

GRANDMASTER JAE JOON KIM
Founder of the World Moo Duk Kwan Tang Soo Do Federation
1929 ~ 2007



Grandmaster Kim was born in Seoul, Korea in 1929. He was the son of a full-time merchant and a part-time Sumo wrestler who had trained in Japan and won the Korean Sumo Championships. The prize, Grandmaster Kim recalls, was the traditional one -- a live cow.

An avid sportsman and athlete, the elder Kim wanted his son to master a "manly" sport. In 1945, he enrolled his son in a Western-style boxing club. He was a good student, winning eleven of his fifteen bouts on the Korean amateur circuit (similar to our own Golden Gloves). Two events, however, led to a road he has traveled ever since. In his fifteenth bout he knocked out his opponent and the boy, a friend, lay unconscious for twenty minutes. "I thought" Grandmaster Kim remembers, "that I had killed him."

The other, while studying Sumo in Japan, Grandmaster Kim's father had witnessed karate training and had been impressed by what he saw. He decided to end his son's boxing career and in April of 1945, enrolled him in Grandmaster Hwang Kee's Moo Duk Kwan Tang Soo Do Dojang in Seoul. Grandmaster Kim became a devoted and gifted student of Tang Soo Do under Grandmaster Hwang Kee's firm leadership and iron discipline. In 1947, he earned his black belt. Grandmaster Hwang Kee's training was rigorous and sometimes brutal. He required hard body conditioning through constant repetition. Students punched and kicked the Tal Yun Bong (makiwara) 100 times a day with each hand and foot, often leaving the board stained with blood. All students had Tal Yun Bongs in their homes, Grandmaster Kim had two. Grandmaster Hwang Kee assigned "homework" and Grandmaster Kim was often up smashing the board well past midnight, sometimes to his neighbors' chagrin.

In 1952 he assisted in the formation of the Korean Tang Soo Do Association in Seoul, Korea. From 1955 to 1959 he was the top Master Instructor of Moo Duk Kwan in Korea. In 1955 he gave an exhibition at the 1st International Goodwill Tang Soo Do Tournament. In 1961, he was appointed Vice-President of the Moo Duk Kwan Tang Soo Do Association and in 1962 was elected Vice-president of the Korean Soo Bahk Do Association (the parent organization headed by Grandmaster Hwang Kee). In 1967-1968 he was the Chief Master Instructor of Korean, U.S. and Vietnamese Special Forces. In 1969 he brought Tang Soo Do to the United States and founded the Association in Detroit, Michigan.

Through the years he toured the world for exhibitions and trained Master Instructors in Europe, Asia, North and South America and South Africa. Along the way he found time to train and promote Chuck Norris, Pat Johnson and World Heavyweight Boxing Champion Leon Spinks. Grandmaster Kim also

instructed Detroit Mayor Coleman Young's bodyguards. His selfless contributions to the community have resulted in numerous proclamations from mayors around the country.

Veteran martial artists will recognize that Grandmaster Jae Joon Kim holds one of the highest ranks in Tang Soo Do in the world: in fact his Dan Number is #38, which was awarded by Grandmaster Hwang Kee (the founder of Tang Soo Do). For over 50 years Grandmaster Kim has been a devoted teacher and inspiration to all who came in contact with him.



Grandmaster Jae Joon Kim has continued to develop World Moo Duk Kwan Tang Soo Do, which now stretches its way from California to New York and from Michigan (where the main club started) to Florida. Grandmaster Jae Joon Kim traveled the United States and around the world conducting tests and seminars to further the expansion of the World Moo Duk Kwan Tang Soo Do Federation. Along with his three sons and his daughter (all masters and instructors) Grandmaster Kim continued to develop the Korean Art of Moo Duk Kwan Tang Soo Do for all. He insured that his students and his instructors' students receive the finest instruction possible.

Grandmaster Jae Joon Kim passed away unexpectedly on January 9, 2007 at the age of 77. At his funeral several masters were honored by his family to be pallbearers. Among the masters were Grandmaster James Saffold, Master Mike Baird and Grandmaster Peter F. DeFosses all are now members of the American Kwan Tang Soo Do Federation.