

Largest turn out in Minnesota Judo history expected at Regional Tournament

For Immediate Release
October 10, 2009

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[St. Paul, Minnesota] Novice and advanced competitors from all over the state and region as well as Olympic Champions will be on hand in St. Paul at Hamline University on Saturday October 17, 2009 for the annual Land of Lakes Open Judo Tournament. Each year, Midway Judo, Inc., a member of USA JUDO – the Olympic governing body for Judo in the United States hosts the tournament.

Three-time Olympian, Maje Omagbaluwaje will compete, giving martial arts and judo enthusiasts a chance to see world class competitor.

Judo – meaning “the gentle way” is the most widely practiced martial art on earth and is the second most-practiced sport worldwide, behind soccer. According to USA Judo, the American College of Sports Medicine cites Judo as the safest contact sport for children under 13. “Each year, this tournament brings the best judoka together from across the region and we expect the largest turnout we’ve had at a Minnesota tournament”, said Cary Yamanaka, Head Referee and lead sensei of Midway Judo, Inc. “Regional tournaments - like Land Of Lakes - are the start for future Olympians who frankly need as much opportunity to practice as possible, in order to prepare for the national competitions. These events offer that opportunity.”

The tournament matches will last three minutes for juniors and novice level seniors. Advanced judoka will have the standard five minute matches. A match will be won by throwing the opponent to their back or by pinning them for 25 seconds. Also, a match can be won via submission through a choke or joint locking technique (arm-bar). Children are not allowed to apply chokeholds or arm-bars.

Parents who are interested in enrolling their children in a martial art are encouraged to bring their children to watch the tournament in order to gain a better understanding of the potential benefits that judo can have for all ages. The event is free to spectators.

The tournament starts at 11 a.m. for juniors and 1 p.m. for seniors and will take place at the Hamline University Fieldhouse. (Snelling and Taylor) 1536 Hewitt Ave.; Saint Paul, MN 55104. More information as well as entry forms are available at www.midwayjudo.com.

Additional Facts about Judo:

- Jigoro Kano, the founder of judo, developed the first school for teaching judo (the Kodokan) in 1882. Kano spent time seeking the safest techniques and produced a form of martial arts that was designed to be done in a safe manner.
- Judo focuses on two main principles--maximum efficiency and mutual benefit and welfare. These founding principles are designed to develop character and a sense of citizenship, a social characteristic that makes judo unique among other physical activities as well as competitive martial arts.
- Many judoka (a judo player) work out several times a week and the workout is rigorous and has extensive health benefits including teaching the ability to fall correctly, building core muscle and back strength.
- Incorrectly falling is the leading cause of injury for children and adults age 35 and older and Minnesota ranks third in the nation for injurious falls.
- Judo promotes safe falling techniques by subjugating the fall correctly and by reducing fear of falling which can lead to better health outcomes.
- Judo is for all ages and both men and women and includes many practitioners who are 60 plus.
- The oldest judoka in America is Keiko Fukuda who was born in 1913.
- A demonstration of the health benefits of Judo is demonstrated in a recent episode of TPT's Getting There – in which members of the Midway Judo Club discuss the health benefits of Judo to the aging population.
<http://www.mnchannel.org/partners/gettingthere/>

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