

“Visually Impaired but Physically a Champion”

Judo Visions

Judo — creating a level playing field

VOL 7 #1

Increasing your Dojo enrollments

Blind and visually impaired youth represent an untapped market opportunity for you.



Coach Willy Cahill
CEO & Co-Founder
Blind Judo Foundation

These Games are sometimes confused with “Special” Olympics which are for people with intellectual disabilities



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Judo creates a level playing field where everyone has an opportunity to compete.

Judo events for the blind and visually impaired was introduced at the 1988 Games in Korea. Since the 2000 Games in Sydney, these athletes—called *Paralympians*—have been winning the Gold at Olympic events.

It is significant that a Gold Medal has still eluded the US Olympic Judo Team since it was introduced to competition in 1964.

What is the Paralympics?

Paralympics is the second largest sporting event in the world. They represent an elite multi-sport event for athletes with a disability, such as being blind or visual impaired.

The Olympics and the Paralympics are run by the same organizing committee. Cities hosting the Olympic Games must include the Paralympics. The next major Summer Paralympics will be held in 2008 in Beijing.

Judo and blindness

For the blind and visually impaired, Judo levels the playing field. It provides mental, physical, and emotional opportunities to excel. There are 7 advantages, including:

- *Physical exercise*
- *Confidence building*

- *Character development*
- *Community recognition*
- *Camaraderie*
- *Perseverance*
- *Learning how to fall*

Implications for you

Reaching out to this community as the head instructor or representative from your Dojo not only builds your membership but opens the door to connections between organization and the community that might be interested in supporting your efforts and training.

In each state, for example, there are several organizations that work closely with the blind and visually impaired. Start by exploring:

- *Your State’s Department of Services for the Blind.*
- *National Federation of the Blind*
- *American Foundation for the Blind*
- *American Council of the Blind*

The Blind Judo Foundation, a nonprofit organization was founded in 2005 for the purpose of introducing blind and visually impaired individuals to the sport of Judo and supporting Dojos at the local level. See www.blindjudofoundation.org and www.supportblindjudo.com.

USABA – US Association of Blind Athletes www.usaba.org. Their mission is to increase the number and quality of world class athletic opportunities for Americans who are blind and visually impaired in

several Summer and Winter Olympic sports.

USAJudo – www.usajudo.org is the National Governing Body for Judo in the US and is a member of the USOC, the Pan American Judo Union and the International Judo Federation. This group has the overall authority to govern all aspects of amateur Judo in the US and to select and prepare American teams for international competition.

IBSA – International Blind Sports Association www.ibsa.es/eng. This organization was founded in Paris in 1981 and is registered in Spain to further develop and promote sports for the blind and visually impaired. They provide assistance to the national member organizations on all 5 continents especially to those organizations in developing countries which have been unable to spread the word about Blind sports.

IPC – International Paralympic Committee www.paralympic.org is the international governing body of sports for athletes with a disability and acts as the supervisors and co-ordinates the Paralympic Summer and Winter Games along with other multi-disability competitions, e.g. World Championships.

IJF - International Judo Federation www.ijf.org – this is the international governing body of the Olympic sport of Judo recognized by the IOC (International Olympic Committee). They consist of 187 member National Federations grouped into 5 Continental Unions (Africa, Asia, Europe, Oceania and Pan-American).

Next Steps

The US Paralympic Judo Coach, Willy Cahill, CEO and Co-Founder of the Blind Judo Foundation would like to learn of

your Dojo, your students and their progress. The Foundation is currently seeking sponsors and contributions in supporting blind and visually impaired to be introduced to the sport of Judo. Your suggestions, comments and input are always welcomed. Feel free to contact either Coach Cahill or Ron Peck by calling 425-444-8256 or roncpeck@comcast.net. We want to hear your ideas, suggestions and input.

Upcoming Newsletters

INTRODUCTIONS

Willy Cahill—Former US Olympic Judo Coach and Current US Paralympic Judo Coach

Scott Moore—1st US Paralympic Judo Gold Medal Winner Sydney 2000

Lori Pierce—1st Female US Paralympic Judo Team Member and Silver Medalist Athens 2004

Highlight your Dojo

Contact Ron Peck for details.

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“Success is to be measured not so much by the position that one has reached in life as by the obstacles which he/she has overcome”

George Washington



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