

# **Report of Director of International Affairs British Kendo Association 2016/2017**

I have now been in this position for 2 years.

## **General overview**

Following on from last year's report the DIA has been continually involved in matters relating to updating the BKA membership database on the EKF website and to correcting that data so that it matches with the BKA's own records. This is a long and ongoing process and which needs constant attention and the cooperation of every member.

Besides the general organisation of overseeing the administration of the EKC, EIC and EJC as well as the EKF's Kendo Refereeing event and the Kitamoto Summer Seminar in Japan, individual applications for grading overseas amounted to around 50 cases which is growing year on year. In addition there are also individual enquiries concerning transfer of membership both from abroad to the UK and vice versa. This is besides the UK gradings which take place every year and produce administration work in the update of new grades and new dan members.

The DIA has a close contact with both the EKF and the All Japan Kendo Federation dealing with various requests or updates. The role also calls upon the individual to attend NC meetings reporting on matters of importance and once a year attend the General Assembly of the EKF (usually held in conjunction with the EKC which was Budapest, Hungary this year).

I would like to give some background information on the EKF/AJKF so members can appreciate the scope of topics engaged with. We are longstanding members of the European Kendo Federation which now totals 32 Representative Member Countries and 12 Affiliate Member Countries awaiting full membership. This group of countries make up the European Zone and other zones include Asia, America, Oceania & Africa. These groups in turn are members of Federation of International Kendo (FIK or IKF as it was previously known). All come under the control of All Japan Kendo Federation and FIK is run by a board of directors representing those areas which presently stands at around 15 people. Like the BKA which has to administer and deal with issues affecting its membership, the EKF/AJKF also has to consider implications which affect the whole international community, e.g. Drug Abuse in competition, Rules for competition and governance of technical information relating to coaching/teaching. We also rely on the AJKF to send recognized teachers to attend EKF competitions, although from last year a new rule was introduced which states that unless a Japanese teacher is an approved member of a delegation sent by the AJKF, then any Japanese teacher attending a seminar & grading are no longer permitted to sit on grading panels. The BOD of the EKF wrote to Japan asking why this change had been made, but have not received a reply to date. The effect of this which has already been felt is that there will be a growing need for European 7th dans to take on this role.

The BKA (which is one of the founding members of the EKF) is currently the fourth largest member country within Europe (following France, Germany and Italy) in terms of its Kendo, Iaido and Jodo membership. The EKF has just finished work on updating its website to provide members and the general public with information relevant to its organisation.

At the EKF General Assembly in May this year there were new elections to the Board of Directors resulting after the resignation of the current President Alain Ducarme who had served in office for 34 years. The new president is Mr Dieter Hauck and the vice president is Mr Zsolt Vadadi from Hungary. There is a new treasurer Ms Donatella Castelli from Italy and the current secretary and technical director remain the same.

At this meeting there was a presentation by the Japanese FIK representative regarding WADA (World Anti Doping Authority). The presentation highlighted the need to take a serious view about the need to comply with existing and changing rules on Anti Doping and which in the near future are likely to become a common occurrence in more and more sports. To date Kendo has mainly avoided any incidents or outbreaks in this area, but the EKF is impressing on all its member countries to apply the policies and practices as laid down by WADA so that compliance is seen to be serving the spirit of fair play to all. The BKA has an Anti Doping Officer who will be responsible for overseeing the review of current regulations and the potential impact on the arts that we practice. Many countries in Europe have already begun the process of compliance so it is a matter of time before all will be affected. It must be pointed out that the consequences of ignoring this aspect will have far reaching effects as offenders (if found out) will be heavily penalised. More information can be found on the website of AJKF and WADA.

On the whole I would say that the membership has grown in terms of its development. There has been a continued growth in successful gradings both at home and abroad in all three arts. In particular it is encouraging to see the lower grades show promising development, however the rate of development amongst our senior grades is markedly slower with fewer and fewer achieving the levels of 6th and 7th dan. My congratulations to all that have been successful over this last year.

I will conclude by saying that the international importance that is now associated with all Kendo organizations has a far reaching impact for the activities that are undertaken and will in the future I am sure become ever more so. International cooperation and goodwill makes possible many of the events that take place around the world and it should be borne in mind that the systems that allow individuals to participate are often carried out by volunteers.

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