

# Ken Sakio

Contributed by Robert Lile  
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Ken Sakio, Former WSKF President

...Master Ken Sakio was born in Tokyo, Japan on January 2, 1922. His introduction to the martial arts began at the age of eleven. As a young boy, he began practicing the art of Judo and Kendo as part of the school curriculum in 1933.

After successfully graduating from middle school Sakio Ken enrolled at the prestigious Toyo University in 1939. He immediately joined the newly formed Toyo University Karate Club and began receiving instruction Karate from famed Okinawan Tode Master, Motobu Choki, who was the chief instructor at the University during that time.

It was after Master Motobu Choki's decision to return to Okinawa, during 1939, that Master Motobu highly recommended his good friend and fellow Okinawan Tode Master, Mabuni Kenwa to act as his replacement at the University Karate Club.

During this period from July 1939, Ken Sakio studied with Master Mabuni. Later during 1940-41, he travelled to Okinawa where he received Karate instruction from a few other Okinawan masters such as Miyagi Chojun (founder of Goju Ryu Karate-do) Master Chibana Choshin (founder of Kobayashi Ryu Karate-do) and Master Gusukuma (Shimpaku Shiroma (direct student of Grand Master Itosu Anko of Shuri).

In 1942, Sakio sensei was honoured with a 'Renshi' teaching license issued by the most highly respected Japanese Martial Arts Organization responsible for certifying all the martial arts, the Dai Nippon Buto-Kai.

By 1949, Sakio sensei had opened his own Shito-ryu dojo, the Seifukan under the supervision and with permission of master Mabuni Kenwa. He also became the karate instructor at the Shimizudani High School Karate Club as well as Outemon High School Karate Club.

By 1969, Sakio sensei was appointed a representative of the Zen Nippon Karate-do Renmei (Federation of All Japan Karate-do Organizations-FAJKO) and a senior 'A' class Referee.

Sakio Ken sensei was honoured for his continuous outstanding contribution to the martial arts by receiving the 'Distinguished Service Award' from the Nihon Budo Kyogai Kai (Japan Budo Council) during 1992.

In 1993, Master Sakio was appointed the President of the Japan Karate-do Shito-Kai as well as President of the World Shito-Ryu Karate-do Federation after the very unexpected death of Master Iwata Manzo.

In 1994 Master Sakio was awarded 9th degree level of black belt from the Japan Karate-do Federation (JKF).

Sakio Sensei recall the days with Master Kenwa Mabuni (Left to right) Funakoshi, Osaka city.

The first time I met master Mabuni was in July 1939, when I needed letters of introduction to master Miyagi, Chibana and Johma in Okinawa. I belonged to the karate club of Toyo University and our karate instructor, master Choyuh Motobu, had returned to Okinawa due to age. I had no other acquaintances, so I Boldly asked master Kenwa Mabuni to write letters of introduction for us to find another karate instructor. Master Mabuni was kind enough to meet me, an unknown student and to give us letters of introduction with kind advice. It was through this connection that I came to learn karate under master Mabuni in later days.

From December 1941, when Japan rushed into the Pacific War, we all lived precarious lives. But, I was charmed by the personality of master Mabuni and the appeal of karate, and I devoted myself to practice under master Mabuni, valuing the short period left to me until my enlistment in April 1941. Recalling those times, I still now feel deep gratitude to master Mabuni, Mrs. Mabuni, for allowing me to come everyday with my lunch box and practice karate till late at night forgetting about the time of the last train.

Master Mabuni was 50 years old then and reaching his peak. His lessons were so exhaustive, going into so many minute details that I was constantly surprised by his vitality in seeking the essence of karate. That was fifty years ago. I am ashamed that in spite of those kind lessons from master Mabuni, with so much toil, I remain immature in arts of karate.