



3rd SCKF Open Memorial Kendo Tournament
Sunday, April 6th, 2025
West High School, Torrance, California

Program:

Master of Ceremony: Brandon Harada, 1st Vice President, SCKF

National Anthem

Welcome Address: Kevin Abe - President, SCKF

Introduction of Special Guest: Brandon Harada, 1st Vice President

Mr. George Nakano - SCKF Director Emeritus

Mr. Gary & Mrs. Linda Yamauchi - Former City Councilman & City of Alhambra

Mayor

Ms. Nina Suzuki - Kubota Mortuary President

Mr. Heizaburo & Mrs. Jeanie Okawa - Torao Mori Sensei Family

Mr. Chris Mori & Sue Nuno - Torao Mori Sensei Family

Return of Perpetual Trophies

Pledge of the Competitors: Kai Romero / Costa Mesa Dojo

Rules and Regulations: Jean Kodama Sensei, 7 Dan / Norwalk Kendo Dojo

Kata Demonstration: Albert Kang, 5 Dan, Uchidachi / Chuo Kendo Dojo

Charles Inada, 4 Dan, Shidachi / Chuo Kendo Dojo

Tournament Rules & Regulations:

Tournament will follow SCKF Tournament Rules and Regulations Version 3.1, 01/2009

AJKF Covid Tsubazeriai Rules will be enforced.

Jodan, Nito, Tsuki will not be allowed in all kyu divisions.

Time Limits:

All Kyu Divisions:

Placement Round: 2 minutes, 1 minute extension. Hantei

Tournament Round: 3 minutes, 2 minutes extension. Hantei (except Semifinals and final).

All Dan Divisions:

Placement Round: 3 minutes, 1 minute extension, Hantei

Tournament Round: 4 Minutes, 2 minute extension, Hantei (except Semifinals and final)

Murakami Cup: 3 minutes and unlimited extension

Yamaguchi Cup: 4 minutes and unlimited extension

Divisions:

0 - 6 Kyu, 5 - 4 Kyu, 3 - 1 Kyu, Girl's Kyu (17 Years & Under), Adult Kyu

Women's Dan, 1 Dan - 3 Dan, 4 Dan & Up, Seniors



Ichiro Murakami
December 23, 1929 - January 14, 2015

*** Murakami Cup**

Donated By Industry Sheriff's Kendo Dojo

Playoff between winners of 0-6 Kyu, 5-4 Kyu, 3-1 Kyu, and Girls Kyu divisions

Time limit: 3 minutes, unlimited extension



Takeshi Yamaguchi
April 15, 1938 - October 5, 2012

*** Yamaguchi Cup**

Donated by Costa Mesa Kendo Dojo, Covina Kendo Dojo, and Norwalk Kendo Dojo

Playoff between winners of women's dan, senior dan, 1-3 dan, and 4 dan & up divisions

Time limit: 4 minutes, unlimited extension

In Memoriam:

Yung Chun Huang (Koh): September 18, 1925 - April 24, 2021

Masakazu Sameshima: November 1, 1926 - April 20, 2024

Yoshimichi Takeda: April 29, 1931 - March 4, 2021

Morihei Henmi: January 30, 1934 - June 3, 2024

Makoto Yamaguchi: November 20, 1940 - September 7, 2024

Pioneers of Kendo in Southern California, Pre-World War II

In 1854, American Commodore Matthew Perry opened Japan, ending its isolation policy of nearly 250 years. Then, in 1868, the Meiji Restoration ended the Shogunate and restored Imperial rule. The subsequent period of revolutionary changes in the country's political and social structure, from a feudal society to a modern, industrialized country, produced upheavals in many areas. In the 1880s, the Japanese government finally eased emigration, allowing people to seek better opportunities overseas. Many came to the United States from agricultural areas south of Tokyo, such as Wakayama, Hiroshima, Fukuoka, Kumamoto, and Kagoshima. As the number of Japanese immigrants increased, fears of a “yellow peril” led to the 1908 “Gentleman's Agreement” between Japan and the United States, which prohibited immigration by laborers, but allowed immigration by wives, children, and parents, and finally to the Federal Immigration Exclusion Act of 1924, which effectively banned Japanese from immigrating to the United States, until the act was finally revised by the Immigration and Nationality Act of 1952.

The windows of immigration between 1885 and 1924 and after 1952 produced unusually well-defined generational groups within the Japanese-American community. The Issei, the first generation to immigrate to America, arrived prior to 1924. The Nisei, their American born children, were by and large part of the group Tom Brokaw called the “Greatest Generation,” who grew up during the Great Depression in the 1930s and came of age during World War II. The Sansei were the children of Nisei parents.

The first written record of kendo in Southern California was in Los Angeles in 1914, when the sein-en-kai (senior youth club, 15 to 20 year olds) started kendo under Omura Isshin sensei. From 1916 to 1923, Sasamori Junzo sensei (who would later go on to co-write the seminal book “This is Kendo”) trained the seinen, including Issei Kubota Yutaka sensei, then in his teens.

The seinen-kai on Terminal Island (East San Pedro) also produced a kendo club. The community there consisted of about 3000 people, who built a large hall for meetings and recreation. After a couple of earlier attempts, kendo was established around 1926 by Fujii Toroku sensei. Nisei Eto Taro sensei began kendo there in 1929 at the age of 10.

By the 1930s, there were two well organized kendo groups in California.

In 1933, Takano Sasaburo sensei arrived in Los Angeles with members of the Waseda University kendo club. With Takano sensei's assistance, the local kenshi requested membership into the Dai Nippon Butokukai in Japan, and in 1935 the Dai Butokukai Hokubei Nanka Shibu was formed. Kubota sensei belonged to this group, which had approximately 1000 members and more than 30 dojos, including Chuo Gakuen, Zen Shuji, Maryknoll, Sawtelle, Lomita, San Diego, Coachella, and El Centro.

In 1929, Nakamura Tokichi sensei arrived at Terminal Island. Working with Fujii sensei, within a year the dojo membership grew from 25 to 100. Nakamura sensei then went on to establish kendo dojos in Central and Northern California, as well as in Oregon and Washington. By 1934, Hokubei Butoku-kai was formed, with Nanka Renmei (consisting of dojos in Terminal Island, Long Beach, Dominguez Hills, and Norwalk) as its first member. According to its own publication, the Hokubei Kendo Taikan (1939), Hokubei Butoku-kai had 10,000 kenshi, 6 regional renmei, and over 60 dojo along the West Coast. It conducted annual tournaments at different locations, ran summer and winter training camps, and held promotional examinations. Nakamura sensei also provided special training to develop future instructors. In 1931, Nisei Hara Akio sensei became uchideshi to Nakamura sensei, traveling with him to Japan, Manchuria, and Korea, as well as performing leadership roles in various renmei along the West Coast.

In 1937, Mori Torao (Noma Torao) sensei came to Terminal Island. Under Mori sensei's teaching and exceptional skill, kendo continued to grow and improve. He visited all 60 dojo in Hokubei Butoku-kai each year before returning to Japan in 1940.

In 1941, the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor changed everything. The coming of World War II devastated the Japanese-American population in general, and the kendo community in particular. But, thanks to the legacy created by the Issei, Nisei, and professional kendo instructors from Japan, the road to reviving kendo was paved.



南加少年剣道大会 (中央学園剣道部) 1932年5月1日
Southern Calif. youth Kendo tournament sponsored by Chuo Gakuen Kendo Club, May 1, 1932



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