

Our **BJC (BOB JONES CROSSES)** are of Finland descent. The original square cross is the Finish cross of bravery and was first given to two true warriors **DAVE MILNE** and **BILL SABOTKA** who had worked with me for many years in my security business long before my introduction to martial arts.

During the following years the three of us gathered many more warriors into *"our family of security"* who were to become known as *"the good guys wearing black"* (please read previous article) due to the fact we had dedicated our lifestyles to protecting those in need.

In the late sixties we had a hundred or so Jones' boys controlling every city discotheque and most suburban hotels and a problem arose when a fad developed for almost everyone around town to wear black and buy themselves the small and yet significant silver cross that for so long had belonged exclusively to this elite band of warriors.

The discotheque era was soon to fade along with the imitators and **ZEN DO KAI** was born and a very basic understanding by myself of **BUSHIDO** literally translated to *"the way of the warrior"* found that word engraved on the small square cross as it took on a slightly new meaning.

I began to present it to my higher grade students as a symbol of protection of our younger brothers i.e. lower graded students. This gave an unparalleled incentive for every new student to put forward his best to try for acceptance in this *"new family of security"* that found its beginnings in a small dojo on the second floor at **48 ELIZABETH STREET, MELBOURNE** on **JUNE 1ST 1970**.

Not long after this date of 1970, World War I broke out with many of my 'bouncer' associates who had not got into martial arts training. They were disgruntled with the fact they received crosses for violent altercations during their careers of door-work; and now I was presenting them to Black Belts who had never done any door-work.

After I explained the *"League of Blood"* **Second Degree Grading** they were slightly appeased.

"Limitations you thought you had, don't exist..."



BOB JONES MARTIAL ARTS

CROSS ROADS

ORIGINAL ARTICLE WRITTEN BY
SOKE BOB JONES,
SUPER SENJO SOUVENIR BOOKLET



BJC - THE FIRST CROSSES

Crowd Controllers *"The Beginning"* (*Early sixties Bouncers)
From Left: Dave Milne, Dennis Williamson, Bob Jones
(Already referred to as *"The Chief"*) and Bill Sabodka
on duty outside the infamous Catcher Discotheque,
right down the bottom end of #471 Flinders Lane, Melbourne
(One and a half blocks from Spencer Street).





BOB JONES MARTIAL ARTS

"Limitations you thought you had, don't exist..."



Far beyond even my imagination was it for me to conceive that only ten years later in the beginning of the eighties that more than five thousand martial artists would become members of this family in more than one hundred Dojos belonging and feeling protected by his teacher and dojo brothers and sisters.



Remembering back to those security days I recall an expression **"Bouncers wives"** which was derived for the ladies who were tolerant towards their men folk who sacrificed so much of their home life to work with me up to six nights a week working in their role of protectors. They received an even smaller cross in the shape of a circle to identify them as those who understood.

Thus this followed across into the seventies also with an added engraved word **"ISHOA"** to show the **"Karate wives"** also understood their men training with me up to six nights a week. The word Isha having the meaning of **'enlightenment'**, the perfect blending of mind and body.

Thus the wives and loved ones of my dedicated students were proud to also be acknowledged as members of this family known as Zen Do Kai. Then came the advent of our first female students who found in time, that they also gained acknowledgement as dedicated martial arts students with the presentation of this small round cross known as **"Isha"**.

In the mid seventies with the Zen Do Kai family now numbering well over one thousand and my first generation students receiving third degree and the teaching title (**SENSEI**), I gave them the right to present the cross to the second generation students on my behalf. Off they went all over Australia building their branches on the trunk of the now very large family tree. A few more years and they were Fifth Degree, their students became Third Degree and in turn went off and began the third generation.

During the recession years of the late seventies our corporation accountants pointed out the major reasons we were having trouble meeting our commitments, Zen Do Kai was still *sponsoring* not only all new family members crosses all around Australia but also an incredible increasing number of *"lost"* crosses, at this point they were retailing at almost thirty dollars. Not wanting to accept the monetary problem of the square and round cross I approached a jeweller to make a *"new cross"*.

My plan was to present a long cross to be known as the **ZEN DO KAI TOMADACHI** (*family*) which could be sold to all Zen Do Kai students for a small profit, (retailing at half the shop prices) thus keeping the accountants happy.



Getting them made up, I presented my brainchild idea at an *A.B.B.A. meeting* that was my next mistake; all of my first generation blacks hit the roof at the thought of mentioning money and the cross in the same breath.

But they did like the idea of the long cross and thought it was a great idea to give them away to lower grades while they were waiting for that magic moment when they would be presented with a square or round cross.

Another quick meeting with those nasty corporation accountants who don't mind one bit using cross and money in the same sentence. The outcome of that meeting led to almost two years without any crosses at all.

During this two year period, now late 1980, with the cross appearing to be extinct my advanced black belts who had felt the pressures of keeping their own Dojos operating realised the pressure I was under during those bad times. They called another *A.B.B.A. meeting* and this time it was their suggestion that rather than lose the concept altogether they felt students would not mind individually supporting the re-introduction of the crosses.

From the sixties to date, a period of over forty years building the strongest tradition of Zen Do Kai now producing beyond fifth generation black belts, I sincerely say I am proud and honoured when I am at a gathering anywhere in Australia and an instructor presents a cross on my behalf and see the same lump appear in the throat that I saw more than forty years ago when I gave my first two crosses to Dave and Bill.

The cross now transcends across all Bob Jones Martial Arts systems, also being awarded to deserving members of BJC Muay Thai, BJC Arnis Escrima Kali and Fighting Fit-Freestyle (aka Tara Miliate).

My story of the cross is deeply dedicated to one of my favorite students **"MAD DOG" VINCE RANDO** who personally made me my present solid gold cross seven days before he was killed at the early age of third degree black belt.



The Father of your Family - BJMA

Yours in Bushido, Ishoa and Tomadachi
Bob Jones Soke 9th Degree