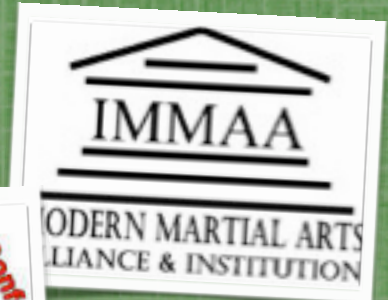


# THE ALLIANCE

THE ALLIANCE OCTOBER 2010



*The Official  
Newsletter for the  
International Mixed  
Martial Arts  
Association*

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## POLITIKOS

*By Hanshi Stephen A. Lonsdale*

The word "politics" is derived from Aristotle's book, "*politikos*," regarding the affairs of state, governing and governments. Usually, we use the term in defining the behaviour within a



civilian government. Politics represents to us nowadays, the social relations

involving authority or power, the making of policy, and the application of that policy, we see politics in just about any group. (Wikipedia)

Politics is a commonly cited problem within our martial arts community. To be sure, other communities also complain of politics within their ranks; we are not alone. I see many complaints of "politics" surrounding issues of rank. A member's rank, if you will pardon the pun, rankles the



sensibilities of others and charges of politics abound.

Is this a really an issue? Should it matter what rank has been awarded to whom? Is not the talent, insight and knowledge of a person, the standard by which they are assessed?

A person earns, or is awarded rank, within their specific organization. The criteria for the achieved rank is usually articulated in the organization's syllabus.

Assuming a student is deemed to have met the criteria, there can be no controversy about the rank in question. That is not to say all black belts are equal. Just as we can agree not all doctors, or lawyers, or engineers, or teachers are equal. Some people are more talented than others in their respective fields.

Nevertheless, they must meet the minimum requirements for



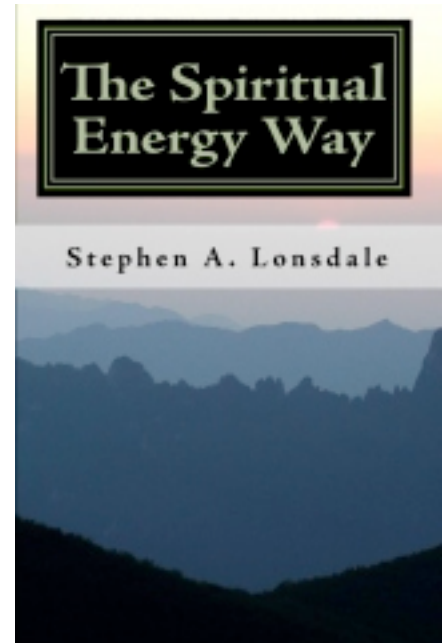
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sometimes an organization will award the person a title or higher rank for what the organization perceives as commendable service within the individual's field, or for that particular organization.

Richard Kim, included in his book, *Weaponless Warriors*, a chart illustrating the average age



and experience a karateka should be to be considered for higher rank. An axiom I have heard states, the first four degrees of black belt are what budo does for the student; the later ranks are what the student has done for budo.

There are many, many martial arts and martial art organizations comprising our community. There is no standard testing that translates between styles or organizations that I know of. Generally, I think it is considered professional courtesy, to honour or offer rank and title to individuals who have worked hard and for many years, to promote the tenets of budo. The honesty and integrity of these

individuals can be evaluated. This is not specific to martial arts.

For the record, and personally speaking, I am acknowledged as Tenth Dan, with the title of "Hanshi" by a number of organizations. And I am



honoured and humbled to be so recognized. However, I do not feel any different from when I did as a shodan. I have learned more and experienced more during the last thirty-seven years of budo training, to be sure.

It is that knowledge and experience, I wish to be judged by, not simply the titles conferred on me.

Not only would I feel a novice in front of my sensei in any of the arts I have studied, but I have students, and students of my students, who have accomplishments I can only envy. I would be content to be considered as a capable student of budo.



There are legitimate business concerns revolving around areas of operation, student retention and the like, that must be

addressed within our community. Those concerns are, I believe, more to do with the economic viability of schools than outright politics. I would suggest we be more tolerant, more ethical, in that we do not steal students or denigrate fellow martial artists and adhere to the teachings of budo.

That is exactly what the **IMMAA** tries to do.

The **IMMAA** is an organization that welcomes the participation and membership of other martial artists, martial arts organizations, clubs, schools and academies regardless of origin but sharing the ideas and concepts taught in all budo, ancient and modern.

The **IMMAA** does not engage in politics. It does not dictate rules, encroach on the authority of others or pit one group or individual against another.

The **IMMAA** is an organization of like minded individuals, groups and other organizations, coming together to exchange ideas, share information, foster an educational forum that brings together the best of many diverse martial arts.

The **IMMAA** believes that the study of martial arts benefits the individual and by extension, society. And if individuals or groups have made dedicated contributions of time and effort to foster and promote martial arts tenets, the **IMMAA** will acknowledge them for so doing.

Christian, Buddhist, Shinto, Hindu, Jewish, Atheist or anything in between; all are welcome under the **IMMAA** banner. All that is required is a dedication to the tenets of martial arts study, to wit: character development and becoming a good citizen, a good person, through martial arts training.

# OUT OF AFRICA

By Shihan Jonathan Kruger



Our trip to Livingstone, the old capital city of Zambia, to see the Victoria Falls (Mosi-oa-Tunya: the Smoke that Thunders) was truly amazing. We went over to see the falls with my relatives from USA. It was a wonderful



experience. To tell you the truth, I was born in Zambia and grew up all my life here (except for the 7



years in Japan) and had never got around to visiting Victoria Falls. As you know, the Victoria Falls is one the 7 Natural Wonders of the World. My first experience to see the falls was very emotional I was overcome by the greatness and the magnitude of this great wonder. To see it is to believe its beauty. Sorry, the picture we took doing jujitsu and karate with Sensei Kelly does not give the Victoria falls full credit to its beauty.

Our uniforms got soaked by the spray from head to foot. Training at the Victoria falls was one of the memorable experiences that I will always remember. Many visitors to the falls that day there, were interested in joining our club after watching us train. The Livingstone Museum is a must see for those who are interested in history especially about Central African history. And they are many interesting and exciting things to do at the falls and you can also visit the World famous Chimfunshi Chimpanzee Orphanage and go walks with them in the forest and

take a photo the famous hippo Billy.

The cell-phone rang from South Africa; it was Sensei Moola, the National Judo Coach telling us here in Kitwe, Zambia, that our **Judoka Joshua Kanyemba** had just won the Bronze medal for Zambia in the 60kg youth category in South



Africa, against the adult's category. Everybody in the copper mining town of Kitwe was overjoyed! Our little 17 year old, 1st kyu Brown belt, Zambian youngster was part of the 7 member Zambian National Judo Team, picked to represent Zambia against Africa's best of the best below the equator. Many of the team members representing their countries had returned from the just ended World Judo Championships held in Tokyo. Out of our 7 national team members sent to South Africa, 3 women and 4 men, all came back with 1 gold 2 Silver and 4 Bronze medals. Making our little unknown nation very proud of them. They were shown on our national TV and all our national newspapers and radio!

# **INTERNATIONAL MIXED MARTIAL ARTS ASSOCIATION**

*It is our aim is to create a forum which brings modern martial arts students, clubs and organizations together once a year for an exchange of views on subjects of common interest. Our mission is to maintain the authority and autonomy of our members, promote closer relationships between our members and all modern martial arts organizations, to coordinate and protect common interests and collect, verify and disseminate information.*

*In these ways we hope to defend and develop the concept of global unity, and to promote peace and understanding between people through the study of martial arts.*

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*As a member of IMMAA, you will become part of this rich tradition and heritage. In addition, your certifications of achievement will be registered and recognized worldwide.*