

Jigoro Kano, The Founding, History & Evolution Of Judo

By

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Part 6

The Indomitable Kano

Kano visits abroad to promote Judo abroad and after his appointment to the IOC consisted of : -

1889, touring of educational facilities in Paris, Brussels, Amsterdam and Berlin.

1912, as part of the IOC he attended the 5th Olympiad in Stockholm and visited Vienna, Paris and London.

1920, attended the 7th Olympiad in Antwerp and visited Paris and London.

1928, attended the 9th Olympiad in Amsterdam and visited Berlin, Paris, Rome and travelled to China.

1932, attended the 10th Olympiad on Los Angeles, and visited Vancouver, Seattle and Hawaii.

1933, Kano travelled to Europe to promote the choice of Tokyo at the site for the 12th Olympiad and visited Moscow, Stuttgart, Berlin, London, Paris and Madrid.

1934, Kano travelled to Moscow, Warsaw, Vienna, Belgrade, Paris, London, Naples, Singapore, Hong Kong and Shanghai.

1936, he attended the 11th Olympiad in Berlin, and visited Seattle, Vancouver, New York, Bucarest, Paris and London.

1938, Kano travelled to Singapore, Cairo and Vancouver.

In May 1938, whilst on the way home, Kano died at sea, while on board the NYK Line motor vessel MV Hikawa Maru. Because the Japanese merchant fleet of the 1930s used Tokyo time wherever it was in the world, the Japanese date of death was 4th May 1938 at about 5:33 a.m. JST – Japan Standard Time, whereas the international date of death was 3rd May 1938 at 8:33 p.m. UTC – Universal Coordinated Time. The cause of death was officially listed as pneumonia. Professor Jigoro Kano was aged 78.

Kano had done much to highlight the benefit of Judo training to the world and to promote its inclusion as part of the Olympic Games. This he never saw, however Judo later became included as a spectator sport in the 1964 Olympics and later as a full medal sport in 1972.

His official honors and decorations included the First Order of Merit and Grand Order Of The Rising Sun, the second most prestigious Japanese decoration and the Third Imperial Degree.

Kano never claimed a rank in Judo, and was recognized by his students as an authentic founder. After his death, the Kodokan recognized him with an honorary and unique grade of 12th Dan. As a founder, he could not be traditionally ranked with the system of his founding. Kano usually wore a wide white belt, twice the width of a usual white belt, although he does wear an old black belt in some photographs. In these photographs, it is not clear if he was intending to wear a Judo black belt, or a black belt of one of the Jujutsu styles of which he was master. The awarding of 12th Dan as a white belt signified that Kano had come full circle.

So Kano became a historian in addition to his other accomplishments. Kano had built a monument to the old styles of Japan, and to his old instructors to whom he owed so much, "in the form of Kodokan Judo Kata." Judo Kata is distinguished from the Kata forms of other martial styles in its purpose of recording historical and philosophical aspects of its Budo heritage.

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