

Madison Japanese Karate Club



MJKC Competitors at the 1977 Minneapolis Regionals (l to r): Mike Getlan, Shunsaku Koga, Bill Mahanna, William Lawler, Chris Greene, Tim Spies, Sensei Sugiyama

The Madison Japanese Karate Club has its roots in the 1960's. Here is a recollection of the early days of the club by Mr. Richard Schulz, long time club director:

"The Captain' was an Naval Reserve officer that started the club in Madison at the Old Naval Reserve Armory on East Washington Ave sometime in the early to mid sixties. Absolutely nobody I know can give me his actual name. The club began taking non-reservists after a few years and Ron Wingender trained with them and got his black belt. When I joined the club in the spring of 1971 the club, under Ron Wingender, had about 15 members and Ron was running the club. All the testing of all ranks was done in Chicago under Sensei Sugiyama. Mr. Sugiyama had minimal interest in our group at this time — we just didn't have much to give to

the region.

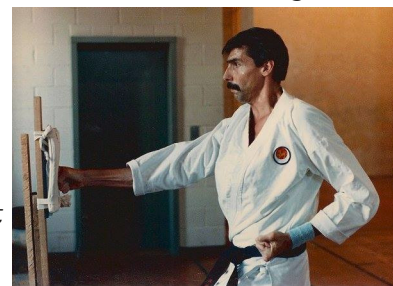
I trained up until just after I graduated. In early 1973 I left for Milwaukee where I trained with the Milwaukee Club (then run by Wayne Plevak and Bill Tetrault). I came back to Madison as a purple belt and shortly after I got my brown belt in late 1975 Ron Wingender left for Chicago. At that point he turned the running of the club over to me and Howard Schleuter (another Brown belt). Howard and I stumbled on as best we could just trying to learn from visiting instructors and keeping the club together.

However, the Naval Reserve folks were getting nervous about the increasing percentage of University students in the club and asked the club to leave. I managed to get us hooked up with the University as a sport club sometime in 1976 (I don't recall the exact date). I finally got my Shodan in October of 1976 and started running classes in Lathrop Room 349. It was a great venue and we grew quickly.

That same fall Mr. Shunsaku Koga tracked the club down. He was a graduate student in sports physiology and had received his Nidan from the JKA in Japan. I invited him to take over as our instructor and he accepted. The only reason I ever got as far in Karate as I did was due to Koga's instruction. Once Koga took over, Sugiyama's attitude toward our club changed. We started to get Sensei Sugiyama to come up to Madison to give exams and clinics. I watched Koga interact with Sugiyama and was able to figure out how to keep his good attention focused on the club.

Koga left in 1979 and I took over as chief instructor. In the fall of 1980 we threw the first of the Madison Invitational tournaments and it was a major success with the competitors and judges. It really was the first tournament any of them had been in that started on time and was organized. Prior to our tournament it was not at all unusual for a tournament's registration to take up the first two to three hours of the tournament (nobody had ever pre-registered for a tournament prior to ours). A tournament that started at 9 am would just be hitting the finals at 9 pm. The competitors referred to the tournaments as 'running on Tokyo time'."

Today the Madison Japanese Karate Club continues to serve the students and staff of the University of Wisconsin-Madison. Our former members can be found from the Northeast United States to California, from Germany to Brazil, and all over the world.



Sensei Schulz



MJKC going strong — spring 2017