

WHY BOW ?

A martial arts instructor of our acquaintance recently stopped by and told us that the trouble with the Oriental martial arts is that they are too orientalized. "We Canadians don't understand why we should begin and end workouts with a bow, and very few of us are interested in bushido philosophy. We are in Canada, man, not in Old Japan," he expounded. "What counts here is winning and making some dough. Let's leave the bowing and the rest of the rituals to the Orientals!"

Our response was simple and succinct: If it is too great a chore to bow and to understand the philosophy of the martial arts, take up a less taxing sport. Karate, judo, aikido, kendo and kung-fu are, after all, Oriental names, and as long as we practice the arts they describe, we should be obliged to observe their etiquettes as well. If our friend wants to forsake the rituals, he need only coin another name for what he practices.

He shrugged his shoulders at this suggestion and replied that no one would patronize his jodo if he change the name, since no one would recognize it.

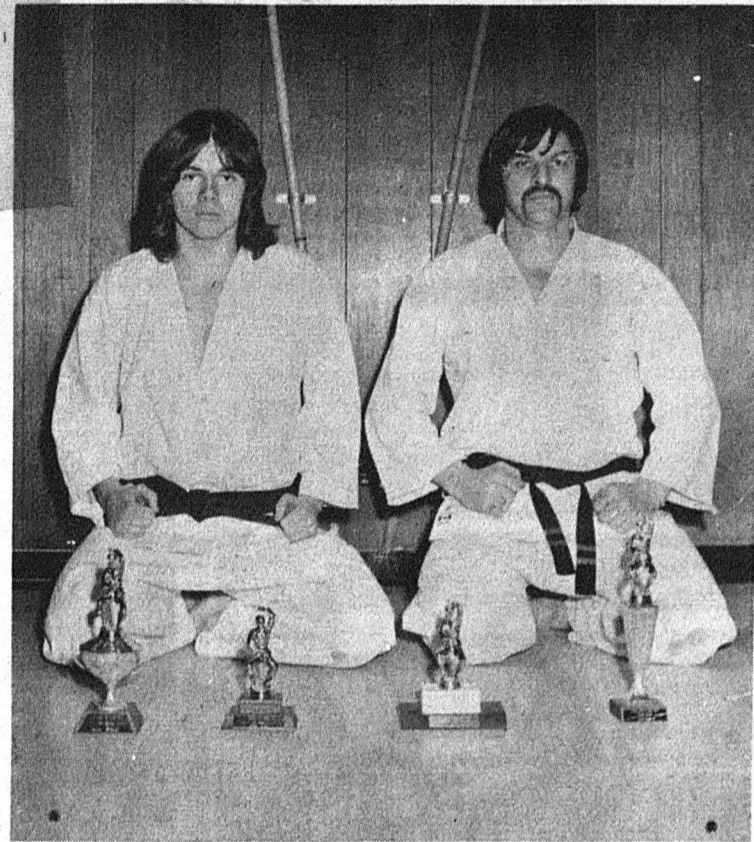
It is true that rituals sometimes seem cumbersome, even to the point of diminishing a sport's excitement, but they are a part of practically every sport, especially if its origin is Asian. The ritual attached to sumo wrestling, for instance, is so long and laborious that it adversely affects sumo attendance today. Spectators are gradually deserting the sport. But sumo is an exception as far as ritual is concerned. In judo or karate, it takes only a second to bow before competing. This shouldn't effect the excitement of the sport. In boxing, we expect some sort of acknowledgement when the boxers touch gloves before combat. Even in the other popular sports in Canada we see a ceremonial toss of the coin or the players shaking hands before the game.

Bowing seems odd to us simply because we are not accustomed to it. Surely our embracing, backslapping, even our handshaking, is just as alien to the Oriental. It's purely a matter of custom. In the martial arts, bowing may mean one of several things: you bow to show respect to your opponent; you bow to show respect to the art; and you bow to show respect to your sensei (instructor) and the osensei (founder).

One kung-fu student mentioned to us that, although he doesn't really care for the Japanese martial arts, he credits the Japanese with integrating ethics into their arts, and aspect which the Chinese sifu traditionally ignored. "Kung-fu students in China called their sifu 'Old Man' and other less printable names," he revealed. "But this is unheard of in a Japanese dojo."

We are convinced that one reason thousands of Canadians have been drawn to Oriental martial arts is because they embody deep tradition of a kind that is becoming scarce in our society today. Statistics show that the Oriental martial arts are still among the largest organized participating sports in Canada. Why? Because parents still want their children to recognize the values of respect and discipline. Many parents who have lost control of their children's behavior now look to the sensei for help. Unfortunately, they seek this assistance at a time when too many American sensei are abandoning or slighting the Oriental traditions. What remains is an empty art, and art without substance, and a danger to the practitioner.

Sensei Supeene
third degree black belt



3rd degree black belt - Sensei Supeene Sr.
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\$ 100.00	1 st. prize, male	\$ 50.00	2 nd. prize, male
\$ 100.00	1 st. prize, female	\$ 50.00	2 nd. prize, female

Classes will be held every Wednesday evening from 7 p.m. to 11 p.m. and on Saturday mornings from 9 a.m. to 12 noon

ATTENTION - Notice of Change

There will be no class of Japanese Style Karate and Chinese Style Gung-Fu held in the Educational Building in the West Gym on Wednesday evening at 7:00 p.m.
Classes will be held every Monday evening at 8:00 p.m. in the New Dance Gym in the Phys. Ed. Bldg. and Saturday mornings at 9:00 a.m. in the West Gym of the Education Building.