

**Obukan Kendo Club  
Portland, Oregon**

A 501©(3) Non-profit Organization Dedicated to  
the Promotion of Japanese Fencing.

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**A busy month for Obukan...**

Wow! What a busy month it's been...we've moved to our new facilities, held a successful seminar, made a few hundred dollars at our car-wash fund raiser, had great fun at the Highline Mudansha taikai, spent two weekends carving up piles of bamboo and making fountains for the Uwajimaya Sakura Festival, held our Spring Taikai and traveled to a successful Bellevue Junior Taikai! It's been great fun and hard work, but it will be nice to have a weekend to get to the yard work for once too.

**Kamei Sensei Visit**

The visit by Kamei-sensei and his dojo was pulled off without a hitch, I heard many appreciative comments from the people who attended. Thanks to Akahoshi-sensei for leading this effort, and to everyone (and there were very many) who helped make it a success! We had the opportunity to meet new people, learn a great deal and see old friends again. Our guests appeared to enjoy themselves, and we were very grateful for their teaching and experience. This was truly an event to remember!

**Move to Conestoga**

At the same time, we moved to our new facility at the Conestoga Recreation Center. Over the course of two days and one night, we moved the new cabinets in, moved the old gear out, cleaned up the Jazzercise facility and did it all *during* the Kamei-dojo visit! Again, big thanks to those who helped out with this process in the nasty weather – and especially Rudy, Chris and Jared – who bravely followed me while I was completely lost in Beaverton. The new practice schedule has been added to the obukan.com website, and is listed on the last page of the Koho.

**Carwash**

More thanks to the people who showed up to make our second car wash a success! We earned another \$300 towards the Japan trip expenses with hard work, generous customers, and the support of our friends at Uwajimaya.

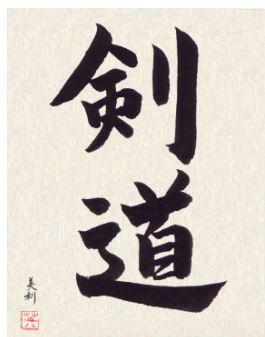
**Fountain making and the Uwajimaya Sakura Festival**

Hancock-sensei and Strauch-sensei have been kind enough to bring their considerable expertise (and lots of fine bamboo!) to my workshop, where a number of us have spent the two Saturdays (and Hancock sensei spent another weekday) carving it up to make "tipping beak fountains" which were sold at the Uwajimaya Sakura Festival on April 30<sup>th</sup>. Strauch-sensei also made a number of water ladles from bamboo and old shinai staves that were quite beautiful. It's been a lot of work, but it's also been fun to create things from scratch for raising funds for the Japan trip. BTW – if anyone has old shinai staves that are too cracked to re-use and have the makers writing on them, we'd be very grateful if you could donate them to either Hancock-sensei or Strauch-sensei or myself (Perry Hunter). They are used for making the ladle handles, and the calligraphy on them adds a really nice touch! All told, we cleared about \$175 from the festival, and learned a lot about how to do even better next year. We still have some goods to sell, so if you or a friend are looking for a fountain, ladle or calligraphy please see either Perry, David or Hancock-sensei.



Since olden days many opinions have been expressed about which part of an opponent one should look at [during a duel] but the majority of people have supported staring at an opponent's face. When so doing, the eyes should be narrower than usual but the mind should be broad. The eyeballs should not move and when the opponent is near they should be focused as though they were looking into the distance. In this way, a man can look at not only his opponent's face but his whole body, thus being able to anticipate any offensive thrusts he might make. In my opinion, there are two kinds of eyes: one kind simply looks at things and the other sees through things to perceive their inner nature. The former should not be tense [so as to observe as much as possible]; The latter should be strong [so as to discern the workings of the opponent's mind clearly]. Sometimes a man can read another's mind with his eyes. In fencing, it is all right to allow your own eyes to express your will but never let them reveal your mind. This matter should be considered carefully and studied diligently.

-- Miyamoto Musashi, *hyoho sanjugo kajo*



## Bellevue Junior Taikai

Wow! What a turnout for the Bellevue Junior Taikai! Obukan had a total of 16 kenshi in the lineup (and one on injured reserve). It was a good showing for Obukan, with several Juniors getting their first taste of competition, and team play. The results were (thanks to Dr. Huang):

### Individual Divisions:

9 and under: (well, they only award first two places, but) 3rd Place, Liliana Considine.

10~11 year-old: 3rd Place, Ayumi Osako

12~14 year-old, Girls, 1st Place, Minori Osako

12~14 year-old, Boys, 2nd Place, Taka Iguchi

Teams (15 and under)	
<b>Obukan Red</b> vs Bellevue White (1:3)	<b>Obukan White: 3rd Place</b> vs Kent (5:0) vs Bellevue Red (1:3)
Beatrix Considine	Taka Iguchi
Ayumi Osako	Masako Kono
Portia Considine	James Hunter
Chris Thommes	Tadahiro Inose
Minori Osako	David Robertson

**Awesome Spirit Award:** Honorable mention: Beatrix Considine

### Participants:

Players: Liliana Considine, Beatrix Considine, Portia Considine, Malia Considine, Rose Hong, Masako Kono, Ayumi Osako, Minori Osako, Chris Thommes, James Hunter, Taka Iguchi, Albert Inose, James Inose, David Robertson. Assistant: Jason Akahoshi

Our thanks to **Bellevue Kendo Club** for putting on a great taikai and supporting Junior kenshi all over the PNW!

## Highline Mudansha Taikai Results

In late March, Glenn, Andy, Rudy all made it through the round robin bracket on their merits, Perry made it through the first round of the medal bracket when his second match was forfeited (*ed*: I'll take it any way it comes!) and unfortunately, all were eliminated in the next round. Glenn won 4 straight 2-0 matches and lost 0-1 just before the medals. One of Glenn's matches was against Rudy, who acquitted himself well (even though his last words to Glenn before stepping into the shiai-jo were "*Please, don't hurt me*" ㇏). We had a great time!

The final match went on and on, both players digging very deep to stay with it until the end. It was most impressive to watch! Thanks to our friends at **Highline Kendo Club** for their help, hospitality and really good oranges.

**Participants:** Andrew Bauman, Perry Hunter, Ruediger Noppens, and Glenn Walker.

## Japan Trip Update

There is one opening in the group for the Japan trip – if you can, don't miss this opportunity! See Hancock-sensei right away if you are interested. Otherwise, participants need to be ready to pay an additional \$800 very soon that will be sent ahead to secure lodging, meals and other expenses while in Japan. Hancock-sensei will discuss these details at upcoming practices.

## Cultural and Other Events

**Saturday May 28<sup>th</sup>** - Obukan Car Wash at Uwajimaya. ***If you're going to Japan, you need to be there*** to help with the final effort at reducing the cost for the trip!

**Father's Day, June 19<sup>th</sup>** - Momokawa and Moonstone Sakery will host a demonstration of Kendo and Iaido.

## THE LAST WORD

(from PNKF *Kenyu*)

In other martial arts, instructors taught their students to make extraordinary changes in both their mental attitudes and their body postures to adapt to the extraordinary circumstances of combat. Musashi, however, concluded that one's mind and body should be changed very little, if at all, from everyday attitudes. According to his experience, both body and mind "should be at peace and unwobbling." This is to say that Musashi cautioned the student against being needlessly tense or lax, and advocated adaptability to any situation. Concentrate on a ploy, a stance or a place on your opponent's body, and your actions will coagulate and bring about your own defeat. This was a teaching he held in common with the Zen priest Takuan, the fundamental point being to let both body and mind work freely, and not to allow them to be "caught" anywhere at all. In the Water chapter, Musashi taught various stances and strikes that the student was to practice day and night. Still, the culmination of these was to be in the above-mentioned Stance/No-Stance and in the No-Thought/No-Concept Strike.

--William Scott Wilson, *The Lone Samurai: The Life of Miyamoto Musashi*

### Kendo Sites of the Month

Here are some excellent sources of Kendo information on the Internet – remember, when in doubt, *ask Sensei!*

<http://www.mushinkankendo.com/>-

The Mushinkan Kendo Club of Colorado Springs has an excellent set of pages describing the Kihon Keiko-ho (aka Bokutoh Kata), as well as instructions for keikogi and hakama.

<http://kendo-usa.org> - Marsten-sensei's site. Among other things, probably the clearest most concise information on how to maintain your shinai.

## Cleaning Service Review

I finally got to the point where my bogu smelled so much like a wet basset hound I had to get it cleaned. So, taking my cue from Sean Galloway, James and I got the kote and men cleaned at NorthWest Gear. It took about three days to get the gear back, and my initial impression was good – the men looked none the worse for wear, and smelled pretty good – maybe a little bit of a detergent smell, but otherwise nice and clean. The men tare are a *little* more flexible but otherwise it feels just the same. The kote also looked pretty good, but the leather was definitely a concern. At first, it felt stiff and hard. The deer hair inside the kote was damp and this makes it swell up a bit – making the kote feel pretty stiff and tight. Mr. Byrd (from Pocatello Idaho) (you may know him from taikai's or the seminar, he's a sandan who teaches at his club with Stroud-sensei's support) recommends something called "leather balm" to bring back the stretch and pliability of the kote. I have not found it yet, but the leather came back to it's (nearly) original feel within a couple of practices.

Overall, I'm pleased. My bogu can be back in my closet again (it had been banned)! I wouldn't do this more than a couple of times a year, but it works well to reduce that really nasty smell and make your bogu more pleasant.

## Beginners' Corner – Your First Hakama and Keikogi

Our current beginners class is now about halfway through, and it's time to start thinking about getting your first hakama and keikogi. These are the basic "uniform" of kendo, and can be obtained either through the dojo (we have a limited supply of hakama available), or through one of several online stores such as BoguBag ([bogubag.com](http://bogubag.com)), e-Bogu ([e-bogu.com](http://e-bogu.com)) or Eguchi USA (<http://www.eguchi.net>). There are a wide variety of materials, weights, sizes and colors available, but most beginners choose a single-layer blue keikogi and either blue or black "Tetron" or polyester blend hakama. Mainly this is for reasons of cost, although the polyester blend hakama is also easier to keep looking good, and is easier to take care of. Later, you may prefer to spend more money on heavy cotton hakama and maybe a lined keikogi – but it's wise give yourself time to get the feel for what works well for you and don't go overboard on cost at first. Obukan does not have a specific dress code, and you'll see white keikogi on some of our members (and sensei, for that matter), it's all a matter of personal preference. Ask for help from one of the sensei as to sizing on the hakama and keikogi, as the sizing charts on the websites can be somewhat confusing.

When you receive your hakama and keikogi, before you do anything else, try them on for size. The keikogi should fit so that the sleeves are not too long, with your arm outstretched, the cuff will be about halfway between your elbow and your wrist. The bottom hem should come down 6"-8" below your waist, so that you don't "catch a draft" from the split sides of the hakama.

The hakama should hang from your waist to about the height of your ankle bone, too long puts you in danger of tripping, too short and you give away your footwork to your opponents (it also just looks *wrong*). The hakama himos should be long enough to wrap around and tie correctly. (see the Mushinkan site for details!)

Once you are satisfied that the hakama and keikogi are going to fit, the next step is to set the dye. If you have purchased a poly-blend hakama, this is not necessary, and you can wash immediately in the gentle cycle, and then lay the hakama out (fixing the pleats!) to dry.

Your keikogi, however, will need to have the indigo dye set, and this is done by soaking the keikogi in a solution of cold water, vinegar and salt. Use about ½ to 1 gallon of white vinegar and a cup of salt to 4 gallons of water in a 5 gallon bucket. Dissolve the salt in the vinegar and water, then immerse your keikogi and let soak 24 hours. After soaking, then wash in the gentle cycle and hang up to dry, never use a dryer unless it's air-only (no heat)!

Even after soaking and drying, the indigo is going to turn you and every thing it rubs on blue for a while – that is normal.

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**Dojo Kun**

Seek Perfection of Character

Be Faithful

Endeavor

Respect Others

Refrain from Violent  
Behavior

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**KEIKO SCHEDULE**

As of March 30th:

**Conestoga Recreation and  
Aquatic Center**

9985 SW 125th Avenue  
Beaverton, Oregon 97008

Members will be able to enter one half  
hour prior to practice times. There are  
lockers and showers available (bring a  
combination lock!)

**Kendo**

Sun: 5:00 – 7:00 PM Gym “A”

Wed: 7:30 – 8:30 PM Room 201

Fri: 6:30 – 8:30 PM Gym “A”

**Iaido**

Mon: 7:30 – 9:00 PM Room 201

- AND -

**Richmond Elem. School**

2276 SE 41<sup>st</sup>

Portland, Oregon 97214

**Kendo**

Thurs: 7:15 – 8:30 PM



**PNKF Datebook**

The Pacific Northwest Kendo Federation will again host Noguchi, Hideo sensei (8th Dan Iaido) from Japan at the Cougar Mountain Zoo for its summer **Iaido seminar**. Traveling with Noguchi sensei again this year is Aoki, Shigehiro sensei (7th Dan Iaido) and Suzuki, Kaoru sensei (6th Dan Iaido). The Cougar Mountain Zoo is located at 19525 SE 54th, Issaquah, WA 98027 and the seminar will be held **Saturday and Sunday June 4th and 5th 2005**. The application form and a more detailed schedule can be found in PDF form on the PNKF web site at <http://www.kendo-pnkf.org/>

**May 14** UW Taikai.

**May 21**, PNKF Board, Sat, 9-11am, Kent.

**May 21**, PNKF Shinpan Seminar, Sat, 12noon-5pm, Kent.

**Jun 11**, PNKF Board, Sat, 2:30-4:30pm, Kent.

**Aug 13**, PNKF Iaido and Kendo Shinsa, Sat, 9am-4pm, Kent.

**Oct 1**, PNKF Board, Sat, 9-11am, Kent.

**Oct 1**, PNKF Shinpan Seminar, 12noon-5pm, Kent.

**Nov 12**, PNKF Taikai, Sat, 9:30am, Renton.

**Nov 19**, PNKF Board, Sat, 2-4pm, Kent.

**Dec 10**, Renton Taikai, Sat, report time 9am, start 9:30am, Renton

**Obukan T-Shirts and Patches Available!**

We have white club t-shirts available for purchase. The shirts and patches are part of our fund raising efforts to help those going on the Japan trip, as well as help to cover expenses for other activities throughout the year. They are made from high-quality materials, and are a great way to show your pride in your club!



T-Shirts are available in S, M, L and XL  
sizes for \$20 each.

We also have Obukan “Tsuba” patches for  
your keikogi – which are required if you are  
going to Shinsa or Taikai representing the  
club. Patches are \$5.



We now have *baseball caps* with the “Ren Ma” logo for \$10 (pictures next time)