



UNITED STATES JUDO ASSOCIATION

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DOJO PROMOTIONS ARE HARMFUL TO JUDO STUDENTS!

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It happens frequently. A well-meaning coach tries to save his students a little money and promotes them with a worthless piece of paper. He signs a certificate as "USJA Sandan", "Kodokan Nidan" or perhaps "IJF Yodan", but neither the USJA, Kodokan nor the International Judo Federation will recognize or accept the certificate. They never gave the coach authority to use their name on rank certificates in the first place and are now concerned about the problem that coach is creating.

We are talking about Dojo (club) ranks and Dojo promotions. They are not recognized by anyone outside of their own club, not even down the street. The coach who uses them may believe he is doing his students a favor by saving them a few dollars in fees, but the reverse is mostly the case.

Invariably the truth catches up. The student moves to another location and another club, competes in a nationally sanctioned event, goes to summer camp, or tries to register his rank with a national organization. He finds that the rank he has worked so hard to achieve is not accepted and he has to start testing all over again. He finds that jump promotions are not permitted and that he has to pay a promotion fee for each rank he has skipped by getting a dojo promotion. Promotion fees have probably increased and now he is paying double what he would have paid before. If he was previously told this might happen, he probably now wishes his coach had done it right from the start. If he was not previously told, he is no doubt bitter and confused as to why the truth was withheld. He feels cheated out of all of the work that he has done. The bottom line is that you get what you pay for. We just hope that no one had to pay for a worthless piece of paper.

The USJA has established a fair and efficient junior and senior promotion system. National requirements have been established and all manuals and necessary forms have been developed and published. The USJA has strict rules to maintain the integrity of the promotion system. This is for the benefit of all members. Every student in the USJA knows exactly what is required for his or her next promotion. We know that a promotion in accordance with the system on the East Coast is equal to a promotion on the West Coast. This is impossible with other systems.

The USJA rank system cost a great deal of money to develop and now it costs money to maintain. The USJA charges a promotion fee based on these costs to keep the system going. We process all promotions as quickly as possible and each student receives a national rank certificate, a national rank membership card and a rank patch. Every rank processed through the USJA is nationally recognized and nationally registered. If a student loses his or her rank certificate, it is easily replaced, because we maintain a permanent record.

The bottom line, you get what you pay for. We believe that all USJA promotion fees are fair and reasonable and are well worth the benefits received. The strong support now expressed for the USJA rank system assures its strength in the future. As for the few misguided coaches who give dojo promotions? Well, we hope that they take a second look at what they are doing.

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