

# Edmund O'Melia

Born 1933

<https://www.archives.com/1940-census/edmund-omelia-ny-65039335>



*Figur 1 - Edmund O'Melia participating in training with ZNKR delegation 1971 (AM)*

US citizen that visited Sweden through late 1960s and early 1970s.

Mr E. o'Melia, 1:a dan kendo, från New York Buddhist Centre Kendo Dojo, som gästade oss hela våren. Mr o'Melias stil är annorlunda än Mr Knutsens och hans blixtnabba enhands- *do uchi* är mycket effektiv men skulle knappast poängsättas i en kendotävling trots att den skulle vara direkt dödande under verkliga förhållanden.

*Figur 2 - Description of O'Melias style from Judo-Sport nr 4 1966*

Translation:

*Mr E. O'Melia, 1<sup>st</sup> Dan kendo, from New York Buddhist Centre Kendo Dojo, who has been our guest during the whole spring. Mr O'Melias style is different from Mr Knutsen and his lightning fast one-hand do uchi is remarkably effective but would hardly be awarded a point in a kendo competition even though it would be directly lethal under real conditions.*

Here is some additional information gathered from Swedes active during the period:

Edmund was a very frequent guest at both the Johannesskola dojo and Brännkyrkhallen around 1969-1971. Apparently, he had learned kendo during military service in Japan. His kendo style was overly aggressive compared to what was trained in Sweden during this period. He was a particularly good basketball player with Boston Celtics as favorite team. It was custom to play basket as warm-up in Sweden.

His occupation was unclear. University student? He was periodically absent and apparently made trips to eastern bloc countries. As this was during the cold war period and Edmund being American that led to some speculation about his actual job. At one time he wanted to sell a wakizashi.

Edmund could speak some Swedish but was not fluent.

Edmund was an acquaintance of Robert von Sandor.



Figure 1 - (Robert) von Sandor (right) lands a men cut on (Edmund) O'Melia, kendo guest from USA.

Mail from Daniel T Ebihara 2021-02-09:

*Dear Hans:*

*My name is Daniel T. Ebihara I am the one whom started Kendo in New York City in 1957 with about 7 students at the New York City Budhist Church. My Sensei was Rev. Shunshin T. Kan, He was 4 Dan in Kendo and the last survivor of Kamikaze Pilot. He was buddhist minister at the Church. We purchased a building 156-58 West 26th Street, New York City.*

*Changed it's name to Ken Zen Institute, known as Ken Zen Dojo, then We purchased place in Downtown at 54 Thomas Street, New York, and renovated for Kendo, and lai-do Dojo. We are there ever since. The Rev. Kan has passed away in 1991. I took over the Dojo since then, and created one Dojo in Boston, one in Westchester, and one in the long Island. I am trying to get for 8 Dan In Japan. I am 82 years old but still trying.*

*This parson you are referring Mr. Edmund Omelia, I can't recall his name, but verry familiar to me. Unfortunately , there isn't anybody better knowledge about New York Kendo here than me.*

*I am very sorry my memory is not very clear these days to help you enough.*

*Daniel T. Ebihara*

*Chief Instructor Ken Zen Dojo*

Ken Zen Dojo was most probably Edmund O'Melia's dojo in the 1960s.