

Report of Director of International Affairs BKA 2019/2020

This is the fifth year of my term as DIA of the BKA. In accord with European National Federations activities being cancelled due to the COVID Virus the EKF followed suit and all events were put on hold from March 2020 and later as the pandemic continued cancelled.

This meant for the first in the EKF's 50 year history the yearly EKC did not place. I am happy to say there is a strong hope that the EIC can take place in Belgrade in October/November 2020. It is also hoped that an EKF Jodo seminar and grading to 7th dan will also happen at the same time.

So with regard to events on the EKF calendar which took place from July 2019 until March 2020 I would like to provide a synopsis breakdown of the three arts to show a cross section of the scale of activities which take place across Europe.

EVENT	GRADING	SEMINAR	TAIKAI	OTHER
KENDO	70	70	0	1
IAIDO	28	28	1	0
JODO	13	13	1	0

The DIA continues to administer UK participation in EKC, EIC and EJC together with EKF Kendo Refereeing seminar in Brussels and the Kitamoto Summer Seminar in Japan organized by AJKF. The DIA also deals with ad hoc requests and provides answers to questions raised by the EKF and the All Japan Kendo Federation, The role of the DIA is to principally act on behalf of the Chair of the association to keep them updated on International matters as the need arises. Once a year will attend the General Assembly of the EKF usually held in conjunction with the EKC. This year it was to be held in Norway, but was cancelled due to the pandemic.

We are founding members of the European Kendo Federation which presently has 44 representative and affiliate federations within Europe. This group of countries accounts for one of the global zones which also includes Asia, America, Oceania & Africa. All are members of Federation of International Kendo (FIK). Like the BKA, the FIK has to administer and deal with issues affecting its membership, the implications of which are numerous. The EKF continues to be collectively responsible for negotiating with AJKF/FIK in arranging to send official teachers to attend EKF competitions and high grade examinations. These arrangements continue on a rotating yearly basis so as to allow as many countries as possible the chance to host such events.

The BKA remains the fourth largest member country with an active dan membership of 1031 compared with that of France, Germany and Italy. Overall within the EKF the total membership currently stands at around 14,438. This is made up as follows;

Kendo (by Dan grade only) = 10,515

Iaido (by Dan grade only) = 4,559

Jodo (by Dan grade only) = 1,349

These figures reflect a slight drop compared with the previous years and may not include individuals who practice more than one art.

It is the sincere wish of the EKF and FIK that Budo related activities will return to normal at the earliest possibility. This situation has been a severe learning curve for many of us, but hopefully will put us in a more appreciative state of mind for the future.

Chris Mansfield
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