

## American Coaching Effectiveness Course for USA Karate Federation - Karate Illustrated

The USA Karate Federation (USAKF) is the United States member for Karate on the United States Olympic Committee. Traditional karate competition, also known as WUKO Karate (after the World Union of Karatedo Organizations), has been accepted into the Pan American Games and has made definite inroads towards future Olympic involvement. USA Karate represents that effort. As the NGB or United States National Governing Body for karate, USA Karate has as one of its stated purposes to provide and coordinate technical information on physical training, equipment design, coaching, and performance analysis, and to encourage and support research, development, and dissemination of information in the area of sports medicine and sports safety. Recognizing that much needs to be done in this area for karate, USA Karate has initiated an instructor's coaching education program for karate instructor/coaches. While USA Karate has a coaching certification program that can lead from local to international coaching licenses, the targets of the USA Karate coaching education program are the local club instructors. Anyone who teaches or helps to teach karate in the dojo as well as lower level students and parents who help train and motivate young karate athletes ready for competition is a candidate for the USAKF Coaching education program.

Why does the USAKF feel a need for the coaching education? Many karate instructors have learned the hard trial and error way about training and preparing karate athletes. In many dojos, the chief instructor does not teach all classes and often times uses lower level black belts and other students to help train and motivate students. There is a privilege and responsibility associated with working with youth and a respect for their endeavor as athletes. Much is expected of the karate coach/instructor. Many individuals help teach karate in the dojos with scant preparation in the sport sciences or no knowledge of how to teach and motivate young people. The USAKF program prepares the coach/instructor for success measured not in just wins, but in impacting youth, role modeling, leading, teaching and motivating. By preparing instructor/coaches to become more effective in working with athletes, instructor/coaches are likely to become more effective, athletes are safer and healthier, lawsuits are less likely and both the instructor and the students have a more rewarding experience.

To be an instructor of youth in our school systems today, proper credentials and certification is required of anyone who is in a position to have influence on the students. Many karate schools try to fill in a perceived gap in what the educational system can provide. Yet the karate school does this without proper training and instructor credentials for those teaching and working with youth. In today's day and age, can a karate school afford to expose itself to liability by using individuals without the minimum education and exposure to proper procedures, first aid knowledge and sports science knowledge? We are not

talking about just the chief instructor who has probably learned much from trial and error, but also the assistant instructors and even under black belt ranks that help teach and work with youth at any level. In the USAKF program, coaching education is designed to provide the basic knowledge and understandings minimally necessary to properly deal with the young athlete.

USAKF has embraced the American Coaching Education Program(ACEP) Leader Level Program as the first part of its instructor/coach education program. ACEP, founded in 1976, integrates current research with applied coaching concerns. The ACEP leader level courses are divided into three programs -- the Sports Science Course, the Sport First Aid Course, and the Sport Techniques and Tactics Course currently in development. The ACEP Sports Science Course deals with coaching philosophy, sports sciences -- psychology, pedagogy, and physiology, and sport management. The USAKF coach/instructor education program uses the ACEP Leader Level Sports Science Course as a starting point. The Sports Science Course is designed, developed, and revised to keep pace with research findings and coaches needs. At a later date the USAKF program will be expanded to include sports medicine, and sport techniques and tactics as well as instruction for "Rookie" coaches.

The ACEP program has many endorsers and among them is the National Federation of High School Associations. According to Don Sparks, assistant executive director of the NFHSA, "We chose ACEP's Leader Level for our national coaching education program (NFICEP) because it was the best program around, it was time-tested, and it was nationally accepted." "ACEP is committed to improving amateur sport by encouraging coaches to embrace the 'athletes first, winning second' philosophy and by providing the education to put that philosophy to work" says Rainer Martens, Ph.D., ACEP Founder.

Providing the best of current research in sports with the knowledge gained from practical coaching experience as well as presenting the functional principles of coaching young athletes the ACEP program is used by many national and Olympic organizations as well as colleges and universities. Organizations using ACEP include:

- The Athletic Congress
- US Gymnastics Federation
- USA Wrestling
- National Federation of State High School Associations
- Boys Club of America
- YMCA's
- Unites States Tennis Association

and over 180+ universities and colleges including Florida State University, Penn State University, University of Northern Colorado, Boise State University, Miami University and more.

The ACEP Leader Level Sports Science Course in place now is designed to help a coach/instructor:

- examine coaching styles and objectives
- develop a functional coaching philosophy
- communicate effectively
- teach move effectively with the four steps to teaching sports skills,
- motivate young athletes by meeting their needs to have fun and feel worthy,
- develop athletes physically through proper training practices
- keep winning in perspective
- motivate athletes
- prevent and detect and handle drug use and abuse
- reduce injuries by managing inherent risks better
- manage their program, their time, and themselves successfully.

USA Karate president George E. Anderson has given ACEP his blessing because "As karate instructors, we tend to think of ourselves as experts not only in karate but in many other things. The average karate instructor has very little training in the sports sciences, yet feels he can train and motivate champions. It is time for karate to continue to study and expand the scientific principles that we are only too quick to point out exist and for which karate is based."

The ACEP Leader Level Sports Science Courses is for national sport organization coaches and even veteran instructors with no coaching courses who want to keep up with the latest practical findings in sports science and sports medicine as well as coaches of developmental programs for Olympic national Governing Bodies. Thus this course is pertinent for every karate instructor, assistant and person involved in educating and developing the youth of our country in karate. Every karate dojo in the country contributes to the national effort of karate education and is part of the development of karate in the United States. The USAKF/ACEP program will provide the necessary information to do the best and most productive job possible.

The Sports Science Clinic requires a total of 8 hours devoted to coaching philosophy, sport science, and sport management material. Essential information that is needed to coach and teach karate effectively. The course is a carefully developed curriculum featuring five videotapes. It is an enjoyable learning experience involving discussions with fellow karate instructors, interesting activities, and opportunities to evaluate teaching skills. After attending the clinic, completing the self-study part of the course, and passing the take-home test, the participant receives a diploma for achievement. Currently certified USAKF/ACEP instructors include George Anderson, Patrick Hickey, Hidy Ochiai, Byron Coleman, Carl Hultin, James Neff, Jesse Mills, and Jeff Ellis.

Anyone can open a dojo and teach karate. There is no way to stop this. Certification of itself as a black belt does not give true teaching credentials or knowledge. Today more and more professionals are required to be certified and to maintain that certification. The karate instructor and anyone who assists in the

smallest way in the dojo should have at a minimum up to date and accurate sports science information. The USAKF/ACEP program goes a long way towards increasing the professionalism in the dojo and can be used to enhance your program over other less progressive and knowledgeable karate schools. Every dojo head, karate instructor or assistant helper in class has a need to understand the principles of coaching or assisting young people to be healthy, productive citizens. Karate provides progressive programs that develop participants' physical, psychological, social and sports related skills. USAKF/ACEP will help these instructors get their programs to flourish and to set young athletes on a lifelong course to enjoy sports and physical education through karate. And if the future is as USAKF predicts, having the proper credentials in coaches education will soon become a necessary part of the karate instructors vitae.

Picture #1: Over 65 Students of Hidy Ochiai recently completed the American Coaches Effectiveness Program at a clinic taught by himself and USAKF Secretary Patrick M. Hickey.

Picture #2: Students at Hidy Ochiai's Karate during a workbook section of the ACEP course.

Picture #3: USAKF Secretary Patrick M. Hickey makes a point at the ACEP Seminar in Binghamton, New York at Hidy Ochiai's Karate.

Picture #4: Instructors at the George E. Anderson Centers for Martial Arts in Akron, Ohio, Completed the ACEP course last February.

Picture #5: USAKF/ACEP certified coaching instructor and USAKF secretary leading discussion during the ACEP course held for instructors at the George E. Anderson Centers for the Martial Arts in Akron, Ohio.