



## Judo Federation of Australia (NSW) Inc.

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It was with great sadness that the NSW judo community learned of the passing of Akira Yamada.

Many of our long standing and senior members well remember the impact Mr Yamada had on Australian judo following his arrival here some fifty years ago. A great technician, Akira immediately became the benchmark for our leading athletes of the time.

Mr Yamada soon became a leading and successful coach, with perhaps one of his major contributions being his role in developing many Victorian judoka to national and international level. Probably his most well-known and successful students were Michael Picken, Michael Young and Trevor Bilney, who rose to prominence under his guidance, going on to win many National championships and achieving international honours. Through his Judo Academy he continued to pass on his vast knowledge to generations of judoka.

With his strong Japanese ties, Mr Yamada was also a pioneer and driving force in establishing and chairing Australia's Kodokan Grading Committee, through which many Australian Judoka have been recognised by the mother school of judo. His own recent promotion to Kodokan eighth dan is a measure of the esteem in which he was held in Japan.

Despite his failing health, Mr Yamada's passion for judo continued to the last, where he played a leading part at the recent Illawarra International training camp in January.

Mr Yamada's friends and colleagues in New South Wales extend our deepest sympathies to his family and close friends for their loss.

He will be sorely missed as a pillar of Australian judo and is an example to all Judoka.

A commemoration service will be held on Friday 16 March at the Jim Stynes Room at the Melbourne Cricket Ground (MCG), 10:00AM for 10:30AM commencement.

Regards

Nic Lowe  
President  
Judo NSW