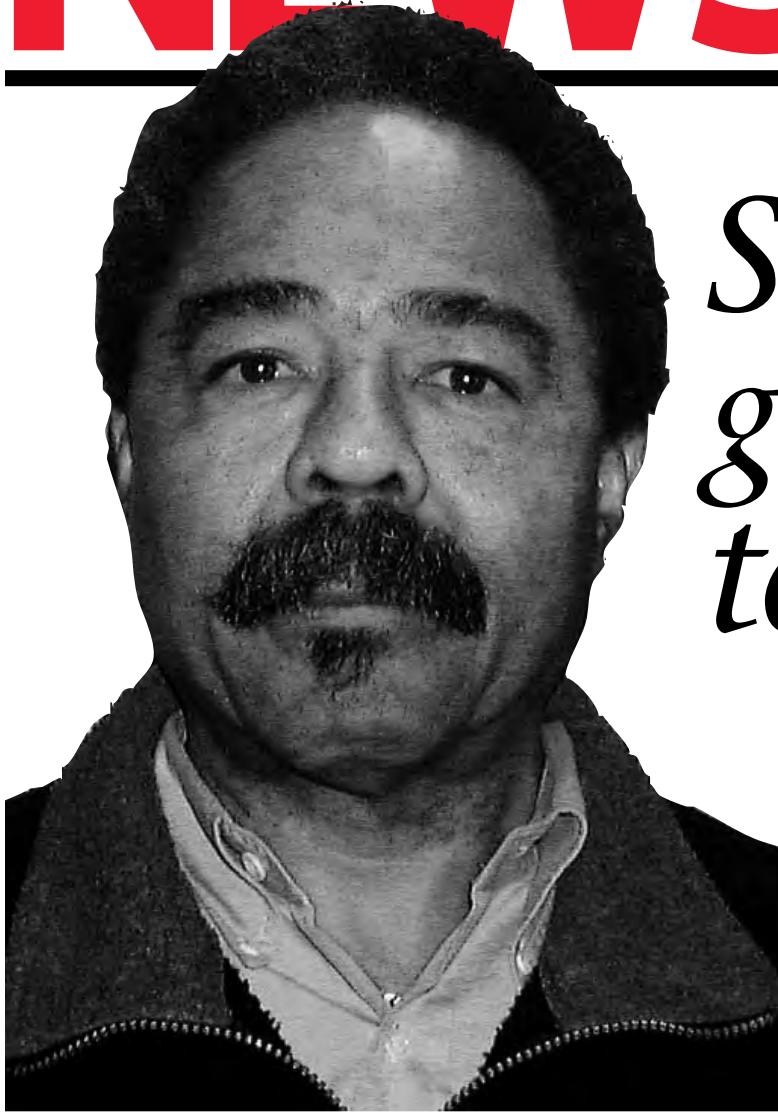


# KARATE BC

# NEWS

WINTER 2008



## *Saying goodbye to James*

Looking back at  
a long and  
distinguished  
career in karate

See pages 8, 9 & 10

### Canada has lost a great sensei

When David Akutagawa suffered a massive heart attack on October 8, he was doing what he deeply loved – teaching karate in his home dojo to students who were like family.

**SEE PAGE 3**

### Two-decade gap between medals

Sometimes, the wait makes it all that sweeter. Sensei David Bentley is back on the winner's podium.

**SEE PAGE 4**



### 'I need to go back, I need to win'

The defining moment that ignited my desire and motivated me towards gold, was the disappointment of the recent year's championship.

**SEE PAGE 6**

PRESIDENT'S CORNER

# Karate BC has a new executive director

We are moving smoothly along with transition plans to find a replacement for James Johnson, our long-serving Executive Director.

James will be retiring in January 2009, and your Executive has tried to be very thorough and thoughtful as we sought out his replacement.

The KBC Executive struck a search committee consisting of Charles La Vertu (Secretary), Andreas Kuntze (Membership Director) and Dan Wallis (President).

Our task was to widely advertise for potential candidates for this position, to screen potential candidates, interview those short-listed and then present two candidates for the full board to interview.

We used PSO and NSO websites and job search web sites. Twenty-two people applied for the position initially.

We reviewed their applications and reduced the list of potential candidates to five. While we were doing reference checks one of the candidates announced she had secured another position, so the Search Committee interviewed four people November 4.

All four candidates were strong and met most of our criteria. Two candidates stood out above the others as they both met all of our criteria, are very successful in their own careers, and are ready to tackle the challenge we offer at Karate BC.

At the end of November, the full board interviewed both of these people. Robert Tuss was clearly the best candidate to lead Karate BC over the next few years.

What were we looking for in a candidate? We have been an entity since 1974 and we have evolved to the point where we have two full-time employees who, in concert with many volunteers, manage an association of over 4,000 members.

Karate BC was established as the provincial sport governing body of karate in order to regulate the development of karate in British Columbia and to allow athletes to compete at the national level. We are blessed to have over 4,000 members, but as the provincial sport governing body of karate we need to look carefully at why so many tradi-



tional karate practitioners choose to remain outside of our association.

Robert Tuss has an international reputation for helping companies take care of their business by finding strategies that work for them and their clients.

Bob's background in tourism and sports tourism ensures that he is uniquely positioned to help us take an outsid-

er's look at our association, its goals, strategies, successes and challenges.

We can expect him to initiate discussions throughout our membership in these areas to help us review and refine our vision and necessary strategies.

We are also looking for a person with strong marketing and fund-raising abilities. Please look at Robert Tuss' blog: <http://www.craftingsuccess.blogspot.com/> and you will see the wealth of expertise and experience he brings to Karate BC.

In particular, we are looking for leadership in the area of strategic marketing and how it can enhance Karate BC's potential.

He also has extensive experience working with volunteers in sport organizations and we look forward to his ideas and guidance as we continually look for ways to extend our volunteer base as well as to express our thanks to our valuable volunteers. Bob is a distinguished leader in these fields, as his many testimonials speak to. People offering testimonials range from Stan Hagen, past-Minister for Tourism, Sport and the Arts, John Cummings MP, and even Kenneth Scott, Her Majesty's Secretary (Buckingham Palace).

For the last number of years he has been offering expertise in marketing, governance, and areas of economic development in developing countries around the world with CESO (Canadian Executive Services Organization - International Services) so he clearly has the necessary organizational ability, oral and written communication skills, and diplomacy so necessary in the Executive Director's job today.

Your Executive was also looking for a leader who could help provide more

**Continued on inside back page**

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## Karate BC Newsletter

is printed and published

by Infigo Imaging

#150-3820 Cessna Drive

Richmond BC V7B 0A2

CANADIAN PUBLICATIONS

MAIL SALES AGREEMENT #40063490

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# "Canada has lost a great sensei"

By Jean Sorensen

When David Akutagawa suffered a massive heart attack October 8, he was doing what he deeply loved – teaching karate in his home dojo to students who were like family.

Akutagawa Sensei died later that day in hospital, but not before achieving milestones in karate, founding an organization with dojos from BC to the Maritimes, becoming a major force in shaping Karate BC and karate at a national level.

"Canada and the world has lost a great sensei and a respected leader in karate," long-time friend and colleague Masami Tsuruoka wrote as a condolence.

Tsuruoka, often referred to as the Father of Canadian Karate and head instructor of Chito-ryu, was only one of the distinctive leaders in karate that Akutagawa Sensei would be linked to over a 51-year career.

Akutagawa was born into a family with deep roots in martial arts. The Akutagawa family castle had 300 samurai but 400 years ago, in the 1600s, it was destroyed by a ruling member of the Tokugawa dynasty, which sought to retaliate against those who showed any favor toward European cultures.

Yet, Akutagawa family members moved to another castle and Akutagawa's grandfather continued teaching young samurai, especially the art of the spear.

Akutagawa studied both Shotokan-ryu and Shito-ryu styles while at Japan's Kohnan University in Kobe, where he earned a degree in economic science. Years later at B.C. tournaments, seated next to Hiroo Yamashiro, founder of Vancouver's first dojo, he would discover they had, in different years, shared the same sensei, Jun Sugano.

Sugano became vice-chairman of JKA from 1928 to the time of his death in 2002. Yamashiro remembers that Akutagawa would good naturely refer to him as "his sempai."

In Canada, he taught RCMP instructors for over a decade at the RCMP Self-Defense Depot in Penhold, Alberta and the RCMP Academy in Regina, Saskatchewan.

Tsuruoka, in 1966, introduced him to Tsuyoshi Chitose, founder of Chito-ryu and he began training in the style until Chitose's death in July 1984. He founded Renshikan Karate Association in January 1997.

Akutagawa achieved a personal goal in June 2006 when Soke Kenei Mabuni of Shito-Ryu Karate-Do promoted him to 8th dan and Shihan. (He had also received his 7th dan from Soke Mabuni Kenei).

Mabuni also aligned Akutagawa's organization as an



"institution" of Shito-ryu karate using the Shito-ryu symbols.

Akutagawa's Renshikan organization promoted traditional karate, in particular, kata as was originally taught by the founders of various styles such as Chito-ryu, Shito-ryu and, to a lesser degree, Goju-ryu.

Akutagawa was one of the early members of Karate BC, realizing the need for a sports body representing karate.

"In my view," said Karate BC President Dan Wallis, "he was a critical player in creating harmony amongst styles in Karate BC."

His contribution to karate included an original member of the KBC technical committee, a member of the NKA technical committee for many years, long-time head of the NKA and KBC officials committees, and head of the Canadian Chito-Ryu Association of

Western Canada for 20 years.

Karate BC Executive Director James Johnson remembers him as one "of a group of forward-looking instructors" who set out in a cooperative effort to improve karate.

As with most building processes there is discord and disagreement and "we experienced an era of turmoil and disharmony, both nationally and provincially," tells Johnson. Yet, throughout, Akutagawa remained resolute.

"He stood up to those who would bully and intimidate and stuck to his principles. That was character!" recalls Johnson.

When he last spoke with him, Johnson said: "He expressed the excitement he felt as he continued to explore the mysteries behind the martial arts."

Close friend Dr. Chee Ling provided the eulogy for his "teacher". He spoke of Akutagawa's devotion to karate but also of his strong Christian faith, which was an equally-important underpinning of his life.

Akutagawa's father served as a pastor in Calgary for many years and his mother played piano in church. The spiritual devotion was also reflected in Akutagawa, who studied the scriptures with theological teacher Pastor Ellie Nessim.

"Akutagawa Sensei has often used stories and examples of the Old and New Testament to teach us, in the midst of karate classes, about life, about developing character and growing the ideals of humanity in our hearts," Dr. Ling told funeral attendees.

Student Tom Mah became one of several who followed Akutagawa's devotion to religion. He recalls: "For many years, Sensei felt alone, spiritually, because no one responded to the message of the gospel," he said at the service. But, Akutagawa's patience, humility, and love for his fellow man won Mah over and "God finally opened my eyes and softened my heart."

While Akutagawa's legacy remains the many students he helped over the years, both with karate and personal problems, Mah maintains it is also "being remembered as a man who cared more for others than for himself."

As with most sudden deaths, there was not the opportunity for teacher and students, friends or family to exchange good-byes. But, when Akutagawa received his 8th degree and Shihan certificate, he wrote a simple message on the Shito-ryu website that reflected the humility of the man.

It said: "Mr. Akutagawa wants to thank all the many senseis from the different styles he has had long-term relationships with and the support they have given over the years. He would also like to thank the members of the Renshikan Karate-Do Association for their support and diligent pursuit of traditional karate-do."

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## Fernando Correia on wall of fame

Sensei Fernando Correia has been inducted into the North Cowichan/Duncan Wall of Fame.

Correia has been tireless in his efforts to promote and develop a high-level of karate in the valley.

Originally from the Azores, Correia relocated to Kitimat in 1963 and came to the valley in 1981. Soon after arriving, he started teaching karate at the Vimy Hall and eventually moved to the Cowichan Centre where the prominent school bearing his name still exists today.

Correia has trained countless students in karate discipline who've gone on to reap rewards from those teachings. He's also been an official and administrator, bearing a passion for karate that's unequalled in B.C.

— Don Bodger,  
Cowichan News Leader and Pictorial

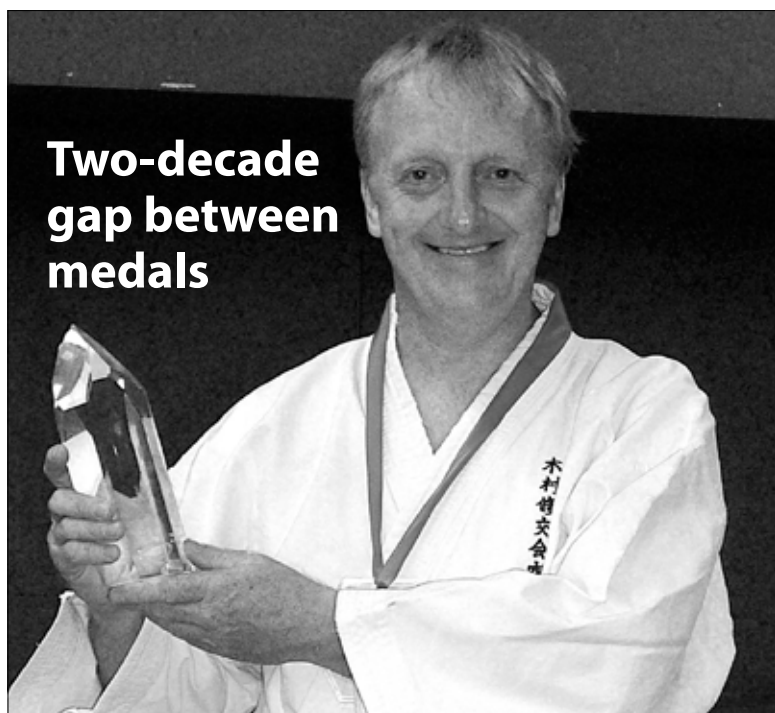
## Awards for six

Excellent performances at the Canadian National Championships in July in St. John, NB have resulted in cash awards for some members the BC Karate Team.

"Your sacrifice in regards to training and devoting all your time to the sport of Karate is a difficult endeavor and we are pleased to offer you this award to say thank you for your hard work and dedication," wrote Roy Tippenhauer, High Performance Chair, in congratulatory letters to the winners.

Based on the number of Gold medals at the nationals, the following awards were made:

- |                        |       |
|------------------------|-------|
| • Reuben James         | \$400 |
| • Victoria Barusic     | \$200 |
| • Cody Martin          | \$200 |
| • Valentyna Zolotarova | \$600 |
| • Cassy Schouten       | \$400 |
| • Jusleen Virk         | \$200 |



## Two-decade gap between medals

A two-decade hiatus proved fruitful for Sensei David Bentley of the Kimura Shukokai Karate dojo in Brentwood Bay on Vancouver Island.

Representing Canada at the 2008 Kimura Shukokai International World Championships in Zurich, Switzerland in July, Bentley won silver medal in the veterans heavy-weight kumite competition.

The last time he sparred in the same tournament was in 1987 with the British team.

It was one of the largest categories with representation from over 20 countries and 18 competitors with no competitors under 3rd Dan.

Bentley jokes, "I brought home two trophies: a silver medal and

a cracked rib!"

He endured five fights and defeated a Swiss fighter in the semi-final only to succumb to an American in the final which was filmed by Swiss television.

Bentley lead a team of seven from the Brentwood Bay dojo.

Since the Brentwood Bay dojo opened in 2000, this has been the largest representation from Canada at this event.

The seven competitors this year have inspired others to begin preparation for the next KSI world championships set for Portugal in 2010.

Visit their website for more information: [www.shukokai-canada.com](http://www.shukokai-canada.com) or to learn more about Kimura Shukokai Karate and the Brentwood Bay dojo.

## 7th Dan awarded to Norma Foster



**Norma Foster (front left) during Dan grading in Sendai, Japan, where she became the highest-ranking female JFK Wadokai karateka.**

## The highest-ranking female JKF Wadokai karateka

Sensei Norma Foster has been awarded 7th dan by Japan Karatedo Federation Wado-Kai. A student of Hideho Takagi, she is the highest-ranking female JKF Wadokai karateka.

Foster was the only one of four candidates to pass the grading in Sendai, Japan in October, and the only non-Japanese.

She was the first woman in the world to be qualified as an international judge, the first female World Karate Federation referee in the world and the first woman to be appointed to the WKF Referee Council.

# Ailing McDonagh recognized

Hundreds of Isshin Ryu karate students and supporters packed council chambers October 8 as Sensei Tom McDonagh received a special recognition award.

McDonagh has been providing a number of karate-related programs in the district for more than 20 years. He has touched thousands of young lives, and he's made a difference in the lives of his older students as well.

That's why it was with bittersweet emotion that Mission council presented McDonagh with a certificate of recognition and appreciation for the work he has done in this community. Last month McDonagh was diagnosed with terminal cancer.

The news not only sent shockwaves through the club, but also throughout the community, as past students gathered to honour him earlier this week, including world champion swimmer Brent Hayden and world champion karate competitor Shaun Dhillon.



**McDonagh with Mission Mayor James Atebe after ceremonies honouring the long-time karate teacher in October.**

"I know he's touched many, many people in the community," said Mayor James Atebe, who led the presentation. "He's an inspiration and a leader."

The district will recognize other leaders in Mission at a ceremony on October 25, but it couldn't wait until then to tell McDonagh how much all the work he's done means to everyone.

"For more than 20 years he's committed his life and training to the community and karate," said Atebe. "Karate has been a way of life for him, a culture. He's inspired so many. The youth in our community are better off because he chose to live in this community."

However, he couldn't have done it alone, Atebe continued. "Every one of us that contributes to the community can't do it alone. We need our family to help."

Atebe thanked McDonagh's wife, children and grandchildren for "loaning him to us."

Although McDonagh is stepping down from instruction, he is passing on what he has built to his students.

"Tom's legacy will go on," said Atebe as he presented McDonagh with the coveted award, and the crowd rose to their feet to show him their appreciation. — Carol Aun, Mission City Record

## Rébecca Khoury first woman to head NKA

Rébecca Khoury of Montreal is the new president of the National Karate Association (NKA). She is the first woman and first Quebec resident to hold the position as well as the youngest president in the association's history.

Khoury will combine duties as president of Karate Québec and the national association

"I felt there was a wind of change," said the former high performance athlete. "I have a lot of support. I'm proud that all four members of my team were named to the board of directors."

"Everything must be redone," she continued. "There's a heavy workload. We also have to polish our international image." The NKA has 14,000 members across the country, almost half from Quebec.

Khoury holds a Masters in business administration from Concordia University. She retired from the sport as a competitor in 2002.

## The Search Is On for the Chunky MVC: Most Valuable Coach

### New partnership brings opportunity for honours

The Coaching Association of Canada (CAC) is thrilled to announce to all those who have taken a National Coaching Certification Program workshop its new partnership with the Campbell, Chunky brand.

This partnership kicks-off with the Chunky MVC: Most Valuable Coach contest in which sport organizations can invite their teams and communities to nominate dedicated coaches who make a real difference.

This campaign is designed to give and share the recognition great coaches deserve.

Each year, thousands of coaches selflessly give of themselves to continually improve their team, their sport and their community, and Campbell/Chunky and CAC want to recognize that effort.

The winner will receive the Chunky MVC Tribute Day to be featured on TSN, among other prizes.

If you know a coach that deserves

recognition for the outstanding work they do, then go to [www.chunky.ca/mvc](http://www.chunky.ca/mvc) and nominate that coach to be the Chunky MVC.

Get your printable poster with all of the details here. Print some off and post them in your sports community! Let your friends, family, teammates, and sport organizations know about the contest and help CAC and Chunky shine the spotlight on our great coaches. Invite them to nominate their most valuable coach at [www.chunky.ca/mvc](http://www.chunky.ca/mvc)!

CAC is pleased to have a new lead partner in Campbell/Chunky to help raise awareness on the importance of good coaching. This exciting new program would not have been possible without CAC, long-time partner TSN, who will promote and administer the Chunky MVC online contest.

•••

For more information, contact: [chunkymvc@coach.ca](mailto:chunkymvc@coach.ca)

Competing at the Pan-Ams in Chile

# 'I need to go back, I need to win'

By Jusleen Virk

The defining moment that ignited my desire and motivated me towards gold, was the disappointment of the recent year's championship.

I lost the chance at gold by a fatal mistake, stepping out of bounds once too many.

Without a doubt I was upset, yet it did not truly consume me until I watched that same girl fight and win in the finals. That is when I realized how close I had been and what my mistake had really cost me.

Our team was contemplating on whether we would even attend the Pan American Championships the next year, as there could be other beneficial international competitions, but now, this was not an option for me.

While packing up in the change room I told Nicole that I needed to come back and I needed to win. If I had ever absolutely set my mind to something, this was it.

The entire year of training was very different than before, not only was the intensity soaring, but I was pushing myself harder than ever towards my goal.

Training with world champions took the entire dojo to a new level, and drove our bodies to limits we never thought possible.

Getting through two to three trainings a day would have proved considerably more difficult if we did not have the support of our training partners. Andrea and Cody were with me the whole ride.

Not only did we tough it out through training together but they helped carry me over various obstacles that I could not have done alone.

After arriving in Chile, my weight became a substantial issue and a stress on top of the existing anxiety of the tournament.

Andrea and Cody were beyond supportive and were by my side throughout the struggle. Stepping off the scale registered was an incredible feeling; my work had almost paid off.

Seeing my draws detonated my nerves, I was nervous but at the same time excited and ready. I felt as though nothing was missing from this year of preparation and the day of the competition was no different.

Although many issues arose, such as protests delaying my event and the bitterly cold venue, nothing could get in the way.

Andrea was, like always, there, to warm me up and maintain my mindset.

As soon as my division was called and I saw my opponents a million thoughts were racing through my mind. Doubt was one of them, however it was quickly stomped out, knowing I had many special people behind me, supporting me.

From the moment I stepped on the mats to the moment the referee calls yame, my mind was calm. Apart from many other fighters, my strength is my seeming lack of emotion.

Sandeep and Nicole remain my strong base while I fight. Any confusion or doubt and I could look and listen to them to clear it. Everything that went on inside me during my final match is a blur.

Walking off the mat, embracing my proud friends and coaches, and knowing that I had reached my goal was, and still is, an unexplainable feeling.



Jusleen Virk (centre) with training partners Andrea and Cody.

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# Training, competing in Portugal

By Dan Wallis

Karate followers of Tatsuo Suzuki gathered in Braga, Portugal this past July to train with their sensei for three days and also to compete in the 5th Wado International Karate-do Federation World Championships.

Competitors from 27 countries attended this event surpassing even the highly successful World Championships in 2005 in Dallas, Texas.

Jeric Ross of Campbell River won a silver medal in kata for the 16/17 division and placed fifth in kumite. Sam Shaffie from Ontario fought very well and just missed out on a medal in the Open division.

At the World Congress meeting Suzuki Sensei began his speech by saying, "I'm back from Hell," referring to the heart attack he suffered three and a half years ago.

The recovery he has made is nothing short of miraculous as he is back in his karate Gi doing what he loves: passing on the teachings of Ohtsuka Sensei to followers of Wado Ryu Karate. Sensei concluded his speech by saying that he has no plans to retire: he only wants to keep training.

What made the trip to Portugal extra special for the B.C. participants was that each took a family member with him to this World Championships. Jeric was accompanied by his father Barry, Brian Simmons took his 85-year-old father Geoff, and I took my youngest daughter, Kaylee.

What times, what memories! We are looking forward with great enthusiasm to the next World Championships, in Norway in 2011.



**Suzuki Sensei teaching kata: Team Canada members: Sam Shaffie-Ontario, Ashely Power-Nova Scotia, Laurel Hache-Nova Scotia, Jeric Ross-BC, Brian Simmons (coach)-BC, Dan Wallis (coach)-BC, Suzuki Sensei (seated)**

**KARATE ON THE MATS**



**FAR LEFT: Silver medalist Jeric Ross on the podium in Braga, Portugal.**

**NEAR LEFT: Dan Wallis and his daughter, Kaylee, enjoy the Portuguese sunshine.**

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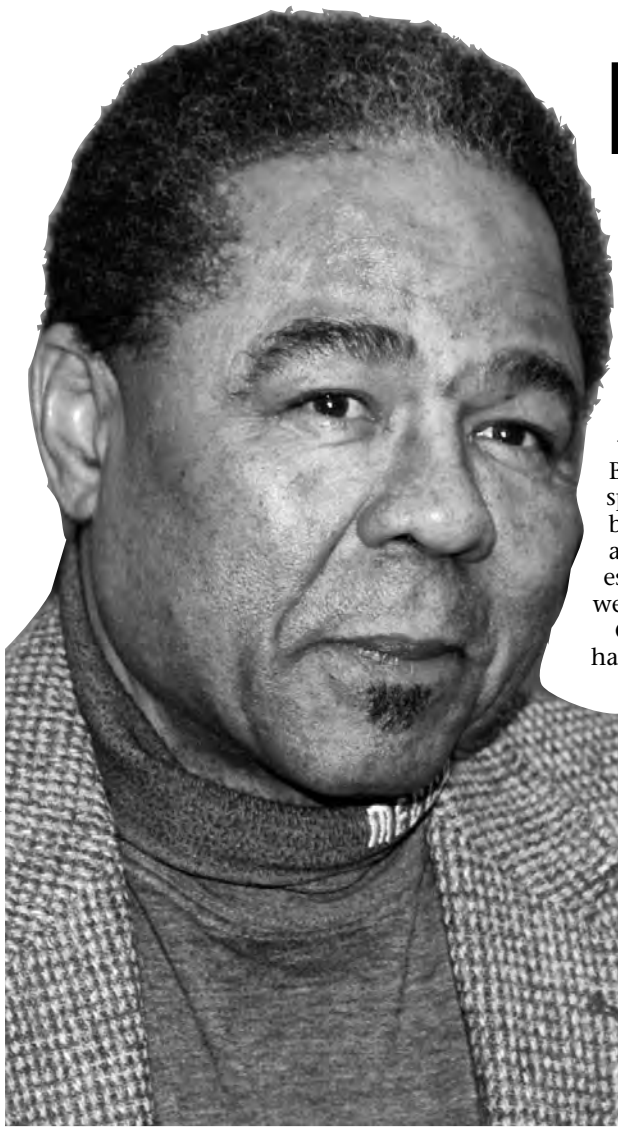
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# KBC's first executive director retires

By Jean Sorensen

James Johnson, Karate B.C. Executive Director, will retire at the end of the year, finishing a career with the provincial association that spans three decades and efforts to forge a professional organization from a concept.

Johnson, a 1991 inductee into Canada's Karate Hall of Fame, said: "Once we got into Sport BC, we were able to see what other organized sports were doing and got ideas from them. We began having organized annual awards banquets and awards. We were also able to find other sources of funding to help our athletes and programs as we began seeing what others were doing."

Originally focused on competition, KBC today has broadened to include coaches training and certification, high-performance training for athletes, high school credits for teens that participate in karate programs, and KidSport, which provides funding for children wanting to participate in sports.

"We are more professionally run now," says Johnson, adding that this professional structure is also the framework for ensuring a fair and impartial treatment for all members within Karate BC.

"What I have tried to do with the organization is play fair and ensure that it does not play any favorites. Today, we have clear policies that apply to all situations and that we can rely upon in given situations to ensure fairness."

Ensuring a level playing field has been a

core value for Johnson, a former University of California student who attended anti-war demonstrations during the Sixties, only to be struck by a police officer's baton in the stomach.

That strike launched his karate career, first studying with Bill Burke (a Hidetaka Nishiyama student) in Santa Barbara in 1969.

Johnson was also president of the university's black student union and that was enough to make him a police target to hassle. Usually, once a month, he recalls. After a visit to Canada to see an alumni friend, he immigrated in 1970 to Vancouver, never looking back. (See Norma Foster's story on Johnson below).

In Canada, he worked with problem youth as a childcare worker and later started a landscaping business and continued studying karate, making an indelible mark.

He trained with Hidetada Narumi, received Shodan in 1973, ascending to Rokyū dan in 2002.

In 1975, 1976, and 1977, he was the Canadian kumite champion, an era before weight classes were established.

In 1980, he coached the Canadian team bound for Germany. And, in 1984, he won, for the fourth time, the title of men's kumite champion and retired from competition. He remains the only individual to hold the title four times, with the last victory at the age of 39.

A year later, he began working for KBC as a Program Coordinator and in 1986, spent eight months (unpaid) as the Executive Director.

In 1987, with the help of Mark Stacey, a full-time paid position was created. It was an exciting time

as there was a feeling of creating a new entity for karate that unified many of the styles and groups.

"At the beginning, all senior senseis had a sense of purpose and a sense of working together and cooperation," he said. "I started to see outside my own style and experience other styles of karate and their techniques."

This sense of unity extended beyond the organization in camaraderie. Dojos of different styles would get together for Christmas parties.

Mentors that Johnson credits for shaping his views on karate today include senseis Hidetada Narumi and David Akutagawa. He credits Masami Tsuruoka (known as the father of Canadian karate) with encouraging local senseis to work together within an association.

"Akutagawa was one of the senior senseis who had a deep sense of integrity," he says.

The experience of travelling internationally to Europe and South America as well as the US and Canada has given Johnson the opportunity to gain insight into how many countries and governments approach karate today.

At one time, BC dominated Canadian competition, but today Quebec and Ontario lead, mainly because of provincial policies rewarding medal winners.

Other South American countries have emphasized financial support for sport, rather than recreational karate and that has enhanced and shaped their stature in international competition.

In B.C. today, Johnson feels that there has been a diversification of karate with only 10-20 per cent of students interested in competing.

But three decades of shaping a karate association has also earned Johnson a wealth of knowledge. He has served as an official provincially, nationally, and internationally.

Positions he has held include: a member of the KBC technical committee, KBC president, NKA president, vice-president of the Pan American Karate Federation, an executive member of the Pan American Karate Federation, and an executive member of the World Karate Federation for six years.

Since 1980, Johnson has maintained a club in Burnaby (where he was inducted into the municipality's sports hall of fame in 2005). He plans to continue teaching karate, spend more time with his wife Bernice and work, perhaps, in sports consulting, part-time.

Reflecting on the years, the development of KBC has been a source of pride but also one of challenges.

"There were some years I enjoyed more than others," admits Johnson, especially as pressure groups formed and attempted to upset the balance that Johnson felt essential in deriving a fair association.

"The last few years have been pretty good. Overall, it's been an interesting experience," he says. "I don't regret the time I have spent here."

A celebration of James' career is planned for mid-January. Please call Mike Scales (604-945-9877) or e-mail Mike at emscales@telus.net, or Bob Howlett (604-970-8048) or e-mail Bob at howlett.richview@telus.net if you would like to speak or make some type of contribution to the evening or if you want to buy dinner tickets.

## Making history: Johnson led fight for gender equity in karate

By Norma Foster

In 1979 I arrived in Vancouver and looked for a Shotokan club.

None was listed in the phone book, except for one that mentioned Shoto Ryu and the contact person was called Hide Narumi. However, the number did not seem to work.

I then called another Japanese name in the phone book, and Mr. Akira Sato gave me a phone number for James Johnson.

I talked to a soft spoken, polite and helpful person on the phone and formed an image based on that conversation.

I ended up going to White Rock to study with Mr. Tak Sameshima, who suggested I attend a course with a clinic given by Mr. Masami Tsuruoka – someone I had never heard of.

Upon entering a hall full of men for the course, acrid smoke drifted out from a small room off the training area. I was introduced to three men who were enjoying cigarettes while drinking who knew

what.

One of them was James. The others were Bino Felix and Masami Tsuruoka.

James looked at me rather sardonically and my image promptly changed from the "nice" person on the phone to this scary, disconcerting individual who nodded from a cloud of smoke.

That impression persisted for a long time as I met Mike Scales at that event and learned that it was not necessary to go from the West End to White Rock for training, I only had to go to Burnaby.

By 1983 I was beginning to make some small successes in competition and was invited to join the Provincial, and subsequently the National team.

James was reaching the end of his competitive career at that time and I came to know him better. I got to know the chip on his shoulder, the insecurities with which he wrestles, the beliefs that he holds close to his heart and his nature, rather than the façade.

I watched him retire, undefeated from

kumite competition, referee, coach, administrator, stop smoking and start a new job.

From running his own landscaping company, he became the first Executive Director of Karate BC. He also became NKA President.

He was inducted into the NKA Hall of Fame and received the prestigious Ross Rumbell President's award for lifetime contribution to the development of karate in Canada.

As NKA president, he accomplished many changes, one of which established the National dan ranking process paving the way for people outside the major styles of karate to join the NKA.

He served as the Canadian delegate to the WKF and PKF and was much respected by those organizations, which in turn increased their respect for Canada.

During those times, James showed that he was not afraid to defend a viewpoint to the death, or to expose a lie.

He came to Canada to escape the poten-

tially permanent and negative consequences of being a black man fighting for civil rights in 1960's California – a battle that one individual could not win.

To me, this is the essence of James. He believes in a cause, and then he will fight and stake his life on it.

The opposite is also true, as he has little time for illusions. One could say that James does not deal in shades of grey, even though such ability could be considered a requirement for a successful administrator.

James was president of the NKA during 1990 when I was told that women could not judge men in WKF competition because it was "against the rules." He did not hesitate to challenge the WKF Referee Council to find this so-called rule, and the rest is history.

Thanks to him, Canada is perceived as a model of gender equity by the rest of the world. He has also supported other women in terms of officiating, coaching and funding and currently serves as a

member of the WKF Gender Equity committee.

He has been very active in ensuring that karate remains included in the BC Winter Games, in having karate recognized by the BC Sport Hall of Fame and the Burnaby Sport Hall of Fame, in establishing policies and procedures that affect and protect us all.

He has devoted countless hours to seeking funding and sponsorship opportunities for Karate BC recreational members, coaches, instructors and athletes and ensuring that such sources will endure.

For example, James was responsible for having karate athletes carded by the federal government and certainly, Karate BC athletes have personally benefited from this.

He established the first Karate BC marketing plan and countless other strategies for growth and set directions that could often be completely neutralized by the wrong board of volunteers.

Thus, one could posit that the job of

Executive Director would demoralize and decimate a weaker spirit. But that is not James.

The contributions that James has made to the growth and development of karate in BC, Canada and the world, should be recognized and appreciated.

Many have tried to minimize, ignore or make light of those contributions and achievements, and appreciation has not always been forthcoming.

However, the facts are undeniable and Karate BC remains one of the best democratic karate models in Canada, in great part thanks to the efforts of one man to fight for what he strongly believed in – the value of karate to change a life forever – for the better.

...

– Norma Foster is a member of the World Karate Federation referee council and the first woman to become an international referee.



# Panamanian judge proves he's worthy

By Norma Foster

I first met Jaime Cardenos of the Panama Karate Federation at the PKF Referee Course in Caracas, Venezuela, May 2008.

He was already a certified Central American Referee A and a PKF Kumite Judge C. He was attempting an upgrade to Judge B.

The examiners evidently considered that he was worthy of an upgrade, having shown without a doubt that he could make good decisions with a fast reaction time.

Being in the same ring as Jaime for three days provided ample opportunity to confirm that the examiners were correct.

What makes Jaime so interesting is that he judges international competitions single-handedly.

That's right.

He uses one hand to manipulate both the red and the blue flag for all gestures.

Jaime started karate in 1984 for reasons of self-discipline and to learn how to defend himself, since he was born with a left arm



**Jaime Cardenos of Panama was successful in achieving his PKF Kumite Judge B rating, proving that karate is for everyone with talent, drive and desire.**

truncated just below the elbow.

As time marched on he became immersed in karate and is presently 3<sup>rd</sup> Dan in Shotokan.

He started officiating in 2002 and attended his first international course in Honduras, where Mr. Katsutaka Tanaka of Anchorage, Alaska encouraged him to show that his ability to judge competition was just the same as – or better than – anyone else's.

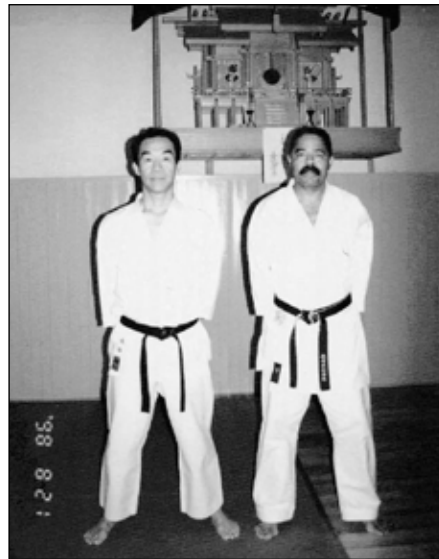
He became interested in refereeing because he enjoys tournaments, and has received much positive encouragement from Mr. Tanaka as well as Mr. Javier Mantilla, PKF Referee Council Chair, both of who Jaime holds in high regard for their willingness to give him a chance.

His advice for the able-bodied? Teach handicapped people all aspects of karate just like everyone else.

His advice for the handicapped? Avoid developing an inferiority complex based on a disability and follow your dreams.

Sage advice for all of us indeed.

## James Johnson in photos



**A photo or two from James Johnson's long career as both a competitor and leader in karate, including (far left) a rare shot of a green-belted James from a few years back.**



# Kanazawa seminar

July 4, 5, and 6 in Nanaimo

by Linda Deugau,  
Nanaimo Shotokan Karate-Do

Nanaimo Shotokan Karate-Do and ShotoCanada hosted Kancho Kanazawa, 10th Dan, and his son, Nobuaki Sensei, 6th Dan for a weekend seminar July 4 to 6.

This was the first time in over 30 years Kancho had taught in western Canada.

Kancho and Nobuaki arrived on Monday, June 30th and were guests of Sam McGee, the founding Sensei of Nanaimo Shotokan Karate-Do and his wife, Inge on Gabriola Island. Sam and Kancho have been friends for over 30 years and first met in Germany when Sam was stationed there with the armed forces.

Kancho and Nobuaki settled in very quickly on Gabriola Island, and spent some time discovering the island where they enjoyed the wildlife, and especially the eagles and deer, a great deal.

Sam and Sensei Nairn Semple also took them sightseeing during the week to Butchart Gardens and to see the incredible trees at Cathedral Grove. They were well rested for instructing the weekend seminar.

The seminar included 100 karatekas (almost all Shotokan stylists) from Vancouver Island, all over B.C., and as far away as Whitehorse, Yukon Territories.

It was fascinating to see Kancho and his son work together teaching, as they seemed to be able to sense each other's needs at all times.

Friday night consisted of two hours of training; Saturday and Sunday each had four hours of instruction. There was a good balance of kihon, kata, and kumite, and everyone enjoyed each and every minute. This was the opportunity of a lifetime for many of the participants to train with a living legend of the karate world.

Saturday night, Sandan Doug Rathy and his wife Ruth hosted a BBQ at their home. Many seminar participants took the opportunity to enjoy the social time, and have some one-on-one conversation with Kancho and Nobuaki Sensei.

During the evening, Sensei Nairn Semple presented gifts of a carved and painted First Nations Talking Stick to Kancho, and a carved and painted plaque of a Killer Whale to Nobuaki.

Over the course of the weekend participants took many photographs and some video. There was also time set aside for autographs as well. Kancho and Nobuaki were more than accommodating and stayed until the last book, photo, or T-shirt was signed.



From left, Nobuaki Kanazawa, 6th dan; Doug Rathy, 3rd dan; Sam McGee, 4th dan; Kancho Kanazawa, 10th dan; and Nairn Semple, 5th dan.

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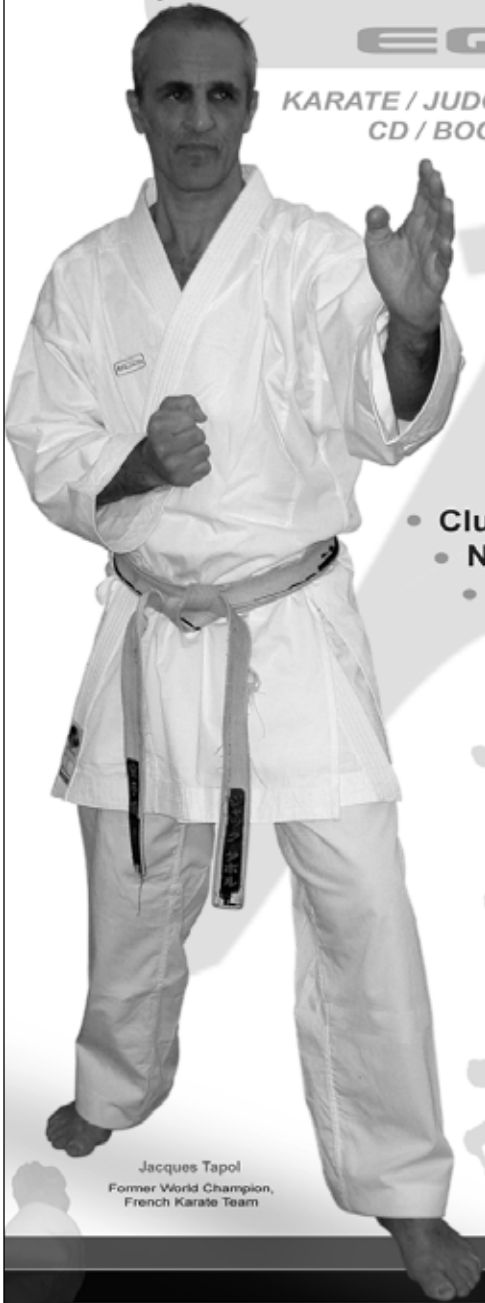
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# IKGA North America Seminar 2008

By Donna Gardecki

This past summer, West Coast Gojukai, in conjunction with the International Karatedo Gojukai Association (IKGA) of Canada, hosted the North America Seminar 2008.

Goshi Yamaguchi Shihan (8th dan) was our special guest instructor along with his assistant Shigeki Yamada Shihan (7th dan). Yamaguchi Shihan is the president of the IKGA. Also assisting with instruction was Canada's Shibuchō, John Priegert Shihan and from the USA, Ian McGarity Shihan.

Friday morning started early with the instructor class at my dojo in Coquitlam – West Coast Gojukai. Twenty IKGA instructors were in attendance and we were able to train hard for three hours (in the heat).

How we all fit into that small space I am not sure but everyone seemed to be aware of where everyone else's feet were going and no one got injured.

Yamaguchi Shihan said the space was "just right."

Lunch was delivered, courtesy of West Coast Gojukai. Meetings in the afternoon took us to 3:30 p.m. It was quite a rush to get to SFU with all the registration stuff for 5:00 p.m. Friday night. However, with help, we managed.

Thanks to some helpful colored belts, Master Gogen Yamaguchi (whose picture I forgot at the dojo) made it to the training just in time to sit at Shomen where he always is.

"Stuff" just always seems to happen



**Participants in the workshop got a good workout, and a chance to relax and enjoy the company of Goshi Yamaguchi Shihan, as well.**

at the last minute – doesn't it?

Training during the weekend was fabulously hot and wonderful. The grading on Saturday night was long (5:15 – 10:00 p.m.), hot and probably stressful for most. I was so tired and full of camp "stuff" that the exam was a welcome relief.

I didn't have to think, just to work hard and spill my technique onto the mat (ok, a couple of stressful bits).

The training weekend ended with the open class (thanks to all of you Karate BC members who came to enjoy

the class) and a demonstration from members of the University of Alberta's dojo and Edmonton's Women's dojo.

A second demo was from Yamaguchi Shihan, Yamada Shihan and myself (eek..). I wasn't sure I was going to pull that one off. However, with a lot of help, I managed.

The seminar formally ended with the banquet dinner on Sunday night with presentations for all those passing their exam and food enough for everyone.

There were 98 people at the banquet – a wonderful group of people!!

All went very well and we have many people to thank for their endless support and words of encouragement, especially the many members of West Coast Gojukai who helped with this event.

Thank you to Yukiko Sensei from Calgary for her support with translations, Rob Richardson Sensei for his work on the beautiful program, Priegert Shihan and

his dojo for the wonderful cloth bags, Ron's Auto in Yellowknife for the pens, West Coast Gojukai for the instructor's class lunch, and junior karateka, Duncan and Calum Scott, for the pipes and drums performance just prior to the opening class.

Yamaguchi Shihan and Yamada Shihan had a nice three days of resting, sight-seeing and shopping after the seminar and left happy (I think) and rested (I hope).

Overall, it was a great event – one of the highlights of my karate life so far.

## Gold, bronze medals from Junior Pan-Ams

Results of the Junior Pan American Championships in Chile:

**Josephine Shiu** won a bronze medal in the 14/15 girls kata division.

She won several tough matches before losing a close one to Peru in the semi-final.

She did an excellent job in the recharge.

**Cody Martin** won a bronze medal

in the 16/17 boys -61kg division. He won 4 matches, and lost a very close match against Venezuela in the semi-final.

**Jusleen Virk** won a gold medal in the 16/17 girls -48kg division.

She needed 4 matches to win the gold, including an overtime match against Chile and a very close match against Ecuador in the final.

This is only the second gold medal

BC has won in kumite in the history of the Junior Pan Ams, and the first in ten years.

Congratulations, Jusleen.

Andrea Maikawa, Reuben James, Victoria Barusic, Valentina Zolotorova, Aishah Muhommad and Desmen Jaldbert also did a great job representing BC and Canada at this event.

– Sandeep Gill

# My Winter Games experience

## Representing Zone 5 and West River Karate

By Avneet Matharu

From the moment we participated in the opening ceremonies to the moment we marched through the Gym door, I knew this tournament was definitely unlike any other Saturday tournament I have ever attended.

We came in representing Zone 5, yet my heart and soul was West River Karate.

The drive and fire in me was building up. I had a volcano in my stomach ready to erupt and at that moment I was starving for that elusive gold medal at the palm of my hands.

It was quite an experience staying with Zone 6 and the coaches. We had a lot of laughs and a lot of fun; like we had our fair share of pranks and had pranks being pulled on us. But Zone 5 dominated the pranks.

It was obvious that the best of each zone came together to compete for that gold medal, and I knew that some of them were going to give 110 per cent, but I was determined to give a lot more than the others.

In my first round of Kata, it was a smooth sail but as I advanced it became more difficult. My three Kata choices were Wankan, Matsumura Rohai, and Juroku.

I went through eight rounds of kata and I was in the Kata finals. It came down to the two best for gold. Thien Nguyen (West River Karate) and I would go for gold on Sunday

After the Kata round was over I was changed and geared up for Kumite. I walked over to Sensei Kenny Lim and he gave me the pep talk of my life. "Avneet you can do it, I know you can. Just listen and don't do anything stupid." I listened (for the first time). I took my first fight too easy, my fighting was very crappy for the first minute, then I literally kicked it into overdrive and after that I was unstoppable. With Sensei Kenny and Sempai Cindy yelling at me, I was working like a well-oiled machine.

Most of my opponents were my size but man, some of them were huge! I was not intimidated by their size and they fell one by one.

One of my hardest matches was between Thien because he knew most of my moves. Instead of fighting aggressive I fought smart. The match could not have been closer at 8-6. I won and I was moving on to the finals between Paulo Santillian (Kim-

eru Karate) and me.

For team Kumite my teammates were Thien and Paulo. We were all pumped up like we had an over-dosage of Red Bull or something. I was first up at bat. None of my fights lasted over 30 seconds. During one of my fights, my opponent took a cheap shot at me and after the referee said yame (stop/end) I kicked him. Man that was the best feeling ever!

Thien made mincemeat out of his opponent. We only needed two wins to advance and we did it. Paulo stood on the sidelines taking notes.

We won the Team Kumite and we were on our way to the finals. Ush-aaay!!!

My opponent for gold was none other than Thien. We are from the same Dojo. This was going to be the battle.

It was the kata finals and it was between Thien and me. Thien did Niseishi

Feeling super confident I did my bread and butter Matsumura Rohai. It was not enough as Thien took gold.

During the Kata finals you could hear a pin drop, with only one ring for both the boys and girls. It was very eerie.

It was a daring match between Paulo and me. We were both very aggressive and I took the gold medal.

Team Kumite was the best of all. We must have been the smallest team there and the Island had their giants. We won every round. In one match my opponent poked me in the eye and I got mad but ended up winning. It is true that the taller they are the harder they fall.

To the surprise of everyone we took the gold.

Thien and I have always split first and second for as long as I can

remember; it was only fitting that we split gold in Kata and Kumite. Even though we have fought fiercely with one another, our friendship has strengthened with respect for each other's abilities. I am proud to have competed against and with Thien.

I cannot forget our third member of West River. Even though I was focused with the tasks at hand I could hear that Victoria Barusic (West River Karate) was doing great in her ring with her Kata and Kumite matches. She had a few great battles and came up on top as well.

The three of us put on School of Karate Excellence for everyone to see and admire. We each took home three medals and it really felt great.

It was a great experience from the moment I was on the bus to the time we left. It was an experience I will never forget and am proud to have shared it with Thien and Victoria.

I want to thank Sensei Kenny, Sempai Cindy, Sempai Andrew, Thien, and Victoria, and the parents who came and cheered us on.

I could hear Randy (Thien's Dad) and my dad (Paul) cheering on Thien and me together when we were not competing against one another.

Thien and I cheered one another on as well. We all cheered Victoria.

I am grateful to have experienced the BC Winter Games with all my friends and family.

I am proud to have represented West River Karate and Zone 5, and showed the rest of BC that we are the Best of the Best. .... On to the Nationals.

*(Avneet Matharu is the 2008 BC Winter Games Kumite Champion and the 2008 12-13 Wado-Ryu World Championships Bronze Medalist.)*



**Vancouver Island referees were out en masse for the Victoria International Karate Tournament.**

# A new executive director for KBC

value to individual members and clubs for belonging to Karate BC. Bob is interested in helping clubs look closely at how to operate their clubs for a profit as well as look carefully at today's market and how Karate BC clubs can occupy a greater share of this market. He has exciting ideas relating to the needs of today's youth and adults and

how we best can tailor our programs to meet these needs.

Bob and James will be working together in January: Bob as Executive Director and James as consultant to Karate BC to ensure a smooth transition as Robert needs to get acquainted with the provincial sport system in British Columbia.

I invite all Karate BC members to embrace this transition period with the spirit of goodwill, openness and growth, and to make sure you introduce yourself to our new Executive Director and make him welcome.

Respectfully yours,  
**Dan Wallis**

## NCCP Course Schedule

### Competition - Introduction Part A

Modules Included in this package - Make Ethical Decisions, Planning a Practice and Nutrition \*\*If you are required by your sport to take only specific multi-sport modules and not the full Part A or B package, please contact the CABK to request module specific courses in your area.

Jan 9, 10, 2009	Vancouver	Field Hockey BC (open to all sports)	(604) 737-3145
Jan 10, 11, 2009	Vancouver	Langara College	(604) 323-5322
Jan 17, 18, 2009	Surrey	Tong Louie YMCA	(604) 575-9622
Jan 30, 31, 2009	Kelowna	Pacific Sport-Okanagan	(250) 469-8852
Jan 30, 31, 2009	Penticton	Pacific Sport-Okanagan	(250) 469-8852
Feb 7, 8, 2009	Kamloops	Pacific Sport-Interior	(250) 828-3583
Feb 7, 8, 2009	Victoria	Pearkes Recreation Centre	(250) 475-5400
Feb 13, 14, 2009	New Westminster	Douglas College	(604) 527-5472
Feb 27, 28, 2009	Kelowna	Pacific Sport-Okanagan	(250) 469-8852
Mar 7, 8, 2009	Vancouver	Langara College	(604) 323-5322
Mar 21, 22, 2009	Surrey	Tong Louie YMCA	(604) 575-9622
Mar 27, 28, 2009	Prince George	Pacific Sport-Northern BC	(250) 960-5348
Apr 17, 18, 2009	New Westminster	Douglas College	(604) 527-5472
Apr 18, 19, 2009	Vancouver	Langara College	(604) 323-5322
May 2, 3, 2009	Victoria	Pearkes Recreation Centre	(250) 475-5400
May 30, 31, 2009	Surrey	Tong Louie YMCA	(604) 575-9622
Jun 12, 13, 2009	New Westminster	Douglas College	(604) 527-5472

### Competition - Introduction Part B

Modules Included in this package - Design a Basic Sport Program, Teaching and Learning and Basic Mental Skills \*\*If you are required by your sport to take only specific multi-sport modules and not the full Part A or B package, please contact the CABK to request module specific courses in your area.

Jan 10, 11, 2009	Vancouver	Field Hockey BC (open to all sports)	(604) 737-3145
Jan 17, 18, 2009	Vancouver	Langara College	(604) 323-5322
Jan 31, Feb 1, 2009	Surrey	Tong Louie YMCA	(604) 575-9622
Feb 13, 14, 2009	New Westminster	Douglas College	(604) 527-5472
Feb 28, Mar 1, 2009	Kelowna	Pacific Sport-Okanagan	(250) 469-8852
Mar 7, 8, 2009	Kamloops	Pacific Sport-Interior	(250) 828-3583
Mar 7, 8, 2009	Victoria	Pearkes Recreation Centre	(250) 475-5400
Mar 14, 15, 2009	Vancouver	Langara College	(604) 323-5322
Apr 4, 5, 2009	Surrey	Tong Louie YMCA	(604) 575-9622
Apr 17, 18, 2009	New Westminster	Douglas College	(604) 527-5472
Apr 25, 26, 2009	Vancouver	Langara College	(604) 323-5322
May 1, 2, 2009	Prince George	Pacific Sport-Northern BC	(250) 960-5348
May 30, 31, 2009	Victoria	Pearkes Recreation Centre	(250) 475-5400
Jun 12, 13, 2009	New Westminster	Douglas College	(604) 527-5472
Jun 13, 14, 2009	Surrey	Tong Louie YMCA	(604) 575-9622

### Theory Level 3

Jan 17, 24, 31 & Feb 7, 2009	Abbotsford	PacificSport - Fraser Valley	(604) 557-4019
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The KARATE BC NEWSLETTER is printed and published

by Infigo Imaging, 150-3820 Cessna Drive,

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## Calendar of Events

### 2009

Jan 11	Zone 5 Karate BC Provincial Qualifier	Capilano University, 2055 Purcell Way, North Vancouver, BC	Andreas Kuntze @ 604-321-1815
Jan 17	Shito-Ryu Seiko-Kai 39th Annual Beach Practice	English Bay, Vancouver, BC: 12 noon to 1:00 pm	Andreas Kuntze @ 604-321-1815
Jan 18	Zone 6 Training Session & Officials/Scorekeeping Clinic	TBA	Jacque Smith
Jan 18	Zone 3 Karate BC Provincial Qualifier	Rick Hansen Secondary School Gym, 31150 Blueridge Dr, Abbotsford, BC	Donna Gardecki @ 604-936-9067
Feb 7	Sato Cup 2009	BCIT, 3700 Willingdon, Burnaby, BC	Andreas Kuntze @ 604-321-1815
Feb 21	Zone 4 Karate BC Provincial Qualifier	Burnsview Secondary School, 7658 - 112th Street, Delta, BC	Bob Mooney @ 604-525-0480
Feb 28	Zone 6 Karate BC Provincial Qualifier	Carihi Secondary School, 350 Dogwood St, Campbell River, BC	Dan Wallis @ 250-923-3916
March 7	Zone 2 Karate BC Provincial Qualifier	Immaculata Regional High School, 1493 KLO Road, Kelowna, BC	Elizabeth Wijnstra @ 250-765-5853
March 7	36th Steveston Invitational Karate Tournament	Steveston Martial Arts Centre, Richmond, BC	Takeshi Uchiage @ 604-272-4660
May 9 - 10	2009 Karate BC Provincial Championships	BC Institute of Technology, 3700 Willingdon, Burnaby, BC	James Johnson @ 604-333-3610
Aug 5 - 6	2009 World Police and Fire Games Karate Competition	Bill Copeland Arena, Burnaby, BC	James Johnson @ 604-333-3610

## Karate on IOC short list again

Karate has been once again selected on the short list of the International Olympic Committee and, along with four other sports, it will be examined by the IOC Executive Board for inclusion in the Olympic Programme.

The IOC session that will take place in Copenhagen in October 2009 will review the Olympic Games Programme and will decide on the inclusion of new sports.

The IOC Sports Director, Mr. Christophe Dubi, has sent a letter to the WKF President, Mr. Espinos, congratulating him for the tremendous work accomplished in completing the relevant questionnaire for IOC Recognised International Federations.

## Please note our new address



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