

# KARATE IN THE PHILIPPINES – THE GOLDEN YEARS

BY: EMMANUEL DEL ESPIRITU SANTO QUERUBIN

In 1955 a non-commissioned officer in the Philippine Air Force started teaching military personnel and their dependents the Filipino fighting arts of SIKARAN and ARNIS DE MANO. The group called themselves the Eagle Karate Club (mainly because of the similarity of SIKARAN and Karate techniques). Upon hearing of the existence of this club, several civilians sought instructions from the leader of the group. Since most civilian members have no access to the military base, it was decided to rent a building outside the base to serve as headquarters and in 1958 renamed the group the Karate Brotherhood of the Philippines. This marked the first step to the journey without an end.

1964, marked the advent of the rise to power of the Philippines in the Karate world. It was the year that the Karate Brotherhood of the Philippines became the fourth member of the Asian Karate Association. On its inception, the Asian Karate Association was made up of Japan, Korea and China .

It was the year SIKARAN, then known as Philippine Karate, was first introduced in the outside world of the martial arts, on the occasion of the First Asian Karate Championships held in Tokyo, Japan on March 14, 1964. It was the first time that a Filipino, received an international award as the “Most Courageous Fighter.”

All of these “firsts” can be credited to one person, Meliton Geronimo, Grandmaster of SIKARAN and founder of the Karate Brotherhood of the Philippines.

Under the aegis of the Karate Brotherhood of the Philippines and the leadership of Meliton Geronimo, more awards were garnered by the Philippines in the subsequent Asian Karate Championships.

On August 2, 1965, Bernard Belleza won the gold medal in the heavyweight division. In the same tournament held in Seoul, Korea, Emilio Galicinao won the gold medal in the middleweight division. Eddie Miraflor won the silver medal in the lightweight division, while Greg Agaloos won the “Most Courageous Fighter” award.

The 3<sup>rd</sup> Asian Karate Championships was held in Manila, Philippines on November 6, 1966. This year was the most memorable date in the history of Philippine Karate. On this day, Meliton Geronimo’s dream that he has held in his heart and mind since he was first introduced to SIKARAN, came true. After years of fighting for it, that started in 1958, the Asian Karate Association recognized SIKARAN, Philippine Karate, as a fighting art of a distinct origin. For all his efforts, Meliton Geronimo was awarded the 10<sup>th</sup> Degree Red Belt as Grandmaster of SIKARAN.

Not to be outdone in 1966 were Jimmy Magbanua and Ariston Bautista. Magbanua was crowned heavyweight gold medalist while Bautista won the gold medal in the lightweight division. Again, Eddie Miraflor won the silver medal in the lightweight division.

On October 10, 1967, in Tokyo, Japan, the 4<sup>th</sup> Asian Karate Championships saw a new Filipino winner. Amando Diaz won the gold medal in the lightweight division.

It was on the 5<sup>th</sup> Asian Karate Championships held in Seoul, Korea on October 27, 1968 that the Philippines again won in the heavyweight division when Antonio Ganiela won the gold medal. Amando Diaz, now a bit bigger and heavier, won the gold medal besting his teammate and former middleweight gold medalist Emilio Galicinao, who settled for silver. Jimmy Geronimo, younger brother of Meliton Geronimo was named "Most Courageous Fighter."

The 6<sup>th</sup> and last Asian Karate Championships was held in the City of Marikina in the Philippines on October 26, 1969. Malaysia has joined the Asian Karate Association. Patrick Lim of Malaysia won the gold medal in the middleweight division. Lim, is also an indirect student of Meliton Geronimo. Patrick Lim's instructor was Emmanuel Querubin, a follower of Meliton Geronimo.

On October 10, 1970, Meliton Geronimo and Emmanuel Querubin represented the Philippines in the formation of the World Union of Karate-do Organizations (WUKO).



SOME OF THE ASIAN KARATE CHAMPIONSHIPS DELEGATES PAY A COURTESY CALL TO PHILIPPINE AIR FORCE COMMANDING OFFICER GENERAL VICTOR DIZON. FROM LEFT: CARLOS QUEJOY, EDDIE MIRAFLOR, MAJOR MENDOZA, GENERAL VICTOR DIZON, CAPTAIN MELITON GERONIMO, BERNARD BELLEZA, , GREG AGALOOS, AND MAJOR MELQUEAS JURILLA.

**ON NOVEMBER 6, 1966  
THE ASIAN KARATE ASSOCIATION  
ACCEPTED SIKARAN AS A FIGHTING ART OF A  
DISTINCT ORIGIN.  
MELITON GERONIMO WAS PROMOTED TO 10<sup>TH</sup>  
DEGREE RED BELT AS GRANDMASTER.**



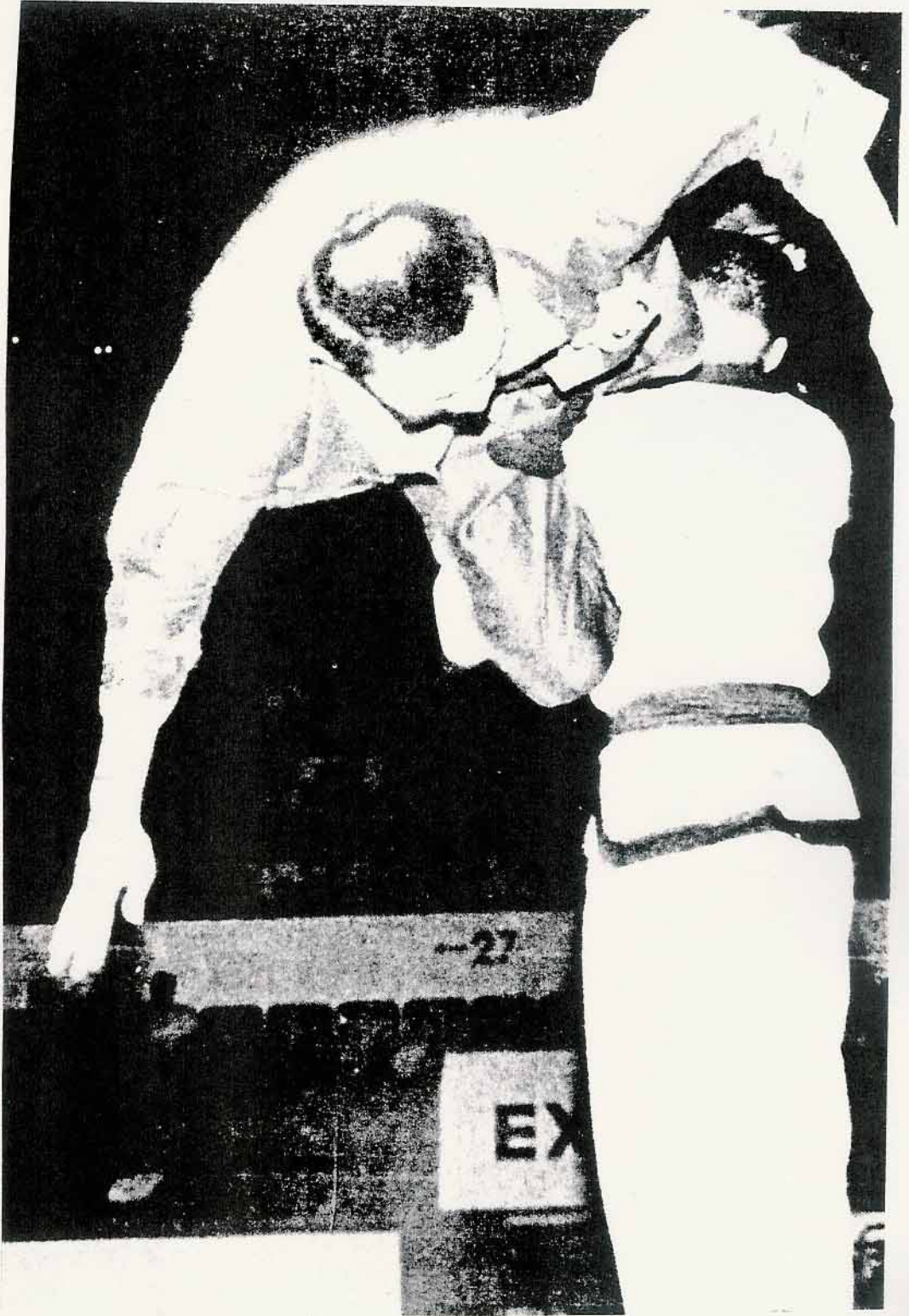
**GRANDMASTER KWAI BYEUNG YUN  
ASIAN KARATE ASSOCIATION  
PRESIDENT**



**HWANG KEE  
GRANDMASTER  
KOREAN TANG SOO SOO**



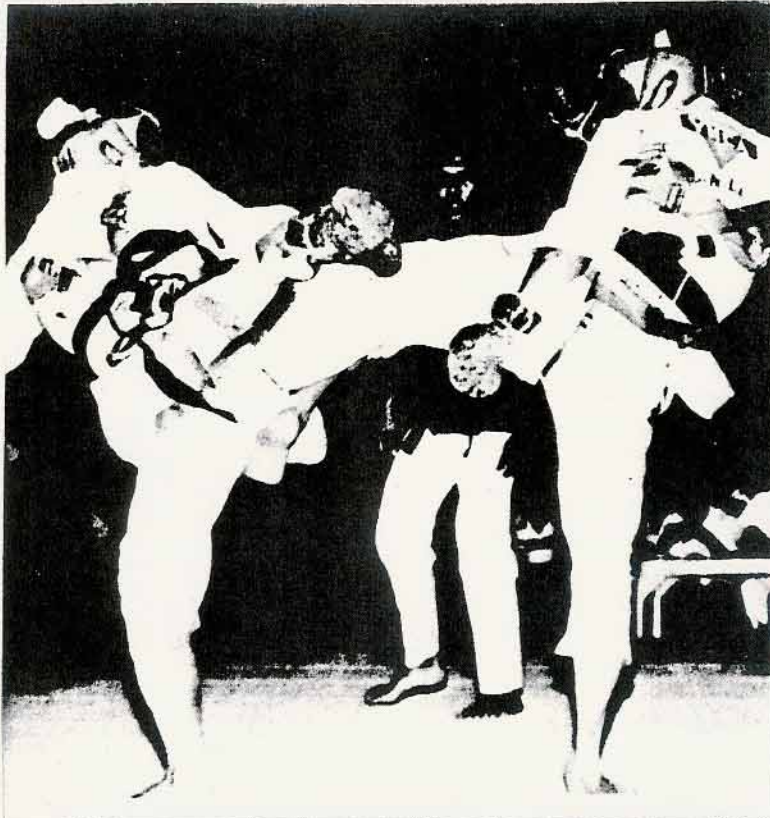
**KOICHI KONDO  
GRANDMASTER  
ALL JAPAN KARATE FEDERATION**



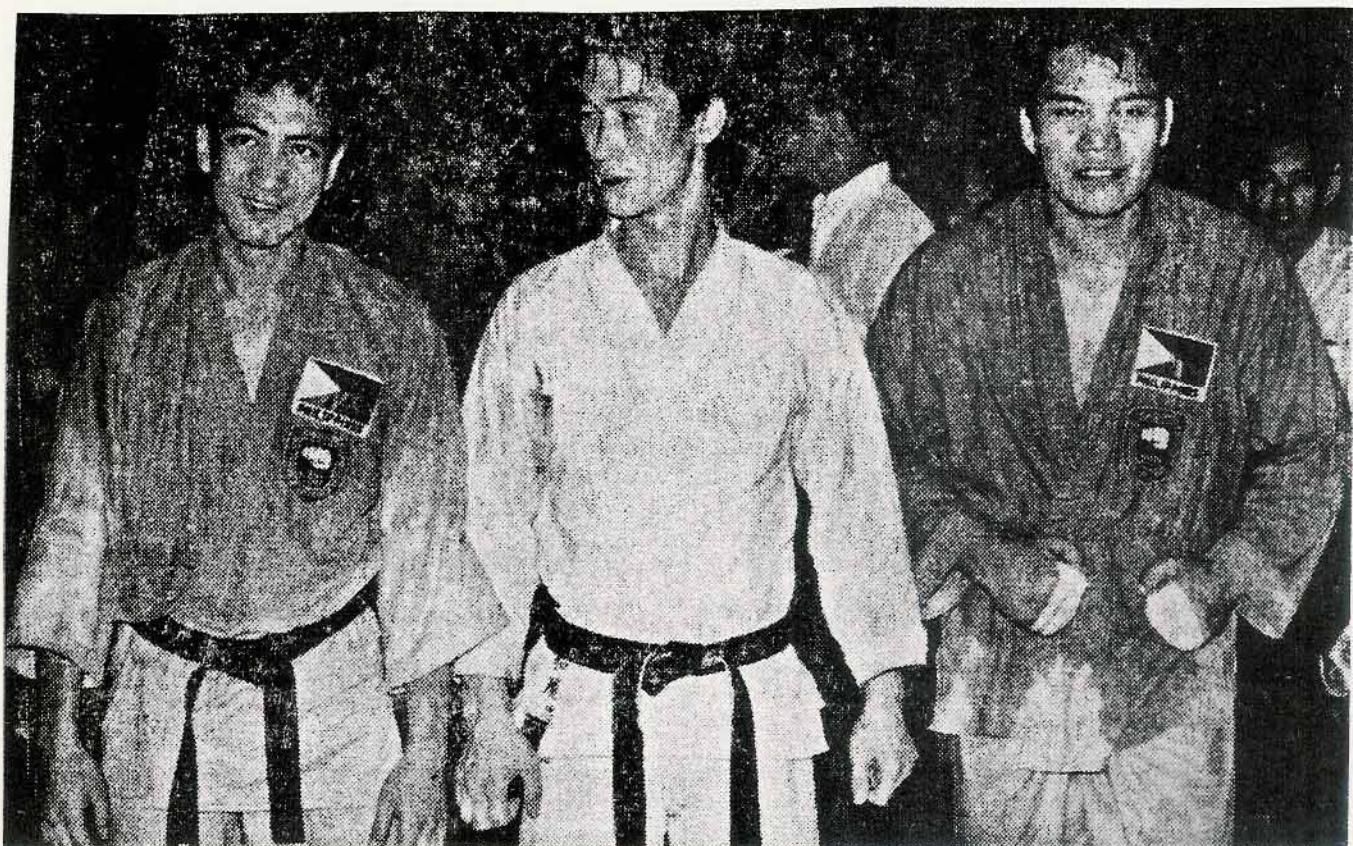
EMILIO GALICINAO, MIDDLEWEIGHT GOLD MEDALIST IN THE 2<sup>ND</sup> ASIAN KARATE CHAMPIONSHIPS DISPLAYS HIS NATURAL GYMNASTIC ABILITY WITH THIS FLYING DOUBLE BACK KICK.



JAPANESE TEAM TO THE THIRD ASIAN KARATE CHAMPIONSHIPS. HEAD OF JAPANESE DELEGATION RECEIVES TROPHY FROM PAAF PRESIDENT ANTONIO DE LAS ALAS. THIRD FROM RIGHT, SECOND ROW IS MELITON GERONIMO. ON HIS LEFT IS ALL JAPAN KARATE FEDERATION MASTER KOICHI KONDO.



THE BRAND OF TOURNAMENT OF THE KARATE BROTHERHOOD OF THE PHILIPPINES IS A FULL-CONTACT, KNOCK-OUT SYSTEM USING PROTECTIVE GEAR PATTERNED AFTER THE RULES OF THE ASIAN KARATE ASSOCIATION.



GOLD MEDALISTS IN THE THIRD ASIAN KARATE CHAMPIONSHIPS. FROM LEFT, ARISTON BAUTISTA (Lightweight) OF THE PHILIPPINES, MAKOTO YAMATOYA (Middleweight) OF JAPAN AND JIMMY MAGBANUA (Heavyweight) OF THE PHILIPPINES.





GLORIA RAPSING SHOWS THE FORM THAT MADE HER 1968 KBP GREATER MANILA REGIONAL CHAMPIONSHIPS GOLD MEDALIST.

# ASIAN KARATE CHAMPIONSHIPS GOLD MEDALISTS



ARISTON BAUTISTA  
LIGHTWEIGHT  
3<sup>RD</sup> ASIAN KARATE  
CHAMPIONSHIPS



BERNARD BELLEZA  
HEAVYWEIGHT  
2<sup>ND</sup> ASIAN KARATE  
CHAMPIONSHIPS



AMANDO DIAZ  
LIGHTWEIGHT  
4<sup>TH</sup> ASIAN KARATE  
CHAMPIONSHIPS  
MIDDLEWEIGHT  
5<sup>TH</sup> ASIAN KARATE  
CHAMPIONSHIPS



EMILIO GALICINAO  
MIDDLEWEIGHT  
2<sup>ND</sup> ASIAN KARATE  
CHAMPIONSHIPS



JIMMY MAGBANUA  
HEAVYWEIGHT  
3<sup>RD</sup> ASIAN KARATE  
CHAMPIONSHIPS

ANTONIO GANIELA  
HEAVYWEIGHT  
5<sup>TH</sup> ASIAN KARATE  
CHAMPIONSHIPS

# JAPAN

## 6<sup>TH</sup> ASIAN KARATE CHAMPIONSHIPS PHILIPPINES, OCTOBER 26, 1969

昭和四十三年  
 十一月二十五日  
 此は  
 試合  
 結果  
 表  
 也



**HIROMASA TOYOKURA**  
Team Leader  
5th Degree Black Belt



**SADAJI AKIYAMA**  
Team Captain  
5th Degree Black Belt



**TEIJU SUZUKI**  
Heavyweight  
2nd Degree Black Belt



**NOBUCHIKA KOBAYASHI**  
Heavyweight  
2nd Degree Black Belt



**MAKOTO TOYOSHIMA**  
Middleweight  
2nd Degree Black Belt



**TORU IBA**  
Middleweight  
1st Degree Black Belt



**ISAO SHIMODA**  
Lightweight  
3rd Degree Black Belt



**KATSUTOSHI TAKAAKI**  
Lightweight  
3rd Degree Black Belt



**NESTOR MUYOT**  
Philippine Coordinator

# KOREA

## 6<sup>TH</sup> ASIAN KARATE CHAMPONSHIPS PHILIPPINES, OCTOBER 26, 1969



HWANG KEE  
Official



KWEI BYUONG YUN  
Official



SHIM TAE YU  
Official



HAN UN-CHANG  
Official



CHUNG CHUL-WOO  
Heavyweight  
3rd Degree Black Belt



HWANG JIN-MUN  
Heavyweight  
3rd Degree Black Belt



PARK YONG-HWAN  
Middleweight  
2nd Degree Black Belt



KANG BYUNG-ILL  
Middleweight  
3rd Degree Black Belt



YANG SUNG-RYAL  
Lightweight  
3rd Degree Black Belt



YU BOX-SAN  
Lightweight  
3rd Degree Black Belt



EMILIO GALICINAO  
Philippine Coordinator

# MALAYSIA

## 6<sup>TH</sup> ASIAN KARATE CHAMPIONSHIPS PHILIPPINES, OCTOBER 26, 1969

林清福



*With honor  
and respect from  
Patrick Lim*

**PATRICK LIM**  
Head of Malaysian Team  
Middleweight  
1st Degree Black Belt

*6, Orchard Avenue  
Petting Park  
Penang - Malaysia*



*With  
our  
best  
wishes  
for your  
help.*

*LMK*

**LOKE MENG KWANG**  
Lightweight  
1st Degree Black Belt



**EMMANUEL ES QUERUBIN**  
KBP Senior Instructor for Malaysia  
Coach, Malaysian Team



**HERMELANDO 'TATA' BAUTISTA**  
Philippine Coordinator

# PHILIPPINES

## 6<sup>TH</sup> ASIAN KARATE CHAMPIONSHIPS

### PHILIPPINES, OCTOBER 26, 1969



CAPTAIN MELITON C. GERONIMO  
10th Degree Red Belt  
Team Leader



ANGEL EBUENGA  
Heavyweight  
1st Degree Black Belt



SERAFIN PANGILINAN  
Heavyweight  
2nd Degree Black Belt



AMANDO DIAZ  
Middleweight  
3rd Degree Black Belt



ENER SAMIA  
Middleweight  
1st Degree Black Belt



ROGER MESINA  
Middleweight  
1st Degree Black Belt



JAIME GERONIMO  
Lightweight  
5th Degree Black Belt



CILFRED ESPINA  
Lightweight  
1st Degree Black Belt



EDDIE MIRAFLOR  
Lightweight  
5th Degree Black Belt



DALMACIO VENERACION  
5th Degree Black Belt  
Coach



BERNARD BELLEZA  
Heavyweight  
5th Degree Black Belt  
Team Captain