

Kendo Bu Strategy – 2011

Submitted by Emmanuele Levi – 5th May 2010

2010 Overview and Comments

The current year has been a difficult year as the Kendo Bu had to face one of the worst economic downturns in this century, increasing prices, new officers with no previous experience, as well as a new constitution, new ring-fencing measures and expenses policies. However, great progress was made in identifying and controlling superfluous expenses; most events have been micromanaged to ensure that costs were under control and funds were not misused. All promised events have been delivered on the date and mostly within budget. Focus on cost has given good results as for the first time in years the Bu will hopefully close the year with a surplus. This will be carried forward into 2011 and help with the increased financial pressure and more demands from the membership.

In addition the Bu has put a lot of effort in providing simplicity, clarity and transparency in all budgets and accounts published – although we can improve on this in 2011.

All in all 2010 has so far proven to be a positive year. Yet the Bu is fully aware that much remains to be done and remains focused on delivering the highest possible quality of events to the membership.

Strategy 2011, Principles and rationale:

Together with this strategy document the Bu is providing a provisional Budget for 2011 to support the actions planned and highlight the financial in and out-flows. For simplicity the strategy discussion will try to closely follow the Budget structure so that members can better associate each expenditure to the activity concerned.

Where the money will come from in 2011?

- For the Current year the Bu recommends a fee of £20 that should generate an inflow of around £16,000. This combined with an estimated £8000+ from grading applications and issuing of menjo should tally to about £25,000.
- Given that several amounts set aside in 2010 for development have remained almost untouched and that we were lucky enough not to have to use the contingency fund, a substantial amount can be carried over from the previous year. We believe that this should be in the excess of £6000. The correct amount will be clearer at the end of the financial year.
- In total the Bu should have about £31,000 at its disposal at the beginning of the year 2011 – subject to controlling spending along budgeted lines.

Strategy for 2011 - How the Bu will spend the Income?

In 2011 the Bu will continue to try to keep costs to a minimum and improve on planning and cost reduction strategies introduced in 2010. Most of the events will continue to be run on a break-even basis, leaving more funds to finance or subsidise those events that increase the general standard of the members: key seminars, events and squad.

Also with the incoming year the Bu intends to open its workings to a greater collaboration enticing the help of dojo and qualified members as well as suggestions from the DRC and senior grades. In addition it intends to co-opt qualified members in relevant roles that require some industry expertise: for example Marketing and Advertising, Children and Ladies Development, Squad Training, etc.

Cost reduction activities:

- Whenever possible the officers will ensure that the cheaper and nearer: venue, teacher, option is undertaken avoiding any loss (economic or learning) to the members.
- The Bu recommends that dojo host and help manage some of the Kendo events as this seems to be the option that ensures best the result both in terms of uptake and finance.

Membership and DRC Suggestions:

1. Brussels Referee Seminar

As is customary, the Kendo Bu intends to send 3-6 senior Kendo members to Brussels for the International Referee Seminar. In principle we believe that participation in this seminar is important for the membership to maintain and further increase the high standard of refereeing we are lucky to have in this country. Therefore, travelling, accommodation and seminar costs of selected participants will be covered by the Bu. For 2011 we believe that new participants should be selected among the 5th and 6th dan segment. For those that will be going to Brussels to grade the Bu will cover only the cost of the seminar. We propose that all participants will have to (co)run at least one of the 4 referee seminars for free - to the economic advantage of the BKA. This year we aim at opening up the selection process rendering it more clear and transparent to the members.

2. Children Fund

Members have requested that an amount of money be allocated to develop the much neglected Children uptake and activities. At the moment children account for circa 8% of the whole membership. This area needs developing as, indeed, it represents, our (BKA) future; yet little resources are devoted to this cause. This Fund intends to remedy this.

The Bu will be happy to co-opt an officer that has the skills and energy to put forward clear proposals and follow through with a plan that would substantially help growing this segment.

3. Ladies Fund

The Bu has also recognised another area that has been overlooked in the past. Therefore, it has decided to set up a Ladies Development Fund to address this issue. The Bu believes that this segment is of paramount importance in increasing and diversifying the membership. Also in this instance the Bu will be interested in co-opting an officer whose main aim will be to

increase the uptake of kendo by ladies all around the country bringing the balance nearer to European average standards.

Kendo Bu Events a General Overlook

In 2011 the Kendo Bu will continue to deliver most of the events that regularly feature in the Kendo calendar. However, this year the Bu would like to implement a new strategy and empower dojo to host and (co)run most of the Bu calendar events. For this purpose money has been allocated into a number of funds. The Officers time that will be spared can be redirected into advising and assisting dojo that would like to develop new events.

1. Dojo Event Fund

Beside the Ladies and Children fund, the Dojo Event Fund will be retained and enlarged with a new injection of money (about £6000) in 2011. Costs, frequency and location of events seem to be the primary concern for members. The Bu will help to address these by assisting dojo with financial and organisational help. Financial help can be drawn from this Fund while assistance will be provided by the Bu Officers. As these will be new ventures we expect not to recover all the money.

2. UK and Japanese Sensei Fund

This year the Bu will depart from the traditional approach of organising and financing UK and Japanese Sensei Seminar. This task will be handed over to dojo or influencer that have access to Japanese sensei and are able to effectively gather membership momentum around them. We believe this will be a more efficient way of organising these events. The Bu will advance funds to help cover the most immediate costs (transport, hall, etc). The Dojo will then pay back the Bu with the income generated by the entry fees. As this is a first we expect some losses and therefore the recovery rate is set low.

3. Gradings

The Bu will continue to guarantee at least 4 calendar gradings and ensure that these events are well distributed around the country and throughout the year. These gradings usually cover ikkyu to yondan. The Bu has considered introducing a godan test in 2011 if there is a substantial uptake that would justify the costs.

In addition, we will also continue to support dojo that would like to sponsor more ikkyu to shodan grading events. These have proven a success with both the membership and the new panellists in 2010 and have somewhat helped releasing the pressure on more traditional events.

Finally, the Bu will continue investing energies into the development of new grading panellists started in 2010. We believe that developing the new generation is of paramount importance for the future of the BKA

4. Seminars

- Referee Seminars appear to be breaking even in 2010 and we intend to maintain the same cost/revenue structure for the current year. On the whole these have been well received and enjoyed by the membership. In addition, it seems that the general level of refereeing is increasing. Thus they are a benefit to the Membership and we strongly advise not to discontinue these. In addition in 2011 the Bu would like to split these seminars into

th-6th dan run

by Brussels Seminar participants) and 2-4 'Regional' spread evenly across the country for lower grades to teach and maintain the basics.

- In general UK and Japanese Sensei Seminars appear to break even. In a few exceptional cases some make a profit or a small loss. Seminars represent a valuable means to continue to raise the standard of Kendo in the UK. As discussed above the Bu would welcome initiatives from dojo around the country to put some of the Dojo Event Fund to good use by supporting and subsidise new seminars.
- Coaching Seminars: These seminars have been somewhat neglected in the last few years. Talks have been initiated by the Bu with several parties and we intend to restart Coaching Level1 and Level 2 as soon as possible. The Coaching Seminar costs are covered by the NC, the figure that appears in the Budget 2011 represent contingencies or to cover extras.

5. Championships and Taikai (British Open, Bowden, Premier etc)

Also for Championships and Taikai the Bu would like to request the help of dojo and leaders to host them. Looking back at the figures these events seem traditionally poorly attended. This is in stark contrast to some of the dojo run taikai (e.g. Mumeishi3's, London Cup) that are far more successful. The Bu hopes that dojo or leaders could inject new ideas and vigour that could help revive these important landmarks.

6. Other Initiatives

There is a strong to desire to continue to develop the new generation of senior grades. At the moment we have only 4-6 high grades with the necessary skills for sitting panels or effectively referee national championships. It is therefore critical that this group is flanked by those mid ranks that have the knowledge and the attitude to learn these skills and, in time, capable of undertaking the high grades duties. To address this need the Bu will press on with the development programme for referees and grading panels.

Referee initiatives will include:

- Create and maintain an updated list of referees and their qualification. This will be published on the BKA pages and referee for championship can be effectively selected from this list
- Split referee seminars in Regional, National and International (Brussels). Regional seminars aim at instructing members that are just approaching refereeing. They will be given the rudimentary refereeing basis and can be run efficiently by 5th and 6th dan. National Seminars (2 a year, run by 6th and 7th dan) aim at further develop an audience of more advanced referees. Those on this list will be able to be selected for the Brussels seminar.
- Send more 5th and 6th dan to Brussels International Referee Seminar (see dedicated point above)
- Grading Panels Initiatives
- Create and maintain an updated list of panellists and their qualification. This will be published on the BKA pages and pannellists can be effectively selected from this list
- Continue with the shadow panel program to develop new members to sit on grading panels.
- Further develop those 5th dan qualified for ikkyu to shodan grading to the next step

Squad Related Fund and Budget:

This year we have simplified the amount set aside for the Squad. First the Bu has decided to set the total amount to be devoted to the squad to 25% of the total Kendo Bu income. Then, one third of this amount will flow into a fund that will accrue to circa £7500 over 3 year. This aims at covering the British Teams participation costs to the World Championship and European Championship. The remaining 70%, £4500 circa, constitutes the current year Squad Training Budget.

Those co-opted by the Bu wto run and coach the squad will be confirmed in their positions and hopefully continue with the excellent work and achievements.

Other Uses of Kendo Funds:

1. Contingency Fund

The amount set aside for the contingency fund remains unchanged from the previous year. It is set at 14% of the yearly income following industry standards. The intention is to build, over 3 years, a buffer that should weather most problems without turning to the membership for additional funds midyear should the need arise.

2. Marketing and advertising Fund

The budget allocated for advertising purposes is increased to £1000. Most members find it puzzling that Kendo does not take advantage of any of the many modern tools that would raise awareness of our association and its purposes. Therefore, the Bu is interested in co-opting an industry expert from the membership who can contribute with new effective ideas to the marketing and advertising Kendo in the UK.

Closing Words and Final Considerations

The Kendo Bu believes that continuous focus on initiatives aimed at growing the membership (both in number and higher kendo standards), cost control, development of a new generation of senior grades could prove a successful approach also for 2011.

By co-opting new officers we intend to address some of the identified gaps. These subject experts will be able to better identify and address these deficiencies and will have some funds to help the development of their assigned areas.

All throughout 2011 we will remain firmly committed to deliver the traditional events and new ones that the membership will plan and propose. We will also try to ensure that these represent a great experience for our members.

Finally, the Bu will continue to embrace the current democratisation process. This is mainly driven by the membership base and is shaping an association that believes in the power of its members, guided by sound principles of equality and consensus, and has one sole, common purpose: the friendly practice and proliferation of kendo and its principles.