

Taekwondo History

The earliest records of Taekwondo practice date back to about 50 B.C. During this time, Korea was divided into three kingdoms: Silla, which was founded on the Kyongju plain in 57 B.C.; Koguryo, founded in the Yalu River Valley in 37 B.C.; and Paekche, founded in the southwestern area of the Korean peninsula in 18 B.C. Tae Kyon (also called Subak) is considered the earliest form of Taekwondo. Paintings from this time period have been found on the ceiling of the Muyong-chong, a royal tomb from the Koguryo dynasty. The paintings show unharmed people using techniques that are very similar to the ones used in Taekwondo today. Although Taekwondo first appeared in the Koguryo kingdom, it's the Silla's Hwarang warriors that are credited with the growth and spread of Taekwondo throughout Korea. Silla was the smallest of the three kingdoms and was always under attack by Japanese Pirates. Silla got help from King Gwanggaeto and his soldiers from the Koguryo kingdom to drive out the pirates. During the Silla dynasty (A.D. 668 to A.D. 935) Tae Kyon was mostly used as a sport and recreational activity. Tae means- to strike with the feet. Kwon means- destroying with the hand or the fist. Do means-way or method. The first Taekwondo School (Kwan) was started in Yong Chun, Seoul, Korea in 1945. Many different schools were opened from 1945 through 1960. Each school claimed to teach the traditional Korean martial art, but each school emphasized a different aspect of Tae Kyon/Subak. This caused different names to emerge from each system, some of them were: Soo Bahk Do, Kwon Bop, Kong Soo Do, Tae Soo Do and Kang Soo Do. The Korean Armed Forces were also formed in 1945 and in 1946 Second lieutenant Hong Hi Chio began teaching Tae Kyon at a Korean military base called Kwang Ju. Americans were first introduced to Tae Kyon when Choi instructed Korean Army Troops and some American soldiers stationed with the 2nd Infantry Regiment. The greatest turning point for Korean martial arts started in 1952. During the height of the Korean War, President Syngman Rhee watched a 30 minute performance by Korean martial arts masters. The Korean War ended in 1953. In 1954, General Hong Hi Chio organized the 29th Infantry on Che Ju Island, off the Korean Coast, as a spearhead and center for Tae Kyon training in the military. On April 11' 1955 at a conference of Kwan masters, historians, and Tae Kyon promoters, most of the Kwan masters decided to merge their various styles for mutual benefits of all schools. Two years later the name was changed

again, this time to “Taekwondo”. The name was suggested by General Hong Hi Choi (who is considered the father of Taekwondo). “Taekwondo” was suggested by the Choi because of its resemblance to Taek Kyon, and so provides continuity and maintains tradition. Further, it describes both hand and foot techniques. A Taekwondo demonstration at the United Nations headquarters in New York City in 1963, caused the formation of the U.S. Taekwondo Association in 1967, which later was superseded in 1974 by U.S. Taekwondo Federation. In March of 1966 Choi founded the International Taekwon-Do Federation (ITF), which he also served as president. Choi later resigned as the KTA president and moved his ITF headquarters to Montreal, Canada, from where he concentrated on organizing Taekwondo internationally. Young-wun Kim was elected the new KTA president. Feeling that Korea was the mother country of Taekwondo and that the world headquarters should be located there, he dissolved the ITF’s connection with the KTA and on May 28, 1973 created a new international governing body called the World Taekwondo Federation (WTF), which coincided with the first World Taekwondo Championship that were held in Seoul, Korea. At the first inaugural meeting, Un Yong Kim was elected as president of the WTF and drafted a charter for the federation. The WTF is the only official organization recognized by the Korean government as an international regulating body of Taekwondo. The World Taekwondo Federation has since made a major effort to standardize tournament rules and organize world class competitions. After the second World TKD Championship in Seoul, the WTF became an affiliate of the General Assembly of International Sports Federation (GAISF), which has ties to the International Olympic Committee (IOC). The IOC recognized and admitted the WTF in July 1980. In 1982 the General Session of the IOC designated Taekwondo as an official Demonstration Sport for the 1988 Olympic Games in Seoul, Korea. Since Modern-day Taekwondo’s official birth on April 11, 1955, its development as a sport has been rapid. Over 30 million people practice Taekwondo in more than 156 countries. Formally, there are two main styles of taekwondo. One comes from the Kukkiwon, the source of the sparring system sihap gyeonggi which is now an event at the summer Olympic Games and which is governed by the World Taekwondo Federation (WTF). The other comes from the International Taekwon-Do Federation (ITF). Separate from the various taekwondo organizations, there have been two general branches of taekwondo development: traditional

and sport. The term “traditional taekwondo” typically refers to the martial art as it was established in the 1950s and 1960s; and particular, the names and symbolism of the traditional patterns often refer to elements of Korean history. Sport taekwondo has evolved in the decades since then and has somewhat a different focus, especially in terms of its emphasis on speed and competition (as in Olympic sparring), whereas traditional taekwondo tends to emphasize power and self defense. Formal practices of traditional martial arts such as Subak and taekkyeon were reserved for sanctioned military uses. However, folk’s practice of taekkyeon as a kicking game still persisted into the 19th century. The Korean Taekwondo Association Central Dojang was opened in South Korea in 1972. A few months later, the name was changed to Kukkiwon. The following year, World Taekwondo Federation was formed. The International Olympic Committee recognized the WTF and taekwondo sparring in 1980. The Kukkiwon is a completely different organization which trains and certifies instructors and issue official Dan and Poom certificates worldwide.

The spread of Taekwondo as a martial art and competitive sport continues to this date. The principle events in the rapid evolution of Taekwondo as a popular worldwide sport are:

- 1965 - The Korea Taekwondo Association was formed.
- 1973 - World Taekwondo Federation created.
- 1975 - General Association of International Sports Federations recognizes the WTF.
- 1976 - Taekwondo accepted as a Consul International du Sport Militaire sport (world level military sports organization).
- 1980 - International Olympic Committee recognizes the WTF.
- 1981 - Taekwondo accepted as a World Games sport
- 1983 - Taekwondo accepted as a Pan American Games and All Africa Games sport
- 1985 - Taekwondo adopted as a demonstration sport for the 1988 Olympic Games.
- 1986 - Taekwondo accepted as a Federation International du Sport Universitaire sport (world university level sport organization).
- 1992 - Taekwondo is an Olympic demonstration sport in Barcelona, Spain.
- 1994 - Taekwondo selected as a full Olympic sport for the 2000 Olympic Games in Sydney, Australia.
- 1996 - Taekwondo is an Olympic demonstration sport in Atlanta.
- Today - Tae Kwon Do is by far the most widely practiced martial art in the world.

My Taekwondo History

My name is Zachary Dunois and this is my Taekwondo history. I started in December of 2001. I was in the Pee Wee program. May 2, 2004 was my first experience at an outside tournament. It was the 2004 PA States and I was a purple belt and I brought home a third place trophy. Over the next two years, I went to a lot of tournaments and came back empty handed a few times and brought back many medals and trophies other times. June 10, 2006 I received my black belt after 4 ½ years of hard work. A year later in July 2007 I went to my first Junior National Olympic tournament in San Jose, CA. It was nothing like any other that I have been to before. I did my best and wasn't able to bring home anything except new friends, good experience and a lot of fun. Two years later we are at September 2009. I have gone to two more Nationals, Detroit, MI, (2008) and Austin, TX (2009) with many other local tournaments. I started to teach the Pee-Wee program and three of the students have promoted to 9th gup which makes me feel like an instructor. In three weeks I am going to try to promote to 2nd Poom. I have had a lot of help over the years and would like to thank a few: Grand Master Kim for giving me the opportunity to promote and having faith in me to teach the Pee-Wee program, Master Eugene Kim, Master Jimmy Kim for coming to our Dojo and showing us different drills to improve ourselves. Master Moore (for helping me with my side kick and always reminding me to re-chamber, re-chamber, re-chamber), Master Schmidt, Master Gaughan, Master Tim Moore for teaching me different drills, Master Munster for helping me with my forms before the 2009 Junior Olympics, Mrs. Moore for helping me with the Taeguek forms and teaching me different ladder drills, Mr. Malone for the Monday night sparring classes and Tyler Kim for being a good sparring partner at our tournaments. This has been just a short history of my Taekwondo so far. Just like my first part of this report, I have many more years to add to my history.

Zachary Jordan Dunois

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