

Ronald K. Bennett

Utah USJJF Regional Representative

Member – US Ju-Jitsu Masters Caucus



Professor Ronald K. Bennett was born in St. Louis Missouri in 1959. In his early youth his family relocated to the suburban communities of East Los Angeles and the San Gabriel Valley California.

The first Martial Arts participation was at age 14 with study to an early intermediate level in Kung Fu San Soo, under the instruction of Mr. Jimmy Woo. Personal teen interests lead away from continued study for a time. Even the minimal training taught Mr. Bennett skills that would prove helpful with the conditions of the East Los Angeles environment of the late 1960's and early 1970's. An altercation in downtown Los Angeles with gang members, following witness of a mugging committed against a woman with a young child, would be one of the first 'real' street situations where martial arts training would prove helpful. Bennett chased the suspects by foot into a nearby sewing factory successfully detaining two of the three. While a factory employee held the captured individuals Bennett continued to pursue the last member of the group. A combat knife was pulled bringing the added threat of a weapon so Bennett dropped back, continuing the pursuit, luckily flagging a Los Angeles County Sheriff's to conclude the arrest. A 'Letter of Recognition' was awarded by the City of Los Angeles.

This, and other personal experiences, brought Mr. Bennett to the realization it was his nature to do all he could to help those who would be bullied, abused or mistreated. Many other situations have required the strength, determination and knowledge learned through the study of Martial Arts.

Black Belt Training, Red Dragon Karate:

Personal training resumed, with the focus of Black Belt rank goals, in Mr. Bennett's mid twenties. At the age of 27, Ron Bennett received the rank of Black Belt 1st degree, from Grandmaster Louis D. Casamassa in the Red Dragon Karate system, headquartered in California. He became an integral part of this system as an instructor under Master David Casamassa and Shihan Chris Casamassa (of motion picture fame with credits including Mortal Combat, Batman, Blade, China O'Brian and many more). Personal training continued with the Casamassa family, and many others affiliated with Red Dragon Karate, and the American Karate & Kung Fu Federation (AKKF). Expanding knowledge and skill was always a focus participating with individuals such as Mike Bernardo, Jason Frank, the original White Power Ranger, Shihan Mike Jablonski, Shihan Rudy Amaya, and Shihan Mohammed Jahanavash.

Following a move to Utah, the Red Dragon Karate, Utah affiliate was opened presenting instruction in American Freestyle unique to the Red Dragon System. Many students enjoyed the knowledge and expertise Sensei Bennett brought to the Martial Arts training opportunities in Utah. Sport karate also got a jump-start since Bennett had much experience both in personal participation and in training for sport karate events. The Red Dragon Open Karate Championship became the sport karate event each year for the area, and had a very successful 6 year annual run.

During these years, Sensei Bennett trained more students to champion status, in the regional Excel Karate League (EKL), North American Sport Karate League (NASKA), and National Black Belt League (NBL) than had even been thought possible. Sensei Bennett finished his teaching career with the Red Dragon System as a 5th Degree with over twelve years of teaching and student competition training.

Though the skills taught within this Freestyle system are very strong, basic system structure and traditional technique were becoming the personal focus of Mr. Bennett. A very difficult decision was made to discontinue participation with

the RDK system and programs. The Utah RDK system was sold and has essentially closed operation. Much respect and gratitude remain for the instructors and training within the Red Dragon System.

New Beginnings:

As a refocus of both professional and personal goals became necessary, Professor Bennett took time to make personal changes. Retirement from police work allowed time to consider many options. Focus on Martial Arts was still most important and an effort to broaden knowledge and training began. Hours were spent reading and training in new areas and areas of limited previous introduction. Traditional forms of TaeKwonDo, Shotokan, Aikido, Judo and others began. Mr. Bennett researched over 150 books and video training tapes including Japan Karate Association Shotokan, Funakoshi Shotokan, John Chung TaeKwonDo, Gracie Jujitsu, Gene La Bell Judo, Ed Parker Kenpo and Al Tracy Kenpo. Martial Arts business instruction by NAPMA, IFC, EFC and others were given much review and consideration.

While a decision to begin again with teaching was yet to be made the creation of a new, traditional, personal improvement system of Martial Arts instruction began. With so much information to use for a base, the many opinions could be evaluated. A conclusion that there is no 'perfect art' allowed a renewed outlook.

Many of the students Mr. Bennett had taught encouraged him to start again. This encouragement accompanied by the love of the art, and sharing this art, somehow would not allow Mr. Bennett to make any choice except to again train students. This time, however, he knew certain elements must be the foundation before teaching could begin.

Review of over twenty-five years of personal Martial Arts training and notes along with new personal commitment to proper moral and ethical standards created that foundation. Positive influences and attitudes found new Martial Arts examples. An introduction to Grandmaster Jhoon Rhee, an individual most inspirational in positive achievement, was the final spark to ignite the flame of a great new program. Grandmaster Rhee encouraged Mr. Bennett to continue training students because of the outstanding TaeKwonDo performance, as well as the personal commitment to honor and truth that was the goal of Bennett.

White Dragons of Bushido is Born:

A Martial Arts system with personal and professional ethics was the foremost focus as an outline began. The system creation included hours of thought and notes, developing training requirement structure, tuition programs, business plans, advertising approaches, advancement and participation programs, and structural Dojo designs.

First was the basic 'Code of Ethics', a guide for each participant to follow to be a better person, friend, family member and citizen. A return to the traditional purpose of Martial Arts training, that of HONOR. Advancement to Black Belt would carry the significant responsibility of advanced physical qualification, mental sharpness and personal integrity. Conduct unbecoming an honored Black Belt would not be tolerated. Leadership by example. Personal conduct with the highest regard for others.

With the lease of a 4000 square foot building in Ogden, Utah, the dream began to take shape. The front area of the location was remodeled into a private instruction area and retail store. The back 3000 foot warehouse area had to be completely finished to become a state of the art Dojo, complete with training bags and equipment, a stereo sound system, weight room and visitor viewing area. A loft was constructed for Black Belt training, complete with training videos and Martial Arts library. Official business operation began September 1, 1998.

With operation just into its fourth year, White Dragons of Bushido proudly supports a martial arts student base of over 350 full time members, with a cardio karate fitness student base of a steady 300-350 members. Overall enrollment has reached almost 800 during the years of operation in the Martial Arts, with 4600 individual participants in fitness kickboxing. Instruction is provided on a full time basis, six days per week. Twenty-eight classes are held weekly, with the average daily attendance at approximately 160 students. Twenty-three Black Belt instructors are available for private and class instruction.

Retail sales of Martial Arts related products to the White Dragon students and individuals and schools in the community average an annual \$40,000 in revenue, with total school revenue increase of over 250% since the first year of operation. A projected fourth year annual revenue of \$280,000 is anticipated.

The War of the Wasatch sport karate tournament is the annual event promoted by Professor Bennett. This event is the largest of it's kind held in the states of Utah, Montana, Idaho and Wyoming each year. Growing each year, for the past three years, both in participation and presentation, 2002 brings the Winter Olympics to Northern Utah requiring this fun and exciting tournament to resume in 2003.

A comprehensive website is under construction that will include information about instructors, training methods and requirements, activities and students.

Personal Martial Arts Recognition:

8th Dan in Taikenjuryu

7th Dan Shihan in the USAKF

6th Dan USKA

5th Dan Red Dragon Karate

ChunKukDo 4th Degree Black

Honorary 4th Degree Black in the Flash Karate Federation

Life Member & Utah Rep., United States Ju-Jitsu Federation (USJJF)

Life Member, & Utah Rep., United States Martial Arts Federation (USMAF)

Professorship PMAA

Yudanshakai Instructor IKA

Instructor of the Year, Excel Karate League, 1996, 2000, 2001.

Hall of Fame, AKKF

Sport Karate #1 Competitive School, 1994, AKKF

Sport Karate Most Winning Instructor 1995-96, AKKF

Tournament of the Year 2000, EKL

IMAC Personal Achievement Award 2000

Promoter of the Year 2001, EKL

Personal Sport Karate Participation

Student Advanced Achievements

White Dragons of Bushido system Black Belts

Matt Johnson - 5th Degree

Andre Williams - 5th Degree

Red Dragon Karate system Black Belts under Professor Ron Bennett

Total - 57

Universal Systems of America Black Belts under Professor Ron Bennett

Total - 33

(older stuff)

The EKL Nationals in 1992 pulled a retired Bennett into Sparring competition where he punched through nine fighters, finally placing 2nd to Eddie 'Flash' Newman of Las Vegas, Nevada in sudden death.

A return to competition in late 1997 found a renewed Bennett successfully defeating all EKL sparring competitors in his division to the final match in Salt Lake City, Utah. The final match placing 2nd, in a controversial call, while battling the long running #1 Jim Dean of Wyoming.

Early the next season, at the request of his students, Bennett competed in the weapons division, winning both of the entered divisions, and participating in Grand Champion division at the age of 40.

TaiKenJuRyu:

A new Marital Arts system was created and founded by Professor Bennett with one of his Black Belt students, Master Bill Bryan in 1994. Mr. Bryan came to study with Mr. Bennett holding previous Black Belts in TaeKwonDo and IKKF Kenpo, under Master Shepherd Nawaii. He studied with Bennett in the Red Dragon System to the level of Black Belt 3rd Degree.

The TKJR system is based on aggressive one punch, one kick, one combination technique then submission by choke or lock. The combination of TaeKwonDo, Kenpo, Judo, and JiuJitsu styles, with techniques of Wado, Isshin and Shito Goju Ryu. The goal was to create a street-smart 'quick defense' style. The system has been tested in full contact situations on the East Coast and in Pennsylvania in sport competition with undefeated results. Master Bryan successfully operates a TKJR training school in the Philadelphia area. Master Bryan enjoys the participation of approximately 100 active Martial Arts students, and also operates a community after school program for area youth.

Other Personal Achievements:

Professor Bennett, although many Martial Arts accomplishments had been achieved, wanted to continue personal learning. He attended and graduated from Weber State University in Ogden, Utah with a CAT 1 Police Officer Degree in criminal justice in 1994. He also graduated from the Salt Lake Police Academy in Salt Lake City, Utah, and the Fred M. House Corrections Academy in Draper, Utah. He is a lifetime member of the Utah Police Officer Association. Special awards in the line of police duty include 'Recognition for Devoted Service', Ogden, Utah. Job assignments in the Utah State Prison and regional county jails would often require the skills of the many years of advanced Black

Belt training. Police service participation spanned over six years with the Ogden City Police Department, Harrisville Police Department and Box Elder County Sheriff Department.