

NUMBER ONE 2016

KIHAKU 氣迫

THE SPIRIT AND VOICE OF THE BRITISH KENDO ASSOCIATION



A SPECIAL



16th wkc
world kendo championships
Japan 2015

ISSUE



REPRESENTING IAIDO, JODO AND KENDO



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KIHAKU

THE OFFICIAL
BRITISH KENDO ASSOCIATION'S
 MEMBERSHIP PUBLICATION

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We need your help.

We want to make this a membership publication for all your questions and curiosities. We'd like info on your teacher(s), their teacher(s), dojo stories and experiences; your thoughts on the arts, philosophy, concepts, the whys and wherefores, trivial or not so trivial. Your feedback and questions, so they can be addressed in one place for the good of our Association.

For this publication to work, it needs to be current, accurate and informative. So, if you have something to say, please say it here.

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Dear Member

Welcome to *Kihaku*, our new magazine for members of the BKA. I hope you will find the publication enjoyable and informative – and even contribute to it.

Our bumper first issue looks forward to the future by way of celebrating what we achieved in 2015. It celebrates our participation in the 16th Kendo World Championships in Japan, as well as other key events for *laido* and *Jodo*.

We are also acknowledging all those members who have been with us for over 30 years – and some for as long as 50 years! It is quite incredible that, as an organisation, we are now over half a century old and enjoy the dedication and support of so many long-standing members. They have contributed so much to ensure our survival, especially in helping new members enjoy the friendship, training, personal development and much more that we offer.

From a personal viewpoint, I feel privileged to have been part of the BKA for so many years. Yes, there have been some very difficult times but it is in these times that we learn the most. As people we can grow and I believe the study of a true *budo* art offers this path in a safe environment.

Since my appointment, I am delighted we now have a new up-to-date website with links to LinkedIn, Facebook and other social media available soon. We have also passed the first stage in being able to award the *Shogo-ho* BKA award for all three *bu*.

Once reviewed, we will make it available for future members when they become eligible.

For the first time we have had professional media coverage of the 16th Kendo Championships. Over 600

high quality photographs are on the website, as well as 15 minutes of film footage showing the highlights of both the women’s, men’s and team events including acknowledging our own BKA Team and Internationally appointed referee Geoff Salmon.

Both the *Kendo* Championships and *laido embu* coverage were made possible by Turkish Airlines and the Sasagawa Foundation. We are most grateful for their excellent support in giving our representatives this valuable experience whilst also reaching out to more people of all ages to show them the true beauty

and benefits of being active in a sport – especially *Kendo*, *laido* and *Jodo*.

As we develop our skills and knowledge in our chosen discipline, I hope we can all stop to remember the true reason for our practice. Hopefully we will grow as people and support our families, friends and the community. This is achieved by building on our understanding of the seven pleats of the *hakama* and their interpretation in *budo*. I wish to share the following with you, which is very helpful in daily *budo* practice and sharing in the community.

It is quite incredible really that as an organisation we are now over half a century old and enjoy the dedication and support of so many long standing members.

We can all feel disharmony in our lives at some point. This is the time to grow and show compassion. It is easy to ridicule and be unkind but this is not our true path. I hope the following will be helpful to share in our *dojos* and in our hearts.

The Japanese Budo Association (*Nippon Budo Kyogikai*) states in *The Philosophy of Budo*:

Practitioners study the skills while striving to unify mind, technique and body; develop his or her character; enhance their sense of morality; and to cultivate a respectful and courteous demeanor. Practiced steadfastly, these admirable traits become intrinsic to the character of the practitioner. The budo arts serve as a path to self-perfection. This elevation of the human spirit will contribute to social prosperity and harmony, and ultimately, benefit the people of the world.

The Japanese Budo Association further states in *The Budo Charter, Article 1: Objective of Budo*:

Through physical and mental training in the Japanese martial ways, budo exponents seek to build their character, enhance their sense of judgment, and become disciplined individuals capable of making contributions to society at large.

Understanding the virtues of *budo* is important to realising the objectives of *budo*. Depending on the source, the list of virtues may vary but they all lead to the same objective.

In *The Principles of Aikido* by Saotome Mitsugi Sensei, Ueshiba Morihei O-Sensei is quoted saying the seven virtues of *budo* are:

1. **Jin** (仁): Benevolence, Kindness
2. **Gi** (義): Morality, Justice, Rectitude
3. **Rei** (礼): Respect, Etiquette
4. **Chi** (智): Wisdom, Knowledge
5. **Shin** (信): Faithfulness, Trust (Trustworthy person)
6. **Chu** (忠): Loyalty, Devotion
7. **Kou** (孝): Filial Piety

Other sources list only five virtues of *budo*:

1. **Jin** (仁): Benevolence, Kindness
2. **Gi** (義): Morality, Justice, Rectitude
3. **Rei** (礼): Respect, Etiquette
4. **Chi** (智): Wisdom, Knowledge
5. **Shin** (信): Faithfulness, Trust (Trustworthy person)

Fay Goodman
Chair

British Kendo Association

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Turkish Airlines

A special thank you to *Selim Ozturk* and his team at Turkish Airlines who kindly supported our *kendo* team going to the 16th Kendo World Championships.

Selim and his team greeted the *kendo* squad as they arrived at Birmingham Airport before enjoying a new experience travelling to Japan via Istanbul. Thanks also for, to their kind upgrade to business class for our referees and the visit from Japan of *Tadahiko Morita Sensei Hachidan Hanshi* and *Masakazu Oshita Sensei Hachidan Dan Kyoshi* for the *Masamune* seminar and *taikai*.

Turkish Airlines now serve over 200 destinations and are continually adding to these destinations. As a prestigious airline, Turkish Airlines in 2015 achieved the following:

- Built the tallest sand castle in the world in Virginia Key Beach Park in Miami and got their name into Guinness World Records.
- Achieved a first in the 55-year history of the European Football Championship after signing a sponsorship agreement with UEFA as the "First Official Airline Sponsor" of UEFA 2016, in France in 2016.
- Supporters of art and artists, becoming the official sponsor of the International Antalya Golden Orange Film Festival.
- Made one of the most important videos to date showing Istanbul and proudly announced it to the world: Istanbul-Flow Motion.
- Became the official partner of the European Rugby Champions Cup and the Challenge Cup.
- Their brand value, which was 1.6 billion dollars in 2012, reached 2.2 billion dollars in 2015. (BrandFinance Top 50 Airlines Report)
- Turkish Airlines' Investor Relations were voted Best Investor Relations in Turkey in 2015 by IR Magazine.

Turkish Airlines also received awards for:

- Best Business Class Lounge Dining (2014 and 2015) twice.
- Best Business Class Airline Catering (2013, 2014 and 2015) three times.
- Best Airline in Europe (2011, 2012, 2013, 2014 and 2015) five times.
- Best Airline in Southern Europe (2009, 2010, 2011, 2012, 2013, 2014 and 2015) seven times at the Skytrax Passengers' Choice Awards.

It was a pleasure to travel with Turkish Airlines and again, on behalf of the BKA, we express our gratitude for their support.



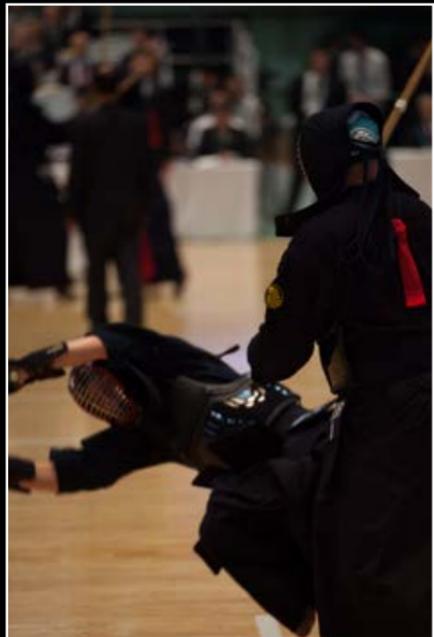


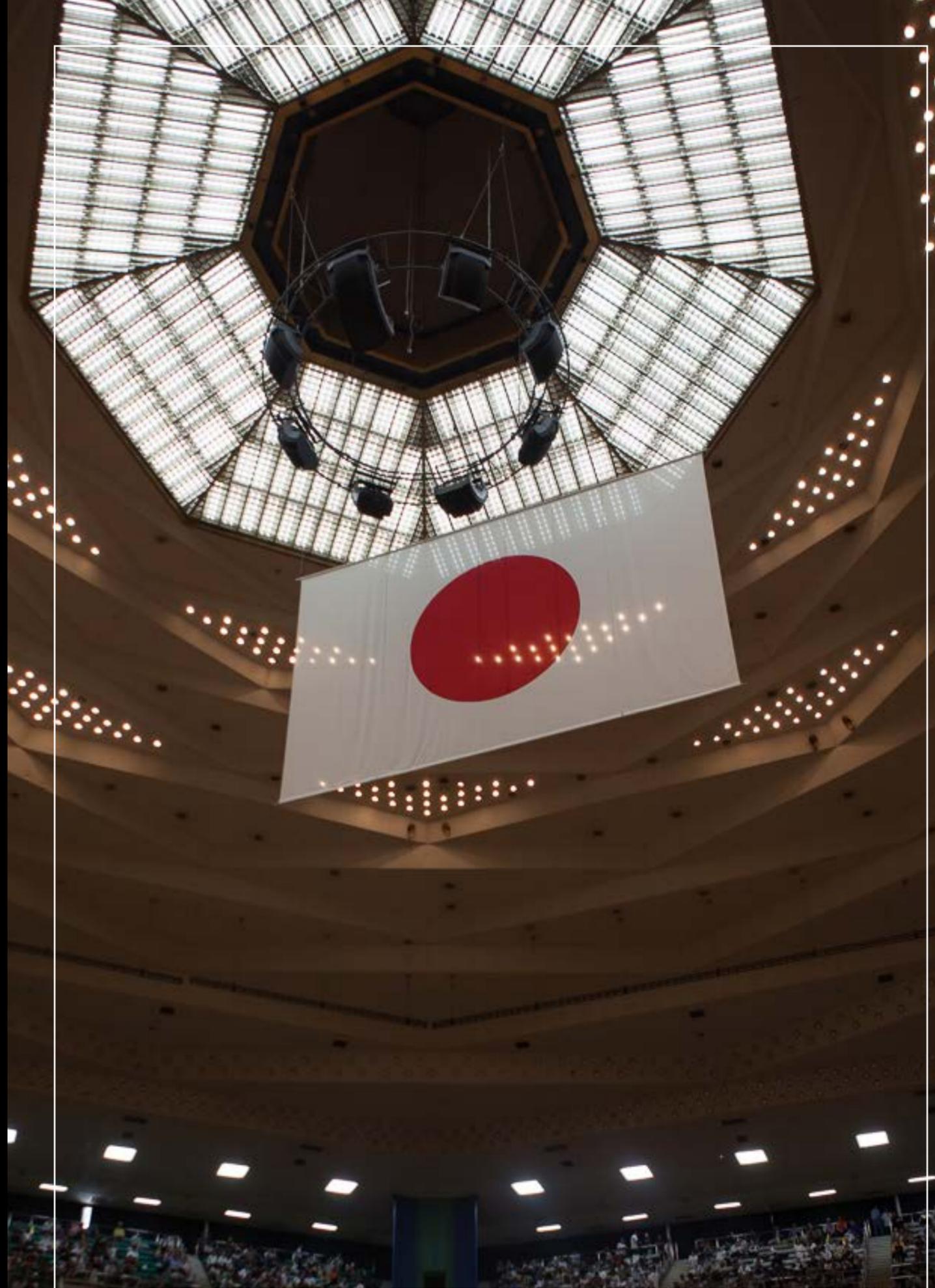
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GALLERY











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REPORT



The 16th wkc

FROM INSIDE THE SHIAI-JO

By Geoff Salmon *Kendo Kyoshi*

Every year in Brussels the European Kendo Federation holds a referees' seminar. This is replicated in the International Kendo Federation's other two zones, Asia and The Americas. These events are attended by groups of three senior teachers from Japan with the objectives of generally helping us improve refereeing standards and selecting referees for each of the zone's regional championships. Once every three years a selection is made of referees for the World Kendo Championship.

Last November I received notification that I had been selected as a referee for the 16th World Kendo Championship (WKC) in Tokyo. The WKC requires 32 referees to cover four courts. Eight were drawn from Europe, a similar number from the USA, Canada and Brazil and the bulk from Asia; mainly Japan and Korea. We were all required to attend two seminars in preparation for the competition. The first was held in Narita in February of last year, the second in Tokyo a few days before the actual event in May.

Narita is an interesting venue. It is the home of Tokyo's main airport although it is an astonishing 100 kilometres or so from the city it serves. Only the quality of Japan's rail network makes it appear closer to the centre. The logic behind the choice was that it allowed attendees to fly in, attend the two day, weekend seminar and fly home without leaving Narita. I took the option to arrive a day early, flying into the closer Haneda Airport and spent a day in Tokyo visiting friends, so had a total of four days in Japan.

As you would expect, the seminar was immaculately organised with a schedule accounting for almost every minute of each day. We were housed in the Narita View Hotel and taken each morning by bus to a local high school

gym where we took turns to referee matches between team members of the most prominent Kanto area *kendo* universities, Kokushikan, Tozai and Nitaidai.

We were mentored by the referee instructors and senior *sensei* who would act as *shinpancho* and *shinpanshunin* and watched by a number of members of the All Japan Kendo Federation's managing committee. The opening address and subsequent instruction made the point that the focus was on ensuring matches were "clean" and that points were awarded in line with "the principles of the *katana*", so there was strong focus on *hasuji* and *zanshin*. Each referee's efforts were critiqued and corrected with the occasional word of praise.

The quality and speed of the *shiai* were wake-up calls to most of us, and the need to move efficiently in the *shiai-jo* was obvious from the start. If we couldn't anticipate the fighters' movements then there was a real danger of being left in a position where we were blind-sided. An interesting diversion was the introduction of a 7th *dan Nito* player and an explanation of how points could be scored with the *kodachi*. According to the referee instructors, this was when the player was square on to his opponent and controlling the *shinai* with the *odachi*. In the *Nito sensei's* view it was never.

The quality and speed of the *shiai* were wake-up calls to most of us and the need to move efficiently in the *shiai-jo* was obvious from the start

The main event was in May. I travelled a week ahead of our schedule in Tokyo and, together with our *Kendo Bucho* and our partners, travelled to Kansai staying in Osaka, Nara and in a mountain chalet in Yoshino. This was a great opportunity to reacclimatise to

Japan, spending time with old friends and practising in the Osaka Shudokan and in Uegaki *sensei's* village *dojo*. Coming back to Tokyo was in a way like changing countries.

I attended the second referees' seminar in the Tokyo Olympic Village without major incident. This time the tone was exceptionally upbeat with the instructors reinforcing the message that we were "the best referees in the world". Referees were based in a hotel close to the Nippon Budokan where the competition was held. Fighters were based in the Olympic Village. Walking through the Olympic Village on my way to the seminar I was suddenly aware of just how many hundreds of *kendoka* were involved in this event. Looking at the programme later that day, I realised that there were a number of new *kendo* countries including Mongolia adding to the already crowded competition schedule.

Men's individual, women's individual and team and men's team events were held over three days. After an impressive opening ceremony from a Kodo drumming group, we were into the competition and there to do what we came for. As a referee you benefit from the best view in the house, but it is limited to your own court, and as you are either in the *shiai-jo* or waiting your turn, you see less of the overall event than do the competitors and spectators.

Each day we entered the Budokan from the basement entrance in time for the 8.00 am referees meeting, and on one of the days we were still in the arena at 8.00 pm. Apart from toilet and brief meal breaks, we were in place all day. I did get one opportunity to briefly visit the spectator area and realised that there was a parallel universe of *bogu* shops and coffee stands and people walking around.

Whilst we know that all competitions are equally important, being in a tightly packed 14,000-seat Budokan, with a battery of press and TV cameras in front of you, gives you an immense feeling of occasion. I was not nervous at any stage of the event, but felt an intense sense of concentration. The points that we saw and awarded almost seemed to happen in slow motion; even when waiting outside the court we were watching intently.

The second day was the longest. With women's individual and team events held together, the event stretched into the early evening. We finally got to the awards ceremony and as prizes were being presented, the floor started moving from side to side. The presentation continued without a break and with the exception of some of the competitors being moved from under a dangerously swaying lighting rig it was business as usual. The referees were then herded into a meeting room where the only topic of conversation was about a questionable decision made in another court earlier in the day.

On leaving the Budokan I saw fire engines and ambulances parked along the main street. When I got to the hotel I saw my wife and many of



the other guests waiting outside the hotel where the upper floors of this tower building had been swaying dangerously. I learned afterwards that we had just experienced an earthquake that measured force 8 close offshore and 5.5 in Tokyo.

The good news was that my *sempai* from Osaka had taken shelter in a nearby restaurant and had already ordered the beers and starters.

Day three is the big one. The men's team event is where most of the national pride is focused. I was selected as *fukushin* for the semi-final between Korea and the USA and together with German and Brazilian colleagues got through the match without controversy, making unanimous decisions. Both teams fought with a very high level of focus and determination, but at the same time showed a spirit of fair play and sportsmanship. The Korean team took the match on a small point margin.

The final match between Korea and Japan had the spectators a little more animated and was safer watched from the edge of the *shiai-jo* than in it.

That was it. A chance to network at the *Sayonara* party, a quick visit to Akihabara and its electronics and JPop memorabilia shops, followed by a great night-flight on Turkish Airlines and work the next day.

Next year it is back to the European Championships in Macedonia. Oh dear, I hear that they have earthquakes there as well. ☘



SHAKING UP WOMEN'S KENDO

GB at the World Kendo Championship

By Emily Knight

This was an exciting year for the kendo team from Great Britain. Not only were the 16th World Kendo Championships held in Japan, in Tokyo's impressive arena for the martial arts, the Nippon Budokan; it was also the first time in over ten years that GB fielded a complete women's team at a WKC.

We had worked hard, developing our team for years. Of course, the work did not stop on arrival. We stepped off the plane into two weeks of training and jet lag in the Japanese summer. Then, the championships began.

Day one: We supported our team mates in the men's individuals. This was our first chance to drink in the awe-inspiring atmosphere of the Budokan. We were ready.

Day two: Finally, it was our time to shine. We fought well in our individual matches and Jen Nash managed to fight her way out of her pool. She then met Lisa van Laecken from the Belgian team and was knocked out. During a short break we re-grouped and switched into team-fighting mode. We had flown to Japan but faced our European rivals Belgium and Sweden.

It was a valiant effort, with some great ippon taken. However, this time the Belgians came out on top. It was disappointing but we grew as a team and learned from the experience.

We lined up together one last time for the closing ceremony. However, the excitement did not end there. As the Korean women went to collect second place, the floor rolled underneath us; an earthquake had hit. After a pause beneath the gigantic Japanese flag which was now swaying above our heads, the ceremony continued. It was an emotional, tiring, memorable experience. But one thing is clear – we are all the more determined for the next WKC. 🇯🇵



KENDO

The BKA Kendo World

I am excited with this the first issue of *Kihaku*. UK Kendo has evolved over the past 50 years and as you see from these pages there is a lot going on. In my early kendo days (1960s) we had few residential *Sensei* to assist us. Often a visiting *Sensei* would give us a seminar – and confusingly, with different advice from the previous *Sensei*! Nowadays we have a number of 6th and 7th *dan Sensei* of our own, all of which have many years of experience and can provide the very best (and consistent) instruction to you all. This instruction is augmented each year with visiting *Sensei*, many having worldwide stature.

Some such *Sensei* come by the personal invitation of *dojo* leaders and others by BKA invitation; we welcome them all and trust that you all will benefit.

I am in my last year as *Kendo Bucho* and I trust that you are content with the BKA progress so far – there is more to do and I trust that you will elect a successor who can continue to make progress in the art.

John O’Sullivan, *Kendo Bucho*

British Open 2015



16th WKC



IAIDO

IAIDO – Around the world

The annual Iaido European Championships gives practitioners from many countries a wonderful opportunity to share knowledge, skills and experience.

The 2015 championships held in Berlin demonstrated yet again the superb camaraderie we experience every year between competitors. Poland and Sweden were in the finals with Poland taking the gold medal.

Everyone benefitted from the full day seminar led by our Japanese *Sensei* delegation, *Yamasaki Takashige, Hachidan Hanshi; Kusama Junichi, Hachidan Hanshi* and *Azuma Yoshinobu Hachidan Hanshi*.

The organisation of this annual event is to be applauded as each country dedicate a great deal of time and financial resources to ensure its' continued success.

The 2015 Jodo and Iaido Summer Seminar incorporated the *Bunka Koryu Enbusai* to commemorate 35 years of summer seminars in the UK and 10 years since we hosted the World Iaido Goodwill Taikai.

The styles represented were:

- *Muso Shinden Ryu*
- *Muso Jikiden Eishin Ryu*
- *Shinkage Ryu*
- *Suio Ryu*
- *Shinto Muso Ryu Jojutsu (Tokyo and Fukuoka style)*

The Japanese delegation on this very commemoration were:

Ishido Shizufumi Sensei;

Iaido Hanshi 8th dan, Jodo Kyoshi 8th dan

Morita Tadahiko Sensei; Iaido Hanshi 8th dan

Oshita Masakazu Sensei; Iaido Kyoshi 8th dan

Otake Toshiyuki Sensei;

Jodo Kyoshi 8th dan, Iaido Kyoshi 7th dan

Shoji Kei'ichi Sensei;

Jodo Kyoshi 8th dan, Iaido Kyoshi 7th dan

Yoshimura Ken'ichi Sensei Iaido Kyoshi 8th dan, Jodo

Kyoshi 7th dan

Matsuoka Yoshitaka Sensei; Iaido Kyoshi 8th dan

Kinomoto Miyuki Sensei; Iaido Kyoshi 8th dan

Aoki Hidekiyo Sensei; Iaido Kyoshi 7th dan



Once all the hard training has finished it is always a pleasure to enjoy the social events – especially the *sayonara* parties. They afford us the opportunity to share quality time with a host of people from around the world where we can enjoy some rather unusual dancing and plenty of laughter!





JODO

The Eishinkan Jodo Taikai 2015

The first Eishinkan Jodo Taikai took place on 20th August 1986 at Shotley Gate under the direction of *Hiroi Tsunetsugu Sensei*. Early *Eishinkan* competitions were held during the BKA Summer Seminar as *Ishido Sensei* was always very keen to encourage *iaido* and *jodo* competitions. During these early Summer Seminars the *iaido* competition was organised by *Shinbukan Dojo* and the *jodo taikai* by *Eishinkan Dojo*. These events were to be the forerunners of our National BKA events, the first official BKA *iaido* Taikai being held in December 1990 and the first BKA Jodo Taikai in May 1991.

The *Eishinkan jodo* team competitions started in April 2004. This low-key competition stems from our aim to provide a low-cost event which would allow competitors and referees to start their competitive life in a relaxed and friendly atmosphere. Consequently we have organised a Plate Competition for teams not making it past the pool

stage. An essential part of the day's proceedings is the buffet meal, very kindly supported over the years by our master chefs Greg Drewe and Alain Bangard, where we get a chance to mingle and chat over a post-*Taikai* get together. Our sincere hope for the future is to play host to more and more *dojo* able to field a team of just three competitors.

After nearly 35 years of *jodo* in the U.K., *Eishinkan dojo* still meets regularly for an enthusiastic, friendly and relaxed practice and our *dojo* is still continues to attract new members.

If you fancy a meal, a small gift and an entertaining day then why not pop along to our 18th Taikai on Saturday 3rd December 2016.

Jock Hopson & Chris Buxton



Visiting Falkenberg

By Jenni Wilding

In September last year I travelled to Falkenberg in Sweden to attend the Jodo Seminar that always accompanies the European Championships, as well as support the team. It is always nice to meet up and practise with friends I have made from attending various events, and there is always a great party!

I booked into the same hotel that the team were staying at. This was the Hwitán Guest House, which I found out was one of the town's oldest stone buildings, built between 1698 and 1703. It is located next to the River Atran, which is famous for its salmon...when I learned that you can fish for these on a day ticket and even hire the equipment I must admit I was tempted! Just along from the hotel is the Tullbron Bridge; this is a lovely old stone bridge which dates from 1756.

I always enjoy seeing new places and I think it's a bonus if you can get to do this in combination with taking part in a seminar, whichever arts you participate in.



MASAMUNE

More than just a dojo name

All three of the martial arts governed by the **British Kendo Association** reflect, to a greater or lesser extent, historical ties to the Japanese *samurai* or warrior class, whose famous favoured weapon – and indeed a visible symbol of his status – was the sword that he wore at his waist.

It is, therefore, quite appropriate that one of our *laido* dojos be named after, arguably the greatest swordsmith Japan ever produced, *Masamune*. Below is a detailed technical description of an un-authenticated sword purporting to be by *Masamune* and which is currently in the Victoria and Albert Museum in London. This is followed by historical background information which I hope may be of some interest.

Type: *Koto katana*

Nagasa: 72.0 cm

Moto-haba: 3.1 cm

Saki-haba: 2.0 cm

Sugata: *Hon-zukuri*, a graceful *tori-zori*, *chu-kissaki*, *mitsu-mune*.

Jihada: A prominent and flowing *itame-hada* with *mokume* and abundant *ji-nie* forming *chikei*.

Hamon: Fine *nie-deki*, *notare-midare* with some *gunome* like inclusions, profuse *sunagaeshi* which spills over into the *ji* in places and *kinsuji*. The *boshi* is slightly *midare-komi* with very little *kaeri*.

Horimono: A *bo-hi* on both sides that finishes in the *nakago* between the two *mekugi-ana*.

Nakago: *Suriage* by probably 3 or 4 cm and *machi-okuri*, two *mekugi-ana*. *Kiri-jiri*, faint *kiri yasurime* are just visible and the *bo-hi* finishes in a pointed end. There is *kin-zogan mei* on the *sashi-omote MASAMUNE* and on the *sashi-ura HON-A* with *kao*.

This sword has a robust *sugata* or form that retains its elegance in spite of the *suriage* or shortening. Both the *hamon* (the hardened edge) and the *jihada* reflect the *nie* dominant *hataraki* (activities or workings within the *hamon*), which together with the large *itame-mokume-hada* and *mitsu-mune*, associate the sword with old *Soshu-den*. The shape is both graceful and strong whilst the *bo-hi* provide the sword with a balance that makes it very easy to handle. It is in fine condition and all details are easy to see.

The *nakago* has a *Honami kinzogan mei* (gold inlay inscription) which attributes the sword to the famous *Masamune* of the late *Kamakura* period (the inscription



The three great masters of Soshu-den.

Top: Go Yoshihiro

Centre: Masamune

Bottom: Awataguchi Yoshimitsu

(from a kakemono in the author's collection)

may be by *Honami Koson Tadayoshi*, the 12th master working between 1662 and 1679). As the sword has no modern Japanese authentication, it is impossible to say whether the attribution is correct or not. However, it does appear to be fine old *Soshu-den* workmanship but, as we know, swords such as this were heavily faked throughout sword history. It is also difficult to believe that it could have been taken out of Japan in the *Meiji* period by a non-Japanese (it was the property of Alfred Dobree, an active collector in the early 20th century, who donated it to the Victoria & Albert Museum in London).

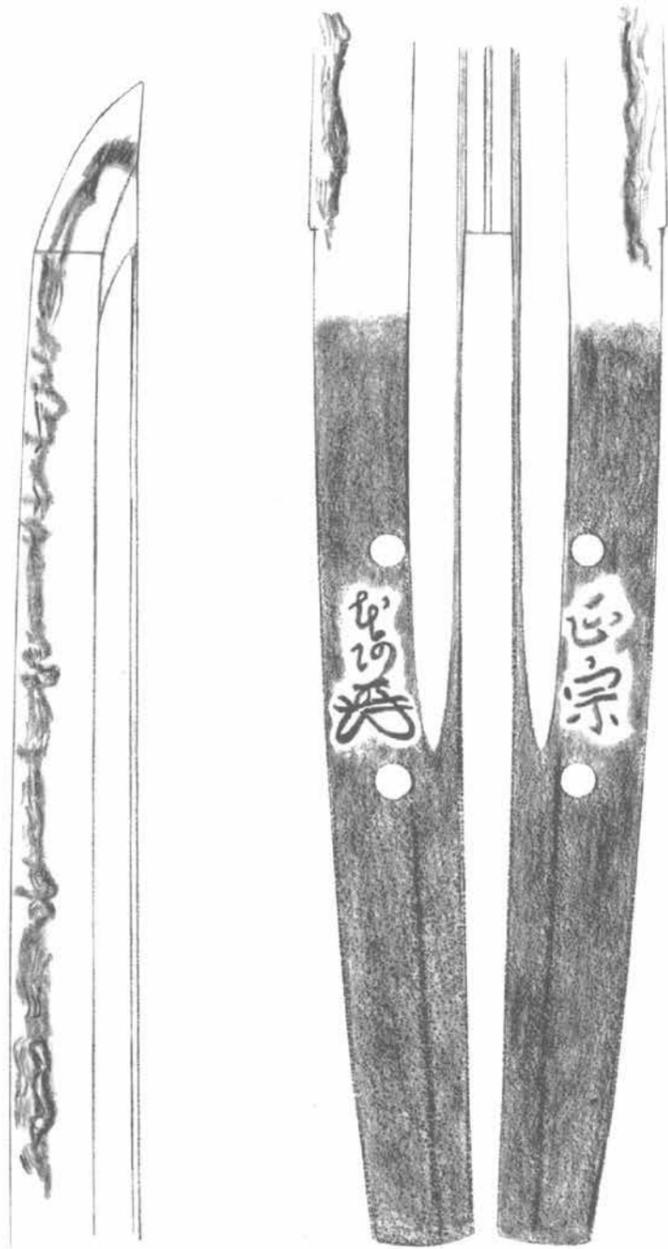
It is well known that *Masamune* is considered to be the most famous of all Japanese swordsmiths and is usually thought of as being the founder of the *Soshu-den* style of swordmaking in the late *Kamakura* period. This style was greatly influenced by both *Yamashiro-den* and *Bizen-den* but is quite distinct from them.

As Japan was under threat from a third Mongol invasion (two had already taken place in 1274 and 1281) the *Kamakura shogunate* encouraged the production of sturdier swords to combat this potential threat. Based at the capital city of Kamakura in Sagami province (*Soshu*) the swordsmiths fulfilled this need and *Soshu-den* was founded. It is considered that *Masamune's* teacher (possibly his father) *Shintogo Kunimitsu* produced the first blades that could be called *Soshu-den*, but this was further developed and refined by *Masamune* who attracted many students from all over Japan. The ten most famous are known as the *Masamune Jutetsu*.

Masamune worked in both the late *Kamakura* and early *Namboku-cho* periods and he demonstrates the two distinct styles associated with these two periods, as did his top pupil, *Sadamune*. That is to say the later ones tend to have a wider *mihaba* and larger *kissaki* whilst the earlier are more like the sword here under discussion.

As this sword is still in the collection at the Victoria & Albert Museum, London, it seems unlikely that it will ever be sent to *shinsa* in Japan and receive any kind of authentication. This is rather a shame and typical of the unfortunate policy of museums in the UK. It is illustrated in *The Japanese Sword – The Soul of the Samurai* by Gregory Irvine (published by the V&A) where the author states in the picture's caption: "the authenticity of the blade and the interpretation of the gold-inlay attribution must remain subject to question".

Finally, the drawing shown above is known as an *oshigata*. I was very generously given permission to draw it at the museum and it is, of course, their *Masamune*. It is like a technical drawing of a sword, showing the details of the blade that are difficult to capture in a photograph. Drawing *oshigata* is also a very good way of studying a sword in great detail. I often feel that having drawn somebody else's sword, I know it better than the owner!

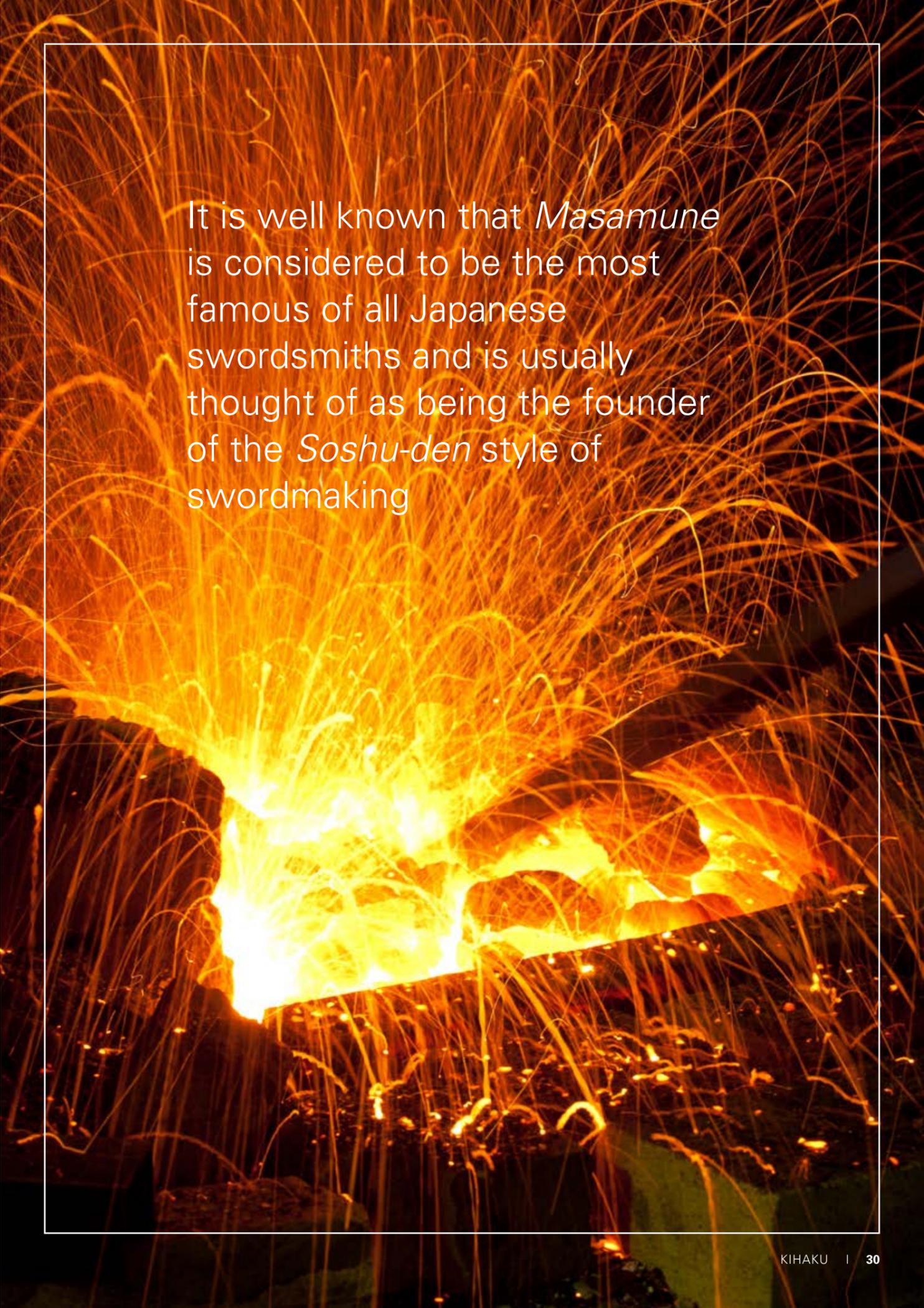


クライフ
H.14・4月・十七日

I am hoping to provide further articles in the future for this magazine, on the subject of Japanese sword and armour. If there are any particular questions or problems that I might assist with, please contact me on Clive706@btinternet.com

Clive Sinclair
October 2015

It is well known that *Masamune* is considered to be the most famous of all Japanese swordsmiths and is usually thought of as being the founder of the *Soshu-den* style of swordmaking



THE DOJO

PART 1

The area where we choose to train is called a 'dojo'. In Japan, as in many other countries, special buildings are constructed for this specific purpose. They are usually of very simple construction intended to be practical and functional. It is also very usual, especially outside Japan, to use a room or an ordinary hall in a community centre. The respect and etiquette towards the environment should be exactly the same.

Kamiza

"The *kamiza* is the spot closest to the *tokonoma* or simply farthest from the door in a room lacking a *tokonoma*. The term *kamiza* may be confused by Japanese martial arts practitioners with *kamidana*, a *Shinto* shrine found in some *dojos*. A *kamidana* is almost always placed in the *kamiza* area. The front of the *dojo* i.e. the wall furthest from the door; may also simply be called "front" (*shomen*).

Kamidana (神棚 literally "god (*kami*) + shelf (*dana*"), is a miniature *Shinto* shrine found in many Japanese homes. The *kamidana* is typically placed high on a wall and contains a wide variety of items (*kamizane*) related to *Shinto*-style ceremonies, the most prominent of which is the *shintai*, most commonly in the form of a small circular mirror, though it may also take the form of a stone (*magatama*), jewel, or some other object with largely symbolic value." (*Wikipedia*, 2011)

A photograph of a departed sensei should never be placed in the *kamidana*, as that would mean that the sensei was being venerated as a god. It is important not to

confuse a *kamidana* with a *butsudan* (a household Buddhist shrine where photographs of the deceased are placed).

Whilst the majority of *dojo* use the word *kamiza* and shout "*kamiza ni rei*", many Japanese *dojo* use the words "*shinzen ni rei*", meaning bow to the altar (shrine). Some countries instead have flags hanging on the wall and shout "*koki ni rei*". Students might also hear "*shomen ni rei*" – bow to the front and also "*ichido rei*" – everyone bow.

Note of interest: In the majority of cases the sacred object is a mirror, called a *kagami*. The *kagami*, the *ken* (a sword, not found in a *kamidana*) and the *hoseki* (a jewel) comprise, according to Japanese mythology, what is known as the three treasures of Japan. Traditionally held by the Emperor of Japan, these three treasures represent valour (by the sword), wisdom (by the mirror) and benevolence (by the jewel).

The setting up of *kamidana* may vary depending on the *dojo* but traditionally the head of the *dojo* would have sat at *kamiza* on a raised platform, opposite the door, with his retainers shielding him from any potential enemy threat.

Entering the dojo

Zori or any other form of footwear, should be removed and left neatly outside the *dojo* to the side of the door. This is to ensure the *dojo* floor is kept clean at all times, with no risk of dirt or hazardous objects being walked in. As the majority of *zori* look very similar, marking your name on your own *zori* may be a good idea for identification and, especially if you are attending a large seminar, it might be wise to take your *zori* into the *dojo* and leave them with your sword bag. One hundred and fifty pairs of *zori* outside the *dojo* can constitute a trip hazard!

Bags, coats and equipment should be placed neatly at the back of the training hall. Mobile phones should be left in silent mode or switched off, unless there are genuine reasons why you need to be contactable during the lesson e.g. family responsibilities. If this is the case then inform *sensei* of this as allowances will be made for you.

As a mark of respect it is usual to bow on entering the *dojo*. Once inside the *dojo*, every effort should be made not to show the soles of your feet to *kamiza* or to the instructors when you are sitting down and watching a demonstration/explanation. Upon entering and leaving the *dojo* it is important to pay homage to *kamiza* in the form of a standing bow ("*ritsu rei*") or kneeling bow ("*zare*"). *Reigi*, also called *reiho*, means politeness or courtesy. When making the "*rei*" (the bow itself) the senior grades will stand or sit nearer to *kamiza* than the junior grades. As a student progresses he or she will gradually move up the line in the direction of *kamiza*. The *shimoza* is opposite the *kamiza* and is the area where the lower grade members of the *dojo* sit or stand. In many Japanese *dojo* it is customary for any practice to cease when the *sensei* enters, everyone kneels and makes a bow, usually with the phrase "*onegai shimasu*" to ask the *sensei*'s help. ㊦



JODO

THE WAY OF THE STICK

By Chris Mansfield *Jodo Kyoshi*

It has been about 400 years since the beginning of this relatively unknown martial art came into existence in feudal Japan. Since that time it has evolved from being a closely guarded secret teaching to a classical art form which, in the 21st century, is practiced by ever-increasing numbers of people around the world.

Originally devised to combat the samurai's sword (*Katana*), this simple four-foot long rounded staff has evolved into a way where the practise of its techniques and philosophy contribute to enriching the lives of those who dedicate themselves to it.

The spirit of *Jodo* is to subdue the opponent without taking their life. The main intent is to teach a lesson whereby respect and value, based on a positive outlook, are the main concerns, and which lead to an understanding and harmony that exemplify the development of the human character or being.

The curriculum of *Jodo* is wide and aside from the 64 forms of the stick, which require many years to learn and develop, there are also sub-weapon systems that can be learnt. Short stick, iron truncheon, sickle and chain are a few of these. Since olden times it was considered important to learn more than one system of fighting.

The British Kendo Association, the officially recognised body responsible for *Kendo* (Japanese Fencing), *Iaido* (Japanese Sword Drawing) and *Jodo*, exists to develop these arts by providing advice, teaching/coaching,

organisation structure in the form of an association, and support for all its members and *dojos* (locally run clubs). It also arranges seminars and holds gradings which are internationally recognised. It invites senior teachers from Japan to ensure the latest and most up-to-date information is made available to its members so that they may develop their martial arts career accordingly. Furthermore members may avail themselves of participating in European events which are regularly held in many countries where *Jodo* is practised and discover the value of international friendships through practising *Jodo*.

The BKA is a founding member of the European Kendo Federation which in turn is affiliated to the International Kendo Federation based in Japan. These organisations exist to promote the development of these arts and help them find their place in human society where those who practise them can benefit by leading more fulfilled lives. 

BKA
HYOSHOJO
AWARD By Errol Baboolal Blake

The Association has begun to award Certificates of Appreciation to members who achieve certain criteria including the completion of 25 years or more of dedicated but not necessarily high-profile service to their art; consistent service to the Association in various administrative capacities that has merited the collective appreciation of fellow members; and running or helping to run a dojo for many years resulting in their students enjoying and progressing in their art even beyond their own level.

The award is above all an expression of the collective appreciation of the whole membership for the voluntary service and dedication of members who do not necessarily have *shogo* awards and contribute beyond the responsibilities of individual membership.

The Association is delighted to have awarded *Hyoshojo* to many members to date – a rather large number due to the recent introduction of the award and the longevity of the Association. Each year, it is expected that a smaller number will be awarded as members reach 25+ years etc. This large number of members who have served the Association is a testament to their success in establishing and keeping the Association going for the past 50 years. It is indeed rare to have such a large number of long-lived members in any martial arts organisation. The members of all *Bu* should be justifiably proud of their seniors in this regard.

To date the following members have been awarded *Hyoshojo* certificates – and we thank them again for supporting our Association so selflessly. ㊦



- | | | | |
|----------------------|----------------------|------------------|-----------------|
| Terry Holt | Christoper Mansfield | Stephen Bishop | Alan Lee-Nash |
| Victor Cook | Jim Jones | Fay Goodman | Gerry Kincaid |
| John Richards | Peter Ellis | John Richards | Victor Harris |
| Ric Schofield | Gregory Drewe | Vito Tattoli | Wilf Swindells |
| Leonard Bean | Kunio Kashiwagi | Hilary Hadley | Adrian Rowe |
| Geoff Salmon | Trevor Jones | Keith Rose | Malcolm Smalley |
| John Howell | Douglas M Evans | Ian Parker-Dodd | Derek Raybould |
| John O'Sullivan | Charles Beck | Anna Stone | Paul Gledhill |
| Jock Hopson | Gary O'Donnell | Malcolm Goodwin | John Piper |
| Mike Davis | Peter West | Martin Clark | Clive Sinclaire |
| Errol Baboolal Blake | Brian Ayres | Judith Farncombe | |
| John Hepburn | Christopher Buxton | Trevor Chapman | |

THE UNSEEN

By Fay Goodman

One of the benefits of studying a martial art is working towards our own self-improvement. Not as easy as it may sound as challenges spring from many sources. Our health, family and work commitments and pressures of daily life can sometimes make our journey, in reaching our aspirations, a little longer.



However, as they say, it is sometimes the journey which is more important than the destination itself!

So with this in mind, where do we start our journey? I am reminded of a Zen saying:

"Jikiden kore dojo nari" – "A true spirit (pure heart) is a training place (dojo)".

The place where we train is very special whether it be our own *dojo*, a school hall or even a bedroom! It represents our starting place for the journey ahead.

In the modern world it is not so easy to find a traditional *dojo*, especially here in Britain! Many of us use a community hall or similar. However, wherever we train, we can ensure it has the attributes of a traditional *dojo*; these being to be clean, uncluttered, and totally functional for our needs.

Like a *dojo*, our heart and mind should exude the simple beauty that comes from simplicity and clarity of purpose – our vision.

"Jikiden kore dojo nari" –
A true spirit (pure heart)
is a training place (dojo).

I like the following expression:

'Your spirit should shine like a *dojo* floor that has been polished by the years of sweat and effort that has gone into your training.'

Wonderful words with a deep meaning. An initial impression of a *dojo* can appear to be that associated with punishingly hard and relentless training rewarded only with aching knees, sore hands and callouses –

and possibly the odd small cut from a *Shinken!*

As we train hard in our *dojo* to develop our skills, I liken this to the closed bud of a rose which opens slowly as the sun and rain nurtures its growth with elegance. When the rose reaches full bloom it shares its' beauty and delicate scent with everything surrounding it. So, we as people, hopefully too can work towards a full bloom sharing our knowledge and skills with all those around us in a sincere and gentle manner.

So, how we treat our *dojo* is very much a reflection of how we perhaps treat ourselves. The mirror reflection can speak volumes. It can be a place of studying to win in combat or a place of quiet calm and inner peace. To let go of what may be troubling us, to accept what is simple in life and appreciate every day with sincere gratitude. The choice is ours.

TREASURE- THE DOJO

In summary, it is interesting how many people perceive a martial art to be 'hard' – to fight and to win at all costs. Yet those of us who practice *iaido* will hopefully understand that the attainment of victory is not to subjugate and conquer. Victory is attained by never drawing the sword in the first place!

The concept of winning is not about prevailing over an opponent, it is the accomplishment of understanding ourselves and showing true compassion to others. This is reflected in the phrase:

"Kachi wa saya no naka ni ari" – "Victory comes while the sword is 'still' in the scabbard"

Life is very difficult and we can all make many mistakes in pursuit of self-development. This is how we learn and share this experience with compassion towards others. So, we may never become that 'rose' (or dandelion!) but through our genuine efforts we can at least try and aspire to fully bloom one day in to the person we would like to be with the values we cherish. Planting the seed is the first step. 

PUTTING A LITTLE BACK IN

The run-up to Christmas 2014 was somewhat hectic for me, as it undoubtedly is for most folks every year. Added to the steady rhythm of training, there are always presents to be bought, plans to be made, Christmas fairs to attend and, if you have children, there is the added bonus of trying to make the whole season feel like it really is a special time of year.

This remains the case even if you know at the other end you're probably going to end up with aftershave that doubles as people repellent and more socks than one person should ever have (thanks Gran). In this peculiarly frenetic hum of activity which tops off our every year, it can be quite easy to tune out the background noise which ordinarily we might pick up on. Walking out of our doors, it's easy to see a busy high street, lots of families, general good cheer and people relishing that positive abandon that comes with spending time with those who are dearest to us. To follow the evidence of our eyes, to all intents and purposes the world is turning, and all is well.

But appearances can be deceptive.

Just below the surface, as in every winter, there are people struggling for the very basic benefits of civilisation. Every day, there are people struggling to eat, to heat their homes, to care for their children. Every day, a silent multitude awake and resume an unheralded struggle, wondering where their next meal is coming from, or if the next knock at the door will be bailiffs come to appropriate whatever material wealth they have left or worse, evict them and condemn them to even greater hardship. These people are largely silent, and being such can be hard to detect, but they are there.

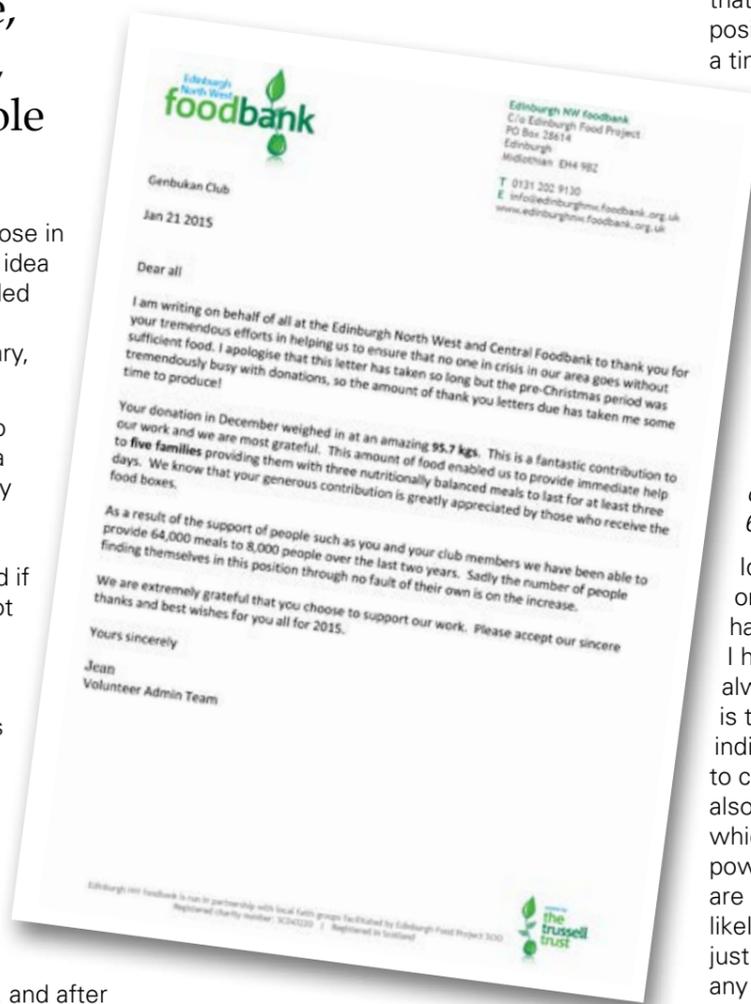
The purpose to my writing here is not an examination of the socio-economic or political factors which bring about this state of affairs, but rather to provide some context to my thoughts this particular Christmas. I had it in mind to do a supermarket dash, to make some small contribution to our local food bank. From the various media pieces I had read this was

the front line, the interface between those in want and those who want to help. The idea of donating material sustenance appealed to me because, as I saw it, a monetary contribution may just fund a CEO's salary, or worse, a celebrity.

It was here that I paused. It occurred to me that in Edinburgh Genbukan I was a member of a collective, and not just any collective. I'm privileged to train with some of the biggest-hearted people I have had the good fortune to meet, and if the cause resonated with me, might not it resonate with them? I am fortunate also to have a *dojo* hierarchy that is receptive to ideas and input from a lowly *shodan*. I reasoned that here was a way that could amplify the efforts of one individual, and in so doing magnify the outcome.

The club responded magnificently.

As soon as I fielded the idea, it was out of my hands. I had messages popping up asking me if x or y would be suitable, a collection was organised, and after a week I dropped off over one hundred kilos of urgently needed food stuffs to the volunteers manning the food bank. The lady taking delivery was initially astonished that my wee car could hold so much and then that I had brought so much. But once she had overcome her surprise, she whipped her meagre workforce into action. Our donation had to be weighed in three goes, and I admit to feeling very proud that day. I got the tour of their modest facility, and was informed that most of those who made use of it were pensioners perhaps with no family



left, although they had seen an increase in the number of families coming to rely on them to make ends meet. With the tour done, we shook hands warmly and parted.

Everyone at the club, I think, felt pretty good that in some small way, they had made a positive impact on someone else's life, and at a time of year when positive impacts are much in demand. For me, this was not really about making our club into a heavily armed charity collection team. It was simply an idea to put a little bit back into our local community, a modest gesture, to increase our effect as a positive presence. After all, with venues, local media, fairs and flyers and so forth, it's not as if our communities do not also serve us. Our contribution fed five families for three days, and the thank-you letter contained the following encouraging words:

"As a result of people such as you and your club members we have been able to provide 64000 meals to over 8000 people."

Ideas, once out of our hands, tend to take on a life of their own, and are shaped by the hands of those around us. With most people I have met in studying *budo*, these hands are always capable ones. I suppose the real point is that we, in studying *budo* together, are each individuals with a certain amount of power to change things. At the same time, we are also members of these wonderful collectives, which if mobilised can generate much greater power. The communities in which we exist are diverse, with myriad needs, and there is likely myriad ways in which our collectives can, just occasionally, put something back in. In any study of the martial arts, we will invariably hear words like "honour", "spirit", "integrity", "courage". Look at a martial arts group on social media and you will invariably be confronted with majestic pictures of *samurai* or stock "mystic" photos, accompanied by meaningless phrases from sources ancient and modern. To me, these are not words to be bandied about in an ego-stroking exercise. Rather, I feel they are calls to action, to try as best you may to embody the ideals that resonate within you. It doesn't mean we all have to be paragons or crusaders or busybodies, indeed that may be counter

productive. Rather, it's simply seeing something you can do, and doing it.

So why not see what ideas strike you? You could be escorting kids on Halloween, freezing in your *hakama* and scowling at tangerine givers. You could be participating in a community event like a spring fair, or an open day, or a regeneration project. It could even be something as simple as giving your elderly neighbour a knock to check that everything's ok. The possibilities vary from person to person, place to place. In trying to close this piece, I am reminded of a quote from an interview with the late, great *Haruna Sensei*:

Interviewer: "What personal characteristics are required to make a good *budoka*?"

MH: "Your question is backward! If you practice *budo*, you develop a good character. *Budo* improves your character."

I feel certain this is the case. 

Kevin Gibbins
Edinburgh Genbukan
Edinburgh, March 2015



mushin

By John Howell *Kendo Kyoshi*

John Howell

Started *kendo* at *Nenriki Dojo* in London UK in 1967. Obtained 1st *dan* in Kyoto in 1970, 24 years later attained 7th *dan*, followed by *kyoshi* in 1995.

In the interim, he represented Great Britain (GB) as a competitor nine times; achieved Gold medal in the 1974 European Championships. He managed the GB team at the World Championships three times and the European Championships five times, also the Italian International Championships three times.

As a coach, he passed as a lecturer from the School of Physical Education London in 1964 for *judo* and later for *kendo* in 1973. Was instructor at *Nenriki*, *Fujiken* and *Shinbukan dojos* (the latter is where he still continues to coach).

He has refereed at the World and European Championships, as well as instructing at British Kendo Association (BKA) referee seminars.

He held the posts of BKA Chairman for 25 years; President for five years; director of the European Kendo Federation for 22 years; and the International Kendo Federation for 21 years. He is also an elected Life Senior Counsellor of the European Kendo Federation. In recognition of his commitment to *kendo*, the All Japan Kendo Federation (ZNKRF) awarded him a prestigious '*Koroshō*' for his work in the promotion of *kendo* in the UK and internationally.

Man at the beginning of life is completely ignorant of everything: He has no inhibitions, or obstacles. As he grows, he becomes emotional, timid, cautious and curious, and as time goes on, he could be introduced to the art of *kendo*. He finds that *kendo* and its traditions suit him and he wishes to receive greater instruction and improve. This great incentive to learn and become perfect is not a bad objective. But the absolute drive for perfection can choke the mind, for he can become a slave to it. To learn, and learn correctly is essential, but he must become its master. This way you can use it when you want. You have to apply this psychology to swordplay. The swordsman must not harbour anything external and superfluous in his mind; his mind must be perfectly purged of all egocentric emotions. When this is carried out the mind is "lost, empty" (NO MIND).

He can for the first time make full use of the techniques he has acquired. If you think about this, he goes even further; he forgets the entire training he has learned, learning gained is learning lost when the mind is empty. However well a man be trained in the art, the swordsman can never be the master of his technical knowledge unless all his psychic hindrances are removed and he can keep the mind in a state of emptiness, even purged of whatever technique he has obtained. The entire body together with the four limbs will be capable of displaying, for the first time and to its full extent, all the art acquired by the training of several years. They will move as if automatically, with no

conscious efforts on the part of the swordsman himself. His activities will be the perfect model of swordplay. All the training is there, but the mind is utterly unconscious of it. The conscious mind, it may be said, does not know where it is. When this is realised, with all the training thrown to the wind, with the mind perfectly unaware of its own workings, the art of swordsmanship attains its perfection.

Let's us look at modern day *kendo*? If we wish to obtain *mushin* the most important point is the personality of the person. During his training years he is to give up all desire for name and gain, all egotism and self-glorification. To be in accord with *mushin* one must observe the Law of Nature which is present in all of us. One must understand about human dignity and the laws of morality which regulate our human life; *Jin* (Love), *Gi* (Justice), *Rei* (Propriety) and *Chi* (Wisdom). These constitute human nature and should be learned on your *kendo* travels. Do not rely on tricks of technique. Do not think of achieving a victory over the opponent. Let the swordsman disregard from the first what the outcome of the engagement will be, one must keep the mind clear of such thoughts. For the first principle of swordsmanship is a thorough insight into *mushin* which works out according to the chance circumstances, the rest is of no concern to the swordsman himself.

Let me continue by quoting from the Zen Master *Daisetzu Teitaro Suzuki*.

無心

"What makes swordsmanship come closer to Zen than any other art that has developed in Japan is that it involves the problem of death in the most immediately threatening manner? If the man makes one false movement he is doomed forever, and he has no time for conceptualisation or calculated acts. Everything he does must come right out of his inner mechanism, which is not under the control of consciousness. He must act instinctually and not intellectually. At the moment of the most intensely concentrated struggle for life and death, what counts more is time

and this must be utilised in the most effective way. If there were the slightest moment of relaxation (*suki*) the enemy would feel it instantly and lose no time in making use of it, which means your annihilation. It is not a matter of mere defeat and humiliation. The moment of intense concentration is the moment when a perfect identification takes place between subject and object, the person and his behaviour. When this is NOT reached, it means that the field of consciousness has not yet been completely cleared up: that there still remains 'a subtle

trace of thought' (*misai no ichinen*) which interferes with an act directly and straightforwardly issuing from the person that is, psychologically speaking, from the Unconscious. The result is surely calamitous, for the threatening sword will strike the interfering gap of consciousness. This is the reason why the swordsman is always advised to be free from the thought of death or anxiety about the outcome of the combat. As long as there is any 'thought' of whatever nature, that will most assuredly prove disastrous" 

This article first appeared in *Cutting Edge* magazine, July 2014.

THE 50TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE FOUNDATION OF THE NENRIKI DOJO

We warmly thank everyone who joined us in our 50th Anniversary Celebration, either at the South Bank University or in their heart.

The dictionary meaning of *nenriki* (念力) is something like 'The strength of resolution' or 'The strength of single-mindedness'. In *Buddhism*, *nenriki* results from the chanting of *sutras*. In cases of emergency, human beings are capable of exerting enormous strength over a short period of time. That strength can be nurtured in repetitive *kendo* training as '*nenriki*'.

Many generations before the foundation of the great *Edo*-period *kendo* schools, a swordsman-monk named *Jion* is said to have founded the *Nenryu* school. According to the '*Kensei Hitsubun*' of *Mizukami Junya*, *Jion* is reputed to have said 'However excelled one might be in technique, strength alone is insufficient, everything depends on *nenriki*'. (https://www.kendo.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2016/03/50th-anniversary-leaflet_final_IRedit.pdf).

Nenriki in *kendo* can be attained through '*ki-ai*' by instilling vigour into the lower

abdomen and summoning up all your strength to infuse the whole body in an instant.

We were given the name *Nenriki* by the late *Dr Itoh Kyoitsu Hanshi* (d. 1974), the founder of the *Seijudo Kendojo* in Tokyo, where our first teacher *Osaki Shintaro*, guest of honour at our 50th Anniversary Celebration, practiced *kendo* during his undergraduate years at *Meiji University*. From 1966 to 1968, *Osaki* was to study baking technology in the Borough Polytechnic, now the South Bank University, the venue of our anniversary meeting. In those early years, *Osaki* was wholeheartedly supported in his endeavours by many *kendo* enthusiasts including *Fujii Okimitsu*, Sir Frank Bowden the President of the BKA, and R A Lidstone, the first President of the *Nenriki*, in whose memory we host the annual *kyu* grade Lidstone *Taikai*.

A number of *Nenriki* members and teachers from those early two years



Shintaro Osaki

remain active in *kendo*, while others who in some cases moved away from London or established new dojos, have always been regarded by us as members of the *Nenriki* in heart.

Shintaro Osaki has made a commemorative *tenugui* with two characters of Japanese calligraphy '*Fusho*' written by *Dr Itoh Kyoitsu* fifty years ago. The word '*Fusho*' can be translated as 'Without Hesitation'.

The three words '*Nenriki*' (念力), '*Fusho*' (不躊), and '*Zanshin*' (残心) can be thought of as the three requisites of all *kendo* actions 'Preparation, Action, and Conclusion' as discussed in detail in the booklet '*Kendo and the Formation of the Human Being*', which was translated into English for the occasion of the 45th anniversary of the foundation of the *Nenriki Dojo* five years ago. This three-part concept is what we apply to our basic (*kihon*) study, which you will find described in the first pages of all books on *kendo* and, is based on the '*shomen*

uchi', a large cut following the natural path of the *shinai* through which means and by which means alone is it possible to encompass the meaning of *kendo*. At the *Nenriki Dojo* we strive to discover the essence of *kendo* through this basic universal cut.

The *dojo* is also a centre for the study of the traditional *Ono-Ha Itto Ryu* school of *kenjutsu* from which present-day *kendo* largely derives. The *Itto Ryu* School became the official school of *kendo* for the *Tokugawa Shogunate* in *Edo* (now *Tokyo*), and was inherited by the late *Dr Sasamori Junzo* from *Tsugaru Yoshitaka*, the eleventh generation of the *Tsugaru* branch, *Genjiro Takaaki* of the *Yamaga* line, and *Nakabata Eigoro* who had been connected with *Asari Yoshiaki* and his great pupil *Yamaoka Tesshu*. The *Nenriki Dojo* has inherited the tradition directly from *Dr Sasamori*. (https://www.kendo.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2016/03/50th-anniversary-leaflet_final_IRedit.pdf). As part of our year of celebration the *Nenriki Dojo* will be running a course in *Ono- Ha Itto Ryu* later in the year which will be announced on the BKA website. ㊦

Errol Baboolal Blake

1960s – Left to right: Victor Harris, Ric Schofield, Brian Hilliard, Fuji Okimitsu, Michael Tucker, Osaki Shintaro, John Howell.

1970s – Left to right: Victor Harris, Ric Schofield, Brian Hilliard, Fuji Okimitsu, Anthony Palmer, Michael Tucker, Tsuyako Palmer, Osaki Shintaro, John O'Sullivan, John Howell, Brian Garogan, Charles Beck, Errol Baboolal Blake (seated), Clive Sinclair.

1980s – Left to Right (Standing): Anthony Palmer, Tsuyako Palmer, Michael Tucker, Bob Coles, Brian Garogan, John O'Sullivan, Victor Richardson, Errol Baboolal Blake, Charles Beck.

Left to right (Sitting): Brian Hilliard, Ric Schofield, Fuji Okimitsu, Osaki Shintaro, John Howell, Victor Harris, Clive Sinclair.



1960s members



1970s members



1980s members



Event attendees

As the British Kendo Association is an association of three activities *Jodo, Kendo* and *Iaido*, this article is aimed towards the general application of *dojo* safety, and it is expected that the reader will be able to interpret the content accordingly.

Let's be honest, any form of paperwork diverts us from the activity we enjoy. However, if a serious accident does occur there will be plenty more forms to fill in and perhaps enquiries from the legal profession or council officers to answer. So as they say, time wise, it really is a matter of spend to save.

Generally speaking, the application of safety during activities within our three *Bu* is a simple matter.

Whereas the great majority of our *dojo* leaders apply the guidance provided on the BKA website, some may ignore the subject until something untoward happens and other more enthusiastic people, if somewhat misguided, take a more bureaucratic approach that results in a paper mountain. The latter two are failures that disadvantage our organisation and its members, as the ethos of our safety management system is to keep it realistic and straight forward.

One of the most important elements within our safety management system is the risk assessment. By implementing this simple method, a *dojo* leader will be able to identify their hazards and control measures. Clearly overall control of the *dojo* rests with the leader and their coaches, but if this is the only control measure adopted an important safety element is missed. Ideally you should involve *dojo* personnel in the risk assessment process as this will help identify hazards and control measures

and also encourage buy-in by those concerned.

Having carried out the risk assessment, the next most important action is to communicate the content to all *dojo* members, with reminders from time to

time. *Dojo* members should be told what the risk assessment contains and given an explanation of why this is important. This does not need to be war and peace, a simple chat should suffice.

One example of this might be the area of floor needed by each person during a practice. In this case, the explanation should indicate the need and the reason, or hazard and why this control measure has been put into place to prevent an accident. Another example might be the pre-use inspection of equipment. Whereas a formal inspection of training equipment (if done at all) will take valuable training time, a far more effective method would be to brief everyone to check their own equipment prior to beginning or swap with their neighbour for an independent assessment. Having communicated this information to each *dojo* member, they will know the what/why and can take ownership of not only their personal safety but also that of others who are training around their area.

Safety is not a difficult issue and if you put these simple measures into place your training should go ahead unhindered. 

The application of safety during activities within our three *Bu* is a simple matter.

SAFETY

By Donald Gordon
H & S Officer, BKA



My first encounter with jodo

In 1981, when I was still young and handsome, I spend a year at Kanazawa University to learn *kendo*. My teacher there was *Edo Kokichi*, at that time 41 years of age, and still competing on the All Japan Kendo Championships.

At that time I was 3 *dan* in *kendo* and *iaido*, but I had no knowledge about *jodo*, except from some articles in Martial Arts books and magazines. One day *Edo sensei* told me "come to the *dojo* tomorrow morning at 9 am and only bring your *bokuto*". I thought we were going to do a *kata* training, but when I came to the *dojo*, there was no one else, except me and him, and he was holding a wooden staff, which was made from red oak.

He said "take *chudan no kamae*", which I did, and one second later my *bokuto* was flying behind me, all the way to the other side of the *dojo*. Now I know he hit me with a *hikiotoshi uchi*



He asked me if I was interested in learning how to use this wooden staff, called "*tsue*", and of course I said yes!

We practised *jodo* 3 times a week in the morning for about an hour, and in a few months I learned all the *kihon* techniques and the 12 *kendo renmei jodo kata*.

Edo sensei had learned *jodo* as a young student at Chukyo University, from a famous teacher called *Hamaji sensei*, who held the highest diploma called *menkyo kaiden*.

In 1982 I came back to Amsterdam, and started teaching *kendo*, *iaido* and *jodo* to my students. Some of the guys that started with me at that time are now 7 *dan* themselves.

In 1983 I talked to my long time *kendo* friend Jock Hopson, and I went to the BKA *iaido* and *jodo* seminar with *Hiroi sensei*, and *Ishido sensei* and

his father. Because I could do all 12 *jodo kata* already, and spoke a little Japanese as well, *Hiroi sensei* started using me as translator, and as a willing victim to show his techniques.

After that Jock and I organised these seminars in both the UK and the Netherlands, and that still continues up to this day.

I'm very happy that a personal friendship between a Brit and a Dutchie led to a very successful introduction of *iaido* and *jodo* in many countries in Europe, and I hope we will be able to continue to motivate others to keep studying *budo* for many years. 🇬🇧

Louis Vitalis



...one second later my bokuto was flying behind me, all the way to the other side of the dojo.

strike, but at that time I could only look at his smiling face, thinking, what on earth was that?

I was used to being beaten up by him in *kendo* every day, and on many occasions I lost my *shinai* as well. Soon I found out that some of his *kendo* techniques were actually based on *jodo* techniques, especially the way to hit the *shinai* out of my hands, or the way of doing *tai-atari*, which would put me out of balance easily.



CHIDDINGSTONE CASTLE KENDO DEMONSTRATION

Chiddingstone Castle in Kent, dating back to the early 1500s, held its 4th Japanese Day on the 14th June. Home to numerous antiquities, it boasts a respectable array of items from Japan, from ceramics and sculpture to lacquerware, swords and *yoroi*. The lacquer collection is perhaps one of the finest in a private collection in Western Europe and is one of the greatest achievements of Denys Eyre Bower, the late owner of the castle and an avid collector. The collection houses a wide variety of swords and sword fittings, including pieces from the *Edo* Period.

The antiquities total some 8,000 objects including ancient Egyptian artefacts, Royal Stuart, Jacobite and Buddhist objects. Barrel organs, tapestries and furniture, along with his vast library of books complete the collection.

Chiddingstone Castle was home to Denys Bower between 1955 and 1977, and he devoted his time there to collecting art and antiques. Wanting a home to share his passion with the public, he bought the castle in 1955 to display his collection.

Tsubaki Kendo Club, along with members from *Shinsei* and *Shinubukan dojos*, descended on this venue to give two *kendo* demonstrations, showing both *kata* and *keiko*. Twenty-two members took part, including 12 juniors, with explanations and narration given by John Howell *Sensei*. Both displays drew large crowds that remained engrossed for over 30 minutes each time, with some later putting questions to various members.

The Japanese day included *taiko* drumming, *bonsai*, *tameshigiri*, various themed stalls, book reading for the children, and lectures on Japanese gardens within the castle's main hall.

The Day went very well, with the Castle reporting an increase in attendance over previous years. 🇬🇧

Tsubaki Kendo Club





Cartilage injuries in the knee

By **Nigel Kettle** BSc(Hons)Ost
GOsC Registered Osteopath

The knee is the joint between the *femur* (thigh bone) and *tibia* (shin bone).

There are two tough, free-moving, cartilage structures between these two bones: one on the medial side of the knee joint, the other on the lateral. Anatomically called the '*menisci*', they sit precisely on to the top of the *tibia* which is fairly flat, so the bottom surface of the *meniscus* is flat, whilst the top surfaces face the two round ends of the *femur*, so they are cupped to accommodate this shape. In effect the *menisci* make the two bones fit together better. To clarify this a little further; the *menisci* are wedge-shaped, half-moon, C-shaped structures; the inside of them is thin and has no blood supply, whilst the outside is much thicker but does have a blood supply to it. This all becomes important when they become damaged as, without a blood supply, they cannot heal. The '*menisci*' allow body weight to be distributed effectively through the knee joint and so permit the *tibia* and *femur* to move relative to each other in a smooth and efficient manner. They also act as shock absorbers and guiders of movement through their attachment points located around the middle of the joint.

Meniscal tears or a torn cartilage – what exactly do we mean? This is where much confusion arises as the ends of the *femur* and *tibia* both have

hard cartilage covering them, as well as the fibrous cartilage that makes up the *menisci*. What most people mean when they talk about a 'torn cartilage in the knee' are the *menisci* most of the time.

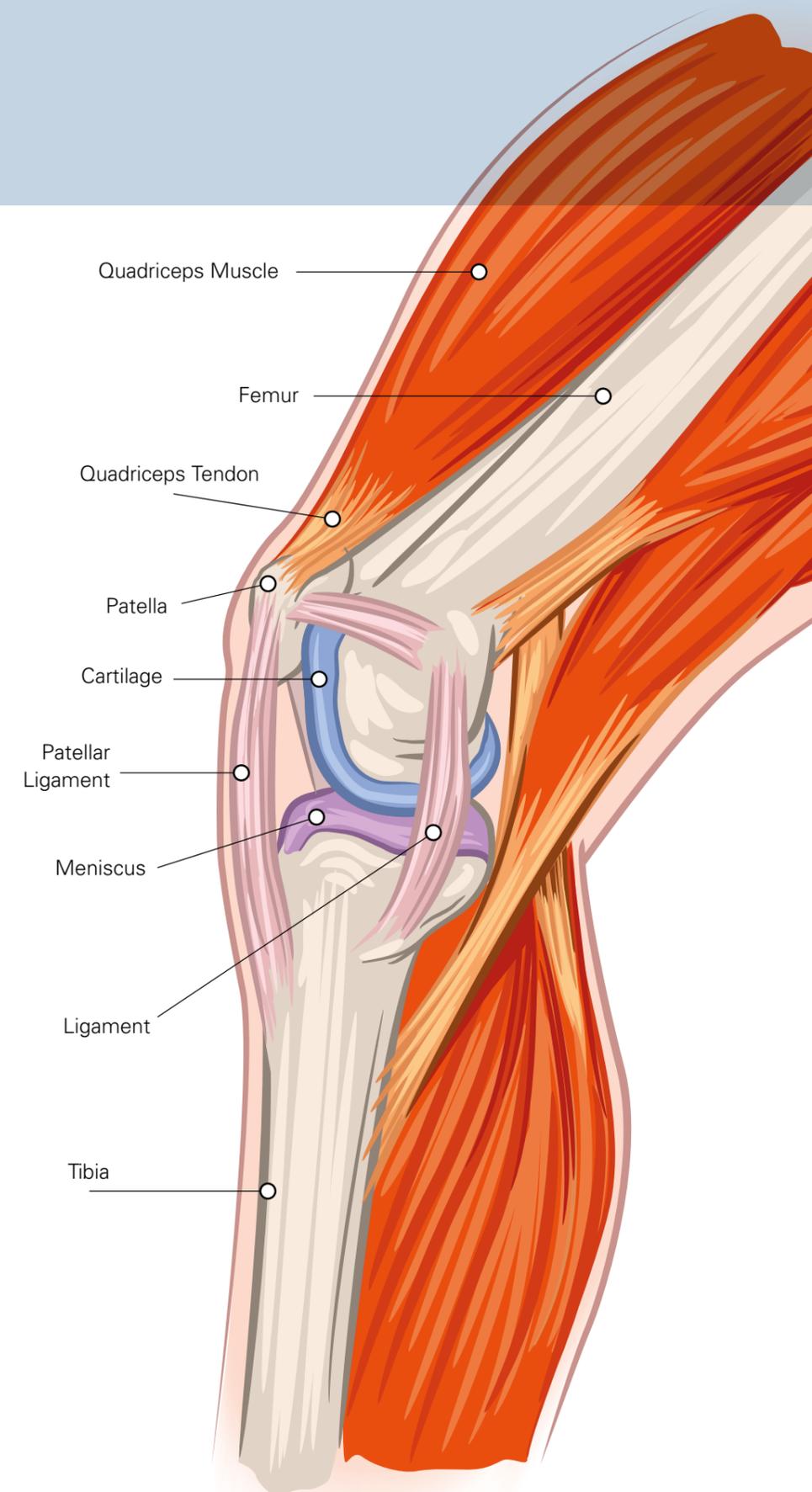
Traumatic injuries are a common cause of *meniscal* injuries often as a result of a twisting motion of the knee whilst under load and in a flexed position. Rapid squatting movements, lunges and jumping activities also cause problems. Another consideration is as people become older they have more wear and tear in the weight-bearing joints – specifically knees and hips – and this not only affects the hard cartilage at the end of the bones but in the natural course of things the *menisci* also become 'frayed' on their thin inner edges and can develop tears and splits within them through their entire width.

There are a number of symptoms in meniscal injuries, ranging from the obvious pain and swelling to locking of the joint, sometimes 'cracking and clicking' sounds from the joint, and of course a restriction of normal movement. This is all to do with driving the joint surfaces together. As they are compressed, the damaged *meniscal* cartilage (which at this point has lost its integrity and may as a result be leaving floating detritus

within the joint, or is trailing frayed bits, or has splits within it – basically is not working properly) rather than facilitating joint movement it is actually blocking and disrupting it.

The diagnosis of *meniscal* injuries is difficult as a lot of the orthopaedic tests are not terribly reliable. Probably the most useful information is gained by a combination of taking a good comprehensive case history, finding out the mechanism of injury and doing a comprehensive physical examination. If a severe *meniscal* injury is suspected then immediate referral to a specialist orthopaedic surgeon and MRI is the norm.

Treatment can be provided by an osteopath or a physiotherapist initially for a minor injury; however, in my experience, if there is a cartilage injury in most cases eventually this will lead to a referral to a surgeon. This subsequently and commonly will result in an 'arthroscopy' of the joint where the *meniscal* cartilage can be trimmed or tidied up and loose bits within the joint vacuumed out. Occasionally meniscal replacements are performed with donor tissue, but this is a fairly new procedure as far as I know. 





www.kendo.org.uk
www.britishkendoassociation.com

