

# UNITED STATES

## Isshinryu Karate Association



My Humble Tribute to Grandmaster Harold G. Long

10th Dan Isshinryu Karate  
9-3-30 To 10-12-98  
By Hanshi Phil Little

Born to modest beginnings in Rockwood, TN, Harold G. Long joined the Marine Corps in 1949, and was called to duty in 1950. Shortly thereafter, North Korea attacked South Korea. He was quickly shipped from Camp LeJeune, NC, to Camp Pendleton, CA, to bring the 1st Marine Division up to strength. In 1950, as a young marine in Korea, he fought in the battle of the "Chosin Reservoir" against the Chinese Army. While temperatures ranged between four degrees below zero to thirty-five degrees below zero, the Chinese Army had orders to annihilate the marines at the Chosen Reservoir. This battle has been termed "the most savage fighting in modern warfare" by today's historians. The marines that survived this battle became known as the "Chosen Few". Today, this group is referred to as the "Eternal Band of Brothers".

In the mid 1950's, Harold Long was sent to Okinawa. He inquired of his house girl who the best karate instructor was on Okinawa. She did not hesitate in telling him that in Chun Village there was a teacher by the name of Grand Master Tatsuo Shimabuku, who had the reputation of being the top instructor of karate on Okinawa. After several visits to Grand Master Shimabuku's dojo, he was accepted and began training. He trained for nineteen months, as much as eight hours a day, seven days a week, in some cases.

When Master Long returned to the United States, he was stationed at Twenty-nine Palms, California, where he opened his first dojo in his back yard. After his discharge from the Marine Corps, in July 1959, he returned to East Tennessee, where the seed of his instruction took root, and branched out to all corners of our nation, which fulfilled the desire of his instructor.

In 1963, he attended the systems head meeting of the first World Karate Tournament in Chicago, Illinois, to set-up rules for all American karate tournaments. In attendance were John Kehan, Phil Kepal, Harold Long, George Mattson, Anthony Mirikan, Roy Oshiro, Don Nagle, Ed Parker, Wendall Reeves, Joon Rhee, Mas Tsuroka, and Robert Trias. Rules for kata and kumite were set down at this meeting to be used for all tournaments, regardless of what style held them in the United States. Master Long proposed all these rules, with one exception.

In 1974, Master Long returned to Okinawa to consult with Grand Master Tatsuo Shimabuku concerning a new karate association. His accomplishments and contributions to Isshin-Ryu Karate were numerous:

1975 - Founded the International Isshin-Ryu Karate Association (IIKA).

1978 - Co-authored a three - book series, *The Dynamics of Isshin-Ryu Karate*, with Allen Wheeler.

1980 - Founded the Isshin-Ryu Hall of Fame.

1981 -Inducted into the Isshin-Ryu Hall of Fame.

1987 -Co-authored *Okinawan Weapons Bo Fighting Techniques* with Hanshi Phil Little.

1988 - Founded the Isshin-Ryu Black Belt Society

1991 - Co- produced an eight tape video series, *Isshinryu Karate - The Ultimate Self-Defense*

1992 - Inducted into the Knoxville Sports Hall of Fame, in Knoxville, Tennessee.

1992 - Co-produced the first national television coverage of the Isshin-Ryu Hall of Fame Karate Tournament.

1993 - Issued membership into Tao of the Fist Martial Arts Fraternity.

1993 - Co-authored, *Who's Who in Isshin-Ryu* with Phillis Manis and Tim McGee.

1994 - Issued membership into the World Head of Family Sokeship Council for Isshin-Ryu Karate.

1995 - Awarded a Doctorate Degree by the College of Martial Arts.

1996 -Inducted into the World Karate Union Hall of Fame.

1996- Inducted into the World Head of Family Sokeship Council Hall of Fame.

1997 -Co-authored, *Okinawan Weapons Sai and Tonfa Fighting Techniques* with Hanshi Phil Little

1997 - Received the "Golden Life Achievement Award and Martial Arts Pioneer Award from the World Head of Family Sokeship Council Hall of Fame.

-Appointed Vice President of the "International Police Tactical Instructors Association"

- Appointed Vice President of the "The Universal Martial Arts Hall of Fame".

- Co-authored, *Isshin-Ryu Karate - The Ultimate Fighting Art*, with Tim McGee

1998 - Inducted into The Universal Martial Arts Hall of Fame receiving, "The Living Legend Award"

-Word Head Of Family Sokeship Council presents Grand Master Harold G. Long "The Living Legend" Award.

In December of 1995, Grand Master Long closed his dojo in Knoxville, Tennessee, and retired from active teaching. He moved into the US Navel Retirement Home in Gulfport, Mississippi, in 1996. He continued to represent Isshin-Ryu Karate at tournaments, clinics, seminars and special events until December of 1997.

In September 1998 he returned to Eastern Tennessee, where he was diagnosed with terminal pancreatic cancer. He remained there with his family, where he fought the only major battle he did not win.

September 23<sup>rd</sup> 1998, prior to Grandmaster Long's passing, he conferred upon me, Hanshi Phil Little, the rank of Ju-dan, 10<sup>th</sup> degree Black Belt. I made the decision after acceptance to keep and preserve this rank of highest honor until an appropriate time out of respect to Grandmaster Don Nagle 10th dan. I instead chose to display the rank of Ku-dan 9th degree black belt. With the passing of Grandmaster Don Nagle on August 23<sup>rd</sup> 1999 and by the recommendation of the "World Head Of Family Sokeship Council," the largest International Grandmasters Council of 9<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup> degree Black Belts of the Martial Arts, I will resume the original conferred rank of September 23<sup>rd</sup> 1998 to Ju-dan and fulfill the wishes of Grandmaster Harold Long as inheritor of the Harold G. Long legacy or Shimabuku-Long Isshinryu™. At this meeting on September 23<sup>rd</sup> 1998, Grandmaster Long also showed me his Last Will and Testament reflecting his desire for me to inherit his personal Isshinryu Karate files, awards and memorabilia. It was a bittersweet day when he conferred upon me the honor and responsibility of this rank, along with his personal red belt, signed and dated by him. Grandmaster Long and I also discussed on this date September 23rd 1998 his vision for an organization with the mission of furthering the charge given to him by Grandmaster Tatsuo Shimabuku, "Soke", of Isshinryu Karate. At this time he conferred his blessing on the formation of the "United States Isshinryu Karate Association"™, (U.S.I.K.A.). He called it, "The Isshinryu Association of the Future."

October 12<sup>th</sup> 1998 at approximately 10:20 PM, Grandmaster Harold G. Long passed away. This was a great loss to all of us in Isshinryu. The legacy of this great man, The Grand Patriarch of Isshinryu, lives on through those lives he touched! The passing of his body has taken place, but his spirit, through us, lives on!

Grandmaster Harold G. Long took many boys and molded them into men. I am no exception. He influenced my life more than any other mortal man. He was the toughest man I have ever known; yet his heart was gentle. He trained me to fight, but encouraged me to work with others toward common goals. He showed me how to teach, and how to learn. He demonstrated unconditional loyalty to his teacher, and demanded the same from me. He taught me how to lead, and how to follow. He never feared controversy, and welcomed it when the ends justified the means. He exemplified tremendous strength and stamina, even in the face of illness. He was the model student of the martial art and the master instructor.

*And in the end...He taught me to live life to the fullest, And to die with dignity*