

BRITISH KENDO ASSOCIATION

7th February 1969

CHAIRMAN'S REPORT FOR THE YEAR 1968/69

Gentlemen,

It is always difficult to review a years' Kendo when the growth rate is as rapid as it is in this country. The past twelve months have been no exception to the rule and while the actual number of new groups forming under our sphere of influence has remained small - though normal for Kendo - our position in the World Kendo movement has measurably improved.

During the year we made a group visit to Paris on the invitation of the France Kendo Renmei; and we enjoyed the visits of Izawa Sensei Otake Sensei, and Fukui Sensei. In May the Sir Frank Bowden Team Match was inaugurated at Portsmouth and this annual event will take, I am sure, an important place in the European Kendo calendar in future years. Then in the late part of the year we have initiated a senior Tournament which will be called the 'Japan Air Lines Yudansha Taikai'; the first Taikai being held at Coalville in order to encourage Kendo growth in the Midlands.

Following the discussions attended by our Secretary in Japan in October 1967 there has been a marked improvement in the relations between this Renmei and Japan which is entirely in accordance with the policy and aims of the new Kokusai Kendo Renmei, or World Kendo Federation. This deepened interest in the non-Japanese Kendo groups has led to the Zen Nippon Kendo Renmei taking the unprecedented step of sending a special delegation to Europe in September of this current year and this Renmei has the honour of acting as the chief host.

In the context of World Kendo I would like to mark the sad death of Mr. Mori Torao, President of the American Kendo Renmei, who had worked very hard towards the establishment of Kendo outside Japan. Mr. Mori was a Kendo leader of very great stature and his passing must inevitably mean harder and more sincere work for us.

The Kendo of this Kendo Renmei has always been marked by a strong feeling of friendship and common purpose, ruffled on only a very few occasions in a minor key, and this, gentlemen, is remarkable when compared with the bleak record of all the other martial arts in this country, especially in recent years. We remain resolutely non-comm-

ercial and our policies are nationally and individually to encourage the friendly but serious practice of Kendo everywhere. We do not want small factions to develop and split Kendo for reasons of self-interest; this is NOT Kendo. If we present a united and clearly serious front to the rest of the Kendo World, as we must do as leaders of the European Kendo Renmei, then we shall receive support and material help from Japan. If we revert to the petty squabbles of the rest of Budo we shall lose everything. This Renmei must ~~must~~ remain a bulwark of correct Budo as an example to everyone. If we do this the future Kendo careers of every member can only improve.

1969 is going to be our greatest year, I am sure. For many years we have worked very hard to establish Kendo here; in this year we pass to the second phase and our Kendo will be regarded as serious, even if unpolished, by the rest of the Kendo world. Please do not for one moment underrate the importance of this. We must all resolve to work very hard to maintain this position and to prove worthy of Kendo tradition.

Thank you.

R. A. Lidstone,
Chairman,
Eikoku Kendo Renmei.