

Japan judo coach bullied female stars

1st February, 2013



A top Japanese judo coach has said he used violence against some of Japan's top judo athletes. The All Japan Judo Federation (AJJF) said it gave head coach Ryuji

Sonoda, 39, an official warning for his actions. It also told Mr Sonoda he would not lose his job but that he must change his coaching style. The AJJF boss Koshi Oozawa told reporters: "We received information that Mr Sonoda, the head coach of the female national team, might have been physically bullying athletes." Sonoda told the Kyodo News Agency: "Until now I have been doing things the way I saw fit, but I will mend the things that need fixing." Japan's Sports Minister Hakubun Shimomura said the coach's actions were unforgivable.

The issue came up after 15 of Japan's top female judo stars wrote a letter of complaint to the Japanese Olympic Committee (JOC) in December. They described Mr Sonoda's bullying tactics. These included slapping the women across the face, kicking and shoving them, and hitting them with wooden swords. He also warned them that he would remove them from his team if they did not do what he wanted. Many of the athletes were on the Japan team at the London Olympics in 2012. The JOC said it was vital to make sure the women could train without being afraid of their coach. A senior JOC official said: "We need to get a proper grip on the situation and train the trainers thoroughly".

Sources: Japan Times / Daily Yomiuri / BBC

Writing

Any sports coach who uses violence to train athletes should be fired. Discuss

Chat

Talk about these words from the article.

judo / violence / warning / coaching style / national team / bullying / unforgivable / letter of complaint / tactics / slapping / London Olympics / being afraid / thoroughly

True / False

- a) A judo trainer bullied some of Japan's top actresses and singers. T / F
- b) The judo trainer did not lose his job for his bullying. T / F
- c) The trainer said he thought he was training his athletes the right way. T / F
- d) Japan's Sports Minister said he would forgive the judo coach. T / F
- e) Over 100 judo stars complained about the coach. T / F
- f) The coach hit women with metal swords. T / F
- g) Many of the women represented Japan at the 2012 London Olympics. T / F
- h) A Japanese Olympic Committee official said trainers needed training. T / F

Synonym Match

- | | |
|-------------|---------------|
| 1. coach | a. caution |
| 2. violence | b. problem |
| 3. warning | c. control |
| 4. style | d. brutality |
| 5. mend | e. necessary |
| 6. issue | f. fix |
| 7. shoving | g. trainer |
| 8. vital | h. frightened |
| 9. afraid | i. method |
| 10. grip | j. pushing |

Discussion – Student A

- a) Have you ever written a letter of complaint?
- b) Have you ever been bullied?
- c) How can we stop bullies hurting other people?
- d) What do you think the judo stars want to do to the coach?
- e) Do you think the coach's actions affected the team at the Olympics?
- f) What is your favourite martial art?
- g) Why do people do judo?
- h) Have you ever written a letter of complaint?

Phrase Match

1. A top Japanese judo coach has said
2. he would not lose
3. physically
4. I will mend the things
5. the coach's actions
6. wrote a letter
7. slapping the women
8. He also warned them that he would
9. train without
10. train the

- a. bullying athletes
- b. remove them
- c. of complaint
- d. were unforgivable
- e. trainers
- f. his job
- g. he used violence
- h. being afraid
- i. that need fixing
- j. across the face

Discussion – Student B

- a) What springs to mind when you hear the word 'judo'?
- b) What do you think of the coach bullying his athletes?
- c) Do you think the coach should lose his job?
- d) What do you know about judo?
- e) Do you think the women should call the police?
- f) What do you think the coach needs to fix?
- g) Do you think judo coaches need to be tough?
- h) What do you think of Hakubun Shimomura's comment?

Spelling

1. he used invcleeo
2. top judo hsattlee
3. an ofcfaiil warning
4. the aeeflm national team
5. hlcylasipy bullying
6. the coach's actions were ngfioaruevbl
7. The ueiss came up
8. a letter of loapitncm
9. kicking and snovhig them
10. wooden dwssro
11. We need to get a reropp grip
12. train the trainers urylthohog

Answers – Synonym Match

1. g	2. d	3. a	4. i	5. f
6. b	7. j	8. e	9. h	10. c

Role Play

The judo coach - You do not think you did anything wrong. Tell the others three reasons why. Japan has been #1 in the judo world because the training is tough. Japan is no longer #1 because training is getting softer. You think athletes need to be tough. Judo is a contact sport, so physical contact in training is OK.

A judo star - You think the coach should be fired. Tell the others three reasons why. You love judo but he made life hell for you. Japan will be #1 in judo with better training. The old Samurai ways are not working any more. A coach needs to be gentle and supportive.

A bullying expert - You think the judo coach is a bully. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell him/her he should see an expert to help with the bullying problem. You think (s)he should quit being a judo coach before (s)he hurts other people. Tell him hitting people is wrong in any situation.

Lawyer - You think the coach should go to prison. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell the judo star you can get a lot of money from the Japan Judo Association if she calls the police on the coach. Tell the star if the coach goes to prison, other coaches will be more gentle and judo will be better.

Speaking – Martial Arts

Rank these and share your rankings with your partner. Put the best at the top. Change partners often and share your rankings.

- judo
- boxing
- wrestling
- karate
- sumo
- taekwondo
- aikido
- none

Answers – True False

a	F	b	T	c	T	d	F	e	F	f	F	g	T	h	T
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Answers to Phrase Match and Spelling are in the text.