



## OUR TRIPS

**National and International Training,  
Demonstrations, Competitions, and Cultural Exchanges**

# American-Russian International Martial Arts Tournament



In June and July 1996, the International College of Martial Arts in Europe invited the world to come to St. Petersburg Russia to share in the knowledge of the martial arts cultural differences and ideas. This exchange would take place over a week of training and a two-day tournament held at one of the largest stadiums in St. Petersburg. This offer was promoted in martial arts magazines, such as Black Belt magazine, as well as many newspapers and T.V. shows. Only a small group of Americans accepted the invitation, which meant hard work as well as time lost from work and financial costs.

Russia was going through its elections and their new freedom was still a challenge and at times a hardship on the Russian people. The American news media was magnifying all of these difficulties in Russia, which may have resulted in so few Americans taking this opportunity to share martial arts knowledge with Russia and the Baltic countries. The American Martial Arts Institute did answer the invitation and carried the American Eagle Style to the winner's circle many times.

*Above is a picture of the Black and Brown Belts that competed from this school and was taken at Red Square in Moscow, Russia. There were also family members and friends that accompanied this group as well as the American translator for the group, Miss Kristy Kershaw, who are not in the picture.*

The following was the news release used by over fourteen newspapers as well as five T.V. stations as a foundation for their news release upon the return of the group.

### **Americans Fight to Make Friends in Russia.**

The American team succeeded in winning 18 medals during two-day international martial arts tournament held in St. Petersburg, Russia last week, and at the same time made friends with thousands of Russians. Of the eighteen medals won, thirteen were won by members of the American Martial Arts Institute under the direction of Grand Master Clifford C. Crandall Jr. who coached and trained them specifically for this tournament. The Eagle Style taught in this school demonstrated American skills in the use of weapons from around the world plus traditional and new katas. This winning team of 30 competitors under Crandall's coaching was comprised of twenty black belts and ten brown belts and were the only Americans to participate in the tournament from the State of New York. As a result, they not only represented the United States, but New York State specifically. They presented the New York State Flag along with other gifts to the St. Petersburg and Russian governmental leaders. Master Nikolai Smirnov, one of the leading martial artists in Russia and the diplomat for the International Martial Arts College in Europe, said "seeing a truly American style and school gave new meaning to the position the martial arts have taken in the United States." The school has a rich history blending Korean, Japanese, Chinese and American Law Enforcement tactics. Gold medals were won in men's weapons kata divisions and men's musical kata divisions. In all this American team won 3 gold, 4 silver and 6 bronze medals.

### **The following are the names of the medal winners:**

#### **Gold Medals (3):**

**Mr. Arturo Santiago Jr.** of Saratoga Springs, New York  
Divisions = Weapons Kata with Japanese Tonfas and Musical Kata

**Mrs. Linda Austin** of Schaghticoke, New York  
Division = Empty Hand Kata (did Traditional Korean Kata)

#### **Silver Medals (3):**

**Mr. Benedicto Albizu Jr.** of Hudson, New York  
Division = Team Kumite (He was the American representative on the international team for free fighting)

**Miss Linda Moller** of Valatie, New York  
Division = Weapons Kata with Japanese Tonfa

**Mrs. Becky Ramsey** of Sand Lake, New York  
Division = Weapons Kata with Japanese Tonfa

## **Bronze Medals (5):**

**Mrs. Jill Crandall** of Utica, New York

Divisions = Weapons Kata with Chinese Half-Moon Staff and Musical Kata with Japanese Naginata

**Dr. Nicholas Chuff** of Ilion, New York

Division = Empty Hand Kata (did Traditional Korean Kata)

**Miss Linda Moller** of Valatie, New York

Division = Empty Hand Kata (did Traditional Korean Kata)

**Mr. Patrick McNeil** of Webster, New York

Division = Empty Hand Kata (did Traditional Korean Kata)

This tournament was sponsored by the largest martial arts organization in Europe and Asia called the International Martial Arts College. A few of the countries which sent teams include Byle Russia, Ukraine, Estonia, Germany, China, Omsk Siberia and Yukods Siberia.

Grand Master Crandall was interviewed by T.V. networks and newspapers and was presented with a Diploma for his outstanding personal achievements and contributions to the world class development of martial arts at a ceremony on Saturday evening. He was quoted as saying, "there is no doubt that American martial arts is now a major factor in the growth of the martial arts in the world and that this responsibility to maintain quality and the courtesies of good mental and physical health should not be taken lightly by American martial arts leaders." A 50-minute educational documentary video tape was done about this group of competitors and their trip to Russia. Over 500 copies were distributed to schools, libraries, and colleges.

## **ABOUT OUR ARCHIVES**

The American Martial Arts Institute maintains a library at its main office with records of rank promotions, events, publications, media coverage, photographs, and videos. These are in the form of photo albums, copies of our publications, preserved news articles, and digital files such as videos and photographs from events in our history. In 1998, the American Martial Arts Institute launched its first website. Since then, the website has undergone many updates to keep up with changing technology. Many of our school's events and history are recorded on this website; however, not all testing results are maintained online (although testing records are maintained at our school). Events prior to 1998, are kept at our school library. This webpage documents some of our school's history.

**For more information visit [AMAI-EagleStyle.com](http://AMAI-EagleStyle.com).**

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