

# Subud Trademark Registration

by Matthew Weiss

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After six or seven years of efforts by many people and many committees we have finally recovered the domain 'Subud.com' . We would like to thank John Daly of Subud Ireland since he has put in a great deal of time and worked on our trademark registration and these issues for us. We will still use 'Subud.org' as the main 'face' of Subud, which is where all of our Internet presence meets. 'Subud.org' will still remain the domain that we will publicize and link to for both members and people wishing to find us, but some people will try 'Subud.com' when they want to find us, and now they will reach us.

In celebrating this success I would like to remind everyone of some points that this effort illustrates and also tell the story of how this came about. 'Subud.com' was registered by an individual Subud member who, when approached many years ago, wanted to keep it for his own. For a short time he hosted Subud.com in an Internet 'chat room'. This placed the Subud symbol and the name 'Subud' in jeopardy because it appeared below the name of the chat room company. It read something like 'Subud, a Community of Worldly Chats,' with the Subud symbol below their logo, which was contrary to Bapak's clear instructions. If this continued eventually anyone would have been able to use the symbol and the name freely, without any connection to Subud.

The chat room dissolved and eventually the domain was not renewed by the member who originally registered it. We all know that the Internet is filled with unscrupulous people and some of them are official domain registrars. John Daly and myself put advanced orders for the domain should it ever become available and the registrars were aware of this. One of these registrars used their special access to acquire the domain from underneath our advanced orders and then just needed to wait long enough to turn that into money. We tried and tried but, to make a long story short, eventually we had to resort to taking them to international arbitration. At the end of the day we recovered the domain at a cost of \$1200. We could only do this because we have an EU Trademark (and others) for the word 'Subud', and the Subud Symbol is registered in Europe.

So what's my point? When Subud Members go out on their own and register and use domains with the word 'Subud' in it, they cause a liability both present and future to the World Subud Association, which is the official body that owns the trademarks. They really need to ask permission from the WSA before registering and talking to us about their ideas. We have lots of Subud sites, like Subud SICA or Subud.net that need new, fresh ideas and qualified people to take an interest in them. Surely there is a place for new ideas and vision within the framework that we already have. It is hard to tell members this without raising alarms and complaints against WSA for interfering in their rights, but WSA is protecting all of our rights. When people tire of a site because they do not have the interest that they once had, like 'Subud.com' it can then be picked up by unscrupulous people who can divert that Subud site to very unsuitable content. Then WSA must go to the work and expense of recovering and registering it year after year, just to keep it out of the hands of others. Please talk to us before you register a domain with the name Subud in it, and if you have done it already, please talk with us. Every website that uses the word 'Subud' or the Subud symbol must use

the registration symbol properly in order to protect the proper use of these in the future.

But for now we can celebrate that if you type 'Subud.com' you will be directed to us. We put out the call to all qualified people who want to lend a hand to use this site to create something that those who 'google' it will find rich, rewarding, informative, interesting, mystical, enterprising, spiritual, noble, human, cultural, and filled with the essence of what Subud is about.

Footnote from the editors: In an email to us about this article, Matthew says:

WSA took the advice of their patent and registration attorney regarding our registration marks, and I tried to implement that with the least pain to anyone. I simplified the instructions by adding 'Subud®' to the phrase, 'Subud® and the seven circles symbol are the registered marks of the World Subud Association', making it easier for websites to comply rather than having to make three changes: the symbol, the phrase, and 'Subud®' somewhere on the page. My simplified instructions fully adhere to what we were advised by the attorney.