



British Kendo Association

Bucho Report Jodobu AGM 2010

Dear Jodobu Members

In our first year of operating under the new constitution the Jodobu have made all efforts to become compliant with the requirements as well as making sure that activities within the year were not overly affected by the diversion of resources.

I would like to begin by feeding back to you my perception of the effect of the new constitution. I was told a couple of years ago by a senior member of the BKA who works in areas of psychology that the interpersonal and structural problems that the BKA had continued to face in the last 10 years were caused by being stuck between two polarising influences. On the one hand, the Association attempted to run as if it were extremely small i.e. utilising the fact that most of the organisers knew each other very well and that the majority of systems operated on trust alone. On the other hand, the Association was trying to grow itself to the scale where the majority of people would only know a small percentage of the rest of the Association. This tension between the two poles had thereby been the cause of much misunderstanding and poor management in recent years.

It is with this in mind that I am absolutely convinced that over 95% of the constitution will or has addressed this shortfall in prescribed management, process and procedure for the Association. I full realise that the BKA is not a corporate body, is not particularly large compared to other martial arts or sporting bodies but this is not an excuse for poor financial management, communication or a lack of procedure. Legal compliance, duty of care, codes of practice and an air of professionalism are all things concern our members and if these issues are not agreed and written down then we are bound to clash in a mismatch of understanding.

There is still much to do constitution-wise if not with design then with implementation but I am confident that our members made the right decision in 2009 in voting in favour of its adoption. The benefits from its adoption may be largely invisible to the majority of our members; only when things go wrong do we start to regard it as a utility. It is for this reason that I urge all our members to consider how things were before we start to critique how things are right now. Time always seems to be against us in managing bu activities but with enough time and support I am sure we will have an association that runs smoothly, professionally and efficiently as well as being flexible to the changing needs of our arts and our members.

The following actions describe what the Jodobu EC has done to be in accord with the Constitution:

- Properly appointed an Events Officer (Al Colebourn)
- Properly designated a Grading Officer from the previous Ordinary Member (Harry Jones)

- Completed some changes to the Jodo Squad management with Alan Nash taking the place of Squad Trainer and George Valkov taking the place of Squad Manager.
- Held our first Bu EC Meeting with the presence of the Jodobu DRC Chair, Lesley Drewe
- Continued to have this open communication with the DRC Chair on several matters.
- Properly published an annual budget forecast.
- Set up a complaints committee and a group of senior advisors.

At the moment the Bucho is taking the role of Cashier with some assistance from various members. If anyone should be interested in taking over this role please let the BuEC know.

We have also continued to grow and develop our coaching system with the new Level 2 course delivered in 2009. The Coaching report covers more information in this area.

As mentioned time and again, the number of Jodo dojos has been the main area of restriction for the Jodobu. This year we have discussed with the DRC Chair a Membership Strategy, part of which is a dojo "conversion" programme which will aim to help extant Kendo and Iaido dojos to become Jodo dojos as well if they are interested. A rough outline of this programme is to hold introductory weekend courses followed by a "hothouse" training session for those leaders of those dojos in order that the teacher/student structure in the dojo is preserved (if that is required). Currently we are collecting expressions of interest before putting together actual dates.

To provide the detailed part of this report I would like to give an outline of how we are doing with regards to the Jodobu Strategy:

- Since the beginning of 2010 and the introduction of members paying for each bu they wish to become a member of, we have experienced a very "deep cleaning" of our membership data with only those people who actually practice Jodo registering as Jodo bu members. This has of course had a bit of a hacking effect on the membership numbers but as of recently our numbers stand at about 190 members. This has resulted in the fact that achieving 350 members any time in the next couple of years might be quite challenging and this year we may need to rethink how we are going to target ourselves for growth.
- By the AGM of this year (2010) we were targeted with having 35 jodo dojos in the BKA. At the current time we have 29 so have fallen slightly short and I am hoping that the new Membership Strategy will go some way to rectifying that.
- This calendar year we have achieved a 100% grading pass rate compared to a target of 98%. Since beginning this strategy in 2007 we have averaged a 93% pass rate which I am confident in saying is not due to any coercing for lenience on the grading panel.
- Nationals and Seminar attendance has been below about 50% of target since strategy inception and we may need to rethink how we target ourselves on this again in the future.
- Financial performance has been difficult to measure although I have had it indicated by the Treasurer that the Jodobu generally breaks even or makes a small profit. This year we are forecast to make a small profit and to date the seminar attendance has been very positive even with the recent volcanic events just prior to the 2010 BKA Iaido and Jodo referees' seminar.

I am hoping that in the coming year we will redesign the Jodobu Strategy with the fuller force of the Jodobu EC being consulted with as well as the most senior grades in the BKA. This may be possible to present at the forthcoming AGM.

In general BKA activities, we have fully adopted the online registration system as much as possible and have to date run two major events with it, the Jodo Spring Seminar and Iaido and Jodo Referees' Seminar. The online system takes away a lot of the legwork as well as providing instant confirmation of seminar/grading registration and open access to all officers. I am sincerely grateful to Malcolm Smalley, the Membership Secretary who has worked tirelessly in developing, testing and improving this system.

In the forthcoming year we are looking at the following activities, some of which are new some not so:

- The Summer Seminar will shortly be going online and be available for booking. This year's Jodo Summer Seminar will be patronized by Otake Toshiyuki Sensei, 8th dan Kyoshi.
- Darlington will host the Winter Jodo Seminar as usual with hopefully a grading up to 3rd dan.
- We are hoping to hold a Koryu Jodo weekend session in London some time in the Autumn. This will be open to all levels.
- Early in 2011 we are hoping to have a Koryu Jodo seminar in the spring to which Ishido Sensei may well be attending.
- We hope to continue holding refereeing events over the coming year.

Some of you may also have heard that we will be the hosts of the 2011 (the 10th) European Jodo Championships and so I am hoping that all our members can get involved in delivering this event.

I would like to finish by offering my sincere thanks to everyone who has enthusiastically got involved with Jodo bu activities over the past year whether its been from attending a seminar to sitting on a grading panel. I have a really good feeling that we are growing steadily and that we will see an accelerated growth in the coming years. I would also like to ask our members to express their thanks to Harry Jones who is stepping down as Jodo Grading Officer this year and has been instrumental in getting the online system up and implemented to our processes.

Andy Watson
Jodo Bucho