

Warrior Spirit Karate

“Let Us Develop The Warrior In You”

Gojo-Ryu

CHOJUN MIYAGI SENSEI



Chojun Miyagi was born on April 25, 1888 in the city of Naha, Okinawa. He began his practice at the age of 12 with Aragaki Ryuko Sensei. Aragaki Ryuko's approach was only to teach the fighting itself and not too much emphasis was placed on the martial art.

After seeing the dedication of Chojun Miyagi, Aragaki Ryuko decided to introduce him to Kanryo Higaonna. In 1902, at the age of 14, Chojun Miyagi Sensei started to practice with Kanryo Higaonna Sensei. At the age of 20, Chojun Miyagi became Kanryo Higaonna's top student and around that time is also when he got married. At the age of 22, he traveled to the main island of Kyushu for his military service. After 2 years of service he returned to Okinawa. For the next 3 years Kanryo Higaonna taught him

privately until Kanryo Higaonna died in 1915. With his death, Chojun Miyagi decided to follow the steps of his Sensei and travel to Fuchow, China, where he learned the martial arts. In his first trip in 1915, he went to Fuchow and trained for two months with a student of Ryu Ryu Ko Sensei. The old man was very impressed with the skill of Chojun Miyagi. Chojun Miyagi went to visit the grave of Ryu Ryu Ko Sensei as well as to the temple where he trained. It was easy to see the footmarks on the patio from the training. Between 1920 and 1930 Chojun Miyagi traveled to China for the second time. This was not a productive trip because the relations between China and Japan were not good in those days. In his third trip to China, in 1936, he was able to contact the Shanghai Martial Arts Federation. This was instrumental in helping him do his research in the martial arts. In the early 20's Chojun Miyagi developed the characteristic Goju Ryu warming up exercises or Yunbi Undo with the help of a friend of his, who was a doctor. This series of exercises were based not only on martial arts fundamentals but also on medical research. It is also around this time that Chojun Miyagi also developed the kata Tensho, and began to teach in high school in Okinawa. In 1925, Chojun Miyagi, Hanashiro Chomo, Mabuni Kenwa and Motobu Choki formed the Karate Kenkyu Kai or Karate Research Club at Naha, with the idea of preserving and practicing karate with members of other lines of Te. Unfortunately the club disbanded in 1929. In 1930 Chojun Miyagi sent his top student, Jihan Shinzato, to perform a demonstration of Te at the Meiji Shrine in Tokyo. Upon his return to Okinawa, Shinzato asked his Sensei about the name of the style of

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karate that they practiced because a Kobudo Sensei present at the demonstration inquired the same of Shinzato. Shinzato Sensei could not answer because until then they only referred to karate as Te (hand), To (China) or Bu (martial art). Chojun Miyagi decided for the first time to call his style Goju Ryu. The meaning was extracted from the Bubishi or book of the poems where there are references to different subjects including the martial arts. The name Goju Ryu identifies the style as the style of the hardness and softness. In this way Goju Ryu became the first style of karate named.

It was in 1933 when Goju Ryu was officially recorded and recognized in the Butoku Kai (the institution that groups all the martial arts in Japan) in Kyoto. The official name was recorded as Goju Ryu Karate-Do, where the meaning of the character (kanji) Karate was To (China) in recognition of origin of this martial art, and not the meaning "empty" as is in the present. In 1934, Chojun Miyagi was appointed as the representative of the Butoku Kai in Okinawa. Also in this year, Chojun Miyagi was invited to travel to Hawaii to teach karate to the Okinawans living on the island. He remained in Hawaii for 6 months. In 1937 Chojun Miyagi was honored. He received the title Kyoshigo from the Butoku Kai. This was the first time in history that somebody in karate received this honor. During World War II, Chojun Miyagi lost his top student Jihan Shinzato as well as two of his daughters. Chojun Miyagi Sensei passed away on October 8, 1953 at the age of 65.