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Yasuda, who is a Pro Bodybuilder and MMA Coach, was born in Kyoto. Learn about this exceptional individual's accomplishments which include training pro MLB players and MMA fighters. Bonus MMA workout included!



By: Ben Fowlkes

For more info on the International Fight League check out www.ifl.tv.

Ken Yasuda has never been just average at anything. The man some call "Japan's Arnold Schwarzenegger" does everything with complete focus and [dedication](#). Now that he's the coach of the Tokyo Sabres in the International Fight League - the world's first team-based [mixed martial arts](#) organization - his fighters are finding out that Yasuda knows what it takes to be a champion, no matter what the sport.

Born in the ancient Japanese city of Kyoto, Yasuda comes from a family that boasts 46 generations of samurai warriors. One look at his build, which is by all accounts uncommonly proportional and [symmetrical](#), especially for Japanese men, confirms that Yasuda springs from a strong genetic line.

Baseball Dreams

But growing up in Japan, it was [baseball](#), and not bodybuilding or pro fighting, that Yasuda wanted to make his mark in. He set his sights on the major leagues, and was even drafted by an [MLB](#) team, though he chose to play at the [University of Southern California](#) and earn a college degree first.

It was here that his life would change forever.

Printable Page

Did you know?
Ken still finds time to coach a professional fight team, not to mention training former MMA champions.

"As a pitcher from Japan, I was never considered tall or big enough in the U.S., so I started lifting weights to increase my strength," Yasuda recalls. "Mark McGwire, who used to play at USC also, would come and talk to us about the importance of lifting weights, and this inspired me. Eventually my musculanty was very good."

But just when things were looking up for Yasuda, a ligament [injury](#) to his pitching arm derailed his baseball career. His childhood dreams, what he'd dedicated his entire life to up until that point, were now shattered. His life suddenly had no direction.

Where weaker men would have broken, Yasuda only grew stronger.



[Click Image To Enlarge.](#)
Ken Yasuda.

"After my injury, I wanted to learn everything I could about the body and about nutrition and physiology," says Yasuda. "I found that I really loved bodybuilding. It's competing against yourself and testing yourself, trying to accomplish things you never knew you were capable of."

A New Pursuit

Yasuda quickly found that he was capable of a great deal in the sport of bodybuilding. He dedicated himself full-time to that pursuit, eventually becoming the first Japanese to become a Musclemania Professional Bodybuilder.

In addition, Yasuda has been a finalist in several other top bodybuilding competitions, such as Excalibur and the Superbody World Championships, and is a favorite to win the next Musclemania after defeating Mr. Universe, Mr. USA, and Mr. France.

Oh yeah, and he still finds time to coach a professional fight team, not to mention training former [MMA](#) champions like Tucson Scorpions coach Don Frye and Pride veteran Kazuyuki Fujita.

So what can a pro bodybuilder bring to the fight game, anyway?

"What's lacking in a lot of fighters and generally in professional sports is the knowledge of conditioning," Yasuda says. "They can work on practicing their skills, but they don't know enough about how to reach their top conditioning at the time of the event. It helps to enhance their physical abilities and to prevent injuries, so that's what I focus on."



[Click Image To Enlarge.](#)

Ken Yasuda, Pro Bodybuilder.

Yasuda cites as evidence the number of mixed martial arts heavyweights who struggle with injuries and conditioning problems. Fujita, a heavyweight long under Yasuda's tutelage, displays the kind of agility and endurance that Yasuda wants to bring to all his Sabres fighters.

Did You Know?

Light heavy-weight Kazuhiro Hamanaka is the only fighter returning from last year's squad, with most other fighters contracted to new organizations.

"Fujita, he's two hundred and fifty pounds, but he can do flips," Yasuda says. "He has amazing muscular endurance. He can exert himself throughout a fight and still not lose strength, which is what a fighter needs."

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Power To Perform!

In MMA competition the prospect of injury presents itself at a higher level. This increases the importance of controlling your mind if you are to have any chance of being successful. Breakthrough the fear right here! [\[Click here to learn more. \]](#)

Besides his knowledge of strength and conditioning training, Yasuda also works to instill in the minds of his fighters the same samurai mentality that propelled his bodybuilding career.

"People can waste their whole lives, one day at a time, and never realize it. I believe you have to separate yourself from your regular life and focus on what you want. If you don't do that, it's too easy to make excuses, and you'll always end up with regrets that way."

Forum Threads:

[What excuses have you overcome?](#) - Started By [TWright](#)

[Don't Make Excuses!](#) - Started By [VinceFan](#)

[No more excuses!](#) - Started By [woarl_06](#)

This is the attitude that Yasuda has brought to the IFL's Tokyo Sabres in preparation for the 2007 season, and they'll certainly need his help if they are to succeed in an MMA league deep with talent.

Though Pat Miletich's Quad Cities Silverbacks have dominated the IFL so far,

winning the first ever World Team Championship on December 29th, the new season starts for Yasuda's Sabres on February 2nd.

It's then that the Tokyo squad will take on Yasuda's former student, Don Frye, and his Tucson Scorpions at Houston's Reliant Arena. It will no doubt be a tough test for the Sabres, as Frye is known for producing hard-nosed fighters.



Click Image To Enlarge.
Yasuda's Sabres.

It's a good thing for the Sabres that they have a samurai warrior for a coach.

Editor's Note:

The Sabres won their match against the Scorpions 3-2.

Yasuda Biography

Born in the ancient Japanese city of Kyoto to a family that boasts 46 generations of samurai warriors, Ken Yasuda is a man who has accomplished big things in every field he's entered. As a child Yasuda dreamed of becoming a pro [baseball](#) player, and was drafted as a pitcher by a major league team after high school.

Yasuda chose instead to play baseball at the University of Southern California, where he developed a love of weightlifting and physical conditioning from fellow USC alum Mark McGwire.

An [injury](#) to his pitching arm eventually forced Yasuda to abandon his dreams of pitching in the major leagues, and where many men would have succumbed to hopelessness, Yasuda picked up the pieces and became one of the world's top bodybuilders.

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Protecting The Pitcher.

While this article does not plan to revolutionize injury prevention in the major leagues, it should provide a decent framework for coaches and players at the teenage level to prevent damaging injuries.

[[Click here](#) to learn more.]

He credits his injury with [motivating](#) him to learn everything he could about physiology and muscular development, something he passes on to his team.

Yasuda has trained MMA stars such as Scorpions coach Don Frye and Pride standout Kazuyuki Fujita, as well as MLB all-star Ichiro Suzuki. He brings a hard-nosed, highly philosophical approach to his Sabres, demanding total commitment from all his fighters.

Did You Know?

As of August 2006, the Sabres were 1-5 in the International Fight League.

Upcoming IFL 2007 Schedule:

Date	Venue	Location	Team Matches
February 23, 2007	The Arena at Gwinnett Center	Atlanta, GA	Portland Wolfpack vs Toronto Dragons Chicago Red Bears vs New York Pitbulls
March 17, 2007	The Forum	Los Angeles, CA	Southern California Condors vs Tokyo Sabres San Jose Razorclaws vs Los Angeles Anacondas
April 07, 2007	The MARK of the Quad Cities	Moline, IL	Nevada Lions vs Quad City Silverbacks Seattle Tiger Sharks vs Chicago Red Bears
April 13, 2007	Jenkins Arena/Lakeland Center	Lakeland, FL	Tucson Scorpions vs Toronto Dragons Portland Wolfpack vs New York Pitbulls San Jose Razorclaws vs Southern California Condors
May 19, 2007	Chicago-Sears Centre	Chicago, IL	Quad City Silverbacks vs Chicago Red Bears
June 01, 2007	Everett Events Center	Everett, WA	Tokyo Sabres vs Portland Wolfpack Los Angeles Anacondas vs Seattle Tiger Sharks
June 23, 2007	TBD	TBD	Toronto Dragons vs New York Pitbulls Tucson Scorpions vs Nevada Lions
August 02, 2007	Continental Airlines Arena	E. Rutherford, NJ	4 Teams with the best overall records
September 15, 2007	The Forum	Los Angeles, CA	Championship Final

MMA Workout

→ MMA Workout Program:

[Barbell Curls](#) 30 reps
[Barbell Presses](#) 30 reps
[Bent over rows](#) 30 reps
[Barbell Curls](#) 30 reps
[Barbell Presses](#) 30 reps
[Bent over rows](#) 30 reps

*no rest between exercises

Rest for 1 minute

[Dumbbell Rows](#) 30 reps
[Dumbbell bench presses](#) 30 reps
[Dumbbell Shrugs](#) 30 reps
[Dumbbell Rows](#) 30 reps
[Dumbbell bench presses](#) 30 reps
[Dumbbell Shrugs](#) 30 reps

*no rest between exercises

Rest for 1 minute

[Barbell Power Clean](#) 30 reps

- [Barbell Lunges](#) 30 reps
- [Barbell squats](#) 30 reps
- [Barbell Power Clean](#) 30 reps
- [Barbell Lunges](#) 30 reps
- [Barbell squats](#) 30 reps

*no rest between exercises

Rest for 1 minute



[Click Here For A Printable Log Of This MMA Workout Program.](#)

This is Ken's basic program for beginner MMA fighters trying to build the necessary blend of strength and endurance that they'll need in the ring. Obviously, sparring sessions are important too, but this is just the in the gym stuff.

Amateur MMA Fights:



Jay Grimsley ([Gorilla Taktics](#)) vs. Gabe Miranda.
October 14, 2006
[WMV](#) (83 MB)

More Gorilla Taktics Fights:

-  Jay Grimsley vs Manny Ramirez. [View Fight Here!](#)
-  Mike Peterson Fight. [View Fight Here!](#)

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Kicking Fundamentals For MMA Excellence.

Unlike punches, kicks are the preferred weapon of choice in MMA when encountering an opponent. Get an edge with these techniques and five standard kicks that are important to all fighters arsenal!

[[Click here](#) to learn more.]



Power To Perform!

Having a good supply of moves and combinations should the opportunity arise, is an area where one can gain the advantage. Get detailed descriptions right here on how to perform kick/punch combinations!
[\[Click here to learn more. \]](#)



Achieve MMA Success!

Here is some insight into developing a foundation while taking a detailed look at what happens during the final few weeks prior to a fight, with expert pointers on what the best pre-fight strategies are.
[\[Click here to learn more. \]](#)

For more info on the International Fight League check out www.ifl.tv

2007 IRON MAN FITEXPO

The Sabres At The 2007 Iron Man FitExpo:

The world top ranking mixed martial artists, the IFL-The Sabres, will appear at FitExpo. The seminars will be a Q&A format and the attendees can openly ask any questions they have on conditioning/strengthening/skills/practice directly to the MMA pros! The Sabres will explain "How the pros train and practice" in detail and how Conditioning & Strengthening must be done correctly by combining with diet/nutrition and observing what is necessary for each individual.

[\[Learn More. \]](#)

Ben Fowlkes

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