, like other modern sports reflects an interest in rationality and constant scientific improvement.

While the principle of *seiryoku-zen'yo* has many applications in the physical realm, Kanō said it could and must also be applied to situations in everyday life: Thus Judo is not merely a technique for competition, but became a "way" which incorporated method and the new purpose of education. It was at this time when Kanō most clearly stated his conception of the "way." One does not simply practice jūdō on the mat: the way of dealing with others and the values which the

practice inculcates must be carried over into every aspect of one's life. Otherwise, Kanō says, one is not doing judo. The warrior that is the judo practitioner seeks true spiritual perfection through his study and, according to Kanō, is one of a long and distinguished line who practiced the martial arts with the pure, unclouded mind of Zen.

Many modern *judo* players only pay lip service to Kano's ideas and some, such as Bruce Tegner, take issue with the whole concept of ethics, Tegner feels that *judo* should be divorced from the mysticism that has been built up around it: By encouraging players of moderate ability, by encouraging players who would not accept Judo as a Way of Life, by encouraging Judo play in the same way we encourage weekly bowling, tennis, and swimming. . . [this will] gain for Judo in America the popularity it deserves. While this may be a classically American reaction to the sometimes oppressively pervading aspect of the ethics, it echoes the sentiments of perhaps the majority of modern judo, practitioners. The ethics is, by and large, considered an unimportant part of modern, tournament-oriented judo. No matter how far the practice of the sport strays from Kanō's original notion, the faction represented by Tegner has become a necessary and essential aspect of the modern sport of *judo*.

The other assertion with which Tegner takes issue is that a *judo* player *naturally* become more morally and spiritually enriched by his or her study. The idea of automatic value inculcation can easily be shown empirically false. For if it were true, all *judo* players would be, "as Dr. Kanō says, "earnest, sincere, thoughtful, cautious, deliberate in all dealings, [would have] a high degree of mental composure [and would have developed] to a high degree the exercise of the power of imagination, of reasoning, and of judgment applied at all times to the activities of daily life."

Clearly this has never been the case for the population of *judo* practitioners. Even from the start of the *judo* movement, there was a fairly large gap between theory and practice for many studying the art. As E. J. Harrison cautions, " ... we may still arrogate to ourselves freedom to doubt whether the typical heavyweight Japanese or Western Jūdō champion of today could pass an examination in the alleged

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## Making Way (continued)

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philosophy of the art." Herein, we can witness the slow death of the inner spirituality of *judo* (in mainstream society) under the crushing progress of that unstoppable force called modernization. It is ironic that *judo*, a creation meant to represent modernized, forward-thinking ideas of physical and mental culture, is constantly criticized as being too antiquated and bound up in tradition. Almost as soon as Kano founded the art, there were people, Westerners and Easterners alike, who wanted to pare off all of the "philosophical malarkey" so that nothing but pure sport would remain. These people seem to have seen nothing sacred about the original conception of the founder:

A sport that resists change dies. Judoka [*judo* players] cannot be content to rest on their traditions and dogmas what is now needed is not an approach to Judo as a stylized form of Japanese wrestling nor as unarmed combat nor as a twentieth century alternative to the 'noble art of self defense' , ,

The players of the sport of *judo* as it is now practiced have little time to devote to perfection of character, for everyone now needs to spend all his/her time practicing for the stiffer tournament competition on all levels. In the early years of *judo*'s interaction with the West, the foreign practitioners tended to be attracted to the art for its philosophical undertones, such as the concept of the Zen-influenced *do*. This has given way to a new generation of practitioners far less concerned with any sort of mental education, and almost exclusively focused on competition, especially at the international level. It is significant that the British, who introduced the expanded system of colored belts in 1927, were having

tournament matches by 1929. The first international competition took place in Frankfurt am Main in 1932, while the Japanese-sponsored, first World Championships came only in 1956. As Draeger asserts, these two approaches are basically antithetical to each other: "It is patent that no sport can ever be a true classical *do* form; no classical *do* can ever house a sport entity. Thus we can perceive a clear break, as significant as the division between *judo* and *jitjutsu* the traditional *judo* has given way to a new form of modern sport *judo* that sees competition as an end in itself. For the majority of today's *judo* players, then, "... there is little indication that *Judo* is experienced as sacred or that any interest in Zen Buddhism evolves from it. Sports science is a far more important "religion" than Zen for this new brand of athlete. Thus, for many *judo* practitioners, we can bid a summary farewell to all of Kano's high-minded concepts of crafting morally and spiritually strong men and women.

Some very interesting parallels can be drawn between Pierre de Coubertin's Olympics and Kanō Jigorō's *judo*. Basically contemporaneous, both movements were based in nineteenth-century liberalism. As Shige-yoshi Matsumae tells us, "Judo is a representative Japanese sport which has an international character. Forming a culture in itself, *Judo* is contributing enormously to friendship and peace among the nations of the world today. *Judo* is helping to promote the happiness and prosperity of all mankind. This is *Judo*'s mission and there can be no loftier goal." Thus, we can see that *jūdo* and the Olympics shared goals of world peace and internationalism. Moreover, both movements harken back to a classical past (ancient Greece or early *bushī* culture), while espousing a doctrine of constant rational improvement (cf *Cidus, Altius, Fortius* ,

*seiryoku zen 'yo*).

There are further parallels between *judo* and various other Olympic sports. Norbert Elias sees the violent nature of ancient Olympic sport as being closely related to the "fighting ethos of a warrior aristocracy." Likewise, Kano modified his techniques to be safer and more effective while maintaining this ethos. The modernization of *judo* is also analogous to the process by which pankration (which used strangle holds, joint techniques, trips, and strikes) was turned into.

Kano strongly supported the Olympic movement from its inception. In 1912, he took two athletes to the Stockholm Olympics, thus bringing Japan into the Olympics for the first time. He made eight subsequent trips to the Olympic Games. Kano was the first Japanese member of the IOC, and he held his post for nearly 30 years. He "always likened the ideals of *Judo* to those of the Olympic Games." Thus, his promotion of Coubertin's mission was simply an outgrowth of his own personal mission of world education, peace, and morality. As the Japanese were very eager to "catch up" in all aspects of the modern world, the Olympics were seen as an optimal outlet for them—the wins of the Japanese swimmers in 1932 showed clearly that the nation was rather successful in this aim. However, during the very same Olympiad in Los Angeles, Kanō said the following while speaking at the University of Southern California:

What I teach is not technique (*jūjutsu*) but a "way" (*Judo*) . . . The principle of a "way" is that it is applicable to other aspects of a person's life the true meaning of *Judo* is the study and practice of mind and body. It is, at the same time, the model for daily life and work. At least while Kano was alive, *Judo* still held fast to these ideas. Ironically, it was with the realization of his goal of making *judo* an Olympic sport that many of his initial philosophic formula-

tions of the art fell by the wayside. On October 20, 1964, *judo* made its debut at the games of the eighteenth Olympiad in Tokyo. Choosing *judo*, over other nations' forms of native wrestling, the IOC gave the sport a golden opportunity to make its international spread complete. Already the sport was clearly not just confined to Japan. The Dutchman Anton Geesink shocked the *judo* world by taking a gold medal in the open category at this first Olympic meeting. Geesink continued the tradition of a strong *judo* presence in the Olympic movement when he became an IOC member in 1987. Other *judo*, medals at those games were taken by the USSR, West Germany, South Korea, Austria, and the United States. Indubitably, continuing Olympic exposure has given a profound boost to interest in sport *judo* (and other combat sports) in all parts of the world.

**Making Way—War, Philosophy and Sport in Japanese *Judo***  
Continues in the next issue.

*The principle of the Way is that it is applicable to other aspects of a person's life..*