



# OAKLAND KENDO DOJO



**YOSHINARI MIYATA, HANSHI 8 DAN**  
1926 - 2016

*"If I can help anybody, somehow to become a better person, this is the ultimate goal. Kendo is to build your character".*

Yoshinari Miyata was born in Los Angeles, California in 1926. As a young boy from a farmer's family he spent his youth working in the fields. At the age of seven he relocated to Kagoshima Japan where he began his Kendo training.

As a child Miyata Sensei watched many Chambara (Samurai cinema) movies and became infatuated with how Kendo reminded him of the samurai. Kendo became the focus of Miyata Sensei's life and family. Five years after starting Kendo and a graduate of a famous martial arts academy, Miyata Sensei began instructing the school's Kendo club.

Following World War II, Miyata Sensei returned to the Bay area where he met and married his wife, Mary. Sensei was one of the first Japanese Americans admitted to a construction union and worked for a small company for many years.

Miyata Sensei continued to practice Kendo and participated in the formation of the Northern California Kendo Federation (NCKF). In 1953, he was one of the founders of Oakland Kendo Dojo and in 1996, Miyata Sensei formed the Berkeley Kendo Dojo.



*Founding members of Oakland Kendo Dojo*



*Instructing Oakland Kendo students*



*1967 International Goodwill Games – Miyata Sensei pictured in white.*

He was a participant in the International Goodwill match (pre-WKC, 1967) and a Team USA Member (2nd WKC, 1973). In 2000, Miyata Sensei received the coveted title of Hanshi. The highest title given only to persons at the highest level of kendo. He considered this to be one of his proudest Kendo memories.

Miyata Sensei's contributions and dedication to Kendo are still being recognized today and was inducted in to the Japanese American Association of Northern California's Bunka Hall of Fame.

[oaklandkendo.com](http://oaklandkendo.com)

Oakland Kendo Dojo Inc. is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit and a member of the Northern California Kendo Federation (NCKF) and the All United States Kendo Federation (AUSKF).



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## YOSHINARI MIYATA, HANSHI 8 DAN

1926 - 2016

### His Philosophy

Miyata Sensei felt that he has learned many things from Kendo, most notably to be more considerate of others and to be able to focus not only on Kendo, but other pursuits as well.

One of his favorite sayings, "Fall down seven times, and get up eight," emphasizes his belief in the importance of perseverance. He believes the ultimate goal in Kendo is to build one's character and become a better person not just in Kendo practice but also in all areas of one's life.

In his own words...

*"Becoming champion means you were good that day, but you should strive to build the kind of person you are for your lifetime. Kendo begins and ends with manners. Never give up and continue practicing Kendo."*



YOSHINARI MIYATA SENSEI

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## OAKLAND KENDO DOJO - CELEBRATING 70th ANNIVERSARY

1953 - 2023



*Founding members of Oakland Kendo Dojo*

In the fall of 1953, the Oakland Kendo dojo was established at Carallo's Judo Dojo. The founding members were Hiroshi Umemoto, Gordon Warner, Benjamin Hazard, Yoshinari Miyata, Shoichi Fujishima and Seiichi Umemoto.

The dojo practiced at the West Tenth Street Japanese Methodist Church and then moved to the Oakland Buddhist Church. Currently its 65+ members, under the guidance of Chief Instructor

Court Tanouye, Renshi Rokudan (6 Dan), practice at the De Fremery Park Recreational Hall in Oakland, California. Oakland Kendo Dojo members also hold practices at the Diablo Japanese American Club in Concord, the Buddhist Church of Stockton and the Mill Valley Recreation Center in Marin County.

Over the past 70 years, the Oakland Kendo Dojo has been fortunate to have hosted many guests, including top instructors and competitors from throughout the United States as well as Japan. Participated in many tournaments and demonstrations and has taught countless children and adults, the fundamentals of the art of kendo. Its members have participated in the US Nationals and World Kendo Championships as well providing both coaches and referees for these events.

Many famous sensei have instructed at Oakland Kendo dojo including; Fujii sensei, Takao sensei, Doi sensei, Chiba sensei, Ogawa sensei, Maoki sensei, Zug sensei, Jow Sensei, and Seung Joon Park sensei.

Many famous kenshi have also trained at Oakland Kendo Dojo over the years; Mark Grivas (TEAM USA and former AUSKF Champion), Yuji Onitsuka (TEAM USA member and coach), Chris Yang (TEAM USA and former AUSKF Champion), Simon Yuu (TEAM USA), N. Nishimoto (TEAM USA member and coach), T. Nishimoto (TEAM USA and former AUSKF Champion), Mic. Cabral (TEAM USA member), Min. Cabral (AUSKF Junior National Champion).

### Time Line

- Oakland Kendo Dojo established 1953 • Established Berkeley Kendo Dojo 1996
- Established Concord Kendo Dojo 1999 • Established Stockton Kendo Dojo 2012
- Established Marin Kendo Dojo 2017

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