

## **Ronald John Pardini**

**Judo Kyoshi 8<sup>th</sup> Dan USJA, 7<sup>th</sup> Dan, USJI**

### **Martial Arts CV**

Ronald Pardini was born on November 23, 1937 in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania; his roots in Pittsburgh Judo run deep.

Sensei Pardini, Hachidan, 8<sup>th</sup> Dan, Kyoshi, began his lifelong study and practice of Judo in 1958 at the age of twenty-one when he responded to an ad in the Pittsburgh Post-Gazette offering an eight-week Judo class at the Pittsburgh YMCA, taught by Sensei Shale Paul, a Dan-ranked Judoka from Washington State. When Sensei Paul returned to Washington State at the conclusion of the course, Sensei Pardini and his Judo classmates continued to practice Judo at the YMCA, often turning to Jigoro Kano's seminal text, Kodokan Judo, for instruction.

Sensei Pardini was among the founders of The Pittsburgh School of Judo, the first formal Judo dojo in the city of Pittsburgh. The Pittsburgh School of Judo was notably successful, often attracting

twenty to twenty-five Judoka to its training sessions.

The Pittsburgh School of Judo was part of the Shufu Yudanshakai, a charter member of the USJF, United States Judo Federation. Founded in 1952 by Senseis James and Edwin Takemori, the Shufu Yudanshakai still exists and covers a large portion of the Mid-Atlantic States including the Washington DC metro area, Maryland, Pennsylvania, Delaware, the Carolinas and Georgia.

Sensei Pardini advanced through the ranks, ultimately achieving the rank of, Shichidan, 7<sup>th</sup> degree black belt in 2007, acquiring the honorific, Kyoshi, and was promoted to Hachidan, 8<sup>th</sup> degree black belt by the United States Judo Association on May 13<sup>th</sup>, 2024.

Sensei Pardini competed at the national level regularly from 1984-2005, placing first in the Masters Division at the Senior Nationals twelve times, never placing lower than third place.

In the early 1960's, upon learning of the great two-time All-Korean Judo Champion Kyu Ha Kim (February 24, 1935-May 14, 2021) was visiting the US, Ron Pardini and the members of the Pittsburgh School of Judo contacted Kyu Ha Kim and invited

him to instruct at their school. Sensei Pardini and Robert Voge later sponsored Kyu Ha Kim's application for US citizenship. Kyu Ha Kim agreed to teach at the Pittsburgh School of Judo and did so for a number of years, which began his long association with Sensei Pardini. (Note: the legendary Kyu Ha Kim came to be addressed as Kwanjangnim or Grandmaster, GM, his honorific in the martial art of Taekwondo by virtue of his Taekwondo rank, 8<sup>th</sup> Dan, or simply by his preferred, Mr. Kim). After teaching at the Pittsburgh School of Judo for several years, GM Kyu Ha Kim established his own martial arts school, Kim's Judo and Karate (later Kim's Martial Arts and Fitness, KMAF, which became a Pittsburgh institution and is still in operation with his son, Kyoshi Eugene Kim, 7<sup>th</sup> Dan at the helm and grandsons Tyler and Tanner Kim instructing another generation of students), attracting many of Pittsburgh's Judoka, including Sensei Pardini. The opening of KMAF was the end of The Pittsburgh School of Judo, which closed its doors shortly after KMAF began operation.

Sensei Pardini was a valued member of KMAF for decades, initially as a student, later as Sempai and senior instructor. Training several times a week, he

not only freely shared his considerable knowledge of Judo, but also provided a role model for aspiring Judoka who were privileged to share time with him on the mat.

In addition to his highly decorated career as a Judoka, Sensei Pardini has led a full life outside of Judo. The trajectory of Sensei Pardini's academic career and professional life mirror his achievements in the Judo world. His working life began in 1958 when he went to work at Colteryahn Dairy as a milkman, where he worked for nine years. In 1969, Sensei Pardini joined the Upper St Clair Police Department as a patrolman. During this time, he attended the Community College of Allegheny County, earning an Associate's Degree in Criminal Justice 1976 after nine years of study. He later transferred his hard-earned academic credits to Duquesne University where he graduated with a Bachelor of Arts in Sociology in 1981. Somehow during this time frame, he managed to find the time to enter and complete the 117<sup>th</sup> Training Session at the FBI Academy, from which he graduated in 1979, followed by attending the FBI's Executive Development Program in 1981. Later, he attended the US Secret Service Dignitary Protection School, graduating in 1982. Sensei

Pardini then entered a graduate program in Regional Planning at California University of Pennsylvania, from which he graduated with a Master's Degree in 1990.

After joining the Upper St. Clair Township police department as a patrolman, Sensei Pardini rose through the ranks to become Chief of Police in 1986. In 2013, he retired as Chief of Police after a distinguished forty-five year career. Sensei Pardini was elected President of the Allegheny County Chiefs Association in 1993 and served as the President of the Western Pennsylvania Chiefs Organization in 1996. Sensei Pardini's long experience in law enforcement provides both hard won knowledge and credibility to his Self-Defense instruction.

Sensei Pardini continues to serve his community as a member of the Upper St. Clair Township Council, where he recently began his third four-year term.

Sensei Pardini has been married to his lovely wife Nancy for sixty-five years, who, in his own words, " ...blest him with four sons and one daughter."

I began my long association with Sensei Pardini on the mat at KMAF in the 1980's. From the moment we first met, his encyclopedic command of Judo technique and fierce spirit were clearly in evidence. Today, Sensei Pardini, at eighty-six years old, regularly teaches Judo at Spirit Forge Martial Arts, including a Master Class on Saturday afternoons, where he freely passes on the wealth of knowledge gleaned from his lifetime of Judo practice.

Master Christopher D. Moore