

AMERICAN JUDO ORGANIZATIONS SIGN HISTORIC ALLIANCE AGREEMENT

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by Gary Goltz for
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Judo in the United States was primarily run by the US Judo Federation (USJF) until 1968 when the Arm Forces Judo Association (AFJA) which was the military division of the USJF broke off and became the USJA. For 50 years these organizations have rivaled each other. In 1978 with the enactment of Stevens Sports Act, USA Judo was created as its National Governing Body under the USOC to handle the selection and management of the international team.

These 3 organizations on March 15th entered into the first ever American Judo Alliance (AJA) Agreement to work collaboratively on developing judo in the United States. This followed months of tough negotiations amongst the current leaders.

In other western countries such as France, judo has half million registered participants vs. a mere 30,000 here. The AJA hopes this new era of cooperation stimulates the growth of American Judo. The success of Brazilian JiuJitsu serves as prime example of what could be done in our country if we put our differences aside and focused our combined resources on growing judo.

Over the next few months several tasks forces on coaching and development from the top talent of the USJF, USJA, and USA Judo will be working on developing strategies and an implementation time table.



Today, history was made with the signing of the first-ever American Judo Alliance Agreement between the United States Judo Association (USJA), United States Judo Federation (USJF) and United States Judo, Inc. (USA Judo). This new agreement paves the way for the three organizations to work together with the focus of growing the sport of judo in the United States.

In addition to updating past agreements that have been in place over the years, the American Judo Alliance Agreement focuses on the following initiatives:

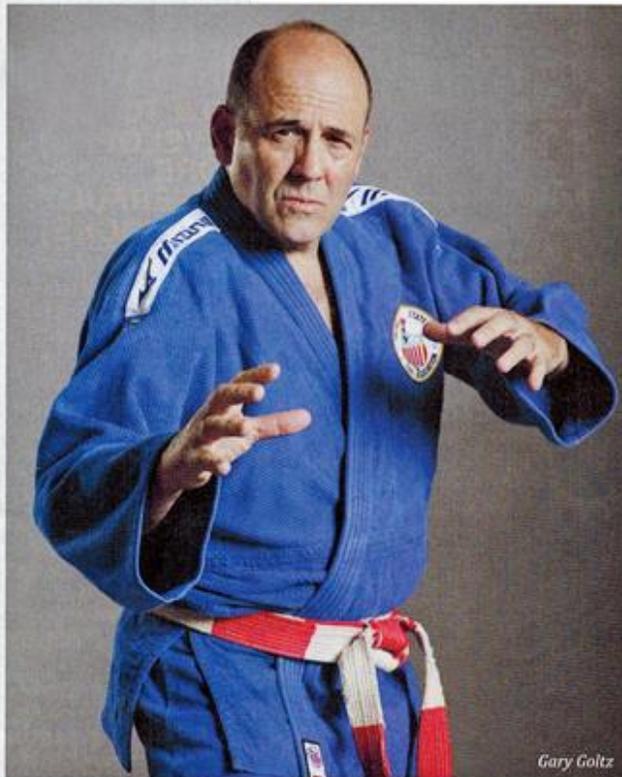
- Revision of the reciprocal participation agreement so that members of USJA, USJF and USA Judo can continue participating in each other's local and regional events.
- The agreement of USA Judo to award the USJA/USJF Jr. Grassroots Judo Summer Nationals a national point- sanction increase for 2018 and beyond awarding 7 points for first place, 5 for second and 3 for third. These points will increase with a 3/4 proration if/when USA Judo increases points for its National Events.

- Added safeguards and requirements for aligned insurance coverages to protect members and participants will be mandated and reviewed annually.
- Reciprocal recognition of coach certifications provided insurance, background screens and Safe Sport trainings have been completed so that without regard to any particular membership affiliation, coaches from the three federations will be permitted to coach at all events sanctioned by any of the three organizations.
- The formation of an integrated coaching certification task force with representatives from all three organizations will create a proposal for a comprehensive, integrated coaching certification program.
- The creation of a task force consisting of six coaches or teachers skilled in instruction at all age and skill levels to create a skeleton plan for an “American Judo Development Model” designed to provide improved processes for the advancement and development of athletes.



American Judo Alliance Leaders (L to R): Mark Hill, USA Judo President; Neil Simon, USJF Executive Committee; Keith Bryant, USA Judo CEO; John Paccione, USJA President; Gary Goltz, President, Nanka Judo Yudanshakai; Kevin Asano, USJF President; Robert Fukuda, USJF Executive Director

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Gary Goltz

For the Greater Good

JUDO ORGANIZATIONS CREATE NEW MEMBERSHIP PROGRAM

▲ In an unprecedented effort to be inclusive, the leaders of the U.S. Judo Association, the U.S. Judo Federation and USA Judo have devised a new program aimed at bringing together all *judoka* in the country for the betterment of the judo community and the sport.

"The All-American Membership program is a significant milestone as it symbolizes a commitment by the three major organizations to become goal congruent and true partners for the future growth of judo in the United States," said Gary Goltz, president and CEO of the USJA.

"This will lead to even greater success for our athletes," added Kevin Asano, USJF president and 1988 Olympic silver medalist.

It took several months of brainstorming for the heads of the big-three organizations to hammer out the details of the program. "As we head into Rio 2016, we will be asking much of our athletes and coaches," said Lance Nading, president of USA Judo. "We all agreed that we needed to go further in our cooperation with the USJF and the USJA, and all three boards of directors are to be commended for continuing to think out of the box for the good of judo in our nation."

The specifics of the All-American Membership program are as follows:

A *judoka* will decide which of the three organizations he or she will join, and that will be the source of the martial artist's insurance coverage. He or she can then register as an All-American member with the other organizations by following the specified procedures. An All-American Membership card will then be issued for use at events run by USA Judo, the USJA and the USJF.

"The success of this new membership program lies in the opportunity it presents to have the true strength of the sport reflected in the number of members it can show to the media and to potential sponsors," said Jose Humberto Rodriguez, CEO of USA Judo. "This program also demonstrates to all the members that our three organizations, with all their strengths and weaknesses, can and will work together to become a world power in the sport."

BLACK BELT TIMES

CAN'T WE ALL JUST GET ALONG?

3 Judo Orgs Vow Cooperation

▶ Gary Goltz, president of the U.S. Judo Association; Neil Simon, president of the U.S. Judo Federation; and Lance Nading, president of USA Judo, have released a formal positioning statement calling for increased cooperation to foster the growth of judo in the United States. Among other things, the statement, which has been approved by executives of the organizations, promises to “emphasize and develop a ‘menu’ (i.e., *kata*, self-defense, physical fitness, recreational judo) of judo participation opportunities and activities in addition to competitive judo” and “to culturally transition from a ‘survival of the fittest’ competitive judo mentality to one that embraces personal development, goal fulfillment and inclusion.”

“This agreement is a large step in the right direction with many more to come,” Goltz said. “We plan to develop a mutual strategy in order to leverage the combined strengths of our organizations. We look forward to our upcoming meeting of the top executives of USA Judo, the USJF and us to work out details of joint membership, rank and coach reciprocity with a commitment toward the spirit of cooperation.”

