

## **Report of Director of International Affairs BKA 2018/2019**

This is the fourth year of my term as DIA of the BKA. The continued ongoing process of updating the EKF database so that it matches the BKA database is a slow and painstaking process. The importance of keeping members records up to date to facilitate entry to EKF Taikai and other grading/seminar events happening throughout Europe and requires constant attention. All countries are now using the EKF database to coordinate their activities.

The DIA administers 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. Individual applications by BKA members applying for gradings overseas continues to rise year on year. Also individual enquiries concerning the upkeep of EKF membership both from abroad to the UK and vice versa is an ongoing process. UK gradings between the three Bu take place throughout the year and produce administration work in the update of new grades and new dan members. Currently this is around 18 events for the association in all. The DIA has regular contact with both the EKF and the All Japan Kendo Federation dealing with various requests, updates or to liaise information. The DIA also works closely with the Chair of the association in advising on International matters at NC meetings and once a year attends the General Assembly of the EKF usually held in conjunction with the EKC. This year it was held in Belgrade, Serbia and celebrated the 50th anniversary since the founding of the EKF.

We are founding members of the European Kendo Federation which presently stands around 47 representative and affiliate federations spread across Europe. This group of countries make up one of the five zones worldwide including Asia, America, Oceania & Africa. All are members of Federation of International Kendo (FIK). Like the BKA, FIK has to administer and deal with issues affecting its membership, the implications of which range from drug abuse in competition, rules for governing competition and technical information relating to coaching and teaching. The EKF is collectively responsible for negotiating with AJKF/FIK in arranging to send official teachers to attend EKF competitions and high grade examinations. It arranges events on a rotating yearly calendar to give as many countries as possible the chance to host such events.

The BKA is currently the fourth largest member country with an active membership of 963 compared to France (4425), Germany (1529) and Italy (1141). Overall within the EKF the total membership currently stands at around 23,500. This is made up as follows;

Kendo (by Dan) = 10,280

Iaido (by Dan) = 4,473

Jodo (by Dan) = 1,303

As I have previously remarked it is encouraging to note the steady growth in membership in terms of development and stability within Europe. Although slow it is gradual. This is a reflection of the many successful events which are organised by all federations and their respective Bu's throughout Europe. We may be small in numbers compared to the other global zones, but we are rich in diversity through our culture.

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