

Newsletter from Prefectural Headquarters of Gifu District

Nonprofit organization approved by Japanese government
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Mr. Tetsuhiko Asai, Chief Instructor, Succumbs to Illness



Mr. Asai, chief instructor of Japan Karate Shoto Federation (NPO corporation), died at the age of 71 on 2:50 p.m. of August 15 this year. He was said to be the last leading figure of karate world as many followers were educated by this worldly charisma. He continued his training even after his fall to illness and attended the national meet on July 29 as an observer. His funeral was held at Gokokuji Temple in Tokyo on the rainy day of September 1 with an attendance of many people from politics, business, and entertainment world. There was also an attendance from karate circles of Europe, Asia, and other parts of the world including Gifu Headquarters. All mourned his death by saying the last farewell and prayed his soul will rest in peace. We again want to express our sincere sorriiness and sadness for his departure.

News 1 for 2006 First Half

7th Karate Championship of Tokai and Kitashin-etsu Area

We passed through Tsuruga Interchange at 8 a.m. on June 25, 2006. As we watched the cars running aside, we saw young boys in white karate clothes sitting alert in the seat. Shouts broke among us like "I know he is from Shizuoka. I challenged him once!" or "I remember that boy!" As we neared the Public Gymnasium of Tsuruga, shouts got higher. We often visit the Japan-Sea-faced Fukui for leisure as the inhabitants of sea-free prefecture, but we felt some difference arising from the bodies of players on that particular day. We felt "a mass of spirit" in them. The site opened at 8:00 a.m. The masses of spirit entered it quietly without hitting one another.

The championship began. Not only the performance under high tension but also the management by the Fukui Headquarters was really admirable. We guess Mr. Nishio, director, and his staffs prepared it and discussed for it hundred times in advance. We felt their enthusiasm of cooperation for the players, referees, and spectators. They offered the best environment of fight to the players and referees and we evaluated it highly.

The performance by the participants from Gifu was excellent but many

teachers agreed to that the standard of Tokai and Kitashin-etsu area elevated substantially. Emotion is gained by attending the games. Players win, lose, stimulate, and respect each other. But it is not only the players that are stimulated but also referees who must stand with fairness but not express their emotion on face and in voice. We had spent many hours with the children and cherished them warmly as if they were our own children. We shed tears with them and pledged victory for the next chance. The leaders were influenced deeply by the matches as well as the players. The heated games came to an end with shouts of joy and delight.



The players who left the Gym promised to see one another again at the national meet in the end of July and went home. Since the game finished earlier than schedule, we paid a visit to "the fish market" in Tsuruga city on our way back. We there noticed the same players enjoying shopping and eating as if another match would begin shortly. We wondered where the fighting spirit had gone and how innocent the smiling children were. Instead of children the parents began a hot fight on sashimi discount. Their fight may have overwhelmed the children's and both the parents and the fishermen got excited. Attending the games gives us a number of opportunities such as visiting a lot of interesting places, meeting various kinds of people, and eating many sorts of delicious foods. This certainly is one of the pleasures that Karate presents us.



Introduction to New Book

Here is the second edition of guidebook by Instructor Kagawa of Shoto Federation. This is on sale with a 100-minutes DVD presenting a number of exhibition plays by national top players. This is well written with a wider view on 4 major sects just as the first edition has been widely accepted and become a Bible for the beginners. This will give you a secret of the basic performance of Karate and level-up. This book provides full explanations about the standard and advanced points such as stand, thrust, kick, receive, basic move, kumite, and kata by visual and photographic methods. This edition is recommendable as a must to be carried all the time.

Editor: Masao Kagawa, B5 Size, 160 pages, Publisher: Nagaoka Book-store, Price: ¥1,575 including 5% consumption tax

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7th Championship of All Japan Karatedo

Brave men marched with a pounding sound like ground rumbles. They

were confident and stern though they were small and short. They waited for this special day. They were neither frightened nor bewildered. They were looking straight on the 29th and 30th days of July in 2007. Three big



games started with 7th Championship of Japan Karatedo by NPO Corporation Japan Karate Shoto Federation, National Karate Championship for Wheelchair Users, and Championship of Karate Students from Elementary, Junior High, and Senior High Schools. Approximately 1,000 players from kids to grownups who survived the local games gathered and displayed their results of daily practices.

Spectators got excited as the games went on. They were shuffled in cheers, delights, tears, and prayers for the victory of their children. Some kids were trying to play beyond their ability in reply to the expectations. But those who were there were the players selected from entire Japan and with full confidence. It was often hard to win with ability only but necessary to know this was the assembly of all Japan and all districts.

Highest Techniques and Drives Charm Spectators

Each player looks extraordinarily strong, fascinatingly skilled, incredibly fast, smashingly heavy, and piercingly sharp. It IS the highest technique. I am standing where the champion will be born. I begin to shake as the games go by. Am I scared? Am I nervous? I ask myself. I am in-between, "I must win" and "I cannot win"... Yes, many dramas are played to reach the goal.



The players met the partners they fought at the Championship of Tokai Kitashin-etsu in June. They were wordless at first with a few greetings only, yet as the games went on, they moved to other teams to cheer them regardless of localities. Shizuoka players cheered Gifu players, and Aichi children were next to Nagano children. Both players and referees of Gifu and Fukui shook hands after the final game was over. The circles of karate performers get larger at each occasion. Elementary school kids and junior high students may join karate activity in different prefectures in future by way of mutual visiting programs. Karatedo is a permanent activity as to offer assistance at times and to be offered with support at times, and to walk

together side by side. National assembly is the best chance to know the extent of Japanese islands and a significant moment once a year to devote hot selves to reach the identical goal together with many friends on the same karate road.

Following the championship of boys, that for the grownups and wheelchair users were held. The player who drew the eyes and sighs of audience was Shinji Nagaki (trainee at main headquarters), the world champion of WKF and of All Japan Karate Championship (below left photo). Many boy players waited to watch him fight. He betrayed no one for their expectations with finely planned tactics and beautiful techniques, and accomplished the top of both kumite and waza.

He dodged every attack of the opponents during the matches but couldn't do so with the boys who surrounded him for his autograph after the fight. His deed was worthy enough to make the boys of Shoto Federation ambitious for their future.

As for the championship of wheelchair users, Naoko Onishi, a representative of Gifu, won the invincible fourth victory. She performed "Roshu" established by Mr. Asai, chief instructor, and received the honor of first prize. Chukyo Gakuin University won the long-cherished victory of group kumite by defeating the powerhouse of Teikyo University (down right photo).



Team of Chukyo Gakuin
Instructor Sonohara (down center)
Player Onishi (right end)

We can say the summit was still high. The wall of all Japan was very thick. But the experience of standing on a first-class stage gave each player big confidence and a future guideline for karatedo. "Finish is a start." Let's forget about the lost games or the honor of prizes because the time has already begun for the national meet in 2007. * Details of games and matches are described in the October issue of "Monthly Karatedo".

Apologies We are sorry for the delay in publishing some of the "Newsletter from Gifu Headquarters" due to issues in the editing office. We are determined to publish the newsletters with wider view and more detailed outlook for the benefit of our important readers. We are always ready to receive reports and comments about your surroundings and it is our pleasure you will continue reading our newsletters. Thank you.