

BJA National Jodo Championship 2017 and EJC 2017 Report

By Ally Mihaylova

The **BJA National Jodo Championship 2017** was held on 10th June 2017 near Leicester. A total of 40 individuals participated (9 Mudan, 9 Shodan, 5 Nidan, 9 Sandan, 6 Yondan and 2 Godan), with 13 teams in the 2-person team event and another 7 teams in the Asahi event. The Championship results were as follows:

2017	Mudan	Shodan	Nidan	Sandan	Yondan	Godan	Team	Asahi
Gold	David Findlay	Mark Snowdon	Mark Ralston	William Heal	Oliver Jarvis	Elena West	Ryoshinkan Kaze (Ed Marshall)	Ojika
Silver	Tai-Huan Li	Mark Thurman	Shakir Abdur Rahman	Ed Marshal	Yuki Shima	Fay Goodman	Ojika B	Nanafushi
Bronze	Brian Ford	Rob Townson	Ally Mihaylova	Kevin McNeil	Martin Chambers		Katchi Mushi	Ichimon
Bronze	Dean Robinson	John Kennedy	Christopher Penfold	David Parker	Carlos Xilotl		Ojika A	San Chiiki
Fighting Spirit	Dean Robinson	Steve Campbell	Christopher Penfold	Ed Umeyama	Rob Colson		John Burn	Abdul Oyede

The 16th **European Jodo Championship (EJC 2017)** was held in Heidelberg, Germany early in September – 9th and 10th Sep 2017. Great Britain had an almost full squad – eleven competitors and one reserve, covering all dans and coming from nine different dojos. The BJA also had three referees selected by the EKF (full list of the squad and referees can be found further below) and a few supporters in the delegation.



This EJC was the biggest one to date, with 18 countries and more than 140 participants. It was an emotional competition, as always very tough and full of both expected and unexpected turns. Our squad members showed great spirit and kept on fighting, at least one person passing their pools per category.



The previous European Mudan gold medallist Robert Townson met all our high expectations and got his second European gold medal – in Shodan category.

Our sole Mudan competitor David Findley fought well to the final, securing a silver medal in his first appearance at an EJC despite having a number of different tachi throughout the pools and knockouts (due to shiai-jo distribution and timings).



Al Colebourne fought off Lukasz Machura in a charged and very close final, snatching the Godan champion title and giving the UK another, last-minute gold medal. Yuki Shima was awarded the Yondan fighting spirit and our team (Elena West, Oliver Jarvis and Robert Townson) showed us great fights, passing a tough pool but losing by a flag to the overall winners Sweden in the knockouts. A special honourable mention goes for Mark Snowden and Oliver Jarvis, who were

relentless tachi to many of our squad members throughout the day, including all our medal winners!

(Photos by Fakhri Al-Alami)

Here is some feedback competitors provided after the event:

Ed Marshall

“The event was well organised by the German Judo Bund DNBK, and likewise the group was well organised for the flights and meals due to the Squad Manager. There was a pleasant atmosphere and camaraderie throughout the trip. It was great to see the squad do well at a junior level and senior level.

My highlight was competing in the individuals as I gain a lot from this practice under pressure. As with all the grade groups in the EJC, Sandan this year had a high level of talent in it where everyone is very close to each other in ability and individuals train very hard to stand out. I had a personal best in terms of how far I progressed through the competition, missing out on a bronze medal by one flag. Whilst this is frustrating for the overall medal result, it is at least encouraging that it is my first year of Sandan and I have progressed further than I have ever done before. Moreover, it is an encouraging indicator as it was no easy draw (two medallists in my three-person pool).

I learned a lot from watching the team competitions (midori keiko). Amongst many things, one specific point that seemed to emerge throughout the competition, was the ending distance after hikiotoshi/honte uchi and how this can become a clear difference between competitors. Awase and connection/intent were also a focus for what I was watching as these things had been emphasised in squad training. I look forward to watching my matches and analysing them with the squad; to highlight training points/themes to work on over the next year ahead.”

William Heal

“A highlight for me was having Kurogo Sensei hammer home the point about the importance of good technique on the tachi side. Many if not most jodoka are also iaidoka and even kendoka. However, the kamae, movement and intention of the tachi side is often weak, making it difficult for the jo side to develop effective jodo. I was inspired by Kurogo Sensei’s relentless suburi training to pay more attention to how I do the tachi side, and drilled my students with suburi practice as soon as I got back to our dojo!

I would like to extend my thanks to the German organising committee for all their hard work (everything seemed to run very smoothly), the jodo squad selection panel for allowing me the privilege of representing my country again, Harry for always pushing me to improve and Ally for excellent organisation effort and for bringing the squad together for an inclusive and good-spirited EJsCs.”

List of the British EJC 2017 delegation

7 dan Kyoshi	Jock Hopson Sensei	Referee
7 dan Kyoshi	Chris Mansfield Sensei	Referee
7 dan Kyoshi	Chis Buxton Sensei	Referee
6 dan Renshi	Harry Jones Sensei	Coach
5 dan	Elena West (Myoken Dojo)	Competitor
5 dan	Al Colebourne (Ryoshinkan Dojo)	Competitor
4 dan	Oliver Jarvis (Ryoshinkan Dojo)	Competitor
4 dan	Yuki Shima (Ryoshinkan Dojo)	Competitor
3 dan	William Heal (Kashiwa Dojo)	Competitor
3 dan	Edward Lief Marshall (Ryoshinkan Dojo)	Competitor
2 dan	Mark Ralston (Budokan Dojo)	Competitor
2 dan	Mohammed Shakir Abdur-Rahman (Eishinkan Dojo)	Competitor
1 dan	Mark Snowdon (Kuroi Inu Dojo)	Competitor
1 dan	Rob Townson (Budokan Dojo)	Competitor
Mudan	David Findlay (Seishinkan Dojo)	Competitor
2 dan	Ally Mihaylova (Hagakure West London Dojo)	Manager/ Reserve