



Sports Roundup

By MARK QUEEN

IT'S JUST POSSIBLE that a West Las Vegas boy may develop into Olympic Games material in the field of judo, the ancient Japanese art of self defense that made its bow in the international competition at Tokyo last year.

At least, that's the considered opinion of R. W. (Mike) Tierney, a psychologist with the county school system who has been tutoring a judo class at Jefferson Center on Tuesday evenings starting at 6:30.

Tierney, a long-time practitioner in the Oriental technique of resisting physical attack by employing the weight and strength of an assailant to his disadvantage, has been highly impressed by the progress of several of his pupils.

"Some of these young men have shown unusual aptitude," Tierney said with evident admiration. "It is quite possible that one or more of them could develop into strong contenders for the United States judo team in the 1968 or 1972 Olympics. A lot depends on their continued close application to training--and our urgent need for additional equipment."

More Equipment Needed

TIERNEY POINTED OUT that the program is seriously handicapped by an acute shortage of mats and judo uniforms. Only two mats and a like number of uniforms are available at Jefferson Center.

"We sure could use a 40 by 40 foot mat, or even a 20 by 20," he mused longingly. "But even though we've been operating under difficulty, most of my young men haven't let their enthusiasm lag and seldom complain."

(Although Tierney's proteges range from 9 to 15 years of age, he treats them on an adult basis and refers to them individually as "Mr." in the tradition of a sport designed to develop gentlemanly traits based on calm self-assurance.)

This obviously dedicated youth leader appeared especially proud of what he calls his "first team," boys who have applied themselves to the program with a tenacity of purpose for some time. Included in this group and sufficiently advanced to assist Tierney in teaching newcomers, are A. J. Bass, Junior Rogers, Billy Ray Johnson, Raymond Watts and Donnie Ray Wheeler. (See photos this page.)

Black Belt Prospects

"ALL OF THESE YOUNG MEN have demonstrated the ability to eventually earn Black Belt ratings," he said, referring to a universal system for evaluating judo skills. "They have given a good account of themselves in local competition and I am looking forward to sending them up against tougher opposition in Los Angeles, possibly this summer."

He explained that Los Angeles is one of the

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FUTURE OLYMPIANS?--Shown above are youthful judo proteges of R. W. (Mike) Tierney (extreme right upper photo) who have been practicing ancient Japanese art of self defense Tuesday evenings at Jefferson Center. Others in upper photo are (front from left) A. D. Bass, Billy Ray Johnson, Junior Rogers, Raymond Watts and Donnie Ray Wheeler, comprising Tierney's "first team;" (rear from left) Carl Lee Bass, Darnell Moreland, Anthony Robertson, Larry Wheeler, George Hall and Edward Robinson. At lower left, Junior Rogers (face showing) executes "uchi mata makikomi" on A. J. Bass, but in turn is upended by Billy Ray Johnson's "hane goshi" at right. Tierney considers several of his pupils Olympic Games material. (See story)

major centers of judo activity in this nation. Another is Chicago, where he first became interested in the sport at the age of 13 and later earned Black Belt rating.

Now in his 30s, Tierney studied judo under such well-known masters as Mas Tamura in Chicago, Kenneth Kunikuya in Los Angeles and Mas Ishinoe in Mexico City while working toward his master's degree at local graduate

schools. He had previously earned his A.B. at the University of Oklahoma.

Tamura is a former president of the American Judo Association, Kunikuya attained sixth degree Black Belt status and Ishinoe achieved the ultimate eighth degree in the hierarchy of the art.

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