



Judo offers life lessons

By Suzanne Sproul
Staff Writer

Judo isn't just athletic. It's also an attitude about how to lead a life.

Gary Goltz is a firm believer in this and instills it in his students. He is the chief operating officer of the Colorado Springs-based United States Judo Association and the head instructor of the Goltz Judo Club of Claremont. The organizations will host the USJA and USJF 2008 Winter Nationals on Dec. 6 and 7 at Damien High School in La Verne. More than 600 are expected including past Olympians.

Judo matches involve throws, holdings and submission techniques. Several age groups will compete, and

Ronda Rousey will present a clinic on Dec. 6. Rousey is the bronze medalist in women's judo at the Beijing Olympics.

Activities will begin daily at 9:30 p.m. and continue through 5 p.m.

Goltz has taught judo locally for 20 years through The City of Claremont in the Alexander Hughes Center.

"My day job is in the health-care industry. I'm a sales consultant, but my passion is judo. I've been involved with it since I was 11 years old," he said. "People might get karate and judo mixed up. Judo is the oné grab, throw to the ground sport, and it's very popular. It's been a part of the Olympics since 1964."

But the philosophy behind

judo goes beyond competition. That's a tenet that has stayed with him all his life.

"Judo is more than a fighting art. It's about how to lead your life. It teaches you to make the best use of your power and to work cooperatively and to go forth with others. And it's about giving back," he said.

So along with throws and takedowns, Goltz teaches about helping others, character and integrity. He said lessons learned in judo are much the same as you learn in life — if you get knocked down, get up and push forward.

The public is invited to the upcoming local tournament. "We hope people come out and see what judo is all about," Goltz said.