

USJF MEETING REPORT: October 26-27, 2023, Embassy Suites Hotel, San Francisco, CA

Keith Chu

October 29, 2023

The following is my report of the USJF meetings that took place at the Embassy Suites Hotel, San Francisco. Please refer to my annotations marked in **bold blue font**.

Note that several meetings are held concurrently, so it is not possible to attend them all. I have added my notes to those meetings I did attend.

Also included with this report is a package of all the relevant documents used at this meeting.

Schedule Day 1

Development Committee: Did not attend.

Finance Committee – Attended Late

- Unfortunately, due to a travel mishap I arrived late to this meeting. The one important point I noticed though was based upon the current membership level and operating expense budget, the organization only has enough reserve to last between 5 and 7 years. Membership growth was the focus on how to resolve the situation.

Junior Development Committee .

This meeting ran concurrently with the Finance Meeting. Did not attend.

Executive Committee Attended meeting as an observer.

- The Executive Committee is usually an opportunity to observe the current attitudes and perspectives of the USJF leadership. From this session, there was distinct attitude to step over the role of Yudanshakai within the USJF. This mostly came from the President, but while there were some comments on this from a member of the executive, the Exco still supported the President.
- Mitchell stated his intention to stand for another 2-year term as President (Election next year)
- A brief overview of the Premiere Judo concept by Ed Hanashiro.
- The three last minute motions added to the Agenda were discussed. There was discussion on the Motion to increase the USJF Member fee to \$80 and to use the added \$10 to a scholarship fund that would be applied at the club/dojo level. Yudanshakai are not included in this decision process. However, problems were identified with the text of the motion, and a second motion by

Chuck Medani (Shufu) to withdraw the motion was passed. The other two motions will be commented later during the BOD portion of this report.

Athletic Scholar of the Year.

This meeting ran concurrently with the Executive Committee Meeting. Did not attend.

Endowment Trustees Meeting – Attended

- I am one of the elected Trustees of the USJF Endowment Committee Board.
- The Endowment Trustee Board has been quite busy, as they were the tool used to recently acquire the USJF Office Building.
- Session included a meeting with Jody Balmer via Zoom. Jody is the Financial Advisor that is used by USJF.
- The trustees have created a semi-independent investment sub-committee.
- Trustees agreed to accept a Procedure and Policy document that spells out the policy to protect the investment corpus and not to make risky investments with it.

Teaching and Coaching Committee :

This meeting ran concurrently with the Endowment Trustees Meeting. Did not attend

Yudanshakai President's Meeting –

Meeting cancelled

Promotion Committee: Attended meeting as an observer.

- Hayward Nishioka is Nanka's representative on this committee. He is also the elected Chairman but has been taking a back seat and allowing others to chair the PC.
- This session was Chaired by Cal Kitaura (Central Coast)
- Meeting was brought to order, agenda and past minutes were approved.
- Hayward gave his remarks.
- There was only one Nanka promotion for consideration at this meeting. This was for Ed Shiosaki, Rokudan. There were no issues regarding this nomination and it was unanimously passed.
- Janet Johnson presented the draft requirements for contributions for senior master promotions (above 6th Dan). See the separate document in the attached meeting package. Time in Grade is no longer considered to be enough for a master promotion. The concept of rank eligibility is now evident.
- Here are some key extracts from Janet's document:
Rokudan
Rokudan candidates have made a transition to a selfless approach to Judo, sharing Judo,

and developing others. Time and effort in Judo is significantly greater than as a Godan. They should be an inspiration to others. They will have students that emulate the example taught to contribute to society and the Judo community within the *Time In Grade* period. They must have local impact – growth outside the dojo. They are a leader within their club, local area and may expand to the regional and the national level.

Shichidan

Shichidan candidates should have at least regional impact within their Yudanshakai and be regionally and possibly nationally or internationally known for their expertise. This may include recognition in judo administration, the accomplishments of their students should carry significance, and they should at minimum have contributions at the regional level, which must be reflected within the *Time In Grade* period. Regional impact means that there is growth outside the local area to include the Yudanshakai and the state or region at the very least. The Shichidan candidate should invoke meaning and purpose to what we do, providing higher and more personalized motivation and inspiration regardless of the student's level through their direct interactions with students, on the mat and in uniform.

Hachidan

Hachidan candidates should, within the *Time In Grade* period, have well-known national and likely international impact through their expertise or through their direct students. Judoka actively involved in the national activities directed by the USJF should know the impact of their Judo, abilities, knowledge, and areas of expertise. Everyone attending national meetings should know their name, reputation, and areas of expertise. Candidates should also be focusing on succession planning to develop those to carry on their legacy. They should be a solid, unquestioned role model of the true Judoka. Their active service, sharing their knowledge and expertise, can be seen and experienced through a variety of ways in the four criterion areas described below.

- **USJF Policy and Procedures Motion (Josh Kindleberger)**
- **There was much discussion on how to handle incomplete promotion applications. The policy decided during the July 30, 2023, meeting was reviewed, and revised.**
- **Effectively, The Yudanshakai is responsible for ensuring the promotion application is complete. This includes correct Form 20 and all additional requirements (background, Safesport, Headsup, First Aid etc.) are good. There is effectively no lee way to correct applications once submitted, so if there are any errors, the only recourse is to request a table and fix for the next meeting.**
- **There is going to be an annual Form 20 training for Yudanshakai.**

Schedule Day 2

Board of Examiners Meeting: - Attended

Nanka's Delegates: Hayward Nishioka and Cheryl Harai.

Chaired by Mac Takeda.

Agenda adopted, Minutes of April 14, 2023, meeting approved.

Promotion Committees summary presented and approved

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

1. Special Needs Judo Program report by Miki Takemori.
 - **This is the first time in quite a while that there has been any discussion on this topic. Miki's report was very rhetorical, which indicated there had been some offline conversation with some 'experts'. I asked exactly who has been involved and it seems there were a few judoka, but none from California, despite the often noted comment that Southern California has one of the largest Special Needs Judo Programs in the country. The sub-committee seems to have no sense of direction, and is in a never-ending fact-finding cycle. I recommended that a mission be created so that a plan with milestones can be developed. Miki, agreed that this was a good idea, but I am not confident that this will happen and that the group will just continue to drift. Many attendees did show interest in the topic.**
2. Newaza Tournament Rules use Report by the Yudanshakai's.
 - **This is a perpetual 'unfinished business' Item. The topic is on hold until somebody tries to implement the USJF Ne-waza rules at a tournament. The problem is that the rules are no where to be found. This a point I made. Josh Kindelberg said he would obtain them and have them available on the USJF website.**
3. Form to be used by National Office (NO) to record questions received by NO and the response. The form can be utilized to develop on our website the commonly asked questions and document the technical questions and answers in a binder for use by the NO staff. Mac Takeda. It will be put on the USJF website by Stillman. Still in the works. It will be completed once the website is completed.
 - **Another recurring item. The National Office does not seem to have any interest in creating this FAQ. I asked whether they keep records of questions asked and they indicated that they do. But not in a surveyable view.**
4. Task Force – Look into voting Authority of YDK and smaller YDKs who do not have voting
 - **No discussion**
5. Approved a **\$50 fee** for promotions that have gone to the dead file, and they want to submit again. There should be a fee, even for USJF life members that cannot get their certifications and/or their Form 20s corrected. It needs to go to the Board of Directors for second reading at the Fall Meeting. Tom Sheehan and Terri Waibel.
 - **There was discussion on how this was going to impact promotion applications in general. Cheryl**

asked about the impact if the 6 month dead file occurs before a next promotion meeting. There was no clear answer provided. Neither is there any justification for why the cost is \$50.

VIII. NEW BUSINESS

- **The following are the motions presented to the Board of Examiners for its approval.**

- Article II: Membership

- Section 1. Type

- A. YDK

- Motion: Creation of Promotion Committee (PC) at Large Club/Association**

- The PC at Large Club Association could be a State association or group of clubs wanting to belong to the USJF but not sure which YDK to join.

- ***One PC member and One BoE member would be assigned to the association to assist in their growth and development.***

- The PC at Large Club Association is a Non-voting member in the USJF BoD.

- This association is composed of non-specific geographical territory or association. The association is based on the common grounds as the club and judoka believe will promote the best interest of judo. The express purpose of this provision to enhance and otherwise promote membership in the USJF and affiliation of clubs

- Each association shall operate under its own written constitution By-laws or written Articles of Association.

- Further, after nurturing the association, they could seek voting rights as a new YDK.

- What rights do they have: The PC at Large Club/Association will have the;

- Opportunity for Dan promotion ranks, Shodan and higher

- Rights of promotion through the PC and BoE representative

- Eligible for scholarships and grants

- Eligible for Certifications

- Art. II. Sect I

- B. Other

- § 1. Club Membership

- § A club member is a group of judoka having 10 or more currently registered members, which includes a head instructor with rank recognized by the USJF of shodan or higher.

- § The club which operates under written constitution or by-laws if incorporated, or written articles of association if unincorporated, and be registered with the USJF for the current fiscal year.

Rationale: To become a USJF Charter Club you must be a member of a YDK. The selection and acceptance of USJF Charter Club into a YDK can be a daunting course of action. There must be an alignment between the YDK mission and objectives and the Charter Club. The institution of the "PC at Large Club Association" can be a temporary placement of clubs believing in the merits of belonging to the USJF. Under the advisement of the PC representative and BoE representative the PC at Large Club Association could form their own YDK or the club could request acceptance into one of our already established YDKs.

- **The premise of this motion is to grow the USJF membership by allowing clubs/dojo's to join without the need to be a member of a Yudanshakai.**

- **I was very vocal about this motion. To me this motion is undermining the role and value of the**

Yudanshakai. Currently clubs wanting to be a member of USJF must join a Yudanshakai. But apparently according to the President there are many clubs who do not want to be in a Yudanshakai. Despite this claim, no sense of how many is 'many' was provided nor any real examples of not wanting to join a YDK nor the reason why.

- I made the point that the message that this motion sends is that YDK can be bypassed or even left and the USJF benefits would still be available. I also see this as a way for the USJF to keep the YDK portion off the rebate for themselves as no portion of the Membership fee would be rebated.
- I asked the chair if we could defer this motion until next meeting to allow the opportunity to discuss with YDK members this concept. This was rejected and the motion was forced through to a vote.
- As I am not a voting delegate at this board, I asked our delegates to vote against this motion. Cheryl voted AGAINST and Hayward vote FOR.
- The motion was passed, now we shall have to wait to see what the impact upon our Yudanshakai will be and whether any clubs will decide to leave Nanka and become a Club-at-large.

Board of Directors Meeting – Attended

Nanka's Delegates: Keith Chu, Dan Augustine and Cheryl Harai

A. ADOPTION OF AGENDA

Adopted.

B. MINUTES FOR REVIEW & APPROVAL

- A. August 6, 2023, Board of Directors Meeting: **APPROVED**
- B. September 10, 2023, Board of Directors Meeting: **APPROVED**

C. REPORTS

A. President's Report (Mitchell Palacio)

- **Mitchell made a presentation which he labelled as "Education in Leadership". He**
- **Highlighted the purchase of the USJF Office building for \$215K and that it has already been assessed at approx. \$350K. The premises is legally the owned by the USJF Endowment Trust, who will be renting the property to the USJF for \$100 per month.**
- **Mitchell emphasized his goal to bring in new blood into leadership roles.**
- **He also presented plans for further development of the USJF website in regards the introduction of Online Forms. The first being Sanction application and second would be an online version of the Form 20.**

B. Treasurer Report (Rome Acopan Jr.)

a. Financial Report

- **Not much to report, although Financial Year is closed the account books for the last FY are still being worked on.**

C. Board of Examiners

- **Report provided above.**

D. Executive Director (Robert Fukuda)

- **No Report given.**

E. Presentations

• Jr. Rank Requirement Matrix (Jennifer Badertscher)

- **This presentation was a mapping of how they view senior mudansha promotions. It was quite complex and busy. A published version of it is not yet available.**

• 50th State Presentation on Premier Judo: Ed Hanashiro

- **This was a presentation on a new version/set of rules for judo competition. The goal is to make judo more appealing to spectators and attract people to judo. Yuko is added back in as a score and points are allocated as Ippon- 15 points, Wazari- 5 points and Yuko- 3 points. Shido are also 3 points awarded as points to the opponent and not as a penalty. There is no Wazari Awasete Ippon, Points are accumulated with the match ending when the first person achieves 15 points. There are a set of tie breaker rules for draw situation. These rules are proprietary and owned by private company. The intention is to license only USJF to use these rules and can only be used by USJF members. The first trial of the rules is next summer in Hawaii at a High School Team Tournament.**

F. Committee Appointment

Endowment Investment Committee: Bryan Matsuoka, Eric Spears, Tom Sheehan, Ex Officio: Rome Acopan

Scholarship Committee Appointments: Rome Acopan Jr., Josh Kindelberger, Bryan Matsuoka, Jennifer Badertscher, Sheldon Konno, Dekin Hom, 2nd Vice President

VII. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

- A. 2nd Reading: Motion: Motion: Reduce the YDK rebate of \$17.50 to \$10.00 with \$7.50 going to operation cost effective for fiscal year 2023-2024 to be retroactive of all 2024 membership.
- Rationale: Increase revenue for Fiscal year 2023 – 2024
 - **I spoke against this second reading, reminding everyone of the impact this has on smaller YDK that do not have the same financial strength that the larger YDK have and a reduction of 66% can have a drastic effect upon them. However, this appeal seemed to fall on deaf ears and the vote was passed after the President made comments about programs losing their funding.**

VIII. NEW BUSINESS

- B. Motion: National Point Roster Scholarship/Grant Program
- **Rationale:** The USJF will award annual college (higher education) scholarships to the top three athletes (male and female) in Championship Categories; Bantam(s) 4-5-6, Intermediate, Juvenile, IJF Jr., USJF Youth Referees and Jr. Kata (up to age 17 yrs. old).
 - **Funding:** The earnings generated from the USJF National Championships in both Fall and Spring are directed to fund the USJF Point Roster Scholarship Program.
 - **This motion passed.**
- C. Motion: By-Law revision - Art. II, Sect 4, #4, Probationary Period to 6 months.
- Every applicant admitted to YDK membership shall be on probation for a period of 6 months. The probationary period may be extended by the Board of Directors for additional one year period.
 - **Rationale:** New YDK are given a greater opportunity to participate in governance.
 - **I asked the question as to what the relevance of the probationary period was. Since there is no definition of criteria to pass or fail probation. Also, all the requirements to join USJF are taken into account upon acceptance to join. I made a motion to amend the time period to be zero months (effectively eliminating probation). Unfortunately, that was not passed, but the change from 1 year to 6 months was.**
- D. By-Law Article II: Membership Section
1. Type A. YDK
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- After Further, after nurturing the association, they would seek voting rights as a new YDK.
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- Eligible for Certifications

Art. II. Sect I

- B. Other 1. Club Membership
- A: A club member is a group of judoka having 10 or more currently registered members, which includes a head instructor with rank recognized by the USJF of shodan or higher.
- B: the club which operates under written constitution or by-laws if incorporated, or written articles of association if unincorporated, and be registered with the USJF for the current fiscal year.
- **Rationale:** Program to increase USJF clubs and membership

- **I made the same arguments as during the BOE discussion of this motion (see my notes above). The outcome was the same, although Dan, Cheryl and I voted against the motion. But not enough to defeat it.**

IX. ANNOUNCEMENTS

A. USJF 2024 Spring Nationals: Open for Bid

B. USJF 2024 Summer Nationals Open for Bid

- **Note the 2025 USJF Summer Nationals are going to be held in Hawaii.**
 - **The next meeting of USJF BOD is scheduled February 2024**
-