

## USJA COACHING GUIDE

This guide has been compiled to give candidates an overview of the USJA Coaching Program. It has not been compiled to dispel any particular coach's method, rather it is hoped that this will assist every coach in becoming more effective. In many instances American coaches have taken the model we have received—the Japanese one—and tried to implement it in this country. It has been tried for over six decades and it has not worked to the level we think it should. It is not that the “model” is not productive, for it certainly is, for the Japanese. The problem is that we have not changed areas that do not fit within the confines of our society/culture. Stubbornly, people hold onto the hope that if they just go through the motions we will develop the same level of judo expertise that the Japanese have...it will not/has not happened.

This assertion is not made to deride the Japanese, it is to admit that their system just does not fit our mold. We do not have a sophisticated middle school, high school and university system. We may have 40,000 people doing judo in this country, the Japanese have 200,000 registered people doing judo. (It is unclear if this number includes everyone, or just members of the AJJF.) Their formula just does not work effectively in this country.

On the positive side as a country, we have some of the most sophisticated thinkers in education and physical training. For whatever reason we judo people ignore our own strengths and continue to insist the Japanese model will work for us...again it has not and it will not! WE ARE NOT JAPANESE! None of us are stating that the Japanese are wrong, it is simply that their approach does not work for us. Coupled with this people endlessly tell us what Jigoro Kano said as if they knew him personally. They tell us what he thought, what he meant, what his exhilarations were, what they “know” he believes we should do; it goes on forever. The fact is that Kano Shihan died in 1938. He was a great educator. He codified jujitsu skills to keep them alive to move them into what was then the modern era. Kano was heavily influenced by the USA educator Dewey. He was a renaissance man, who matured toward the end of the Meiji era. He saw Japan go from a struggling late 19<sup>th</sup> century nation to a world naval power—after defeating the Russian Navy, 1905. It was a tumultuous time, Kano did well to develop judo as he did. He was first and foremost an educator. He attempted to make “his judo” an activity that could be learned by many and benefit all. But, his base was his society. There is nothing wrong with his plan. It is when we ignore the influence of his times we start to get lost. Possibly we should move judo into our society/culture so that it may be learned by many and benefit all.

All too often instructors simply repeat the very same thing(s) that they were told. Though this may not in and of itself be a weakness, it becomes a detriment when there is little or no attention to overall skill acquisition. As educators our primary goal is to provide our charges an environment in which they can acquire functional skills. These skills also need to be learned in an enjoyable fashion. People usually do not remain in an activity that they do not like.

For those who are not sport oriented it is hoped that they will find value in this information as well. Coaching is as much about teaching as it is about tactics. If our charges are not grounded in sound skills, it makes little difference where the action takes place. The result will be the same, defeat. Teaching people skills that are not effective is just as bad in sport, as it is in self-defense. Solid teaching skills will benefit all instructors no matter what their focus.

The academic portion of the program will ultimately be accessible on line. You can take the necessary tests, reference articles on judo, physical training, etc., all on-line. It is hoped that many of you will continue your coach education by availing yourselves of these resources. A good coach never stops learning. There are many subjects that you need to investigate. Everything from proper nutrition, fitness evaluation and improvement, injury prevention, legal and medical concerns, et al., are as important as specific judo knowledge. Even investigating sources devoid of judo specifics may be of great help.

## DEVELOPING A PLAN OF ATTACK

In the past many have simply used the Go Kyo as their guide, there is nothing intrinsically wrong with this approach. However, for many this has become the bible, deviation can result in being summarily punished by the judo gods. Others have abandoned the go kyo altogether, saying it is antiquated, irrelevant, simplistic, etc. Neither of these two extremes is true. As with most "absolutes," there are inherent weaknesses in both. If we conclude that these two poles are not quite right where should one start? One point would be to determine what your potential students wish from judo. Secondly, establish the feasibility of your ability to provide that product/service. Your own expectations may not be in line with what your students are expecting.

Wherever possible there should be a division of classes. It is realized that many of us cannot do this. We do not have the time, space and/or staff to accomplish this. In many instances we are only capable of roughly dividing participants by age. Dividing the class into under 12 and 13+ is a common separation. The observant coach will realize that these groups learn differently, within these groupings there are additional differences in learning. Some people inherently reach this conclusion; others of us have to have it explained to us. Either way you should be aware of the differences and how they will affect teaching. You need not become an educational scholar, but it behooves one to be cognizant of these differences. Refusing to acknowledge the requirements for each group will be a disservice to your students.

In many dojo one single class is all that can be accommodated. This is not a good solution, but it is a fact of life. In these cases you should group people by age, not rank. Learning is dictated by one's age, not by rank. When possible use different instructors for the different groups. Please, remember this is about teaching, not about the tremendous skill of a 6 or even a 12 year old. Our goal is to improve your teaching ability. The end skill may be similar in all groups, but the manner in which you get to those skills will be vastly different. As a coach you must constantly be aware of what your charges are capable of understanding. There will always be the exception, but you should not predicate your entire coaching program on one early maturing child or a later bloomer.

In a class made up of teens and adults similar skills may be taught, but the presentation will be noticeably different. Though there may be more verbally instruction, you still adhere to the 15% to 85% idea. (15% talking and 85% doing)

In both groups we are trying to (1) ensure that people know judo as an exciting physical activity, (2) teach skills that they can build upon and (3) enjoy themselves. If you can accomplish these things you are well on your way to employing a plan of attack. For many of us our first concern is what are we going to teach?

People have discussed at length what the first throws should or should not be. To this day a good percentage believe we should use o goshi as a first throw. Others deride this and say ippon seoi should be first, or was it koshi guruma. The point is that there are as many “appropriate first throws” as there are coaches. No throw taught in a beginner’s introduction to judo is going to be the “end product.” Observation of many different approaches has led some to believe that the actual throw is not as important as how it is used as a bridge to other skills. This is a simple concept, but in many instances sadly forgotten. Let us take one example: Koshi guruma is an easy throw for children to do. They have both feet on the mat; the arm around the neck allows shoulder girdle motion, to say nothing of allowing the hips to pass in front of the opponent. Many use this as an introduction; the problems arise when this is the only throwing skill the child attempts. Though successful at first, it is the kind of skill that is easily defended against, a simple duck under stops it cold. The coach allows the child to continually do this throw in randori and tournaments. If the child does not learn other skills, they are stuck. Koshi guruma has now become a dead end skill, it must be unlearned for the child to progress.

On the other hand a thinking coach may well take the same throwing skill, link it to o soto, ko uchi, even harai goshi and we have a skill that is now being used as a bridge. Allowing the students to broaden their skill base and eventually develop their own judo personality. Adding skills is far easier than having to unlearn a skill...some say that this may be impossible to do. Once you have become hard wired to a particular skill it will never really be extinguished. If the skill is weak or dead end, the solution is even more difficult.

Specific lessons plans and goals are important. This can be a daunting task. Some will say that it is not needed they...”have been doing it this way for 25 years”... Unfortunately, many of these instructors have not been doing much for those 25 years. This is a harsh criticism, but it needs to be said. Very few who consistently develop skilled students do not have a plan. In most instances those who have an innate capability, spent years in intense training and they are now able to transmit this information to their charges. They are the exception; most cannot do this and must learn it! Lesson plans can be prepared for individual classes, monthly, quarterly, etc. The over all goal is to plan which direction you are heading in. Additionally, reflection on your past classes is an important element.

In the addendum there are a series of lesson plan examples. These are actual plans. As with any plan there are strengths and weaknesses. The point is that they all have a broad purpose...skill acquisition!

### *PLAN IN HAND...OFF TO TEACH*

You have your lesson plans in hand and it is off to the dojo to implement scintillating skill acquisition. Possibly there are a few more things we might point out. A well thought out presentation is one of the most important preparations. This one single presentation should not be kept in isolation, like judo skills it is meant to be a part of a larger whole. This is where long range planning needs to be put into the picture. This is not about a plan to get an 8 year old to the Olympic Games, it is about gong from two legged throws, to directional changes, to transitions, to one legged throws, to sacrifice throws, to multiple throw possibilities (combinations)...if all this and maybe another 100+ elements are mastered international success may be possible. It is a very long road; you are expected to map it out for your athletes.

One way to begin thinking toward future improvement is to arrange your sessions as building blocks. For many years people have mouthed this kind of advice, unfortunately in many instances it is never implemented in a functional manner. Here is one example:

*Students are taught to do o soto gari and then they are taught to do ippon seoi nage. They become relatively successful with these two throws in randori. They enter a tournament they do one or the other. They have a good day, winning 2 and losing 2. Nothing wrong so far. Back in the dojo the coach asks them why did not use the two throws in combination(s)?*

The answer is simple they were never *prepared to use these throws in combination with anything!* There are several ways to introduce this, but the process begins with the coach introducing the principle and the students learning it. This does not mean that you lecture your charges on the possibilities (opportunities). You structure your sessions so that the athlete is exposed to these possibilities in a dynamic fashion. The execution of this kind of skill base becomes instinctive. In other words as your athletes initiate an attack, they respond to the reaction of their opponent. If the first throw is successful further continuation is unnecessary. However, if a different situation presents itself the athlete needs to have been trained to take advantage of it immediately. This kind of response is not developed through verbalization, it must be done through physical training. Intellectualizing a physical activity is fine, however, it must be done in the physical sense. Intensity, ferocity, speed, et al, are variables, but judo must be done at a physical level, nothing else is going to develop skilled participants.

In short you must plan for the future in a logical manner, it should appear random and relaxed, but it can be neither! Your students may in fact be enjoying themselves greatly, never realizing the depth of what they are actually learning. This is a sign of a good teacher.

## THE ASSISTANT COACH

The entrance level for many coaches will be while they are assisting a senior coach. At this level they are actively involved in the instruction of other judoka who may only be slightly below their level (skill wise). For the specific requirements, please refer to the page at the end of this section.

During this phase the coach will essentially be following the plans that the head coach is implementing. They should learn to build upon what is being taught, not try to reinterpret what is being said/taught. At this stage, the basics of laying a foundation are more important than being “in charge.” In some instances a person may already be a certified coach in another sport or even a public school certified coach. This person brings a great set of teaching skills to the table.

At this juncture we might mention that in many instances adults bring a wealth of experience and knowledge with them. Simply because they are not “judo experts” does not mean they are not qualified in some other activity. In such a circumstance the person will probably exude confidence and knowledge far beyond their judo level. In the past we have diminished such experience...”they just are not really judoka”... We need to guard against such an attitude. These folks can be invaluable to a program.

Thus far we have mentioned nothing specific about how the assistant coach actually interacts with the head coach. He/she may be the uke, but it is hoped that they also begin to

interact with students. This interaction should be of a cooperative nature with what the head instructor is teaching. The initiate should remember that most instruction is going to be 15% explanation and 85% participation. As the beginning coach moves around the room helping to improve gross motor skills, they should also be looking out for possibly unsafe situation(s).

It is hoped that the interaction between the head instructor and the assistant(s) will be of a collaborative nature. Simply expecting one's helpers to parrot what you say will not allow them to become quality coaches. Again, if the assistants bring other coaching credentials with them, this can be a useful element.

Learning how to implement a lesson plan is a vital skill for an assistant. Following a lesson plan is important, but knowing how to vary it to meet changing demands is equally necessary. Even many experienced coaches see these "demands" as roadblocks. They set out a series of lesson plans, then few students show up, the size discrepancies are huge, one adult and ten children...the list is endless. Alternative action plans should be devised, sometimes it is as simple as adding a two-legged throw for a one legged one. The assistant coach must learn to be adaptable.

Where possible the assistant should begin to have some input into the overall structure of the classes. It may be something as basic as adding a new game that may help some aspect of newest. Personal experience has shown that excluding the next generation does not improve their ability to teach. Rather it probably keeps them in a "student" role long past their chronological age. In many instances this is not a conscious decision, but the ramifications become ruinous. A sense of belonging needs to be developed within the instructional group. It should begin soon after one begins their coaching endeavors. The new coach needs to become an integral part of the staff.

Many dojo in the past have closed with the loss of the sensei, through a change of location, death or retirement. In some instances the people left in the dojo did not feel they could carry it on. In addition to instruction, one should prepare folks to continue the dojo if the unexpected happens. We have paid little attention to this in the past.

## THE COACH LEVEL

At this level most coaches have gotten a reasonable handle on teaching/coaching. They are at least aware of the demands of teaching and have implemented long/short term goals for their athletes. This level coach does the overwhelming amount of work. Most operate at a local level. They are part of a dojo or run one themselves. Their charges may or may not be heavily involved in local and regional level events. At this phase the basic foundation should be established. Remember, without a sound base there will not be real progress. Striving to maintain sound teaching methods is vital, here it is even more important.

The ability to layout a plan for students' to develop a broad range of skills is more important than tournament victories. Though most coaches desire to see their athletes do well in the competitive arena, there is more to a win than the outcome of a match. Translating a win at a local or regional event into the equivalency of a World title is just not realistic. For some (coaches) this kind of athletic participation is all they are interested in and there is nothing wrong with that. The problems arise when they delude themselves into thinking that an 8-year-old champion is on the fast track to the Olympics in 12 years. One does not automatically lead to the

other. There are many judo athletes who never do judo until they are well into their teens and manage to do well at an international level. The factors are too vast to list here, but the odds against an 8-year eventually participating in an Olympiad are huge.

So what is a coach to do? We suggest a broad approach, based on productive teaching techniques. Skills taught in a totally static fashion are not productive. Skills taught in isolation are not productive. Skills taught as absolutes are not productive. Skills taught for short term contest victories are not productive. The list can easily continue, but most will already understand the message. It is hoped that most coaches will look critically at what they do and how it actually affects their students. This is not an easy thing, but with practice one can learn it. A specific example may be helpful.

About three years ago a father brought his two sons to a different dojo. He was not satisfied with their progress at their original club. He voiced his concerns to the head instructors and they said they would work with the boys. The eldest was 10 and had been doing judo since he was 6. After watching the boy for several weeks it became apparent that the boy had few judo skills. His throwing skills were few and his ne waza consisted of turtling up or if held down simply trying to trap his opponent's leg. Trying to shape his throws was difficult because his skills did not seem to exist. The best thing that could be said for the boy, was that he seemed to have heart and that was a plus. After about 5 months a positive action happened. The boy had acquired a good deal of skill with a grap'n roll turn over...from his ubiquitous turtle. Maybe ne waza was going to be his strong point and something to play off. It worked, he got knocked down, but once in newaza he would roll his opponent into a hold down. It was a break through. After a year he was entered in a fairly strong regional event and during his first match he got dusted. The coach consoled him, but urged him to fight back, get his grip and initiate the attacks. In his second match, simply put, he was getting beaten again. Suddenly with time running he jumped straight into o soto gari. Throwing his opponent for ippon. Nothing big about that right...Think about this, it was the first time this boy had ever thrown some one in a contest! The shaping now continues and things are looking up. So what is the point of this illustration? The simple answer would have been not to find a hook. Just have this kid do what the others were doing, but that was not having the desired results. There are other issues, but the coaches found a way for the boy to achieve success. It worked and has allowed other aspects of his judo to improve. Has it solved all of the problems? It certainly has not, but the coaches continue to work on solutions. Possibly, you already remedy problems in a like manner, many do not or they forget to regularly critique their own teaching. This does not mean that you walk around wearing a hair shirt; it simply suggests that one should be vigilant and honest about the results of your instruction.

As mentioned earlier, coaches at this level do much of the teaching of judo. Or to be more precise, core skills are mastered so that an athlete will build upon these skills. This level coach is of prime importance, for without an adequate skill base nothing can be constructed. It is paramount that these teachers have extremely sound fundamentals. Not only should they be competent judo wise they should also possess adequate teaching skills. The single skill builds to multiple skills, both in throwing and groundwork. The coach does not need to invent the most difficult drills possible, rather they should have a purpose. The actual teaching should encompass a wide variety of approaches...not everything can be couched in phrases about kuzushi or a power hand.

## TEXT REQUIREMENTS

For *Assistant Coach* and *Coach* levels Successful Coaching, 3<sup>rd</sup> edition, by Ranier Martens, needs to be purchased. This text is the academic base for the USJA coaching program. It is a respected text for youth coaching. If you read nothing else in the academic arena this book will do you well. The mantra is still the same; we need to evolve our approach so that it produces participants of a very high caliber. Simply throwing individual skills at students is insufficient. This text will provide an academic starting position. For many of us, this will be the only text of its type that we need to have. Though it is hoped this book will encourage you to search out additional references.

## ALL OF THE SKILLS

At this juncture it is important to begin an exploration some of the more philosophical aspects of coaching. Again, these are not the only things you may consider, but it is hoped that they will inspire additional investigation.

There are no easy answers, only easy questions...do not know who said it, but it is true. Coaching is only a constant when some one else is doing it; when we do it our selves it is an ever-changing endeavor. No two people are identical and skills do not work the same for each participant. Depending on one's time and inclination your coaching approach may be more or less detailed. You may find an approach that is simple, meets the needs of your students and yourself. Learning where you are as a teacher can have tangible benefit. Some may have aspirations to "develop" a national champion or even an Olympic athlete. Should you develop a student who has national aspirations/abilities a few things should be considered. However, before we broach that subject let's look at a few considerations for the coach.

First, if you do not know what is really out there for your charges, do not make it up. Investigate what others suggest or may know. Very few will be able to take a student from the very beginning to the end...in fact we know of no one who can do that. The variables become so great that no one coach has all the capabilities. On the other hand the sound coach will prepare their athlete in such a manner that they are capable of adapting to the next level of training, no matter what it is. All too often, even the best intentions are riddled with less than accurate evaluations. *It is important to factually evaluate your athletes' performance and your own as a coach.* For many judo participants high-level athletic performance may not be their goal. In many cases it is not even a consideration. It does not mean that you water down your technical lessons; it does mean that you take into account where your charges actually are. In recent times people have been separated into "recreational" and "competitive" classes. Though these terms may not be bad, their ramifications have been ruinous. The recreational athlete has been derided and the competitor overly fawned upon.

The vernacular that has arisen is bothersome. "I do not do that because I am not a competitor"... "I do not need to do that because I am a competitor." The first statement has allowed people to participate at a sub par level on both the physical and technical level. The later statement has allowed folks to believe that they have somehow arrived at the pinnacle of success. Both of these situations are inconsequential in the broader scheme. In order to have competitive success we must have a large active participation base. As with skill acquisition we must form a foundation and build upon it. None of this is meant to deride either group, it is

meant to spell out that there are many more similarities than differences with the two. At some point the two groups do split...but it may never be a question for most judo people. Joining a judo dojo is different for many people; we should be prepared to accommodate them, when possible.

Secondly, for those who do wish to venture to a higher level of athletic participation your guidance is paramount. The athlete may have recently graduated from high school, but this does not mean that they understand what training may be like in Europe, Japan, or even at a U.S. regional center. The smart coach will prepare the athlete in such a manner that they not only survive but also mature in the new environment. No matter how much is anticipated there will always be the unknown. This can produce a fear that is incapacitating to some, others learn to adapt. Unfortunately, if unprepared many do not adapt, they are crushed mentally as well as physically. The coach must keep in mind that though a foundation has been built, there are many things which need to be placed into this base. In the 1960's—1980's I witnessed many athletes pack their bags and head to Japan. The vast majority of them returned home only to quit judo or so beaten they had no desire to do judo anymore. I have observed the same kind of situation domestically. Athletes who are not truly prepared who are placed in situations they seldom survive. In many instances this is not the athletes fault, the coach(s) should take responsibility for poor preparation. This is may be where your long-term goals may shine or are encased in mud. Unreal expectations for an 8 year old are as filled with folly as fantasy about the local 18 year going to the Olympics. The roll of a coach can become much more complicated than simply writing out a lesson plan. We owe it to our students to be as prepared as possible.

If the coach utilizes all of the tools at his/her disposal great things can be accomplished. This does not mean that every coach is preparing some one for high-level competition. It does mean that they are providing the environment that enables the athlete(s) to be prepared should they desire to move to the next level. Remember, this does not mean you neglect the development of other mere mortal athletes. Most of us will never have the opportunity to coach high level athletes—in fact you may not like what you find, should you get that opportunity. What we can/should do is teach students so that they have a wide variety of judo skills, that can be applied at a decent level of randori.

## NATIONAL COACH

At this level the coach must have become a forward thinking individual, capable of a vast array of coaching skills. They should have mastered all of the skills required for the first two levels. If they so desire they will be capable of assisting athletes to reach the national level or beyond.

Long-term player development and monitoring are integral to their curriculum. This includes, but is not limited to weekly, monthly and annual goal setting. Candidates at this level will have both a practical and theoretical understanding of judo skills and their applications. Though part of this will be in the purvey of the “Coach” as well, the National Coach should exhibit a broader range of knowledge.

Aside from coaching and preparing people to function at a national level, a National Coach must perform as a mentor wherever possible. The operative phrase is “perform as a mentor.” This does not mean that one suddenly becomes the “lord” of their fiefdom. It means that in a positive sense they assist others in furthering their teaching skills.



At this stage of development the coach should have acquired a comprehensive knowledge of many different kinds of teaching methods, skill development programs, auxiliary training routines, have an ability to functionally evaluate an athlete's performance and still be able to truthfully evaluate their own coaching. Though many people at this position may not be actively involved in coaching at the national level, they should all possess the ability to do so. In the coach's development a broader perspective should have taken shape.

The ability to analyze what an athlete is actually doing, good or bad, will be needed. For many of us analyzing what transpires in a match is not always an easy thing. An initial review of a match or moment may not in fact be accurate. General comments about kuzushi or pulling may miss the point completely. Several years ago a DVD of the semi finals of the National championships were shown to a group of coaching candidates. They were asked to determine why a particular move was not working and what were possible origins. As it happened all of the athletes were attempting some kind of drop seoi. The usual comments of no kuzushi, poor grip, etc. though valid were off the mark. The problem was with tori's body position, they all failed to be facing the same direction as their opponent. In other words when a 180 degree turn was required they only made a 90 degree or less. As to the origins: This was purely conjecture, but by doing drop seoi—even if it failed—they could turtle up and wait for matte; they had been successful with ineffective skills early in their careers and finally they had never been taught to bridge this skill. (This points out the importance of sound coaching at the first two levels!)

In fairness to the participants this challenge was sprung on them without warning. Their initial comments were expected, but after about 20 minutes they started searching for other problems with the attempted seoi. Eventually they began to realize what had actually transpired and what was illusionary. It is a requirement that must be honed over years...the coach must train their eye to see what is really happening and not what they think is going on. At this point the coach should have become an independent researcher. They should seek information that may, or may not, be helpful to their charges. Very little in coaching remains constant, we should be looking for good information, regardless of its source. The Money Ball was suggested to me a couple of years ago. It is a book about how the Oakland A's develop and recruit baseball players. What the heck does this have to do with judo? It has everything to do with THINKING, regardless of the discipline. It is a good read and well worth the time...it will help the way you look at judo teaching/coaching.

Obviously the ability to analyze performance during training sessions is a must. The National level coach will constantly strive to objectively determine the effectiveness of his/her athletes. This determination is not limited to the results of a contest or even a series of contests. At this level it is paramount that the coach be able to see the broader picture. In other words is what is being taught getting through to the athlete(s)? Are the participants in fact progressing up the skill ladder or are they simply marking time? Are they limited to a very few skills, which when unavailable (stopped) virtually halts their judo? Or when faced with opposition, do they at least try possible alternatives? These questions are only a few that a functional coach will ask himself or herself. They are not necessarily daily questions, but they should be used in the normal evaluation of an athlete's performance.

If the coach has not already become familiar with auxiliary forms of training for judo, they must now become a part the coach's tool bag. The rigors of judo training in and by itself can benefit one's physical fitness. Some practitioners may well use judo as their only form of exercise. This is fine as long as training is of a sufficient intensity to ensure sustainable fitness

levels. This, again, is where the coach's long term planning comes into play. In many instances a regular pattern of training sessions begins to happen: Warm-ups, uchikomi, drills, newaza randori and tachi waza randori...then it is off to home. This pattern can continue for months, in some instances it carries forth for years! Though sessions may be intense, they are not varied enough to result in improving levels of fitness. A National level coach will know that he/she must vary the training to insure fitness.

A time does come when an aspiring athlete will need to engage in programmed auxiliary training. This training needs to be as arranged as a normal judo session. A sound knowledge of the physical—anaerobic and aerobic—demands of judo are necessary. As with technical training a foundation must be established and then built upon. The National Coach should have the ability to establish weight-training programs that are balanced and directed toward judo. There is no one approach that is good all the time; a variety of exercises and equipment is preferable.

In general the National Coach will have a vast array of judo and training knowledge. The manifestation of this base is not in its title, but in the practical and theoretical presentation of teaching. Remember through the whole process it is about teaching. Each National Coach will probably have one area or another where they are stronger. No two coaches are the same, as with athletes there will be differences.

## SUMMARY

It is hoped that this short overview will give each candidate an idea of what we are trying accomplish with the USJA coaching program. The different levels of coaching are just that, there is no design to build a hierarchy. The different levels do indicate one's potential ability to coach/teach. As with many accomplishments not all people will utilize abilities in a similar fashion. It is hoped that every participant garners benefit from this program.

In your reading of this little treatise you may see things that you have heard or read in another context. You are probably correct. After almost 50 years in judo, it is difficult to determine what is mine and what I have borrowed. Let me acknowledge all the great teachers and influences on my opinions, I will not list them all. If you think it sounds like something Anton Geesink said, Jim Bregman demonstrated, it looks like Ben Campbell's drill, it read the same in one of Geof Gleeson's publication it probably came from them. It may as easily come from a candidate in a course I presented. Borrowing is a skill that all coaches should acquire, never allow potentially sound information to go unused simply because you did not think of it. I believe another term for it is EDUCATION!

Bill Montgomery  
Chairman, USJA Coach Education and Certification Committee

## USJA COACHING REQUIREMENTS

ALL coaches must pass a background check every four years and be a member of USJA, USJF or USA Judo.

### **Assistant Coach Level:**

- Minimum rank of sankyu
- Must pass Assistant coaches clinic
- Be able to perform basic mat techniques taught at coaches' clinic
- Be able to perform basic throws taught at clinic
- Demonstrate a brief lesson teaching a throw and a mat technique
- Normally, an Assistant coach will be assisting at a club or running a program within a YMCA or community center with some type of building-level supervision.

For re-certification, must document 50 hours per year of coaching over the previous year and have attended one approved clinic over the past four years.

### **Coach Level:**

- Must document coaching at least 100 hours per year
- Minimum rank of shodan
- Be able to perform basic mat techniques taught at coaches' clinic (see attached)
- Be able to perform basic throws taught at clinic
- Be able to perform basic gripping taught at coaches' clinic
  
- Coach level will be expected to demonstrate the techniques and drills in the attached
- Curriculum with an 85% passing score.
- For initial certification, must attend Coach level clinic.
- To maintain Coach level status you must attend one approved coaches clinic every two years.
- Certification in CPR and First Aid are highly suggested. This may be met by attending a Red Cross or other certification clinic, by professional licensure (e.g., M.D., R.N.) or included as part of the coaches clinic.

Coach level who do not attend at least one coaches clinic every two years may recertify as Assistant Coach by submitting documentation of 50 hours of teaching over the past year.

## National Coach:

- Must meet all Coach level requirements. In addition, have attended three approved coaches clinics in the previous three years.
- Must submit periodization plan for one-year training cycle or equivalent in depth study on some physical aspect of judo.
- National level coaches will be expected to demonstrate the techniques and drills in the attached curriculum with 90% passing score. Or if they are physically unable to do so, to have their student(s) demonstrate the necessary skills.
- Must pass the National level clinic. Summary of clinic topics: Legal Responsibilities, Building Self Esteem, Goal Setting and Motivational Strategy, Ethical Conduct in Sports, Organizing the Season and Proper Utilization of Assistant Coaches. Strength and Conditioning, Speed Training, Tachi Waza (Advanced Ashiwaza, Opposite Side Attacks and Counter Attacks) and Ne Waza (Basic Kansetsuwaza and Advanced Shimewaza.)

## SAMPLE AGENDA

- Psychosocial Sports Science: Building Self Esteem, Goal Setting and Motivation Strategy
- Mat Session 1
  - Tachi Waza (advanced ashi waza and counter attacks)
  - Ne Waza (basic kansetsu waza and intermediate shimewaza)
  - Strength and conditioning
  - Speed training
- Classroom Session
  - Risk Management: Legal Responsibilities
  - Psychosocial Sports Science: Ethical Conduct in Sports
  - Pedagogy: Organizing the Season
  - Assignment for Tournament Session
  - Judo Rules
  - Pedagogy: Proper Use of Assistant Coaches
- Mat Session 2
  - Tachi Waza (advanced ashi waza and counter attacks)
  - Ne Waza (matwork combinations and counters)
  - Gripping
  - Tactics

To renew at National level, must document 100 hours of coaching in the previous year and have attended three coaches clinics over the previous three years.

## CORE SKILLS

In the past coaches have been left to their own devices when it comes to core throwing and/or ground skills. The following examples are just that, examples. They follow one person's plan. These throws may not be to your liking or you may find others more effective for your program. The hope is to use skills that will benefit the overall judo development of your students. If you utilize dead end skills you are slowing your students' advancement.

Though one could certainly just use the Go Kyo, I have grouped throws into two legged, one legged, forward and backward throws. Some throws may be in more than one group. I have done this only because it makes sense to me. Especially in the beginning stages, we may be placing way too much emphasis on the Japanese terms for throws. I believe that they should be learned, but they should be viewed as a plus, not a deterrent... "if you do not learn the Japanese terms, you will not be a yellow belt"... I am not sure what that kind of presentation accomplishes.

And so because we all know the Japanese terms I will list them as I teach them to children, then adults and teens.

### Two Legged Throws

Tai Otoshi

Koshi guruma

O Goshi

Ippon Seoi Nage

### One Legged Throws

O Soto Gari

Ko/O Uchi Gari

De Ashi Barai

Harai Goshi

These starting points are for children. Though I do use the Japanese terms, I try not to make a big deal out of them. For me these throws form the base for the skills I teach. They are certainly not the only ones. With this short list I can expand throwing into many possibilities. One may ask, "but these are only 8 throws, what about the rest?" These are not 8 throws they are 48 throws. The throws are attempted in many, many different directions. Over a period of months/years a wide array of possibilities will surface.

For teen and adults a similar set of throws are used.

### Two legged Throws

Tai Otoshi

Ippon Seoi

Tsurikomi Goshi

Sode Tsurikomi Goshi

### One Legged Throws

O Soto

Ko/O uchi Gari

Okuri Ashi Barai

De Ashi Bara/Tsubami Gaeshi

Harai Goshi/Uchi Mata

Again, these are the base. No particular emphasis is given to any one throw. I am attempting to develop a wide-ranging skill set so that the student will develop their own judo. I am sure that many of you are currently using a similar path. I am not a proponent of sutemi waza for children and only introduce them to adults/teens when they have acquired good motor skills and body control. This is not to say that they cannot be introduced early, but many of these so called sutemi waza become a "drop and flop" scenario.

Newaza skills are similarly taught. As soon as possible throws lead directly into hold downs, and when appropriate into chokes and armlocks. Hold downs are taught in a multiple manner. In other words students are shown how to move from one hold down to another. The same is true of chokes and armlocks. Isolation is used, but sparingly most skills are linked rapidly to other possibilities.

<u>Holddowns</u>	<u>Chokes</u>	<u>Armlocks</u>
Yoko Shiho Gatame	Hadaka Jime	Juji Gatame
Kesa Gatame	Okuri Eri Jime	Ude Garami
Kami Shiho Gatame	Kata Juji Jim	
Ushiro Kesa Gatame		
Tate Shiho Gatame		

With these two groups of skills I lead a student into a wide variety of situations. Generally, a move is quickly linked to another. Little explanation is given as to how “easy” or “difficult” a maneuver may or may not be. In many instances the things I found difficult, our charges take for granted, for they are seldom told anything about the possibility or lack thereof. Again, these are only one coach’s starting points. Each person should follow a program that works well for them and their athletes.

## LESSON PLANS

In this section a series of lessons plans have been compiled. They are meant to serve as examples of how different coaches prepare for their classes. For many coaches having specific long term goals may be an intangible. This does not mean that they are not planning, but their specific circumstances do not call for such specific goals. It may be helpful to define what short and long term goals are: Short term goals can be as simple as getting a new student to execute a rudimentary o soto gari in a dynamic fashion. They could also be a compilation of skills sets you wish a group to master. As mentioned earlier most classes are mixed in age and experience, to one degree or another, so this too influences goals. Nonetheless each coach should have a destination in mind.

Long-term goals can become a bit more complex. They get wrapped in the over all development of the athlete. Each coach needs to understand how he or she can facilitate an athlete’s progress. If we prepare our charges properly, long-term goals become clearer. Care should be taken not to impose unrealistic goals on your athletes. It may in fact be the case that you have people in your dojo who care little about competition, but thoroughly enjoy training and improving their judo. Absolutely nothing wrong with this. You should be ready to assist them along with those who wish to build a competitive career.

*The first plans are from George Weers, long time coach, committee member and former Chair of this committee. This is a fairly detailed plan. You may be unfamiliar with some of the venacular, but this a good example of how George sets things in motion.*

Pekin Judo Team 9/18/10 Lesson Plan

George WeersGRW: C:\Documents and Settings\George Weers\My Documents\dataFiles\Judo Files\pekinJudo\pjtLP9-18-10.doc

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I. Under 12 Group

a. Cartwheels etc;

i. Cartwheels, Left and Right

ii. Round-Off, Left and Right

iii. Elbow Cartwheels, Left and Right

b. Falls;

i. Forward Shoulder Roll

ii. Rear Shoulder Roll

iii. Side Fall

iv. Front Fall

c. Tag Games

i. Knee Tag

ii. Two Hand Capture

iii. Two Hand Capture > Arm Hug

iv. Hip Tag

v. Toe Tag

vi. Ankle Tag

1. Advanced Foot, Ankle Push (Deashi Barai) Uke Moving backwards

2. Sliding Foot, Ankle Tag (Lateral Deashi Barai) Uke moving sideways

3. Foot Stop (Lateral Sasae Tsuru Komi Ashi) Uke moving sideways

Pekin Judo Team 9/18/10 Lesson Plan

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II. Over 12 Group

a. Cartwheels etc;

i. Cartwheels, Left and Right

ii. Round-Off, Left and Right

iii. Elbow Cartwheels, Left and Right

b. Falls;

i. Forward Shoulder Roll

ii. Rear Shoulder Roll

iii. Side Fall

iv. Front Fall

c. Inside Knee Keep Away

d. Tag Games

i. Knee Tag

ii. Two Hand Capture

iii. Two Hand Capture > Arm Hug

iv. Hip Tag

v. Toe Tag

vi. Ankle Tag

1. Advanced Foot, Ankle Push (Deashi Barai) Uke Moving backwards

2. Sliding Foot, Ankle Tag (Lateral Deashi Barai) Uke moving sideways

3. Foot Stop (Lateral Sasae Tsuru Komi Ashi) Uke moving sideways

e. Arm Hug > Hip Bump > Small Outside Hook > Plate & Jello



Pekin Judo Team 9/25/10 Lesson Plan

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I. Under 12 Group

a. Cartwheels etc;

- i. Cartwheels, Left and Right
- ii. Round-Off, Left and Right
- iii. Elbow Cartwheels, Left and Right

b. Falls;

- i. Forward Shoulder Roll
- ii. Rear Shoulder Roll
- iii. Side Fall
- iv. Front Fall

c. Partner Wheelbarrows

d. Monkey Walk

- i. Stand together at each other side with arms around the partners waist
- ii. Walk forward
- iii. On each step move your leg around in front of the partners leg
- iv. Walk the designated distance then changes places and Monkey Walk with the other Leg

e. Tag Games

- i. Knee Tag
- ii. Two Hand Capture
- iii. Two Hand Capture > Arm Hug
- iv. Hip Tag
- v. Toe Tag
- vi. Ankle Tag

1. Advanced Foot, Ankle Push (Deashi Barai) Uke Moving backwards

2. Sliding Foot, Ankle Tag (Lateral Deashi Barai) Uke moving sideways

3. Foot Stop (Lateral Sasae Tsuru Komi Ashi) Uke moving sideways

vii. Two Hand Hold and Ankle Push

1. Two Hand Hold and Ankle Push > Easy Roll Down and Side Fall

2. Two Hand Hold and Ankle Push > Easy Roll Down Head tag

Pekin Judo Team 9/25/10 Lesson Plan

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II. Over 12 Group

a. Cartwheels etc;

i. Cartwheels, Left and Right

ii. Round-Off, Left and Right

iii. Elbow Cartwheels, Left and Right

b. Falls;

i. Forward Shoulder Roll

ii. Rear Shoulder Roll

iii. Side Fall

iv. Front Fall

c. Inside Knee Keep Away

d. Tag Games

i. Knee Tag

ii. Two Hand Capture

iii. Two Hand Capture > Arm Hug

iv. Hip Tag

v. Toe Tag

vi. Ankle Tag

1. Advanced Foot, Ankle Push (Deashi Barai) Uke Moving backwards

2. Sliding Foot, Ankle Tag (Lateral Deashi Barai) Uke moving sideways

3. Foot Stop (Lateral Sasae Tsuru Komi Ashi) Uke moving sideways

4. Kouchi Gari

a. Players traveling laterally > Inside Ankle Tag

b. Tori travel backwards > Inside Ankle Tag

c. Neck Over-Hook and Arm Hug > Back Step Circle > Kouchi

e. Arm Hug > Hip Bump > Small Outside Hook > Corner Roll Counter > Plate & Jello

i. Explain the concept of getting out of the way and Pushing

ii. Explain Uphill Turn

Pekin Judo Team 10/2/10 Lesson Plan

I. Under 12 Group

a. Cartwheels etc;

i. Cartwheels, Left and Right

ii. Round-Off, Left and Right

iii. Elbow Cartwheels, Left and Right

b. Wheel Barrows

c. Falls;

i. Forward Shoulder Roll

ii. Rear Shoulder Roll

iii. Side Fall

iv. Front Fall

d. Partner Cartwheels

i. Low Drop & Turn

ii. Lateral Travel Ankle Push > Cartwheel

e. Monkey Walk

i. Stand together at each other side with arms around the partners waist

ii. Walk forward

iii. On each step move your leg around in front of the partners leg

iv. Walk the designated distance then changes places and Monkey Walk with the other Leg

f. Two Hand Hold and Ankle Push

i. Advanced Foot, Ankle Push (Deashi Barai) Uke Moving backwards

ii. Sliding Foot, Ankle Tag (Lateral Deashi Barai) Uke moving sideways

iii. Kouchi Gari

1. Tori travel backwards > Inside Ankle Tag

2. Neck Over-Hook and Arm Hug > Back Step Circle > Kouchi > Head Tag

g. Cool-Down Game

Pekin Judo Team 10/2/10 Lesson Plan

II. Over 12 Group

- a. Cartwheels etc;
  - i. Cartwheels, Left and Right
  - ii. Round-Off, Left and Right
  - iii. Elbow Cartwheels, Left and Right
- b. Falls;
  - i. Forward Shoulder Roll
  - ii. Rear Shoulder Roll
  - iii. Side Fall
  - iv. Front Fall
- c. Partner Cartwheels
  - i. Low Drop & Turn
  - ii. Lateral Travel Ankle Push > Cartwheel
- d. Kouchi Gari Review
  - i. Neck Over-Hook & Arm Hug
  - ii. Back Step > Kouchi >
  - iii. Hands & Knees > Uke Spin Under >
  - iv. Tori Leg Pass > Hold-Down > Uke Uphill Turn Escape
- e. The Basic Objectives of Judo
  - i. Manage the Power Hand
  - ii. Manage the Attacking Space
- f. Inside Knee Keep Away
- g. Inside Knee Keep Away > Slide to Kouchi Gari
- h. Introduce Cowboy Bumps
  - i. No Hands Bump
    - 1. Basic Hip Bump & Foot Stomp
      - a. Relaxed Leg
      - b. Push with the HIP
      - c. Stomp STRAIGHT Down
    - 2. Forward Rotation
      - a. Explain the important of Continual Pressure
      - b. FROM THE ADVANCED FOOT PLACEMENT
        - i. Step Forward AND Through the Partner
        - ii. Back Step Rotation into Position for the Next Bump
      - ii. Hands On Bumps (Straight Line Cowboy Bumps) > Deashi Barai
  - i. Cool-Down Kata

*The next lesson plan is from Lanny Clark, also member of the coaching committee. This plan is more conventional. Again, its purpose is to give both coach and athlete a path.*

#### Lesson Plan for 2 hour class

- Start- Pre determined warm ups including some conditioning. 15 min.
  - To include low impact jogging or jumping jacks- 50 sit ups or crunches and 50 pushup.
  - No Cold Stretching! Stretching can be done after the body is warm..
- Newaza form practice- set routines- 5-10 moves both left and right sides. 2 person teams. Higher rank goes first. 15 min.
- Newaza randori (free play) 7 three min. rounds- one minute between rounds. 30 min.

*Hydration break/restroom break 5 min.*

- Static form practice- with uki giving off balance positions- sets of 10
  - The pace should be slow to start and build in tempo until they throw on 10.
  - This can be done with combinations or single attacks. 10 sets each.
  - Gripping should be dynamic and constraint. The grip you practice with needs to be the grip you fight with!!!
  - 15 mins
- Dynamic form practice- moving drills and throwing drills.
  - Keep things in motion- line throws, oucho/kouchi drills, nage komi etc.
  - Gripping should be dynamic and constraint. The grip you practice with needs to be the grip you fight with!!!
  - 15 mins.
- Free play- including randori, games, dojo shai etc. Randori sets of 4 min each with 1 minute between. 20 mins
- Cool down stretches and breathing 5 mins.

Total mat time 120 mins. This works best with 3 practices a week.

By Lanny Clark Member USJA Coaching Committee.

*The next addendum is from Parnel Legros. Parnel is a national level coach, he has produced many national and international medallists. He started Starrett Judo Club and coaches it to this day. He is also a public school teacher, physical education. This is not a lesson plan, but it does show the depth a coach may go to prepare their charges.*

My calendar year starts in September and I always start with the following 10 points which will set the tone for instruction. I call it, "Contract for learning."

#### CONTRACT FOR LEARNING

- #1. Assessment
- #2. Expectations
- #3. Assignments
- #4. Thought provoking questions
- #5. Pre-test
- #6. Test
- #7. Inventory
- #8. Tournament preparedness
- #9. Roster
- #10. Public relations

Once the contract for learning is in place, the lesson plan takes its shape.

#### THE 10 STEPS LESSON PLAN

- #1. There must be a learning objective.
- #2. There must be a do- now.
- #3. There must be a motivation.
- #4. There must be a list of materials to propel you through the lesson.
- #5. There must be a mini- lesson.
- #6. There must be a skill practice.
- #7. Sometime a demonstration.
- #8. There must be randori & not all the time.
- #9. There must be a summary.
- #10. There must be homework.

The lesson plan is always changing but the goal stays the same. The goal is set once they sign up for judo.

*The following plans are from our club, Norwich Judo Dojo. There are two types. I have used these in a variety of ways for over 30 years. They do not remain constant. As situations dictate it is necessary to change from time to time.*

March 12

- Randori 3 X 3 (both)
- Bridge'n roll
- Grab'n roll
- Lunch Money (crash pad)
- Tsute geiko 4 X 2
- Osoto to sasae
- soto to seoi/tai otoshi/harai
- Ashi

March 15

- Single & Double leg takedowns
- Harai as counter to single
- Sprawl w/turnover
- Bridge'n roll
- Uphill turn
- Seoi to osoto
- Seoi to ko uchi
- Seoi to o uchi
- 4 X 2 Randori (both)

March 17, 19, 22, 24 & 26

- Randori—Avoidance
  - Defense
  - Counter
  - 3 X 1 each
- Randori newaza—turtle turnover
  - Far arm near leg
  - ½ Nelson walk around
  - 3 X 1 each
- Randori Tachi waza-regular
- Randori Ne waza—regular
- Push-Pull

March 29 & 31

Review All Drills done in this phase (*Note single and double legs were a standard part of our curriculum until the rule change. However, because we also teach jujitsu we do include them.*)

*The following was prepared for a coaching course, it is self-explanatory.*

## Lesson Plan I --June 19, 2010

*I have been reluctant in the past to write up lesson plans as part of my courses. My thought was that each coach should work to develop their particular approach. It was pointed out to me that during my own early development as a coach I had examples from which I worked. It was true, I had a host of fine people to mimic and thereby assist in my own coaching/teaching skills. To this end I have put together two simple lesson plans. One we will actually use for the children's session in the morning. These plans are examples of what I actually do, though on many occasions I run on themes. Series or situational training is a major part of our dojo scheme.*

### Children

- Dynamic warm-ups—lots of jumping, jogging, push pull, etc.
- De Ashi to yoko
  - De ashi to yoko counter with uphill turn
- Osoto to kesa
  - Osoto to kesa counter with uphill turn
- Ippon seoi to ippon seio, jump over
  - Ippon seoi to jump over with pull over counter (rudimentary uki otoshi)
- Tai otoshi
  - Tai otoshi with step over to ko soto
- Harai goshi, as a rolling throw onto crash pad if available
- Game—Sharks and Penguins, Freeze Tag, etc.
- Randori—one child attacks only with de ashi, other only counters with o soto (using the same foot that was attacked) 3 X 2 min rnds
- Newaza—determine level
  - ½ Nelson
  - Far Arm Near Leg
  - Grab 'n Roll
  - Spin and Pin
- Randori—switch between tachi waza and newaza on command 4 X 3min rnds
- Game—strength



*This is a very general plan. I have no idea of what level the children will be, so I must prepare a plan that I can adapt if circumstances necessitate. My primary goals are to get the children used to attacking on one leg (de ashi and o soto), transitioning to newaza, escaping a hold down. I use uphill turn specifically for children, because it will lead to positive positioning as they get older. During the drills I will be using the names of the throws but I do not emphasize them much. If the kids do hiza instead of de ashi I do not really care. It is about teaching them to do judo on one foot. The name of the skill is really quite irrelevant.*

*The jump over and step over drills are done to teach avoidance and counter attacks. Do not worry about the “ rudimentary uki otoshi. As you will have seen it is a simple roll down. The funny thing is that we have been doing this for quite sometime... our teens have applied some amazing sumi otoshi or uki otoshi in tournaments. They were never taught these a specific skills, it was the process that created the product!*

*There are other aspects of this plan that we can discuss. Remember, this is just one example.*

Bill Montgomery  
Chairman,USJA Coach Education and Development