

which are the exception. If White had **not** scored waza-ari, then Red would win by **yuko**. If White had **not** scored waza-ari, nor Red any yukos (picture 5) then Red would win be-

cause of White having received a **chui**.

I hope that this very short article has helped to clarify the new scoring system a little more.

BRITISH KENDO ASSOCIATION

OFFICAL NOTES

On February 23rd at Coalville, Leicester, our A.G.M. was held. This was a very successful meeting with 85 people present. The main function of this meeting was the ratification of the proposed Constitution, which was accepted with five abstentions, none against, the balance in favour. At this meeting the new committee was elected as follows:

CHAIRMAN:

Mr. W. Prytherch (Coalville)

VICE-CHAIRMAN:

Mr. J. Clarke (Bristol)

HON. SEC.:

Mr. V. Harris (Nenriki)

TREASURER:

Mr. R. Metcalfe (Leeds)

MEMBERSHIP SEC.:

Mr. J. Howell (Nenriki)

MINUTES SEC.:

Mr. E. Schofield (Miken)

P.R.O.:

Mr. T. Holt (Mumeshi)

COMMITTEE MEMBER:

Mr. L. Bean (Hagakule)

TECH. ADVISOR:

Mr. O. Fujii

Also held on this weekend was a Shodan Grading. The following people were on the examining body.

CHIEF EXAMINERS:

Mr. K. Kikuchi, 7th Dan

Mr. O. Fujii, 5th Dan

PANEL:

Mr. J. Clarke, 3rd Dan

Mr. V. Harris, 3rd Dan

Mr. J. Howell, 3rd Dan

Mr. E. Schofield, 3rd Dan

Mr. T. Holt, 3rd Dan

Mr. L. Bean, 3rd Dan

A very large entry was accepted for this grading and the following people were promoted to 1st Dan.

Mr. T. Wheeler (Nanbankai)

Mr. P. Cronin (Mumeshi)

Mr. G. Dockwray (Bujusukai)

Mr. P. Gledhill (Miken)

Mr. S. Divers (Miken)

Mr. S. Murcoka (Miken)

Mrs. C. Angel (Mumeshi)

Mrs. H. Clarke (Mumeshi)

Mr. G. Ingham (Leeds)

Mr. G. Smith (Leeds)

Mr. R. Turner (Nenriki)

Mr. M. Mulrooney (Hagakule)

Mr. E. Hall (Hagakule)

Mr. J. Webb (Mumeshi)

Mr. J. Wood (Hagakule)

Mr. W. McGoven (Mumeshi)

Mr. D. Daines (Mumeshi)

Mr. B. McArdley (Mumeshi)

Mr. E. Moore (Hinkley)

The standard of kendo was very good and a much improved kata was shown by all. Dan grade certificates were presented at the end of the grading and our congratulations to the above on obtaining their 1st Dan.

If any information on kendo or the British Kendo Association is required would you please write or telephone the Hon. Secretary:

Mr. V. Harris, 709 Howard House,
Dolphin Square, London, S.W.1.
Tel.: 01-834 1393.



DAVID WHITE LOOKS AT BRITISH KENDO

All has not been well the last few months with kendo, the sport the *Sunday Times* once described as Britain's most exclusive. And when there is a split within a sport that probably numbers fewer than 300 regular practising adherents it's an unpromising lookout for the rest of the martial arts.

However, according to our top kendo exponent, 5th Dan Roald Knutsen, things are not as dark as they may appear, and I'm inclined to believe him.

Briefly, since September the British Kendo Association has spawned a rival, the British Kendo Renmei (which roughly translates as Federation) now headed by the formidable Mr. Knutsen.

As 40-year-old Mr. Knutsen puts it: "There has been a deep-rooted problem in kendo over the last few years. It is an ethical problem. I feel that kendo is much more than just a sport although sport is certainly the lower level of kendo. There are mental and spiritual—although I prefer the word intellectual—levels, and the sport aspect must be kept in its right perspective.

"I will not allow budo (martial arts) politics to be talked in my dojo, and if possible not outside either. I was Secretary of the British Kendo Association for 10 years and have seen some people become over-ranked. I think this has contributed to the fact that we reached a state last year where half of the B.K.A. seemed to want to get on with the kendo and the other half seemed to

be involved in kendo as a social grace with political bickerings spoiling the practice.

"Eventually we decided to form our own federation and seven of the 22 B.K.A. dojos joined the Renmei. Already, with the formation of new groups we have 20 working dojos and quite frankly we fully realised we would no longer be members of the International Kendo Federation (a completely Japanese dominated body) and the European Kendo Federation. As for forfeiting our official dan grades that can only be described as a laughable threat".

Mr. Knutsen took a little pressing before I elicited from him the information that the Renmei's refusal to accept any part or full time professional kendo teaching in the U.K. had been one of the major factors that produced the eventual split.

"We have to develop kendo in the U.K. against its background of 1,200 years of tradition and discipline.

"Senior Dan ranks teach because it is their duty to teach and we believe it better that they should not be paid. We had the fear that professional kendo would be introduced into Britain and we do believe in strict amateur kendo in the old fashioned sense of the word amateur.

"In old Japan the kendo master was not paid by his pupil, he in fact had to pay out to help keep the pupil. The master took on a great responsibility for the pupil and this philosophy is still true in Kendo which is not a 1974 art but an ancient one.

"A lot of kendoka will only ever be interested in kendo as a sport, we accept this and understand that only a few will want to go into the deep philosophical aspects of kendo. However, the responsibility of our Renmei must be to maintain the tradition of the discipline of kendo.

"I do not particularly like the Japanese — Mr. Knutsen has from time to time been accused of being a fanatical Japanophile — I am an Englishman but I can see certain intellectual and spiritual values in kendo that can be applied to our own natural tradition. I am not trying to create in my students a sort of reproduction of Japan, but the values of budo are, I believe, common to all countries".

Mr. Knutsen is nothing if not frank and he worried me a little by his insistence that kendo must be run on a feudal system, with someone at the top strong enough to dictate the running of a dojo. I had—with slight reluctance—to agree that kendo is a military art and that this implies that a student (or private?) must accept the discipline of the dojo.

However, Mr. Knutsen—who has an interesting habit of qualifying things that I can see could upset some of those he deals with—made me feel a good deal happier when he explained: "I went through the British Army and did not like the discipline one little bit. But if I volunteer to get up at 5 a.m. to do kendo practice that is surely an entirely different matter to being forced to do it. If my students don't like my methods there's nothing stopping them going elsewhere".

There seems to be a good chance that in the fullness of time the B.K.A. and the B.K.R. will get back together again, particularly if as they threaten, the B.K.R. apply for "dual" recognition to the International and European Federations. It's worth mentioning that Roald Knutsen was co-founder of the E.K.F.

It is a great pity that the first official European Kendo Championships, which were due to be held at Bletchley in Bucks in April could not see a united British side who might have given the French and Swedes a run for their money.

Roald Knutsen himself had a Norwegian father and became interested in kendo while on a judo beginners course at the L.J.S. back in 1958. He did judo and kendo in parallel for about six years.

"Kendo was very mysterious at that time. We didn't have much information and I used the former chairman of the Association, Mr. Lidstone's manuscript which started the few of us on basic theory.

"We made a lot of errors but we were flexible in our mental approach and were able to correct our faults. Nowadays, with formal teaching it is much more difficult to correct entrenched errors.

"The Japanese like youngsters to start kendo at 11 or 12 but here I think the best age is probably 16 or 17 bearing in mind our social conditions. After the age of about 22 posture becomes more difficult and older people have to think much more about all important posture instead of it coming completely naturally".

Roald Knutsen's introduction to kendo in Japan was at the Imperial Palace Dojo in Tokyo where he saw the highest grade kendo. He felt a great sense of camaraderie wherever he practised in Japan and pays tribute to his mentor, Ben Hazard the California based 6th Dan, who always stressed the importance of training in Japan if only to polish techniques.

"We still have so few people able to teach in the U.K., with one of the main limitations on the growth of kendo being the initial expense for armour and equipment which totals about £80.

"This, in fact, produces a natural brake on kendo and development will continue at a slow pace. This does give time for the few teachers in the U.K. to cope with the situation but it means we are never likely to get Sports Council financial help.

"Perhaps because of the expense about 50 per cent of kendo students come to it through aikido or judo, and the rest through an interest in swords or books.

"I feel that the best advantage is for a young man or woman to study one martial arts discipline for a number of years until they are reasonably proficient—say 3rd Dan—and then branch out into the other arts if they want to.

"The basic theory is common to all the martial arts and this is particularly true with aikido and kendo theory. Mr. Yamada said that aiki theory is probably 80 per cent kendo theory without the sword, therefore these two arts particularly complement each other.

"The point about studying for a number of years is not to get Dan grades but to have reasonable control and to be able to express this under controlled conditions".

This applies particularly to the use of the naked sword which—despite the romance of wielding a katana—should Mr. Knutsen believes be very closely controlled and probably restricted under 4th Dan.



The British Judo team on an early morning work-out during their thirty day training tour of Japan. From left to right: Angelo Parisi, David Lawrence, Constantine (Alex) Alexander, Brian Jacks, Ray Ross, (in pedal-rickshaw) Team Manager, Roy Inman, Keith Remfry, Vacinuff Morrison and Raymond Neenan.

Photograph by Timothy Street-Porter.