

# KENDO NEWS



Official Newsletter of Kendo Na h-Eireann

©Kendo Na h-Eireann 2006

Summer Edition

## EDITORIAL

This issue of Kendo News is approaching something like my original idea. I would like to thank everyone so far for making their contributions. In this issue, we have contributions from Kobukai on the recent visit by the Swedish Kendoka. Also, for the first time, there is a nice article on laido. Please keep them coming. In past issues there have been personal interviews, profiles, reports from different tournaments and seminars and general budo-related issues. Please feel free to submit any of these and of course if you want to suggest any items please feel free to do so. Looking forward to your submissions etc.

As I have done in previous issues, I will begin to include articles which will be spread over a few issues. This is due to the fact that there is a lot to cover in some aspects of Kendo. I will be starting in the next issue with care instructions for the Hakama and Keikogi.

*Vince Long,*  
Editor.

**Page 2 News**

**Page 3-5 Report from Dublin Kobukai**

**Page 6 Reflections on laido**

**Page 8 Kendo Glossary**

**Page 9 Contact Page**

# NEWS NEWS NEWS NEWS NEWS NEWS NEWS NEWS NEWS

The new official website for Kendo Na h-Eireann is active. Log-on at:

[www.irishkendofederation.org/](http://www.irishkendofederation.org/)

In future, any submissions etc. to  
[secretary@irishkendofederation.org](mailto:secretary@irishkendofederation.org)

If you need to contact the president for official matters on policy, foreign grading applications, permission for events etc, use  
[president@irishkendofederation.org](mailto:president@irishkendofederation.org)

To access the members-only forum, you must contact the administrators with your club name and Kendo Na h-Eireann number. It is open to current year members **only**.

The guiding committee of Kendo Na h-Eireann (now called the BOM or Board of Management) has decided to welcome another member to its ranks. Congrats go to Danny Lennon of Kobukai. He is the new Membership Secretary, leaving Vince Long to look after enquiries, championships co-ordination etc. etc.

## Dublin Kobukai at IKET. Edinburgh July 2006



[Click here to see full size image](#)

H. Malm, N. Whelan, L. Cahill, T. Takenaga



[Click here to see full size image](#)

N. Yanai, Hayashi, J. Tashiro, M. Sumi, T. Takenaga, Cahill senseis.

## **Seminar 12/13/14 May 2006 lead by Sensei Joakim Hahl**

The three Swedish Kendoka Joakim Håhl (5<sup>th</sup> Dan), Nicke Rydgren (4<sup>th</sup> Dan) and Nils Björkegård (4<sup>th</sup> Dan) arrived at Dublin airport on Friday morning 12 May. The weather had been nice in Dublin for about a week with the promise of summer arriving. Friday noon was hot and showed the best side of our city to the visitors. Once they had arrived at their accommodation they had the opportunity to do a little site seeing. Joakim had been in Dublin a few years earlier and knew his way about.

### **Friday 12<sup>th</sup> May, 2006 20:00 to 21:30**

On Friday evening the warm up was lead by Nils which I think everybody learned a few new exercises for example the knee stretch from sonkyo and the reverse hand stretch.

The suburi was then lead by Nils which included Jogeburi, nanamaburi, zenshin men, zenshin kotai men (longer footwork essential) and hayasuburi (only 20 hayasuburi).

Kirikaeshi across the hall and back and men to finish. Even if the motodachi stops at the far wall to change direction, kakarite keeps hitting sayumen while motodachi stops and prepares to change direction. Therefore the kirikaeshi does not stop.

This was repeated twice

The position of hands at jodan in kirikaeshi employed was the same that Yanai Sensei has been telling us to do in seminars over the last number of months. They advised that the cut should be forward from jodan and only sayumen at last moment. Kirikaeshi is a big movement with lots of energy in each cut with kikentai-no-ichi.

### **Kihon waza**

Joakim lead us in kihon geiko while Nils and Nicke gave demonstrations. What was impressive was that each cut was ippon with very strong zanshin throughout

### **Kakarigeiko**

The three motodachi lead us in kakarigeiko and they were at pains to show us that kakarigeiko should have flow. It must have fast footwork. Done like uchikomi with the aim of maintaining flow. Mostly men cuts, it can be all men cuts, kote men, kote on its own slows down the uchikomi. If it is going well and flow is maintained then you can cut men tai-atari hiki men and perhaps one do cut.

### **Saturday 13<sup>th</sup> May, 06 8:30 to 18:00**

#### 1. Individual Shiai

The feedback from the instructors was that a lot of the fighting was random kendo. This was caused by people bouncing around in kamae. The Kensen was bobbing around all over the place this unfortunately causes maai to change repeatedly and change at random. A hit from random kendo is not considered by the judges to be an ippon or at least they are less likely to give it.

Lining up, entering the shiai jo, reigi, exiting the shiai jo are all so important. Do not raise the tip of your shinai in the air when bowing for example. Keep your back straight. The judges see so much the same through out the day of competition make an effort to do something different and special. For some of the older Kendoka their posture was a constant source of trouble for them. The instructors gave gentle but constant reminders to anyone who was not standing with good posture.

## 2. Suburi lead by Nicke

Suburi should be done at the same pace as the leader. Slower or faster means that you are tired and are trying to escape the exercise. Suburi was done at a slow pace with emphasis on raising the shinai, the cut, longer footwork to exercise the legs and hips, the need to keep the feet more than one fist wide and tenouchi. It is the same cut whether you are doing suburi or shiai. Focus on each cut not on the number of cuts. The suburi was then done faster. Same routine again jogiburi, zenshin men, zenshin kotai men (longer footwork essential) and hayasuburi. Then extra weight was added either by using a suburi bokken or two shinai. Girls don't have to use either and can use only a shinai. Suburi bokken should be used slowly and not use tenouchi severely which tear the muscles in the arms. Suburi bokken are for building up muscles.

Joakim all suburi should have relaxed elbows as the shinai goes over head. Zenshin kotai men should have longer footwork so that the suburi benefits not just the arms.

### Team Shiai

Two teams of six were selected by pooling shinai and selection.

There was general feedback about lining up in team formation and correct attire and behavior. Only the first two fighters should have their men on. They may stand and the rest must sit in seiza. When the first fighter starts fighting the third may begin to put on bogu and stand. When each fighter finishes they sit in seiza. They stand bow and then enter the shiai-jo together. Fighters must synchronize their entry and exit of the shiai-jo. They must sonkyo together.

A fighter must never leave the shiai-jo while the match is still on. No-one else must enter the shiai-jo. The fighter tells the shimpan there is a problem i.e. raises the right glove. E.g. a broken shinai the shimpan must examine with the fighter making an adjustment as there is no proof then. The fighter retreats to the line and does sonkyo with his back to the line. No one else is allowed enter the shiai-jo except the fighters and shimpan. Therefore the person supplying the replacement shinai must stay outside the area and pass in the replacement shinai.

### Keiko

Everyone enjoyed the Keiko with each of the motodachi. Nils, Nicke and Joakim. Some of the bouts were quite exciting especially for those fighting Kendoka two or three grades higher than them. Everyone wanted to give it a go. When people realized that Nicke was the Swedish champion and Nils a top fighter in Sweden, everyone wanted a shot at the title. Unfortunately both fighters went home with their reputations intact.

### Warm down stretching

People often finish training after Keiko and miss an opportunity to do a correct warm down. A warm down stretching session was done with Nils. Each stretch should be held for a count of 15. When stretching one can let go the stretch each time to disconnect the natural resistance reaction in the muscle and then stretch again.

### Sunday 14<sup>th</sup> May 10:45 to 14:00

After a very entertaining evening in Mulligans of Poolbeg St where the competitive edge between the Swedish and Irish contingents continued with each person in their turn ushered to the bar to bring back another tray of creamy pints the recall of the Sunday morning exercises isn't as clear as the previous day.

There was ashi-sabaki followed by suburi lead by Nils and then kihon geiko. The next exercise was **Renzoku Kihon**, where 7 is the ideal number (two teams 3-1-3 with one in the middle) and as each person attacks the person in the middle they anticipate with debana men, debana kote and debana do.

## **Enjin-shiai**

Jikeiko hell circle was a big hit. Especially I might add with Lee San who realized sometime during the weekend that he doesn't have to copy the old guys kendo (i.e. slow) and was doing a very accurate impersonation of Nicke (and lets face it he's fast) and was only knocked out of the circle with difficulty. Noel also seemed to enjoy not wanting to vacate the circle and they both showed very well for the Irish contingent. As Joakim advised you must acknowledge the score if you are scored against and move back to circle. However, your aim should be to beat everyone who enters the circle and that is the spirit of enjin-shiai

## **Keiko**

We all enjoyed Keiko and tried not to admit we really needed to sit down or lie down. There were mixed results some people had hoisted the white flag while others carried on the spirit of enjin waza to the Keiko.

## **Kakarigeiko**

If that wasn't enough the days session and the sessions for the weekend ended with Kakarigeiko. Kakarigeiko with the three Swedish motodachi. Kote is difficult to do and maintain flow in kakarigeiko. For good flow use footwork primarily and lots of ki and kiai. Each cut should be ippon. Mostly men cuts, with kote-men, some tai-atari men and one do

## **Conclusion.**

The seminar was well run. The visitors had wonderful kendo spirit and generosity and attempted to pass on to their new Irish friends their love of kendo and of fighting. For three young men they had a strict sense of reigi and did not falter once in demonstrating by their behavior and composure what is required in achieving a very dignified level of etiquette. They were very much focused on correct execution of suburi and all kihon waza. Their ability to execute zanshin after each ippon was memorable. As a result we are working towards another weekend seminar to be lead by the Swedish instructors and they have agreed to come back to Ireland when the timetable allows.

# Reflections on Iaido.....

G. Walther.

I am in no way qualified to write about Iaido but because I was asked I feel compelled to write about what Iaido means to me and some of my experience.

All true Martial Arts should benefit the student mind, body and soul. After all, a Martial Artist without philosophy is nothing more than a street fighter.

I have had the honour of being taught judo, jiu-jitsu and Wing Chun by people I respect in and out of the dojo. I have forgotten more than I care to admit about Iaido, yet for me it gels all that I know and all I wish to become.

In the Kata of Setei we begin at peace with our surroundings. When aware of our attacker, we defend, counter and then return to a state of peace. Thus the circle is complete.

There are 12 kata in seitei. The first four are from kneeling. They vary in number and direction of attackers. All are made up of four parts -

- A) drawing the sword
- B) striking
- C) blood shaking
- D) return

Sounds easy!

Before Iaido, to me, carrying a katana was a macho thing, but after one class with Mr. John Gibney my mind was a-buzz with excitement and nervousness. I knew I had to learn more. The first time I used my Iaito I was mostly nervous. The respect and responsibility of such a thing (some would say person) made me forget nay macho thoughts.

It is a year and a half since my first class. I still have not learned enough. I have received lessons in 3 other styles of Iaido, including 2 different styles of Toyama-ryu. I enjoy the differences and find that I can see something those ads to my seitei. To all my instructors, graded and not, my thanks and respect.

How top breathe properly during kata. How many things we do in just one stroke of a sword. Although this can lead to discussions on whether the sword should be held at 10 or 12 degrees. Not-to

(return to scabbard) is a technique I look forward to learning particularly well.

The old romantics among us might appreciate the moral in the classic 'Sanjuro' which shows us that the best katana is kept in the Saya.

In his book 'IAI', Darrel Craig writes "that learning Iaido without knowing Kendo is like dressing up with nowhere to go". Considering what it does for me, I can only imagine the benefits to Kendoka.

# KENDO GLOSSARY

Bokken..... wooden sword used in kendo-no-kata  
Chudan-no-kamae..... middle guard  
Do..... the abdomen target in kendo and the name of the armor which protects it.  
Hakama..... the traditional split trousers of the Samurai  
Hidari..... Japanese for 'left'.  
Hiki waza..... stepping-back technique.  
Issoku-itto-no-maai..... one-step-attack distance.  
Gigeiko..... free practice.  
Kaeshi waza..... reflex deflection technique  
Kakarigeiko..... all-out attack practice  
Kamae..... guard position  
Keiko..... practice  
Keikogi..... practice jacket  
Kendogu..... kendo armour  
Kensen..... the tip of the shinai  
Ki..... spirit, mental energy  
Kihaku..... spirit  
Kirikaeshi..... continuous strikes left-right on the men  
Kodachi..... the short wooden sword used in kata  
Kote..... the wrist target in kendo and the name of the gauntlet which protects it  
Maai..... distance  
Men..... the head target in kendo and the helmet which protects it.

Metsuke..... point of observation  
Mokuso..... sitting meditation.  
Nidan waza..... two-stage attack  
Oji waza..... counter attack technique  
Okuri waza..... sliding forward with the right foot  
Sandan waza..... three step attack.  
Seiretsu..... call to line up.  
Seiza..... kneeling position.  
Sensei..... teacher  
Shiai..... kendo match  
Shiai-jo..... competition area.  
Shidachi..... the student position in kata.  
Suburi..... swing practice.  
Suri-ashi..... sliding step.  
Tachi..... the long wooded sword used in kendo-no-kata.  
Taiatari..... body-check.  
Taito..... holding the shinai/Bokken at waist level.  
Tare..... the hip protector.  
Tenouchi..... balanced strength of the hands at the moment of cutting.  
Tsuba..... sword guard.  
Tsuka..... the shinai handle or hilt.  
Tsuru..... the shinai 'string'.  
Uchi-dachi..... the teacher in kendo-no-kata.  
Zanshin..... continued awareness.

## One to Ten in Japanese

One..... ichi  
Two..... ni  
Three..... san  
Four..... shi  
Five..... go  
Six..... roku  
Seven..... shichi  
Eight..... hachi  
Nine..... ku  
Ten..... ju



## *Irish Kendo Federation*

Full Members of the European Kendo Federation and the International Kendo Federation

### **UCC KENDO CLUB**



UCC Kendo Club

Ph: 353 21 4509903  
Fax: 353 21 434 7273  
Email: vlkendo@yahoo.co.uk

Learn one of the most traditional forms of Japanese Budo.

- Regular Gradings
  - Practice with Japanese senseis monthly
  - Tournaments at home and abroad
  - World-wide recognition of your grade
  - Represent Ireland internationally

Dublin Kobukai

Ph: 353 1 87 6633 604

Email: dublinkendo@gmail.com

I wish to find out more about Kendo. My name is:

My address is:

Additional Information:

Send to:

Vincent Long,  
Secretary,  
Kendo na h-Eireann,  
Apt 9,  
Shandon House,  
Western Rd,  
Cork.