

# The Correct Name of Professor Okazaki's Teacher

by Professor George Arrington

For many years there has been a difference of opinion as to the given name of Professor Okazaki's Jūdō teacher Tanaka. In the 1970's I was told that the teacher of Professor Okazaki was named Tanaka Kichimatsu. As most Danzan-Ryū practitioners, I accepted this as fact. In 1993, Professor Sig Kufferath, a personal student of Professor Okazaki, told me that this was incorrect. He told me and others at the Okugi class in July 1993 that the correct name was Tanaka Yoshimatsu. He said that this is what Okazaki had told him.

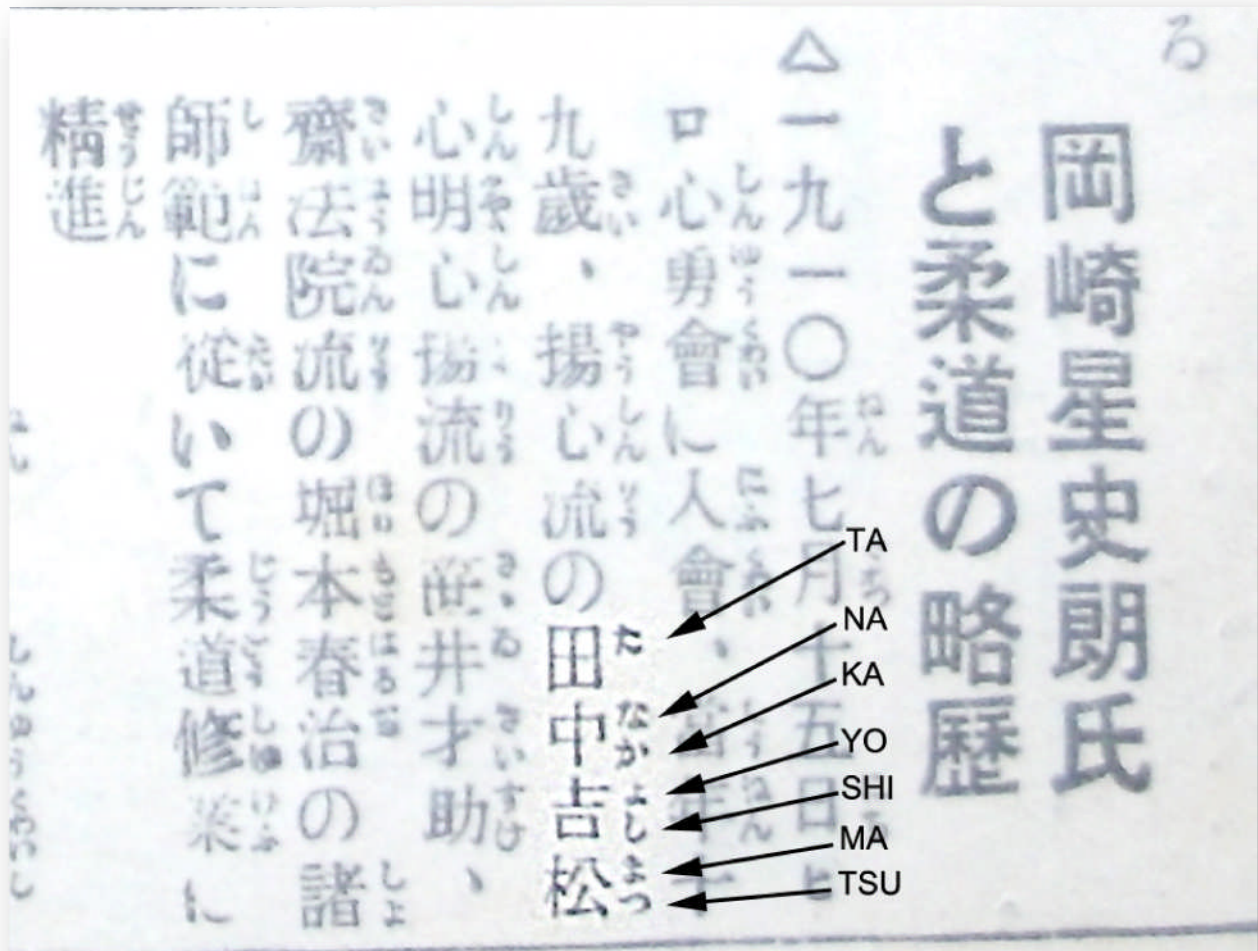
Upon reporting this on my website in 1995, I received correspondence that Yoshimatsu was incorrect and the correct name was Kichimatsu. Seeing a difference in opinion on this (with a majority of Danzan-Ryū people using Kichimatsu) I set about to try to settle which was right.

To understand this let's look at the kanji involved. In his Mokuroku scroll, Okazaki names his instructor as 田中吉松. The first two kanji read "tanaka" and the last kanji is "matsu". It is the third kanji that seems to be in question. The kanji 吉 can be read as either "yoshi" or "kichi". In asking native Japanese speakers about how to read 吉松, they said that "yoshimatsu" was correct. They said that the "kichi" form would properly be used if it came at the end of a name, such as 巖吉 "Genkichi", the name of Okazaki's brother. Even when presented with this information, those on the other side of the debated remained hardened to their belief and seemed not to be convinced. Perhaps they would change their mind if they could go back in time and speak with Okazaki. This may actually be possible.

I recently came across an old Hawaiian Japanese newspaper from 1941. There are a series of articles detailing the celebration of the seventh anniversary of the Kodenkan. In addition to detailing articles about demonstrations and other aspects of the anniversary, there is a brief biography of the martial art training of Okazaki Seishiro. Below is a section of the May 17, 1941 issue of The Hawaii Hochi with the section in question at the bottom in bold:



An enlargement of this section is shown below with Tanaka's name in bold:



Different from the writing in the Mokuroku, this newspaper article uses “furigana”. These are phonetic symbols (usually hiragana) that clarify how to voice the words. Since many Japanese words can have different pronunciations, furigana are often added in newspapers. It is clearly seen here that the name is correctly read, “よしまつ” “Yoshimatsu”. Further, it is likely that the information for this article was given by Okazaki himself.

It is often difficult to admit that conclusions are incorrect, especially when they are based on deeply held beliefs. Hopefully the above evidence will help put this sometimes contentious debate to rest.

For an amplification of this article, see the table below:

Kanji	Romaji	English Translation
岡崎星史朗氏 と柔道の略歴 一九一〇年七月十五日ヒ 口心勇會に入會、當年十 九歳、揚心流の田中吉松 心明心揚流の笹井才助、 齋法院流の堀本春治の諸 師範に従いて柔道修業に 精進	okazaki seishirō shi to jūdō no ryaku reki ichi kyū ichi maru nen shichi gatsu itsuka hi ro shin yū kai ni nyūkai, tōnen jū- kyū sai, yōshinryū no tanaka yoshimatsu shin kokoa shinyōryū no sasai saisuke, seihōinryū no horimoto haruji no moro shihan ni shū ite jūdō shūgyō ni shōjin	Mr. Seishiro Okazaki and his Jūdō biography. He entered the Shinyūkai in Hilo on July 5, 1910. At that time he was 19 years old. He diligently devoted himself to Jūdō instruction from Tanaka Yoshimatsu of the Yōshin Ryū and his assistant Sasai as well as various instruction from Horimoto Haruji of the Saihō Institute.

Below is a 1911 photograph of the Shinyūkai Dōjō with Sasai, Tanaka and Okazaki identified:

