

Torii

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Teller

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Warriors mess in 'field'

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Warriors step with tradition

Compiled
by Keiko Kaisako

A unique, traditional parade called the daimyo procession is conducted in either fall or spring festivals in castle towns throughout Japan.

To commemorate the construction of the Iwakuni castle which was built in 1608 and to remember the time lord Kikkawa paid respects to the Shogun in Edo, the daimyo procession is conducted here annually as part of the Kintai Bridge festival.

The daimyo procession is based on the sankin kotai system in which each daimyo or "feudal lord" was required to reside in Edo (Tokyo) in alternate years. "Sankin" means reporting to one's lord to render service and "Kotai" means rotating.

The system was utilized as one of the ruling methods of the Tokugawa Shogunate, the Government of Japan during Edo Era from 1603 to 1867. There were more than 260 feudal lords all over Japan at that time. To maintain control over them, the sankin kotai system was introduced and formalized by the fourth Shogun Ietsuna in 1635.

The system was actually a polite form of the hostage taking. The wife, children, retainers and servants of each daimyo were de-

tained all the time in their residence in Edo by the Shogun, while the daimyo had to rotate back and forth every other year between their home provinces and Edo.

The rotation procession was organized, consisting of the daimyo in his palanquin, several units including pikemen, mounted and unmounted swordsmen, banner carriers, servants, attendants and porters. They usually traveled with a contingent of 150 to 300 on the main highways. The size of the procession varied due to the official domain size.

As the retinue went on, showing their power and prestige, the

front runners cleared the way, commanding observers and passers by to step aside and kneel to pay respect to the daimyo while the retinue passed.

In spite of the great expense and arduous journey for daimyo, the system remained in operation for over 200 years. It not only worked for the Tokugawa Shogunate, but it also contributed a great deal to Japan's political, economic and social development along one of the major highways called Tokaido.

Today's daimyo procession is not a long, rough journey, but it still shows the prestige in old times.



Young warriors, wearing the traditional costume, add flavor to the Daimyo Procession which is held as part of annual Kintai Bridge Festival.



Our Cover

Members of Det. "A" hold their glasses high during one of the eight traditional toasts given during their "Warrior Mess Night." (USMC photo by Sgt. Nolan Wells)

Torii Teller

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Narumasa Tsuchihara watches over two students in the dojo named after him.

Dojo named after sensei

Story and photo
by LCpl. Gregory Sloan

Down through the ages some individual's contribution has been rewarded by naming buildings, bridges, parks and other objects after the particular person. That singular honor was recently extended by the Air Station to an ally, friend and teacher.

Narumasa Tsuchihara was honored Monday in a dedication ceremony of the recently remodeled Special Services Dojo room. The martial arts room was named after him for his 18 relentless years of voluntary time instructing judo to Americans on the Air Station. A few of his students were able to make it to the morning ceremony along with other martial arts students who use the facility.

"I am very moved, this will be a lifetime remembrance and I will cherish this moment forever," a modest Tsuchihara said of the occasion.

He retired yesterday from the Japan Maritime Self Defense Force after 33 years of service. He has a job at Yamaguchi Sogo bank and will continue to coach judo.

In 1970 the Americans and the Japanese trained together; when the instructor became too old, Tsuchihara was asked to teach and has held the job ever since.

"Judo can teach you more than self-defense; practices work on patience, endurance, quick-reflexes and being injury free.

A highlight of his judo career was when he was invited to referee an all Marine judo tournament in El Toro, Calif., in March of 1984. While there, he saw his students win six out of the seven categories in the individual competition, a credit to both the student and, of course, the instructor.

The teacher hopes he can one day watch one of his American students go to the Olympics.

"I would like to recruit Americans around the junior high and high school ages, who are ideal to build up and produce a champion from," he ex-

plained. "Americans are already bulky so I teach them the technique and skill it takes to be a champion," he continued.

"One of the most characteristic and fascinating aspects of the art of judo is when a small-sized opponent, that has acquired the skilled moves, can throw the bigger and more well built opponents down," the judo sensei said. "Judo is a form of self-defense, being able to protect yourself from a bigger man on the offensive."

The judo instructor is eager to teach Americans the art of judo. Classes are an hour and a half every Tuesday and Thursday night with opportunities to enter a wide variety of competition for the confident competitor.

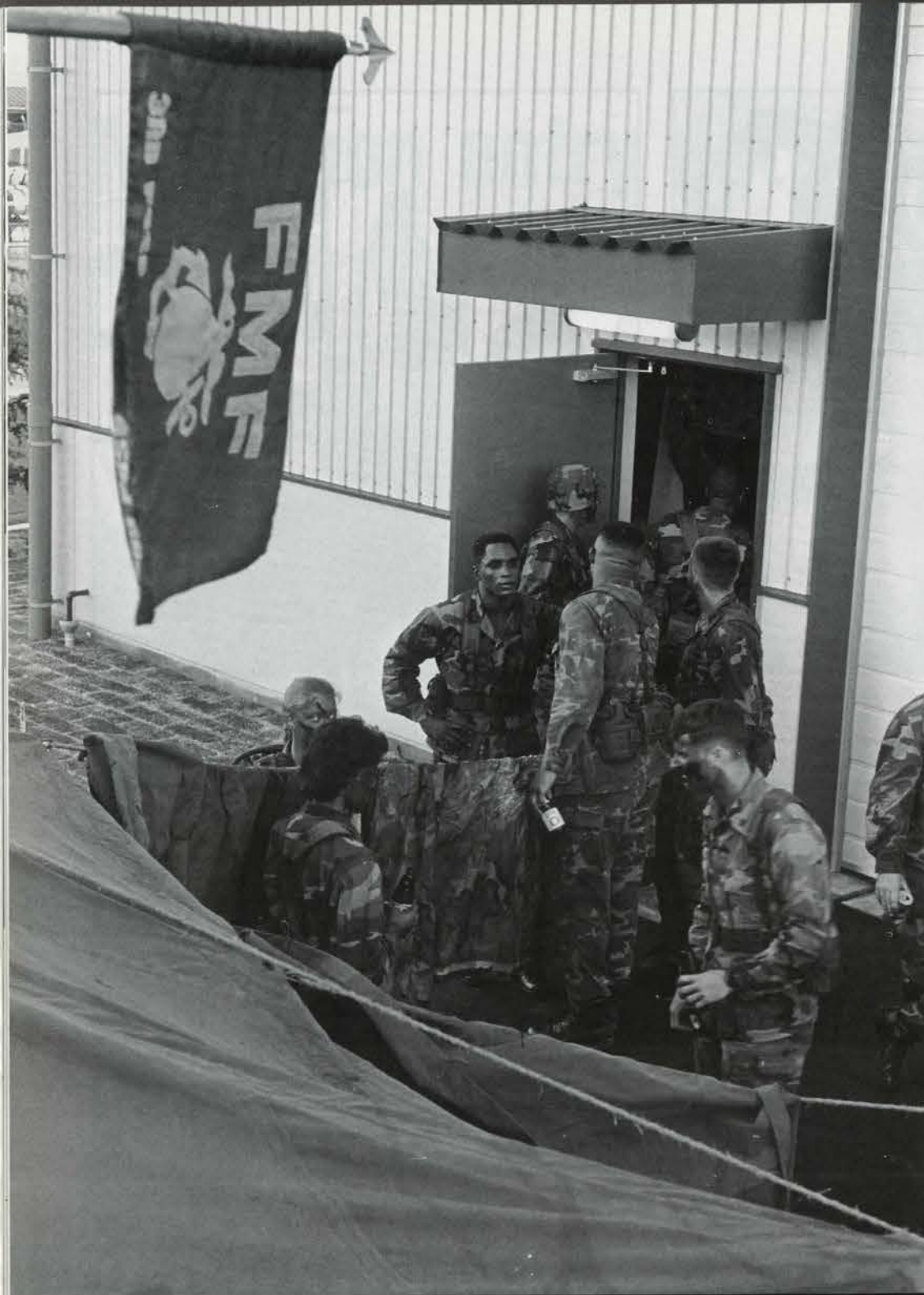
Tsuchihara first taught judo to Air Station personnel in May of 1970 after being stationed here in April of 1970.

The sixth degree black belt instructor started at Nakano Dojo and Teijin Company Dojo in 1954 primarily for conditioning. Taking advantage of his 6-foot, 198 pound frame he had an advantage over most other Japanese competitors.

He later entered tournaments, competing in individual and group competitions. Tsuchihara participated in more than 10 major tournaments sponsored by JMSDF in which he finished first place five times, he successfully defended his title for three successive tournaments in the individual competition. Also, taking first place five times in the group competition. He has entered the Hiroshima prefecture and national tournaments with equal success.

The instructor has been in sumo competitions for 10 years which takes more tremendous training on the back and legs. The fifth degree sumo wrestler has been awarded four first place trophies, three consecutively in JMSDF tournaments.

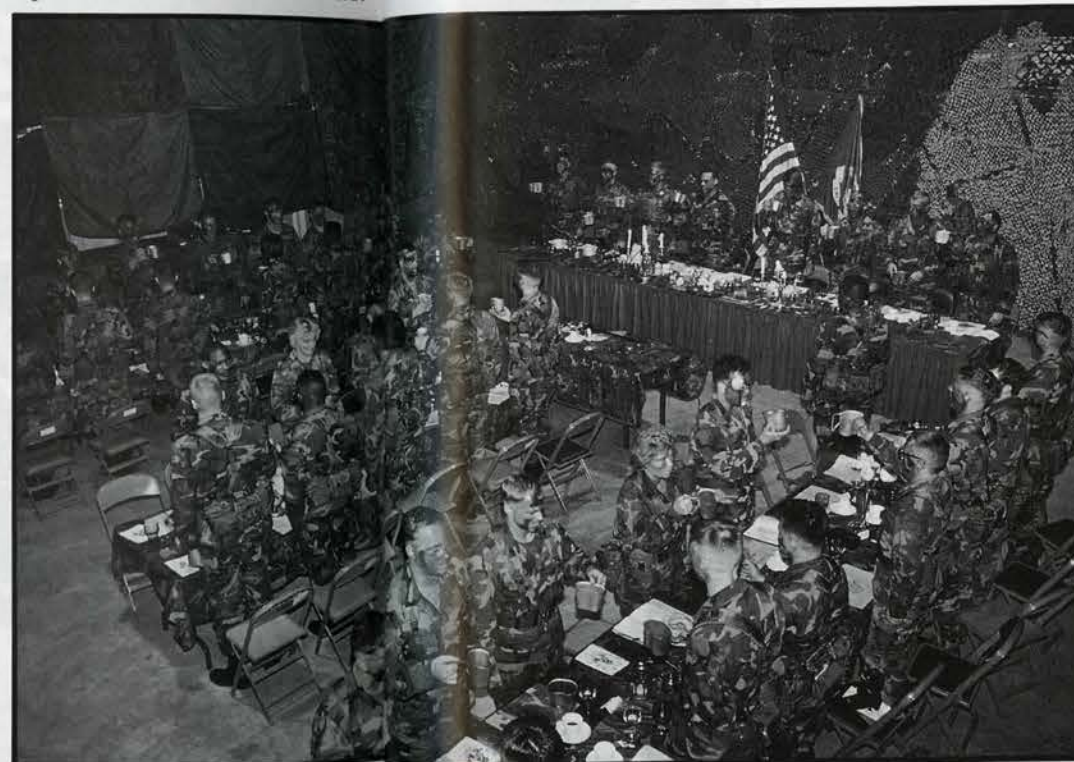
Students practice judo in the Dojo room, of the newly rebuilt Special Services building, named after their instructor hoping to retain all the skilled moves taught them to have as much success as Narumasa Tsuchihara.



Members of Det. "A" 3rd FSSG gather outside the GP tent which served as the bar for their field mess night.



LCpl. John MacHaleck pours wine for dinner; he and other lance corporals served as stewards.



Members of the "Warrior Mess" raise their canteen cups in drinking a final warm beer toast to fallen comrades who have gone before them.



Kevlar helmets are dressed and covered on tables covered with poncho liners at the field mess (above). SgtMaj. A.N. Hockaday, guest of honor, addresses members of the mess.

'First ever of its kind'

Story and photos by Sgt. Nolan Wells

Like any mess night the participants followed the protocol of formal dining, complete with china, wine and the traditional rum punch. But quite unlike any formal mess night, one did not see the usual collage of Dress Blue and Alpha uniforms. Instead, those gathered wore the traditional uniform of the combat Marine--camouflage utilities, helmets, cammie-stick makeup and full 782 gear--for what is believed to be the first ever of its kind "Warrior Mess Night."

The Marines and Sailors, Staff NCOs and NCOs, chief and petty officers of Det. "A," 3rd FSSG and their invited guests gathered in the ground support maintenance section of their recently completed warehouse for an evening of camaraderie.

Det. "A" Sergeant Major Daniel J. Bradley, served as Mr. President and was ably assisted by not one, but four vices on the occasion. The various duties for coordinating the mess night were divided among junior and senior Mr. and Mrs. Vice, as they were known and addressed.

"We researched back as far as the Korean War, and to the best we were able to find out, there had never been a field mess like the one we have put together," Sgt. Jeffrey P. Dunn, Senior Mr. Vice, said. "I never realized all of the work that goes into a mess night until we started putting this one together."

"I wanted to have an NCO and Staff NCO mess night with officers as their invited guests," SgtMaj. Bradley began. "But I also wanted to use it as a learning experience for the NCOs since this was the first time many of them have had the opportunity to be part of a mess night."

To foster as realistic a field setting as possible in a garrison environment, the cocktail hour preceding the dinner was held in a tent with trash cans and a table serving as the bar; camouflage netting, ponchos and poncho liners covered the walls to bolster a field-like dinner setting. Had field mess gear and MREs been available, Bradley said, they would have served for the meal.

The meal did however begin somewhat out of the ordinary when the beef, normally wheeled out on a serving cart, was driven out on a forklift. A camouflaged poncho under draped over a pallet served as the mobile table.

With dinner and the eight traditional toasts concluded, guest of honor, Station Sergeant Major Al Hockaday, chose to carry on step further the brotherhood of Marines taking care of their own.

"Marines don't leave Marines on the battlefield... and neither do the Sailors who serve with Marines," he repeated between orations. "And it all starts in gatherings just like this..."

"If you take one thing with you when leave here tonight, let it be this: if you go into battle with Marines, you're coming home, because Marines don't leave Marines on the battlefield," he concluded.

After the spontaneous and sustained applause which followed SgtMaj. Hockaday's speech, Det. "A" warriors presented him a plaque adorned with a cammie stick and a vial containing sand from Iwo Jima, site of the Corps' bloodiest battle.

With all things said and toasting from the floor concluded, the members raised canteen cups high for the two final bottoms-up toasts of the evening. The traditional rum-punch toast to Corps and Country preceding the warm-beer toast, complemented with "Taps," to fallen comrades.