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*Looking at the Mountain
 Sakura in mist
 I miss a person who looks at the
 Sakura
 ~ Kino Tsurayuki*



Farewell To Old Friends...

Mr. Scott McGrew

Sometimes, we forget that life is a temporary thing, and that suddenly, indeed overnight, what seemed the natural order of things can change forever. So it was in these last few weeks, when we lost a friend, and had to say “farewell” to two more.

Mr. Scott McGrew, a longtime member of Obukan passed away suddenly in late March. More often seen in Iai practice in recent years, Scott was also a member of the kendo yudansha and practices Aikido in Portland. Mr. McGrew is survived by Ms. Susan Noack, his partner and friend of 4 ½ years. Ms. Noack has asked that if anyone has any photos or images of Scott, could they please forward them to Perry Hunter, who will collect them and send them on to her.

Richard Tanaka-sensei

After over nine years practicing with Obukan, Tanaka-sensei has earned his retirement, and has returned to his home in San Jose. Tanaka-sensei led the Iai classes and has been a favorite of many of us at Obukan for years, we all miss his smile, his laugh and his wonderful kendo. I have heard from a member at San Jose that they have learned to love his whistle too...

We look forward to his visits in the future, and of course, we need to plan a road trip to San Jose to make sure they're treating our friend well!

Dr. Ruediger Noppens

Also leaving us to return home this week was Dr. Ruediger Noppens. Rudy started kendo with Obukan two years ago, and has been an enthusiastic and jolly member of the club. Rudy was always there for special events and demonstrations, always ready to lend a hand. We're going to miss Rudy's humor, his hard work and that fantastic kiai. Joge will never forget the first rendition of “Das Wanderlust” ever to be sung in their theater, either. Take care of yourself, your wife and Johannes!

“It is human life. We are blown upon the world; we float buoyantly upon the summer air a little while, complacently showing off our grace of form and our dainty iridescent colors; then we vanish with a little puff, leaving nothing behind but a memory--and sometimes not even that. I suppose that at those solemn times when we wake in the deeps of the night and reflect, there is not one of us who is not willing to confess that he is really only a soap-bubble, and as little worth the making.

When we think of friends, and call their faces out of the shadows, and their voices out of the echoes that faint along the corridors of memory, and do it without knowing why save that we love to do it, we content ourselves that that friendship is a Reality, and not a Fancy--that it is builded upon a rock, and not upon the sands that dissolve away with the ebbing tides and carry their monuments with them.”

- Mark Twain

Farewell friends...remember always to make **now** the most important time.



Don't Try This at Home

During one of those hot summer practices...one of my senseis decided to tell me a quick story.

I think he was talking about Mr. Takeshi Nakamura, but at the least it was one of those All-Japan champs of long ago who is also a policeman.

Anyway, while on duty, he had to deal with someone who had a live blade. All he had was his night-stick.

So, this thug, not knowing who he's dealing with, tried to threaten him to back off. So, the policeman took out his night-stick, took chudan hanmi and pressured the guy with his seme.

The thug got so scared he kept backing up until he tripped over a garbage can and knocked himself out. My sensei was probably exaggerating, but after kakari-keiko in 38 degree Celsius room without ventilation, any excuse to stop practice is cool by me.

~ Mr. David C. Pan
(1995 and yes, **that** DC Pan ☺)

Highline Mudansha Taikai Results

On a brighter note, the Highline Mudansha Taikai was great fun, and Obukan's Glenn Walker and James Hunter each came away with a trophy from the medal round. Both Glenn and James lost to the eventual (repeat) winner, Mr. Mauro of the UW Kendo Club. Congratulations to Glenn and James!

Spring Shinsa Results

The PNKF Spring Shinsa was held on the 25th of February, Obukan results were:

IAIDO

3RD KYU: Jared Burns

2ND KYU: Will Coulter

1ST DAN: Kawai Hisakazu, Glenn Walker

KENDO

5TH KYU: Scott Kawamoto, Madison Rosen

4TH KYU: Liliana Considine, Rose Hong

3RD KYU: Ian Burns, Beatrix Considine, Portia Considine, Charlotte Stewart (OSU)

2ND KYU: Jared Burns, Todd Carlstrom (OSU), James Hunter, Perry Hunter, Taka Iguchi, Ruediger Noppens

1ST KYU: Glenn Walker

Congratulations to everyone, well done!

Obukan Intra-dojo Taikai April 30th

Obukan will be holding it's 6th Intra-dojo Taikai on Sunday April 30th at the Conestoga gym from 5:00PM to 8:00PM. This Taikai is **mandatory for all Obukan kenshi** at every level (those who have completed the beginners course). The Taikai is a lot of fun, a test of your skills and a taste of what you can expect at other PNKF taikais throughout the year. The sign up sheet is posted on the website (www.obukan.com) and there is no sign up fee. Entries need to be in by Sunday April 23rd!

Uwajimaya Demonstration April 22nd

Our annual kendo demonstration at the Uwajimaya Sakura Festival will be held at about 1:00PM Saturday April 22nd. Since the UW Taikai is the same day, we need some extra effort from our membership to show up for the demo and help fill out the ranks! Please do come, this is an important event for our recruiting efforts, as well as for our longtime friends of Obukan at Uwajimaya Market.

Obukan Kendo and Iaido Seminar July 7th-9th!

Obukan Kendo Club is proud to announce that we will be holding what we hope will become an annual summer event – our own Kendo and Iaido Seminar! The seminar will be attended by several high-ranking senseis from the Joge, Japan area and will be accompanied by a barbeque party on Saturday, July 8th. The seminar will feature special-focus sessions for Juniors, as well as regular sessions for kendo and iai. Watch for details on the website (www.obukan.com) in the Koho and at practice over the next few weeks as details are finalized.





What are the characteristics or qualities you would most hope that people develop through their training in kendo?

"I don't want to be like an evangelist on the radio or television talking to thousands and millions of people. How many people would really be influenced? Like Shinran Shonin [the founder of Jodo Shinshu Buddhism], he didn't care. If somebody was there to listen to him and to know the Buddhist way of the Pure Land, he was intent on that one person. If that person understood he said, "Hey! I got my job done." Quality is what is important, not quantity. I wouldn't say, "Get it! Get it!" Yes, in kendo sometimes I will deliberately miss, offering an opening, and if they (the students) do not respond quickly enough, then next time I will stay in the proper place and they won't be able to come in. They will experience the differences for themselves. This way I can train them without saying anything. So, we talk about "**Ki, ken, tai, itchi**" (spirit, sword, body are all unified) and how you got to apply it in your daily life.

If they question me about daily life, then I can sit down with them. If they want, I give it to them. Really, if they want to "steal" [techniques] from me, then I'll give it to them. From my previous training the lessons from my sensei are in me, I apply those philosophies when I talk to you, or anyone else. When I talk it is from my hara [guts]. If you don't understand, you have a problem, I don't."

~ Rod Omoto-sensei (1996)

Richmond Elementary Dojo News

The Richmond Elementary School dojo is back in action every Thursday at 7:15PM-8:30PM while public schools are in session (through mid-June). All experience levels are welcome, practice is in the Gym with Strauch-sensei, Grobart-sensei, and often Murosako-sensei as well. Come on over, it's a different kind of practice in a funky old gymnasium - practices are usually less crowded and tend to focus on kihon, something everyone needs!

The Iaido/Kendo kata class is now being held on the last Thursday of each month!

 **PNKF Datebook**

Date	Event	Time and Place
Apr 22	University of Washington Taikai	10:00AM, Edmundson Pavillion, UW, Seattle
May 6	Bellevue Junior Taikai	10:00AM, Highland Community Center, Bellevue
May 13	PNKF Board Meeting	10AM-12PM, Kent
May 13	PNKF Shinpan Seminar	12PM-5PM, Kent
June 10/11	PNKF Iaido Seminar	(tentative dates)
July 7-9	Obukan Kendo and Iaido Seminar	TBD
July 8	PNKF Board	2PM-4PM
July 24-29	PNKF Junior Seminar	Monday through Saturday
August 12	PNKF Fall Shinsa	Kent

Ji-geiko for Kyu Grades – by Sotaro Honda-sensei (British Squad Coach)

Firstly, the most important point for Kendo-ka of this level to keep in mind is: to try to use *Waza* (*Shikake-waza*) on your own initiative. It should not be just *Men* and *Kote*, but you should use all *Waza* you have learnt in *Kihon-geiko* and *Kata-geiko*. You should not be afraid of failing and being defeated. It is expected that you will gradually grasp the timing of using each *Waza* whilst you try to attack using your own initiative. Another important point is that you should not stop your movement after striking and thrusting, but try to complete your attack and quickly prepare yourself for the next action. It is quite often seen in beginners' *Ji-geiko* that they lose their attention and guard as soon as they finish their first attack and that they walk back to where they were before attacking. It is important to always maintain concentration wherever you are and to prepare for the next action as soon as you have finished your first attack.

Secondly, it is usual that most beginners have not learnt, at this stage, how to defend. It is also quite often the case that beginners do not properly know what to do and they are just absent-mindedly standing without doing anything, closing their eyes and tensing their shoulders, moving back or running away in case their opponent attacks before them. It is also be reasonable to assume, that they may feel fear at someone's attack. What is important here is to have a proper understanding of *Ko-bo-itchi* and *Ken-tai-itchi*. These terms illustrate the importance of always being mentally and physically ready to defend against the opponent's counterattack whilst attacking, and ready to counterattack while defending (All Japan Kendo Federation, 2000, p. 47). There is no defense just for the sake of defense, in Kendo. Defense is done for the next attack or counterattack. Using a proper defense enables you to immediately attack after defending, but you should not just be standing and defending by using only your *Shinai*, you should keep your knees relaxed and defend by using both your *Shinai* and your footwork. As you gain more experience, you come to acquire a wider variety of *Waza* and better timing. What you are encouraged to do for your progression at this stage is to use big techniques involving all of your body and not relying on small techniques or trying to strike more times than your opponent has.

If you form bad habits on the way you attack and defend at this stage, it will take a long time to get rid of them in the future. It is important to reflect how you have been tackling *Ji-geiko* by listening to your *Sempai* and *Sensei*'s advice and by self-examination.

**Obukan Kendo Club
Portland, Oregon**

³(3) Non-profit Organization Dedicated to
motion of Japanese Fencing.

Dojo Kun

- Seek Perfection of Character
 - Be Faithful
 - Endeavor
 - Respect Others
 - Refrain from Violent Behavior
-



KEIKO SCHEDULE

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 41st
Portland, Oregon 97214

Kendo

Thurs: 7:15 – 8:30 PM

Iaido

Last Thurs of Month: 7:15 –
8:30 PM

Obukan T-Shirts and Patches Available!

From time to time, we have various items available for purchase that support the Obukan Kendo Club. They are made from high-quality materials, and are a great way to show your pride in your club!

Obukan “tsuba” patches for your keikogi –
which are **required** if you are going to a
Taikai representing the club. Patches are
\$5.



Obukan **Ren-Ma** hats are available in adjustable
sizes for \$10 each.

Shinai Sale!! – For a limited time, we need
to move some of the shinai we purchased in
bulk. Since we got a great deal on them, we
are passing the savings along to the club
so...all new adult shinai (38-39) are only
\$20 until further notice. Juniors (37 and
below) are only \$15.00!



T-shirts are currently sold out...but we have fine Obukan tenugui for \$5.00!

Kendo Websites

There are some excellent sources of Kendo information on the Internet (and lot's of not so good ones) – remember, when in doubt, *ask Sensei!* Many links to excellent information and more are available at <http://www.obukan.com>. Obukan.com is adding new links and timely event information nearly every week. Members and supporters, please visit Obukan.com and sign up for the new Yahoo!-based “members-only” area! This signup will get you on the group-wide e-mail list, and provide you with reminders about important events, practice times and notices sent to the membership.

Obukan DVD Library

We currently have the following DVD's available for loan:

ZNKR Seitei Iai – Videos and pointers for proper execution of Iai kata (in English)

ZNKR Seitei Iai – Videos and pointers for proper execution of Iai kata (in Japanese)

Obukan 2005 Slideshow – Includes pictures from the Japan trip and highlights from throughout the year.

Obukan In Japan – Videos from last year's Japan trip

Tip for Drying Your Bogu

Here's a great tip for drying your bogu after practice:

Buy some wooden clothes hangers at Target – the kind with the spring clips for hanging pants. When you get home after practice, tie up your men so that you leave a loop, or “tail” of himo about 12”-18” long. Pass the tail through the leather loop inside your doh so that the doh and your tare hang from the loop, with the men upside-down inside the doh. Then, clip your kote to the clips on the hanger, so that they are palm-out on either side of the men and then loop the men/doh assembly over the top of the hanger. Viola! You can now hang the whole thing up to dry. For pictures on how this is done, check the Obukan.com website.