

**Obukan Kendo Club  
Portland, Oregon**

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

**Volume 22, Issue 1**

**January, 2005**

**Special points of interest:**

- **Renton Taikai Results**
- **Happy New Year!**
- **Mochitsuki 2005**
- **Beginner's Class**
- **Kamei Sensei's Visit**
- **Japan Trip Update**



**Inside this issue:**

Renton Taikai	1
New Year's Keiko	1
Mochitsuki 2005	2
New Obukan Officers	2
Beginners Class	2
Japan Trip	3
Kamei Sensei Visit	3
PNKF/AUSKF Dues	3
PNKF Datebook	4
Fund Raising Items	4
The Japanese Sword	4



**Great Results from Renton!**

Obukan made an excellent showing at the 8<sup>th</sup> Annual Renton Taikai with Dr. Chun-fang Huang taking first place in the Women's division. Obukan was represented by 11 participants, with four players in the top three within their divisions, and the Senior Team coming in at third! Well done, everyone!

<p><b><u>Junior Team</u></b> 1) vs Bellevue (0:3)</p> <p>Junior Team Members: Rose Hong Beatrix Considine Portia Considine (This was the youngest team in the tournament!)</p>	<p><b><u>9 and under</u></b> 2nd place, Liliana Considine 3rd Place, Rose Hong</p> <p><b><u>Women 1-3 Dan</u></b> 1st place, Chun-fang Huang</p> <p><b><u>1-3Dan</u></b> 3rd place, Lonny Hancock</p>
<p><b><u>Senior Team</u></b> 1) vs Spokane (4:1) 2) vs Seattle (4:1) 3) vs UW (2:3) (unofficial 3rd place)</p> <p>Senior Team Members: Jared Burns Glenn Walker Cheng-yu Chen Chun-fang Huang Lonny Hancock</p>	<p><b><u>Participants</u></b> Jared Burns Cheng-yu Chen Beatrix Considine Liliana Considine Malia Considine Portia Considine Lonny Hancock Rose Hong Chun-fang Huang Glenn Walker Shimpan: Hancock sensei</p>

**Early Morning Keiko-Breakfast Greet's New Year**

A total of about 20 kenshi braved the cold and dark on Saturday the 1<sup>st</sup> for the annual New Year's Keiko and Breakfast. Starting at 7:00 AM, a good, hard practice (on a cold, cold floor!) was followed by a potluck breakfast and good conversation with friends at the start of a brand new year. Hancock, Akahoshi, Strauch and Grobart sensei all had a word to say about our goals and direction for the New Year. We burned our broken shinai staves and looked forward to another year of good kendo. While there were all sorts of delicious and interesting things to eat (provided mainly by parents and supporters – thank you!) somebody in our dojo makes *really* good flan!

## **Koho Needs Your Help!**

First, allow me to thank our board and membership for the opportunity to serve Obukan in the coming year as Koho editor. I really appreciate the vote of confidence, and promise to do my best to continue the tradition of the Koho being the finest example of Kendo news and information as exists in the PNKF.

I'd like very much to make this an expression of our membership as well – and need your help to do it. If you know of cultural events, interesting stories or have news to share with the Obukan membership *please* let me know and I will be very happy and grateful for the contribution. I can be reached at:

[perryh@gaservices.com](mailto:perryh@gaservices.com)

[perryh@tek.com](mailto:perryh@tek.com)

(503)452-0696 home

(503)627-2134 office

Thanks again, and have a happy and prosperous 2005!

Perry Hunter  
*Koho Editor*



## **Mochitsuki 2005 Coming**

The Japanese-American Citizens League is sponsoring their annual New Year celebration **Mochitsuki 2005** at Portland Community College on Sunday, January 30<sup>th</sup>. The festival features two Japanese dance groups; Sahomi Tachibana and Fujinami-Kai, as well as two Taiko groups; Portland Taiko and Tanuki Taiko. Robert Kikuchi-Yngojo will be on hand for storytelling, and there will be mochi pounding, ikebana, and calligraphy activities to participate in as well. Tickets are \$10 for adults, \$7 for students and kids are \$4. See [www.oregonnikkei.org](http://www.oregonnikkei.org) for more information.

## **New Obukan Officers Get to Work**

Our December Embu also saw the election of new club officers. In a tradition that apparently stretches back for some time, various (good-natured) scores were settled by nominating favorite club members for the various board seats needed to keep the club running smoothly as a non-profit corporation. There is a lot of work that happens away from practice that makes the club possible, and these folks have volunteered to help get it all done. The Obukan Kendo Club officers for 2005 are:

Glenn Walker – President  
Steve Uchida-sensei – Vice-President  
David Schellenger – Treasurer  
Stephen Strauch-sensei – Demonstrations Coordinator  
Ryuken Akahoshi-sensei - Parent Liaison  
Chun-Fang Huang - Taikai Coordinator  
Brandy Grobart-sensei - Locker & Equipment Manager  
Keith Fitz-Gerald – Web Master  
Perry Hunter - Koho Editor (gee, thanks Chun-fang ☺)

### **Board Members:**

Sean Galloway	Dennis Robertson
Andy Bauman	Cora Considine
Mrs. Kosai (?)	Joan Smith
Andy Scott	Adam Hogan

Let's all give these volunteers our fullest support in the coming year! Board meetings are generally held the first Sunday of each month before practice. The next meeting is scheduled for Sunday, Feb. 6 at 1:30 PM.

## **Beginners Class Starts Friday, January 21st**

Our next Kendo Beginners class will begin Friday January 21st at 6:30 PM. Please be sure you sign up with the Tualatin Parks and Recreation Department in advance (call 503-645-6433 or visit <http://www.thprd.com>). Cost is \$20 for the eight-week class, and you will need to purchase a shinai (bamboo sword). Shinai are available for about \$30 from the dojo and will be sold after class. Beginners need to wear appropriate workout clothes; sweatpants or shorts and a t-shirt are fine.



### **The Last Word** (from PNKF *Kenyu*)

Once Musashi was ordered by his lord to do, in the lord's presence, a painting of Daruma, but his skill was not forthcoming and he was unable to finish it that day. That night he turned in, but suddenly the solution came to him and he leapt out of bed, finishing the painting beneath a lamp. It came out exactly as he desired and was, indeed, exquisite. Musashi then turned to a disciple and said, "My painting is still not up to my sword technique, and the reason is this: under the gaze of my lord, I painted with the intention of doing the work well, but in fact it turned out to be quite inferior. I did the work just now, however, using my martial art, and it turned out just as I wanted. In my martial art, when I step out grasping my sword, neither I nor my enemy exists. My viewpoint is one of destroying both Heaven and Earth, and thus I have no fear. Well, I can see now that my painting is as yet no match for my skill with the sword." -- William Scott Wilson, *The Lone Samurai: The Life of Miyamoto Musashi*.

## Training In Japan Update

Planning and preparations continue for the 2005 trip to Japan. Approximately 15 of our kenshi are traveling first to Hawaii, then on to Joge, near Fuyokuoka in Hiroshima prefecture for two weeks of training in June of this year. There are still a few slots open, so if you want to come along, please see Hancock-sensei as soon as possible!

A pre-payment of \$100 for the Hawaii hotel is due immediately. Airfare is due February 1<sup>st</sup>, please make your check out to Obukan Kendo Club in the amount of \$960.00 and turn in to David Schellinger.

## Kamei Sensei Visiting Obukan

Kamei-sensei, Hanshi Hachidan and a group of about a dozen Rokudan and above sensei will be visiting Portland and Obukan from Friday March 25<sup>th</sup> through Wednesday March 30. It is extremely rare that this side of the Pacific gets a chance to practice and learn from even one such high-ranking sensei, let alone so many! We are indeed fortunate, and should make every effort to attend the practices and seminar that will be scheduled for that time. Watch for more information to be published after Akahoshi-sensei returns from Japan.

In the meantime, we need volunteers to help with transportation; shopping and most important - home stays for the visitors. It's a great opportunity, and we really need your help! Please contact Sean Galloway if you can help with a home stay.

## PNKF and AUSKF Dues

It's that time again...time to take care of your annual dues for the Pacific Northwest Kendo Federation (PNKF) and All-US Kendo Federation (AUSKF). Your annual dues support both the PNKF and AUSKF as well as allow you to participate in shinsa (rank examinations) and taikais. You must be current with the AUSKF and PNKF to participate in regular (not beginner class) practices with Obukan.

Please turn in your dues to David Schellinger by February 1<sup>st</sup>. They are a requirement before the shinsa Feb. 26, or if you plan on competing in any upcoming taikai. For 2005, The fees are:

### **Adult Yudansha and Kyu – 18 years & older**

PNKF Annual Dues \$20  
AUSKF Annual Dues \$40  
TOTAL DUES \$60

### **Youth Yudansha – 17 years & younger**

PNKF Annual Dues \$5  
AUSKF Annual Dues \$40  
TOTAL DUES \$45

### **Youth Kyu – 17 years & younger**

PNKF Annual Dues \$5  
AUSKF Annual Dues \$25  
TOTAL DUES \$30

## 2005 PNKF DATEBOOK

- Jan. 22, (Saturday) – Vancouver Taikai, (10:00 AM), Vancouver, BC
- Feb. 12, (Saturday) – Steveston Taikai, 9:30 AM, Steveston, BC
- Feb. 26, (Saturday) – PNKF Kendo and Iaido Shinsa (8:30 AM – 4:30 PM)
- Mar. 19, (Saturday) – Highline Mudansha Taikai (9:45 AM roll call)
- April 9 or 16, – UW Taikai
- May 7, (Saturday) – Bellevue Junior Taikai (10:00 AM)
- May 21, (Saturday) – PNKF Board, Kent, (9:00-11 AM)
- May 21, (Saturday) – PNKF Shinpan Seminar, Kent, (12 noon-5PM)

## Obukan Kendo Club Portland, Oregon

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to the Promotion of Japanese Fencing.

### Dojo Kun

Seek Perfection of Character

Be Faithful

Endeavor

Respect Others

Refrain from Violent  
Behavior



### WEEKLY KEIKO

Greenburg Jazzercise  
10855 SW Cascade  
Tigard, Oregon

### Kendo

Sun: 3:00 – 4:30 PM

Tues: 7:30 – 8:30 PM

Fri: 6:30 – 7:30 PM (beginners)

Fri: 7:30 – 9:00 PM (advanced)

### laido

Wednesday: 7:30 – 8:30 PM

Richmond Elementary  
2276 SE 41<sup>st</sup>

Portland, Oregon 97214

### Kendo

Thurs: 7:15 – 8:30 PM

### Credits

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## Obukan T-shirts and Patches Available!

There are still a number of white club t-shirts available for purchase, and club members are reminded that the Obukan shoulder patches are required – so please pick one up as soon as you can! Proceeds from the t-shirts and patches are part of Obukan's ongoing fund-raising effort, and are currently helping to reduce the costs for those going on the Japan trip. They're also a great way to show off pride in your club!

t-shirts are \$20 and patches are \$5 – see David Schellinger at practice to get yours.

## The Japanese Sword

The Japanese Sword was developed during the mid-Heian period (794-1185 AD). Constructed with technologies imported from China and Korea, the Japanese took this methodology and introduced the curve into the blade. Technologically far in advance of its European contemporaries, the Japanese Sword is considered intrinsically beautiful and an object of deep contemplation. This beauty derives from the Japanese appreciation of nature, which is reflected in the crystalline structure of the *Hamon* (hardened edge) and in the hues and textures in the steel and the elegant curve. The innumerable variations of these intrinsic qualities within the steel have been meticulously recorded by generations of sword appraisers. This recording of styles of forging allows connoisseurs to determine the work of one smith from thousands. With these attributes, the sword has attained the position of a highly religious, artistic and cultural icon. Without these attributes it is merely a weapon.

However, functionality as a weapon is a requirement of the Japanese Sword, and they are incredibly efficient yet able to remain sharp with heavy use, and cut through armor without bending or breaking. They are also regarded as sacred objects, and according to the precepts of Zen Buddhism, are regarded as the instruments of moral guidance for the Samurai seeking a pathway to enlightenment. Superior swords were worth more than land and riches, handed down within families through several generations. Many swords are offered to Shinto shrines as gifts for the *Kami* (gods), or vessels for the *Kami* to reside in, and worshipped accordingly. Along with the sacred mirror and the jewel, the sword is part of the Imperial regalia. This sword belonged the Sun Goddess, Amaterasu, who gave it to her grandson Ninigi, when he descended to earth from heaven to begin the divine lineage of the Imperial family.

The traditions passed down and used in sword production have remained relatively unchanged for over a thousand years. Shinto purification rituals are performed and the assistance of the *Kami* is requested by swordsmiths before forging commences. The steel is folded between 15-20 times, thus producing a strong laminate, formed from thousands of layers. This is wrapped around a softer steel core. It is then hammered out to form the shape of the blade and covered in clay, which is removed along the cutting edge, and heated to the color of the moon in February or August. It is then quenched in cold water. This is a critical moment, as the tensions brought about by the sudden change in temperature could break the blade. This process produces a blade with a tough, yet slightly flexible body, with a hardened razor edge created by the crystalline structure in the form of the frosty looking *hamon*.

The blade then undergoes a rigorous polishing process. Artisans, specializing in sword polishing, use up to fifteen different grades of stones and copious amounts of water, to produce a highly polished surface; thus allowing the activities within the steel to become visible to the naked eye.

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From <http://www.traditionaloshigata.com>