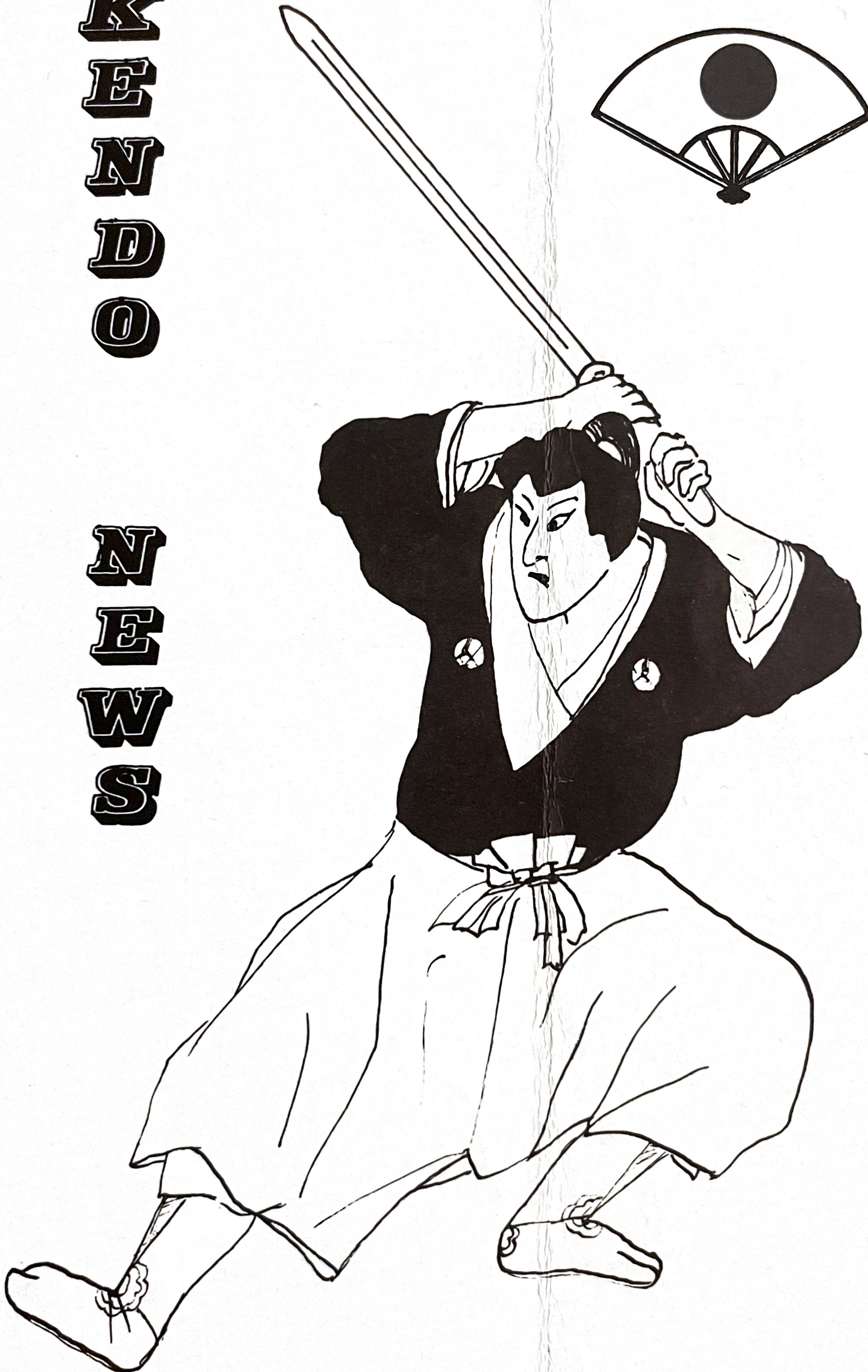
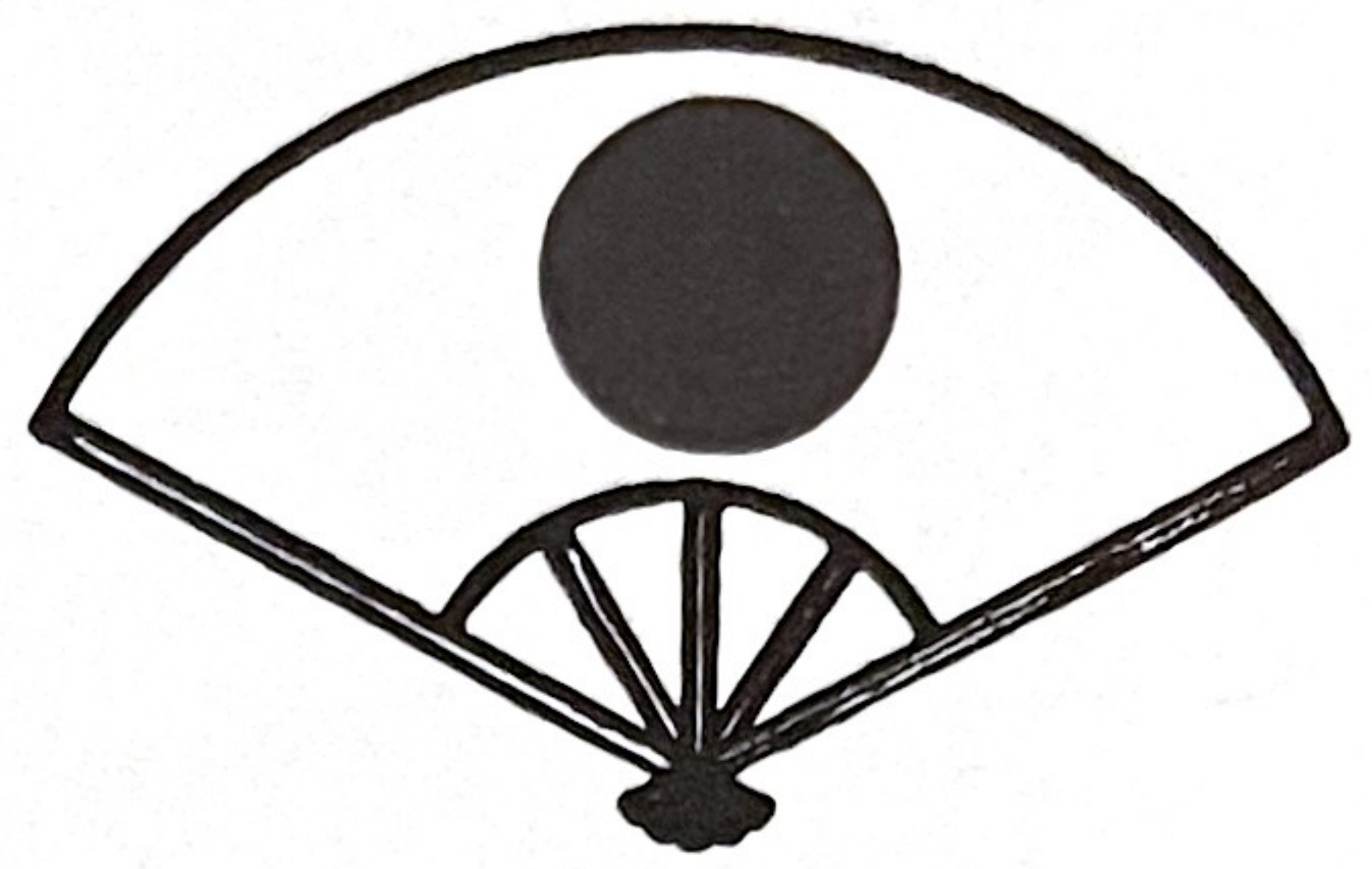


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**THE BRITISH KENDO ASSOCIATION**

SECOND EUROPEAN KENDO CHAMPIONSHIPS - BELGIUM - APRIL 1977

The party of 22, including 12 competitors, Manager J. Howel Coach O. Fujii and 2 referees left Victoria Station late on Thursday 7th April to join the night boat train to Belgium. The crossing was pleasant and everyone arrived fairly fresh at 8 am. in Brussels. After settling in at the hotel most of the fighters took the opportunity to get several hours sleep, then went for a short loosening-up practice with the visiting Japanese Teachers. The IKF delegation consisted of Messrs. NAKAKURA 8th Dan Kendo, 8th Dan Iaido, ISHIHARA 8th Dan Kendo, OKA 8th Dan Kendo, MATSUNAGA 7th Dan Kendo and KASAHARA 7th Dan Kendo.

On Saturday 9th the proceedings started early (breakfast at 7.30 am.) and transfer to the stadium at 9.00 am. It was necessary to hold the Individual and Team Championship on the same day, so the preliminary rounds started promptly.

For the British there were no shocks from the draw (two Germans were unfortunate however to be drawn together in the first round.)

On COURT A Kelly (GB) beat Isenchid (Swiss) to be beaten by Delorme (France) who had also beaten Gledhill (GB) in the first round. Holt (GB) had a bye in the first round, then two convincing (2 men) wins to be beaten by a strong Frenchman (Lopiccolo) in the quarter finals.

On COURT B Mrs. Hopson (GB) beat Navilli (Italy) in round one to lose against Doucet of France in her next fight. Richards (GB) was beaten by Steiger (Austria) in the first round. Baboolal (GB) beat Wolfs (Holland), Jattkowski (Germany) and Doucet (France) before meeting Deguitre (France) in the quarter final. This fight was a draw (one point each) after 5 minutes and several extensions of 3 minutes each were required before Deguitre gained the winning point.

With this the British involvement in the Individual was concluded, both Holt and Baboolal being unable to make the last step into the medals.

Individual medals went to :

Gastor Sterckx (Belgium) GOLD

Paul Otto Forsteuter (W. Germany) SILVER

Deguitre and Lopiccolo (France) BRONZE

The Team Match consisted of two leagues, the winners of the first round (3 leagues of 3) formed a final league of 3 to decide the medals.

France emerged from the group including Belgium and Switzerland. Italy came out from the group containing Spain

and Holland.

G.B. beat Sweden  $4 - 1$  and W. Germany  $3\frac{1}{2} - 1\frac{1}{2}$  and so joined France and Italy.

The final was where things went wrong. The score-board showing the next match as France - GB was changed to Italy - GB. This was considered the easier of the two final matches for Britain. Further encouraged by John Kings consistent result (2 points - nil win) concentration was lost and Britain found themselves 3-1 down - the match already lost before Jock Hopson, the Captain, could take control. ITALY won 3 - 2.

Britain then fought France, a stronger yet more orthodox team than Italy; John King again won (2 - 1 this time). Dave Todd lost after a hard match by one point, Mike Davis won 2 - 1, Tony Palmer lost by one point, scored just as time was called. This left the situation a draw 2 - 2 with 4 points each. A win was required by either captain to decide the last match. Jock Hopson scored 2 men cuts to give Britain victory over France, Yet the final result was GOLD - France, SILVER - G.B., BRONZE - Italy. The result decided on the number of individual wins and points scored.

After recovering from the previous evenings celebration most of the party returned home by boat on the Sunday afternoon. Each competitor no doubt reflecting on the reasons for his or her success or failure.

Fujii San and 3 Kendoka went on from Brussels to Holland to take part in the Zen Nippon Kendo Renmei European Seminar, which the masters were also taking whilst in Europe.

Congratulations to O. Fujii who took and passed his ZNKR 5th Dan whilst assisting at the Seminar.

The 3rd European Kendo Championships will be held in CHAMBERY, in the French Alps near Lyon, over the weekend 7-9th April 1978 followed by a ZNKR summer camp 10-15th April at the same venue.