



15 YEARS OF KENDO

IN TRINIDAD & TOBAGO
2004 - 2019



KENDO FEDERATION OF TRINIDAD & TOBAGO

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15 Years of Kendo in Trinidad and Tobago 2004 - 2019

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

Introduction Messages	4
Commendation certificates	6
History of Kendo in T&T	7
15 Years of kendo timeline	8
KFTT objectives & List of Yudansha	9
Why do you do practice Kendo?	10
Testimonials from around the world	12
Japanese Embassy Cup 2015 -2019	13
Tournaments	20
Seminars & invitations	28
Training Camps	34
Events	42
Beginners' Classes	50
Liming	52
Press & Media	53
Thank you page	56
What is Kendo	57



INTRODUCTION MESSAGES

AMBASSADOR OF JAPAN TO TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO

Warm congratulations to the Kendo Federation of Trinidad and Tobago for its publication of this bibliography, marking over 15 years since its establishment. I wholeheartedly appreciate the Federation's dedicated efforts toward promoting the traditional martial art of Kendo in this country.

After arriving in Trinidad and Tobago, I was pleasantly surprised to learn that Kendo was thriving here for many years. While visiting Kendo practice sessions and the Championship Tournament, to which we proudly presented the Ambassador's Cup, I easily observed practitioners devotedly engaging in Kendo.

At the 2019 Championships, I presented the Ambassador's Commendation to the Federation for its longtime contribution to promoting Kendo. It is unfortunate that contact sports have been restricted due to the COVID-19 Pandemic; however, I sincerely hope that Kendo will fully resume soon.

Recently, the Commendation of the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Japan was conferred on Mr. Eddy Devisse, President of the Federation since its inception, for his contributions to promoting Kendo in his country. This Commendation is another testament to the Federation's contributions to strengthening Japan-Trinidad and Tobago relations, and the Japanese Government highly appreciates the Federation's work in Trinidad and Tobago.

Congratulations once again and let us move forward together!

Tatsuo HIRAYAMA

Ambassador of Japan to Trinidad and Tobago



EDDY DEVISSE - HEAD INSTRUCTOR

This year marks my 30th year practicing Kendo. It's amazing to realize that I've spent more years training in Trinidad than all other countries I've lived in combined. These last 15 years have gone by very quickly and I'm very proud of the progress we've made. We have many motivated students and great supporters of our organization, so despite the challenges we are facing, I'm very excited about our future.

It's no secret that some of the values of Kendo (discipline, persistence and hard work) don't quite match with daily life in T&T. This gap is what motivates me to push forward with teaching kids and teenagers.

I believe that T&T can compete on a similar level to that of the best Kendoka in the world. Trinbagonians have the natural ability to become world class Kendoka, competing on equal terms with countries like Japan, Korea, USA and Canada. This is my objective for the next 15 years!

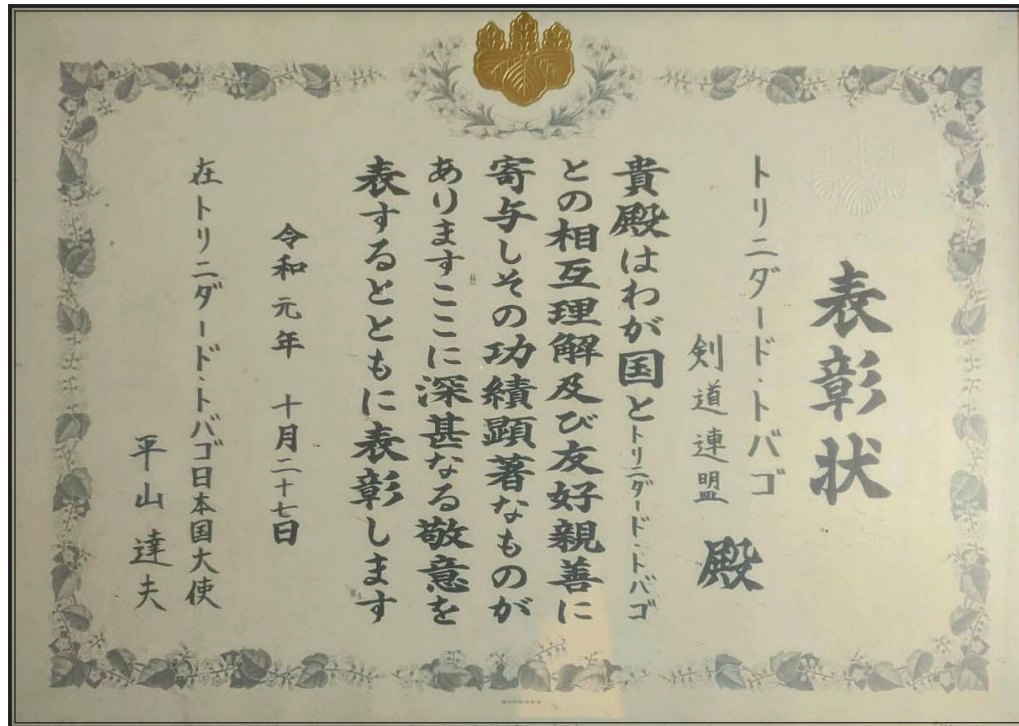
I am thankful for everyone that has supported and encouraged us here and abroad, including everyone that has tried Kendo even for only a few classes. Thanks to all the senior students who share the same passion and continue to support my efforts, and of course my wife, who allows me to spend 2 to 3 nights every week away from home, knowing that if I didn't I would probably be impossible to be around anyway.

Here's hoping for many more years of growth and quality Kendo!

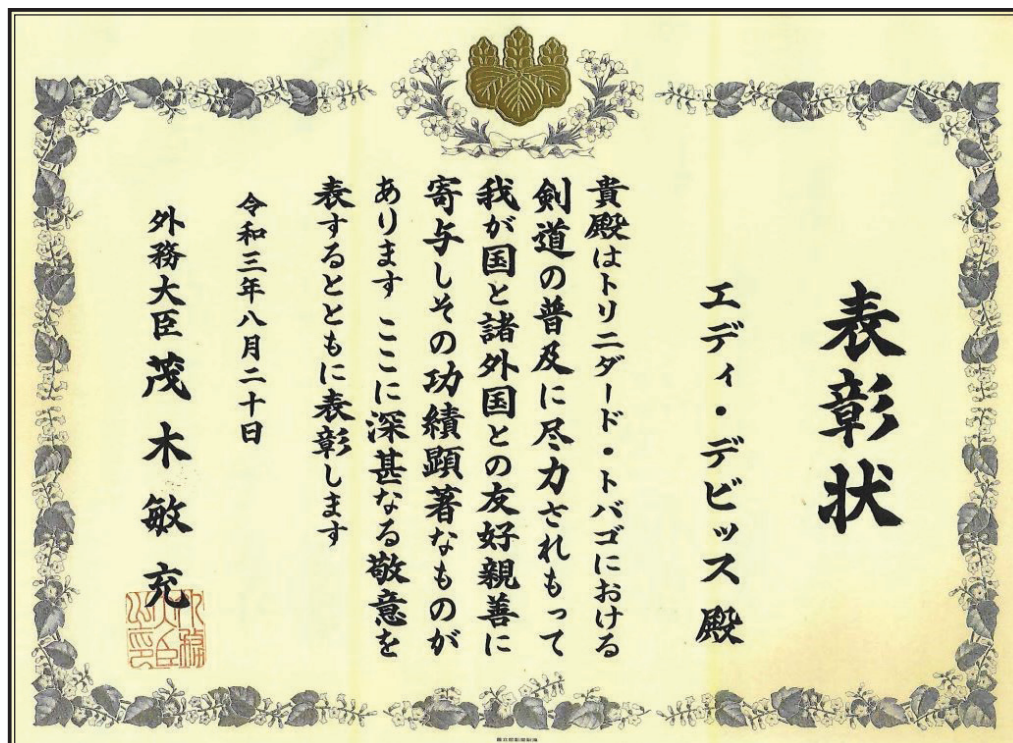


COMMENDATION CERTIFICATES

In 2019 the Embassy of Japan awarded us this commendation for the work we've done to develop and promote Kendo in Trinidad and Tobago. This was a great honor given to us by Mr the Ambassador of Japan Tatsuo Hirayama on the occasion of our 15th anniversary of activities in the country.



In 2021, the Japanese Ministry of Foreign Affairs awarded Eddy Devisse a commendation “For the contribution to the friendship and goodwill between Japan and T&T by making efforts to popularize Kendo in Trinidad and Tobago, through remarkable achievements.”



HISTORY OF KENDO IN T&T

As we celebrate 15 years of the existence of our organization in T&T, there is much to celebrate.

Back in 1985 or so, a small group of Trinis were introduced to Kendo by Kenji Takahashi at the Port of Spain YMCA. Practice was simple and few people joined, but the seed of Kendo was planted. Some of these same students were first in line when almost 20 years later in 2004 Eddy Devisse migrated to T&T and noticing that Kendo wasn't being practiced he opened the first "dojo".

A small group of prospective students convinced Eddy to teach a class despite his initial reluctance to do so. Being only 3rd dan at the time, he didn't have much teaching experience and without knowledge of the local culture he was concerned about doing it "right", i.e. balancing the traditional aspect of Kendo with the local reality.



At first many people were attracted to this class offered in a small Karate dojo in St-Augustine, but given the very traditional way Eddy taught (essentially footwork until you couldn't feel your legs anymore), few had the motivation to continue training after a few weeks. Changes to the teaching methods were made and a new dojo was opened in POS, making Kendo more accessible to all.

Since these early days, growth has been slow but stable, the curriculum has evolved significantly, and hundreds of people of all ages have been exposed to Kendo. We've done a tremendous amount of work to keep classes going and spread awareness of Kendo in the country. We hosted many foreign guests and traveled in multiple countries, always proudly representing T&T. We've also created strong bonds with local organisations that will hopefully support us in the future.

More importantly, senior students have taken some leadership roles in various aspects of managing the organization. Due to that, we can now consider increasing the number of locations, age groups and frequency of classes.



Around 1985 a Japanese expat, Takahashi sensei introduced Kendo to T&T. Unfortunately he didn't stay very long and Kendo went back into a dormant state for many years.

In March 2020 I coincidentally met Takahashi sensei, now living in North California, at a Butokuden dojo practice. He saw the T&T flag on my zekken and asked me "You live in T&T? I also used to live there many years ago!". He didn't know how much time we spent trying to find him as we were planning this archive document!

TUESDAY, APRIL 06, 2004

➡ Kendo classes start Friday April 16th

Please note that due to strong demand, I decided to start official classes on Friday the 16th. Location is the St-Augustine dojo and time is 8pm to 10pm. Please note that there is a fee of \$40 per month, for a class on every Friday. The fee includes the rental of the equipment and is independent of how many times you attend per month. The fee goes towards the rental of the practice area, as well as to purchase and maintain equipment lent to the students. Let me know if you intend to come and if anyone will accompany you.

15 Years of Kendo



2004

First class
in T&T



2005

First Men's team in
international
tournament - Aruba



2007

Bogu donation
All Japan Kendo
Federation



2010

Beginners'
programme starts



2014

Visit from
Japanese Navy



2014

First Women's
team in international
tournament Mexico



2015

First Japanese
Embassy Cup



2019

Membership to Confederation of Latin America Kendo (CLAK)
Registration as T&T National Sporting Body
Commendation of KFTT from the Embassy of Japan



KFTT OBJECTIVES & MISSION

To create an organization that can sustain itself operationally and increase membership steadily

- Good instructors
- Consistent influx of new members
- Solid and repeatable curriculum
- Kendo of high standard

While aiming for these objectives, we should encourage:

- Practice of beautiful Kendo
- Personal development of young & old students
- Opportunities to explore the world
- Having fun

LIST OF YUDANSHA

Eddy Devisse ***5 dan***

Hasani Girod ***3 dan***

Richard Amow ***2 dan***

Kwesi Williams ***2 dan***

Herman Williams ***2 dan***

Nicholas Alexis ***2 dan***

Jevaughn Birch ***2 dan***

Keon Greene ***2 dan***

Jason Windsor ***1 dan***

Alisha Wells ***1 dan***

Avinash Maharaj ***1 dan***

Dionne Mitchell ***1 dan***

Melony Mitchell ***1 dan***

Arif Ali ***1 dan***



WHY DO YOU PRACTICE KENDO?

KWESI WILLIAMS

Why do you enjoy doing kendo?

I think because it's simple yet complex, like life, like art, and I like art

What the hardest thing about kendo?

Confronting my weaknesses and embracing my power

How has kendo helped you in your life?

I'm not sure as yet but the same issues I had when I first started still there, the only difference is I'm more aware of it. Need to train more

.....

KEON GREENE

What the hardest thing about kendo?

Making it a full part of my lifestyle and sticking with it.

What do you think TT Kendo can achieve in the future?

I believe it can be in every school. From primary to university.
Having tournaments between schools and multiple dojos.

.....

JEVAUGHN BIRCH

Why do you enjoy doing kendo?

I enjoy kendo because after a good training I feel great and enjoy the camaraderie and community. I also enjoy seeing my progress and becoming better.

What the hardest thing about kendo?

Physically the training, mentally identifying my weakness and trying to improve them... then to reach a new level where you have more weakness to fix

How has kendo helped you in your life?

Before Kendo I did not exercise and was very unfit and unhealthy, and in order to compete in kendo I've gone on a fitness journey where Im in much better shape in my 30s than I was in my teens and 20s.

What do you think TT Kendo can achieve in the future?

TT Kendo can become a rival to the other latin american countries as our raw potential is very high. Tapping into our potential and sustaining it will be the key to our success.

.....

RICHARD AMOW

Why do you enjoy doing kendo?

I enjoy Kendo because it is an art of repetition for perfection

What the hardest thing about kendo?

The hardest thing about Kendo is me getting over my shortcomings to be perfect

How has kendo helped you in your life?

Kendo has taught me discipline and not to overthink things

What do you think TT Kendo can achieve in the future?

Kendo TT can achieve an active vibrant youth programme a dream of mines

.....

NIGEL SEALEY

Kendo is the art of swordsmanship where I will learn the basics of battoujutsu and be like Kenshin Himura. Those were my first thoughts that pervaded my mind, before joining a beginners course hosted by the Trinidad and Tobago Kendo Federation. Little did I know I was open for a rude awakening! Even more so as I had to learn proper footwork and even wear armor!

.....

AVINASH MAHARAJ

I have been practicing kendo in Trinidad for the past eight years. I joined in 2013 which was a few years after I graduated for twofold reasons. One was that in medical school the main use of your body is to literally carry around your head and so your physical health often declines. The second reason is that like alot of people from my generation we grew up on Samurai movies and series and so we always had an interest in the Japanese sword.

My first class was not actually supposed to be a class at all. Sensei had told me to come and observe a class before I decided to join. However on arriving there and filling out the form I was quickly handed a Shinai and was told to go on the dojo floor. We started with basic foot movements and then did the traditional “Ichi, ni, san” method of doing a proper men strike.

This lasted less than an hour but around forty minutes into it I felt so tired that it immediately made me realize how out of shape I really was. I now think in essence this is what was the first step into me making the decision

to stay. That a simple exercise can get me so exhausted showed me how weak I really was which was a complete contradiction of what I thought of myself. The second part came when Eddy Sensei told us to sit down and the senior kendokas in bogu were going to “Have some fun”. I remember sitting on the wooden dojo floor, watching them bow to each other, lower their bodies in sonkyo and they then proceeded to strike each other. But the completely foreign concept to me was that they were not striking simply with their arms but rather using their entire body. Even more amazing was that everytime they landed a hit, the entire dojo floor and walls shook. I immediately made a commitment to myself that I wanted this “power”. I now not only wanted to get into shape but I decided not to stop until I was able to generate this incredible amount of force and power myself.

Both my goals were fulfilled in less than a year but like any science the more you know the more you realize you don’t know. And I believe it is that allure that appeals not only to the martial artist in me but the scientist as well. Everytime I think there’s only a few more things to learn, I realize there’s yet another Pandora’s box waiting to be unlocked. This is what keeps Kendo interesting to me... Well that and of course the refreshments after practice. Kampai!



TESTIMONIALS FROM AROUND THE WORLD



Congratulations on your 15th Anniversary!

I am very excited to see the growth of Kendo in Trinidad & Tobago, in the recent years.

I visited TT in 2010, and I had the pleasure of practicing with the TT members. The group was still small but I could feel the enthusiasm from all the members. I know there are many challenges that come with starting a new Kendo community, and in order to build its foundation, it requires so much dedication!

I wish TT Kendo the best of luck and I will be cheering for the success of TT Kendo in the years to come.

Taro Ariga
Kendo Kyoshi 7 Dan
Butokuden Kendo Instructor

I am really proud to say that I have benefitted from practising Kendo with the members of the KFTT since its inception in 2004.

The spirit and determination of the teacher and core students is a wonderful example of what Kendo has to offer the world.

Errol Baboolal Blake
(Chairman, British Kendo Association; September 2019)



As fellow Caribbean islanders we congratulate the Kendo Federation of Trinidad & Tobago and celebrate the occasion of fifteen years of Kendo on the island. I am happy and proud to say that the friendship and exchanges between TT and Aruban kendoka are practically as old as KFTT itself. We have witnessed our 'baby brother' grow and mature and it fills our hearts with great joy now that KFTT has become an official member of CLAK.

I believe the introduction of KFTT into CLAK is an important symbol of the diversification - or 'caribbeanization' - of CLAK, as KFTT sets the example for the non-Hispanic/Portuguese nations in our region to join into this big Kendo brother and sisterhood. So from all Aruban kenshi to the great Soca Warrior Nation, a heart-felt congratulation. Way to go!

Sergio Velásquez,
President of Kendo Aruba/Bun Bu Itchi,
Vice-President of CLAK

JAPANESE EMBASSY CUP

Perpetual Cup donated by the Embassy of Japan in Trinidad & Tobago to the winner of the yearly National Open Tournament.

Every year since 2015 the Japanese Embassy has been graciously supporting our efforts to develop Kendo in T&T by attending and awarding the cup to the winner of the tournament.



JAPANESE EMBASSY CUP 2015



“After many years of building a relationship of trust with the Japanese embassy I thought it would be appropriate to formalize it in the form of a recurring trophy given to the winner of a yearly tournament. I was very honored to see that the embassy trusted our approach and supported us in developing Kendo in the country. To celebrate this first tournament we invited our friends from Aruba, Sergio & Eun Jung Sensei. Who brought along some friends from Dominican Republic and Puerto Rico. it was a great few days of Kendo training and celebrations.” – Eddy



Over the Easter weekend holiday the Kendo Federation of Trinidad & Tobago hosted a 3 day intensive Kendo training workshop. The event concluded with a tournament amongst the participants, held at the Central Regional Indoor Sporting Arena in Chaguanas. The tournament was endorsed by the Japanese Embassy in T&T.

Angela Lie-A-Lien from Aruba won the Open Category and claimed the Japanese Embassy Cup trophy, while Kwesi Williams from T&T finished in second place.

In the Kyu (non-black belt) category, 1st

place went to Ravi Sookram, followed by Jevaughn Birch and Keon Greene, all from T&T. In the Women's category Angela Lie-A-Lien finished first, followed by Danbi Velasquez and Melony Mitchell.

In addition to local Kendo members, the workshop was attended by foreign guests from Aruba, USA & Puerto Rico.

Photos and video coverage of the event can be found on the KFTT's Facebook page: www.fb.com/kendo4tt.

NATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIPS - 2015

	Open category	Women	Kyu
1st place	Angela Lie-A-Lien	Angela Lie-A-Lien	Ravi Sookram
2nd place	Kwesi Williams	Danbi Velasquez	Jevaughn Birch
3rd place	Danbi Velasquez	Melony Mitchell	Keon Greene
Fighting Spirit award	Nekeshia Lewis		
Best Ippon	Richard Amow		

JAPANESE EMBASSY CUP 2016



Keon Greene (3 rd – Open Category), Melony Mitchell (2 nd – Women), Kwesi Williams (1 st – Open Category), Nekeshia Lewis (3 rd – Women), Dionne Mitchell (1 st – Women), Hasani Girod (2 nd – Open Category)

The 2nd edition of the National Kendo Championships was held July 23rd at the St. Paul Street Sport Complex in Laventille, Port of Spain.

Kwesi Williams won the first place in the open category and was awarded the “Japanese Embassy Cup”. Coming second and third respectively were Hasani Girod and Keon Greene.

The Women’s category saw Dionne Mitchell, Melony Mitchell and Nekeshia Lewis win the top three places.

Chiharu Hoshiai and Takashi Kariya from the Embassy of Japan were on site to award the yearly Japanese Embassy Cup as well as other awards.



NATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIPS - 2016

	OPEN CATEGORY	WOMEN
1st place	Kwesi Williams	Dionne Mitchell
2nd place	Hasani Girod	Melony Mitchell
3rd place	Keon Greene	Nekeshia Lewis

JAPANESE EMBASSY CUP 2017



This year's event was particularly fun. As usual this event was supported by the Japanese embassy. We also got the visit of high ranking Kendo friends from Japan, UK and Mexico. that meant that the social aspect of Kendo was emphasized. – Eddy

NATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIPS - 2017

	OPEN CATEGORY	WOMEN
1st place	Herman Williams	Melony Mitchell
2nd place	Hasani Girod	Dionne Mitchell
3rd place	Kwesi Williams	Alisha Wells

JAPANESE EMBASSY CUP 2018



“That year the Colombian guest sensei held an iaido seminar that was open to the public. It was interesting and we learnt a few kata. Iaido, I discovered that day, is not for my knees. 2018 was also the first time shiais included kata and kirikaeshi. Richard Amow and I won the kata but lost the tie-breaker for kirikaeshi.

Disappointed at losing but also genuinely amazed anyone was functional in that heat of that weekend. I won the women’s shiai, a nice improvement over my 3rd place finish of the previous year. I enjoyed the comraderie and high spirits generated by spending time in a weekend of kendo training and showing off Trinidad and its food.” – **Alicia**



National Championships - 2018

OPEN CATEGORY	WOMEN	
1st place	Keon Greene	Alisha Wells
2nd place	Kwesi Williams	Cherisse Constance
3rd place	Hasani Girod	Julia Parris
Fighting Spirit award	Julia Parris	
Best Kirikaeshi	Keon Greene - Jevaughn Birch	
Best Kata	Arif Ali - Alisha Wells	

JAPANESE EMBASSY CUP 2019



“The 15th anniversary of kendo in Trinidad brought out kendoka who hadn’t seen the dojo in ages. It seemed like riding a bicycle, the ease with which they fell back in suburi and other exercises.

As an anniversary tournament, there were special guests in the form of stick fighters, drummers and whip masters who put on exhibitions for the opening ceremony. The local flavour and representation was a pleasant addition. The larger-than-usual number of participants for the local tournament (which meant fighting against people you never fought before) made it more interesting than usual to me. And yet again, the tournament was undertaken in unrelenting heat. I held onto my first place finish in the women’s category, adding to my shinai mini-collection. I also won an award for fighting spirit from the guest sensei, Fernando Benavides. Not going to lie, it was a surprise. But the prize was Ecuadorian chocolate, I wasn’t about to question the choice. All in all, another excellent weekend.” – **Alicia**

National Championships - 2019

	OPEN CATEGORY	WOMEN
1st place	Hasani Girod	Alisha Wells
2nd place	Keon Greene	Dionne Mitchell
3rd place	Jevaughn Birch	Melony Mitchell
Fighting Spirit award	Hasani Girod	



“Let’s talk about the tournament. The whole idea of having a beginner in a Round Robin dueling session is crazy; but hey it was my choice and I did not regret. Kiai my lungs out to scare my opponents to victory but it didn’t work: lost all my matches. I did learn a lot though.

I learnt how to:

- Perform Kendo etiquette - Reiho
- Put on the Kendo equipment - Keiko Gi, •Bogu and Hakama in addition to the use of the bokken and shinai
- Perform Keiko - which I think gave me some valuable practice to even enter the tournament.

This was my first tournament and I must say that it gave me a good introduction into what it will entail to pursue Kendo. Grounded basics and encouragement from my fellow kendoka.” – **Nigel**



T&T KENDO NATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIPS 2019

JAPANESE EMBASSY CUP

Come cheer T&T's best Samurai in the Caribbean
Sunday October 27th 12:00pm - 4:00pm
JEAN PIERRE COMPLEX
TRY KENDO 9AM-11AM (FREE AND OPEN TO ALL AGES)
ADMISSION IS FREE TO ALL



TOURNAMENTS

CUBA 2004



“After only a few months living in the Caribbean I was invited to a regional tournament In a country that I never thought I would ever visit. It turned out to be an extraordinary experience not only for the Kendo and the new friends I met but also because of the opportunity to see Cuba from a different perspective.” – **Eddy**



ARUBA 2005



“During the month of October 2005 I left Trinidad with my destination being Aruba. For the first time I was leaving my family behind and travelling abroad with Eddy, Junior, Aaron, Nicholas. The parents of Aaron and Nicholas travelled with us along with Lesley.

Cannot remember the exact time we arrived in Aruba but the flight was a connecting flight from Trinidad to Caracas to Aruba. On arrival we were informed that the host had a training session carded. We rushed to check in find the nearest grocery to get something to eat. Take my advice never eat Tuna salad and bread along with orange juice half hour before a practice session. I almost vomited in my men.

Aruba is a wonderful place tourist oriented. Oranjestad is beautiful. There is a mall that has a channel that leads to the sea that allows boats to enter and exit. The food there was great and the beers cheap.

After the sightseeing it was tournament time. What an experience. It was the first time I met Sensei Taro Ariga. He actually won the tournament that year. My first match

was against an experienced higher ranked person I think he was a 4th Dan and my second match was against a 2nd Dan. Lucky me only a 2 kyu.

So after wearing the Gi for the whole day, and only having one set of Gi the weather in Aruba provided assistance. The place was always hot and dry so we would always hang the Gi's to dry. After tournament the Saturday night it was Sayonara party. We were transported on a party bus to a sea side location, fantastic event.

On return to the hotel it was to get as much rest as possible to prepare for grading exams. Nature had other plans. No rain until that morning and my Gi along with others got soaked. No time for it to dry properly so grading wearing a wet Gi . With all that we all passed our 1st Kyu exams on the 9th October 2005.

Aruba will always be special. Meeting folks like Sensei Sergio, Sensei Kim, Angela, Carlos Flores, Estaban and many others will always be special. The friendships created still continue.” – **Richard**

COLOMBIA, MEDELLIN 2007



OUR recent trip to the 7th Caribbean & Central American Cup tournament held in Medellin, Columbia was the result of many months of hard work by all the members of the Kendo Federation of Trinidad & Tobago (KFTT).

Since our last tournament (Aruba, 2005) we have

been preparing ourselves in many aspects including organization, training & funding. Throughout this preparation we have received help from many people; the most significant help came recently from individuals and companies who shared the same values and support our vision.

VENEZUELA, CARACAS 2008



“Visiting Caracas with some of my first students and folks from the Japanese embassy was a great experience. I think we made a really big impression and certainly had a lot of fun.” – Eddy

ECUADOR, QUITO 2010



“My first time travelling with the Kendo team for grading and tournament took me to Ecuador. The team had prepared well for this journey and I was looking forward to it. I remember the many training drills to cover any situation that we may encounter on the floor and my own mental preparation as my goal was not to fail the exam.

All that nearly ground to a halt as soon I stepped off the plane. All my preparation could not tell me that I was so vulnerable to the thin air. Altitude sickness. Which made the next few days a grueling task. I literally turned into Darth Vader fighting for breath once my Men came on.

The following days was filled with Seminars, Drills, Jikeiko and meeting and forming friendships with other Kendoka from other countries in attendance and thanks to social media, still in touch with. Although there was

the obvious Spanish / English language barrier. The familiar Japanese commands and demonstrations made following along easy.

Actual tournament participation would beat any YouTube video that I had seen so far. My own matches were over quickly. But seeing how other kendoka bring their own way of fighting into the ring was an eye opener.

On exam day I stepped into the dojo with the familiar mindset of “The exam starts as you enter the Dojo” Our group had gone over the kata section a day before so all that was left was Kirikaeshi and Jikeiko. Which quickly passed and I was on my way to be able to take my Dan exam years later. All and all a memorable first experience which made me better prepared for following excursions with the Kendo team.” – **Jason**

COLOMBIA, MEDELLIN 2013



MEXICO, MERIDA 2014



“The 4th CLAK tournament was held in Merida Mexico 2014 and a record number of kendokas from Trinidad and Tobago participated in the event. It was constructed of a full men’s team and for the first time in the history of Trinidad kendo, a full women’s team as well. The participants of the country were very welcoming and we were treated to a variety of traditional Mexican dances and songs during the opening ceremony as well of course as a wide variety of authentic Mexican tequila during the course of the time we spent there.

Overall throughout the difficult training and tournament we never felt as though we were alone as both the locals and visitors, kendoka or not, made our stay not only enjoyable but genuinely memorable by their amiable, genuine and open approach. Because of this I don’t think it is a stretch of the imagination to say that most of the Trinidadian kendokas who visited during that time are looking forward to further events in this extraordinary North American nation.”

– Avinash



CHILE, VINA DEL MAR 2016



“This was the second CLAK event I’ve attended. It proved to be meaningful to me as it was there I passed my shodan exam as well as tested the progress I’d made on my kendo since the last event I attended in Mexico. Added to that the bonding between the Trinidadian Kendoka themselves and with old and new international kendo friend, this event holds a special place.” – **Jevaughn**



COLOMBIA, CALI 2019

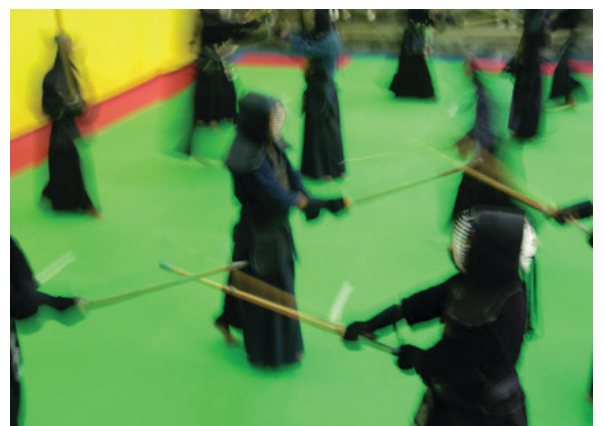


“Cali Columbia was host to the 7 th annual CLAK tournament, seminar and grading. The contingent was of the smallest ever to represent Trinidad, comprised of myself, Hasani Girod and Eddy sensei. It was great to reconnect with old and make new kendo friends. The opportunity to train with and get pointers from senior ranks, particularly female ones, is one of the best parts of CLAK. Between visiting local dojos and unscheduled keiko, there were a lot of opportunities.

While neither Hasani nor I placed in the tournament, it gave time to watch the rest of matches for the seniors’ and ladies’ shiais. Kendo considers observing others as a type of training, so spectating was a learning experience in and of itself. I also did my shodan exam, with the examiners taking time to specifically ensure that I –the lone non-fluent Spanish or Japanese speaker in my group (basically at the tournament, to be honest) — properly understood directions and instructions. It was indicative of the fairness and consideration with which kendokas generally approach others and life. Unexpected highlight of the trip though, was a surprise rock band concert by Eddy sensei, Fernando sensei and Sergio sensei at the Sayonara party.” – Alisha

SEMINARS & INVITATIONS

VENEZUELA 2006



VENEZUELA, MARGARITA 2007



VENEZUELA, MARACAIBO 2007



BARBADOS 2007



ARUBA 2009



ARUBA 2018



DOMINICAN REPUBLIC 2010



ARUBA 2019



“This was a seminar hosted by Bun Bu Itchi in Aruba, with Sensei Sergio Velasquez and Sensei Kim.

This was my first kendo seminar and grading in another country. We were met by kendokas from various countries such as Panama, Puerto Rico, Ecuador to name a few. Though the day to day training was tough and sometimes arduous, the knowledge I gained has been an amazing asset in my kendo. The friendships forged were nothing short of great.

The seminar itself was very informative and useful to my growth as a kendoka. We learnt a variety of techniques, warmups, stretches and fine tuned kata. My experience was a very good one and I am very grateful to Sensei Eddy for the opportunity to be able to experience it.

I am thankful to my senpai for guidance and support.”

—Arif

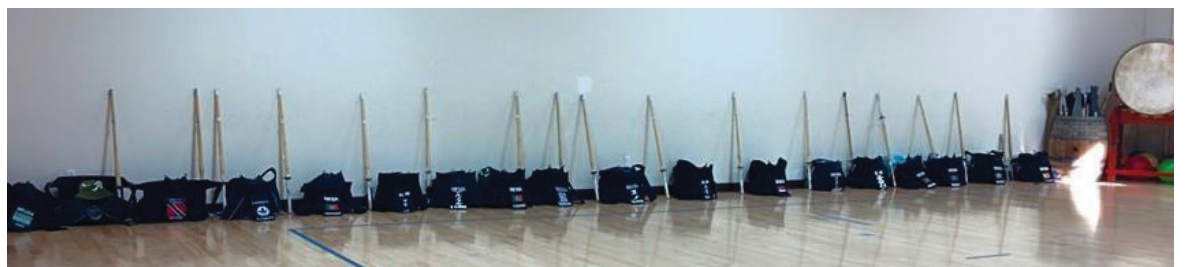
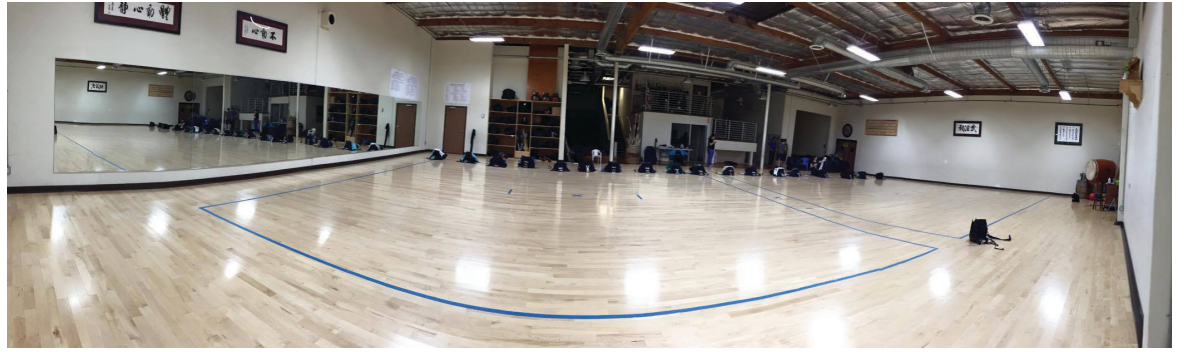
DOMINICAN REPUBLIC 2019



“The Dominican Republic seminar holds a special place for me. Several sensei from across the region were in attendance and were able to give more personalized, in-depth guidance when compared to say a larger CLAK seminar. The event also offered the opportunity to get to know the kendoka of the Dominican Republic who I had not met at previous CLAK events. Added to this the opportunity to partake in the historical side of Santo Domingo made this event one of my favourites.” – Jevaugh



TRAINING CAMPS



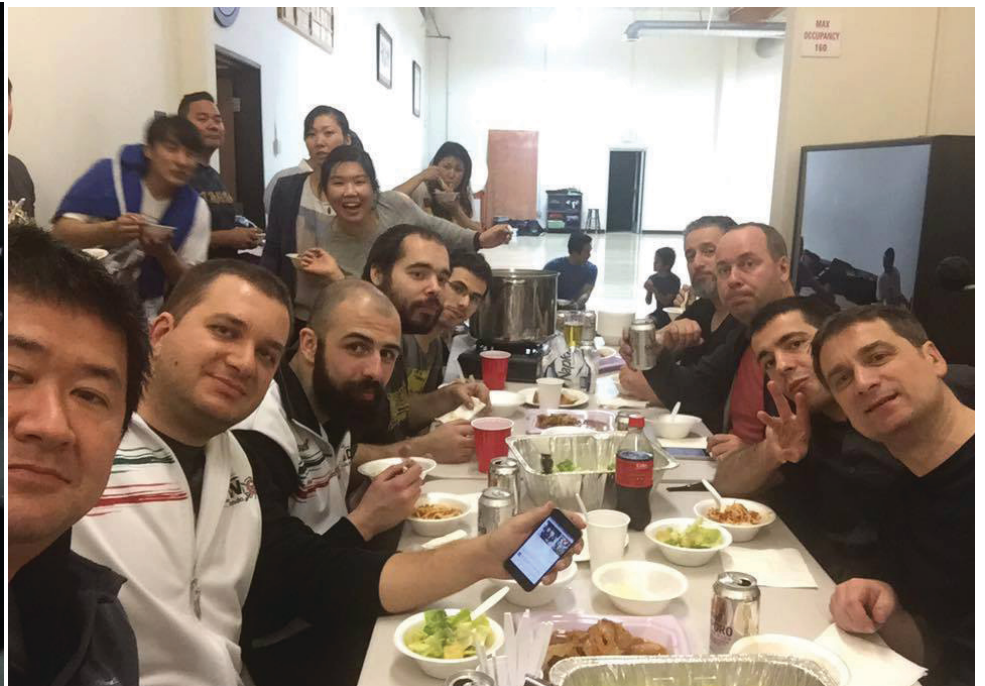
TRAINING CAMPS IN T&T



CALIFORNIA - BUTOKUDEN INTERNATIONAL GASSHUKU 2015



CALIFORNIA - BUTOKUDEN INTERNATIONAL GASSHUKU 2016



CALIFORNIA - BUTOKUDEN INTERNATIONAL GASSHUKU 2017



- ✓ Understand Dojo Kun (by Ogawa Chutaro Sensei)
- ✓ Always keep Dojo Clean
- ✓ Order of Line up at Seiza: Dan > Age
- ✓ Gasshuku Captain: Henrique (Portuguese team Captain)
- ✓ Put Men quickly (if slower than Ariga sensei, do 500 Hayasuburi during Break. NO EXCEPTIONS)
- ✓ Never be late to practice. Always be in the Dojo before Sensei. If you are late to practice 500 Hayasuburi.
- ✓ Never take off Men during practice
- ✓ During Jigeiko practice, do not wait in line. Try to practice with as many people as possible.



CALIFORNIA - BUTOKUDEN INTERNATIONAL GASSHUKU 2018



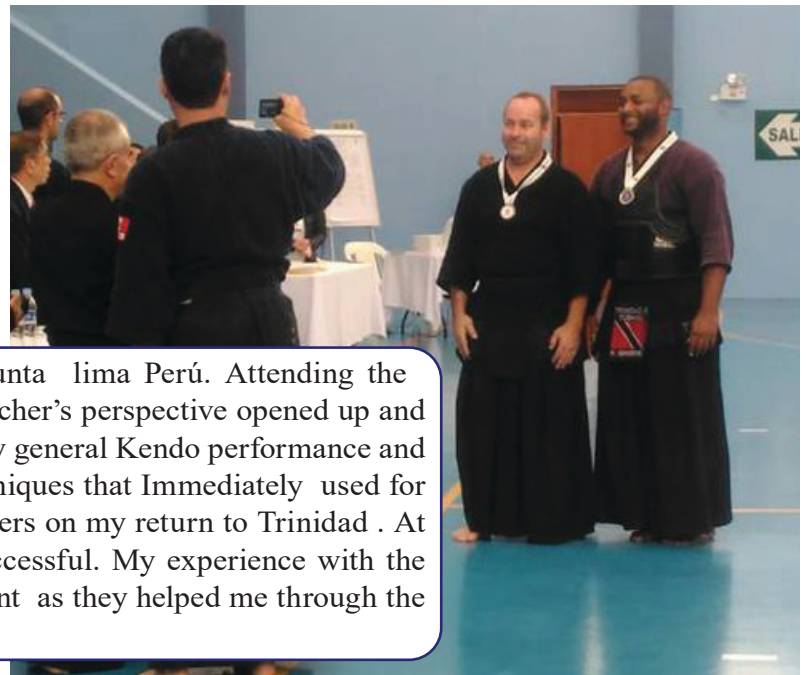
CALIFORNIA - BUTOKUDEN INTERNATIONAL GASSHUKU 2019



PERU, LIMA 2012



PERU, LIMA 2018



"I attended the Instructors seminar held in La punta lima Perú. Attending the event was very eye opening, as learning from a teacher's perspective opened up and answered some technical issues I was having with my general Kendo performance and training . I also picked up some great teaching techniques that Immediately used for the training of beginners and for dealing with my peers on my return to Trinidad . At the event attempted my Ni Dan exams and was successful. My experience with the host and other kendoka ,of the event was very pleasant as they helped me through the language and skill barrier any time I asked." –Keon

LOCAL EVENTS

SAVANNAH 2005



BOGU DONATION 2007

With the support of the Embassy of Japan in T&T we were lucky to receive equipment donations from the All Japan Kendo Federation. In both occasions we received the following equipment:

- New and used bogu (armour)
- Gi & hakama
- Carbon fiber shinai



BOGU DONATION 2016



NATIONAL MUSEUM 2008



Arts A GLIMPSE OF JAPAN'S HISTORY

MARTIAL ARTS from Page 1

Budo is the modern Japanese word for martial arts. It is written with two characters meaning "martial" and "way" or "the way of the warrior".

Before the word Budo came into use in the twentieth century, the martial arts were generally referred to as "bujutsu", meaning "martial technique". The term "Budo" marked a shift in emphasis from martial arts as practical fighting systems to martial arts as vehicles for training the mind, body and spirit.

The exhibition, which offers a glimpse of Japan's history, consisted of two parts. The first was a display of historical weapons such as bows and arrows, swords of armor and helmets and an explanation of the development of Japanese martial arts from the eighth to the nineteenth centuries.

Parts of the armour carried messages. The armour's design signified a warrior's status and inner self. Thus, warriors pursued high artistic quality for their armor.

This potency was used to raise battle morale, advertise the appearance of the warrior winning the battle and his movements on the battlefield. It was also used for ceremony and decoration when praying for fortune in war and success in life.

The second part of the exhibition dealt with the reorganization of Japan to Budo in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, and how the spirit of martial arts is still inherent in the daily life of Japanese people today.

Ambassador Seki believed that although economic exchanges between governments were important, the exchange of culture also played an important role in developing closer ties between two countries. He hoped the exhibition would satisfy the ever-growing interest in martial arts and offer a better understanding of Japanese culture.

The exhibition at the museum runs until September 14 and is open to the public between 10 a.m. and 6 p.m. from Tuesday to Saturday and 2 p.m. and 6 p.m. on Sundays.



MARTIAL ARTS DISPLAY: A kendo demonstration by the Shoshodo Kendo Federation of Trinidad and Tobago followed the opening ceremony.



SPRINT OF MARTIAL ARTS: An array of helmets which are on display as part of "The Spirit of Budo: The History of Japan's Martial Arts" exhibition being held at the National Museum and Art Gallery. —Photo: ROBERTO CODALLO



CARRYING MESSAGES: Magarishi haramaki type armor with suikan type helmet.



STATUS SYMBOL: The 6-panel type armor with hoshi-kabuto helmet. —Photo: ROBERTO CODALLO

UWI LANGUAGE CENTER 2009 & 2011

Throughout the years we have supported and received the support from our Japanese friends at the UWI Language Center.



JAPANESE NAVY VISIT 2014



“This activity was one of the most memorable ones if you ask anybody who attended, despite lasting no more than a few hours. It was nice to see how people from vastly different countries and cultures could bond around Kendo. There was a tremendous amount of work involved in making this happen involving the local embassy, but it was definitely worth it. There was even an article written about this event in Kendo Jidai, the main Kendo magazine in Japan.” – Eddy



STICKFIGHTING TRAINING 2014



“Soon after arriving in Trinidad I realized that “fighting with sticks” had a long history in the country. I got the opportunity to meet an enthusiastic promoter of the indigenous art of stickfighting who soon became a student of mine and we formed a long lasting bond. in preparation for a tournament I thought it may be interesting to invite them for a fun session.” –**Eddy**



JAPANESE EMBASSY DEMO 2014

The Shoshin Kendo Dojo was invited to the Japanese Embassy on February 22nd to give a Kendo demonstration. The kendokas also took the opportunity to address members of the National Security, Educators, Ministers and the Media about the value of school and security programs incorporating the two main traditional martial arts of Japan: Kendo and Judo.



SUPER JAPANESE NIGHT 2018



SUPER ASIAN NIGHT 2019



BEGINNERS' CLASSES





LIMING AND 第二道場



PRESS AND MEDIA



Countdown Photos: <https://bit.ly/nrkswv>
剣道 #kendo #16wkc

大会まであと
16 days to the tournament.

16日



162 likes

MAY 12, 2015

Add a comment...

Prepare for regional Kendo Cup in Venezuela

THE KENDO Federation of Trinidad and Tobago (KFTT) is currently preparing a team for the Caribbean and Central American Cup in Caracas, Venezuela in October.

The national team will be seeking to improve on its third-place finish in last year's competition in Colombia.

According to the Wikipedia encyclopedia, kendo, or "way of the sword", is the Japanese martial art of fencing.

Kendo developed from traditional techniques of Japanese swordsmanship known as kenjutsu.

Kendo is a physically and mentally challenging activity that combines strong martial arts values with sporting-like physical elements.

Practitioners of kendo are called kendoka, meaning "one who practices kendo", or kenshi, meaning "swordsmen".

Kendo is practised wearing traditionally styled clothing and protective armour, using one or two bamboo swords as weapons.

Kendo may be seen as a

Japanese style of fencing, called fumikomi.

In related news, the KFTT recently staged its first seminar and tournament, featuring performers from Aruba, Venezuela and the United States.

They took part in six training sessions under the directorship of American sensei Daniel Ebihara.

Eloy Arends of Aruba won the individual section while the combination of Guillermo Auvert of Venezuela and Alejandro Castillo of Aruba prevailed in the team category.

"The event was a resounding success," said KFTT president Eddy Devisse, "our guests were very satisfied with their experience here and praised the TT team's skills."

Devisse, in a media release, stated that the KFTT is the only organisation recognised internationally by the Japanese Kendo Federation and other Federations worldwide.

Persons seeking further information can call 787-9100 or via the internet at kendo.ipmtt.net.

Japan Kendo Federation donates equipment to T&T

NEW GEAR: Members of the Shoshin Kendo Dojo clash their Shinai (bamboo swords) as they perform a Kendo demonstration following the official presentation ceremony of new Kendo equipment to the Trinidad and Tobago Kendo Federation on Tuesday night. The equipment, which was donated by the All Japan Kendo Federation, was presented to Head Instructor, Eddy Devisse by Japanese Ambassador, Kachiro Seki at the Shoshin Kendo Dojo, Tranquility Methodist Church Hall, New Town, Port of Spain.



24 • Saturday November 24, 2007

The Barbados Advocate

Kobudo demonstration a first for region

By Corey Greaves

THE Embassy of Japan, sponsored by the Japan Foundation and supported by the Okayama Prefecture presented a Kobudo (Traditional Japanese Martial Arts) Demonstration in front of a large crowd at the Barbados Shotokan Karate Club, Dojo at Marine Gardens on Thursday.

The seven specialists from Okayama Prefecture, Japan presented some of the most popular forms of Kobudo, Iaido and Kendo and both groups performed Katan, while the Kendo demonstration ended with a display of sparring.

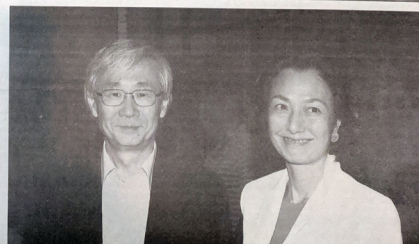
In the first time that Kobudo has been showcased in the region by Japan, making the journey was Isamu Akagi Iaido 7th dan, Masao Sahara Iaido 7th dan, Koushi Kanda Iaido 6th dan, Setsuko Sahara Iaido 6th dan, Yukihiko Fukushima Kendo 7th dan, Hajime Kariishi Kendo 7th dan and Masao Sakate Takenouchi Ryu 4th dan.

There were four specialists in Iaido - the way of the sword, Iaido is concerned with drawing the blade and cutting in the same motion, which is to slay an opponent with one stroke of the sword immediately after unsheathing it. A typical form consists of the draw and cut, finishing cut, cleaning the blade and returning it to the scabbard, all without looking away from the imaginary opponent.

Kendo, also training the way of the sword, is practised using a shinai, which is the practice "sword" and is made up of four bamboo staves, which are held together by higher fittings. Kendoka also uses bokken (bokuto wooden sword) to practice more formal, set forms known as kata. It is practised wearing traditionally styled clothing and protective armour. Kendo may be seen as a

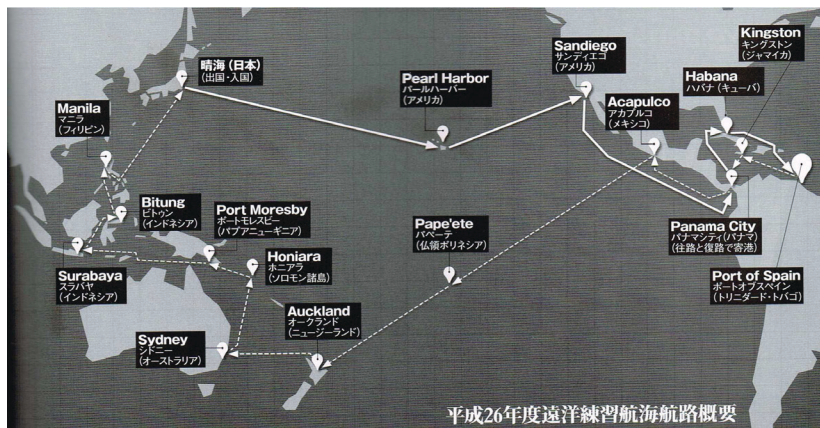


Five of the Kobudo masters from Japan: (from left) Masao Sakate, Yukihiko Fukushima, Setsuko Sahara, Koushi Kanda, Masao Sahara and Isamu Akagi.



RIGHT CENTRE: Isamu Akagi, Iaido 7th dan demonstrating the path of the sword as he cuts through the object with one stroke of the sword.

RIGHT: The Ambassador of Japan H. E. Kachiro Seki (left) and his wife were in attendance during the Kobudo demonstration.



平成26年度遠洋練習航海航路概要



文=菅野 徹 (すがの とおる) 日本国練習艦隊司令部 庶務長付・2等海尉。 date: 10/25/07

トリニダード・トバゴ共和国
練習艦隊がゆく
海上自衛隊 諸国交刺通歴 Vol.5
写真◆練習艦隊
本年5月からの約5ヶ月、
世界各国を歴訪した海上自衛隊「日本国練習艦隊」
乗組した菅野氏による行く先々の交刺知愛

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H.E. MITSUHIRO OKADA
AMBASSADOR OF JAPAN



Jevaughn Birch, left, and Peter Alfred attack each other in one of the early rounds at the Kendo National Open Championships at the St Paul Street Complex this past weekend. Judge, Eddy Devisee, monitors the match behind.

Williams, Mitchell top Kendo Open Champs

RYAN BACHOO

On a quiet Saturday afternoon on St Paul Street, the only noise a passer-by could hear are the screams of kendokas, trying to conquer their opponents with swords and spirit in the complex. Upon entry, there are a few people in the stands watching on, and athletes scattered around the stage warming up or strapping up for their fights ahead.

Kendo is still a relatively new sport in this country. Upon moving to T&T 10 years ago, president of the Kendo Federation of T&T, Eddy Devisee began teaching the art. It's growth has been slow, but it's grown so well, for the past three years, the federation has been putting on its National Open Championships, featuring the top athletes in the country coming up against each other.

The event was attended by Japanese embassy officials, who have been sponsoring the main prize, the Japanese Embassy Cup since the championships' inception. It's won by the winner of the open category. This year, that person was Herman Williams, who beat Hasani Girod in the final. Herman's brother, Kwesi Williams finished in third place in the open category.

Dressed in samurai outfits with a grill across the face for protection and dried bamboo sticks in their hands for swords, kendo is how the samurais in Japan used to train so they wouldn't hurt each other. Today, over two million people around the world practice the art. To win a match, a kendoka needs to get to two points. A point is attained for a blow to the opponent's head, hand, or body. Judges can also take into consideration the spirit of the athlete, so that explains all the screaming around the St Paul Street Complex.

In the female category, sisters Melony and Dionne Mitchell met in the final. Both traded blows, pounding away at each other's hands and heads. In the end, Melony had gotten the two points to beat her sister. Alisha Wells finished in third place.

The sport has enjoyed the support of the Japanese mission here in T&T, but the difficulty level sees people come and go. Devisee tells Guardian Media Sports, "It's very, very harsh. We train exactly how they do in Japan, and so the retention rate is very low, so 20 or 25 people will join, and maybe two or three will remain after a year."

Still, Hideaki Fujiyama, the Embassy of Japan's Third Secretary feels kendo can provide a sporting bridge between his country and T&T. He says, "I think by doing kendo, Trinidadian people can understand Japanese culture a lot better. I think it's important to promote mutual understanding between both countries."

With Machel Montano's tour of Japan having wrapped up last month, perhaps there are opportunities beyond music for Trinbagonians to showcase in the asian nation.

Kendo Federation gets donation

THE All Japan Kendo Federation recently donated Kendo Equipment to the Trinidad and Tobago Kendo Federation at the Shoshin Dojo, Transquility Methodist Church Hall in Port of Spain. Japanese Ambassador, Koichiro Seki presented the equipment to head instructor, Eddy Devisee, before an assembly of past and present Kendo students and their friends and family members.

Kendo is a Japanese martial art developed by the samurai as a means of practicing their craft. It has since evolved into a modern fencing art that blends tradition and sport and in many ways it is the Japanese equivalent of fencing.

Following the formal presentation ceremony, members of the Shoshin Kendo Dojo and volunteer staff of the Embassy of Japan performed a Kendo demonstration displaying some basic techniques of this martial art form.

EVENTS — The Daily Express Section 2 • Friday 4th May 2007 19

PHOTOS: MICHAEL BRUCE

KENDO STYLE: Members of the Shoshin Kendo Dojo and volunteer staff of the Embassy of Japan perform a Kendo demonstration.

ALL SMILES: Japanese ambassador, Koichiro Seki, presents equipment to head instructor, Eddy Devisee, at the Shoshin Kendo Dojo.

HAVING A CHAT: From left: Director of Cartoon Division, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Sandra Honore speaks with the Japanese Ambassador, Koichiro Seki and permanent secretary, Ministry of Sport and Youth Affairs, Margaret Farley following the Kendo demonstration at the Shoshin Dojo, Newtown, Port of Spain.

TAKING A LOOK: Japanese language student, Candace Leung Woo-Gabriel, chats with Public Relations and Cultural Section Officer Embassy of Japan, Eddy Devisee.



SPORT **HEAD OF EIGHTH FIRST CITIZENS CUP** **GUAYA UNITED**



'AAH-YAH': Two kendoka demonstrate the discipline at the Kendo Federation of Trinidad and Tobago (KFTT) National Championships, held at the St Paul Street Sport Complex, Port of Spain, on Saturday.

Kendo taking root in T&T

THE Kendo Federation of Trinidad & Tobago (KFTT) hosted their National Championships at the St Paul Street Sport Complex, St Paul Street, Port of Spain, on Saturday.

The tournament included the Open and Women's categories in a competition endorsed

by the Japanese Embassy in T&T.

Kendo is the traditional Japanese martial art that arose from samurai warriors fighting with bamboo "swords". Kendo athletes wear protective gear-like armour over kimono-like training wear.

Kendo differs from other forms of martial arts, in that it is not solely about winning, but also respects good manners and nurtures a strong spirit.

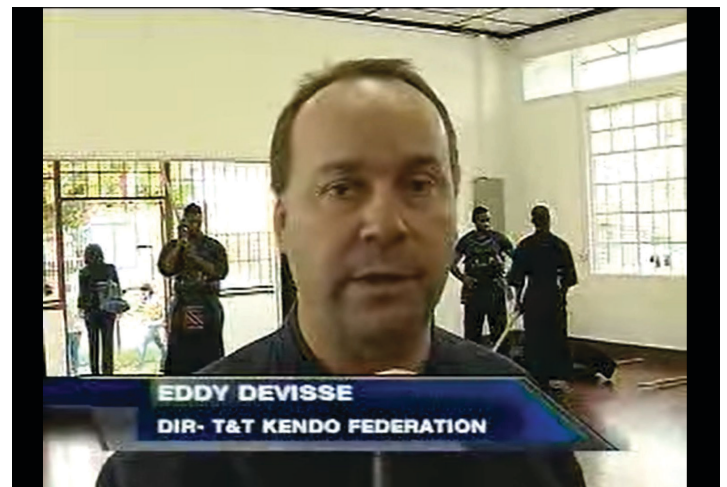
Eddy Devisse, KFTT president, said that Kendo has taken root and is continuously growing in popularity.



NEW

KENDO IN ACTION

7:15



EDDY DEVISSE

DIR- T&T KENDO FEDERATION



JAPAN • CARICOM

FRIENDLY YEAR

Kendo National tourney at St Paul Street Complex

KENDO is a form of Japanese martial art that originated from kenjutsu, with competitors using bamboo 'swords' and protective gear-like armour.

And, on Saturday, the Kendo Federation of Trinidad and Tobago will be staging a tournament at the St Paul Street Sports Complex, East Dry River, Port of Spain.

This contest will run from 1-4 pm and will include the Open and Women's categories, while there will be awards for Kantoso and the Best Ippon, as well as the Japanese Embassy Cup for the overall winner. The Embassy Cup will be presented by a member of the Japanese Embassy of Trinidad and Tobago which has endorsed Saturday's tournament.

Eddy Devisse, president of the Kendo Federation of Trinidad and Tobago, said, "We are really excited about this year's championship and are expecting some great matches. Kendo is starting to grow in popularity here in Trinidad and Tobago and the National Championships and the awarding of the Japanese Embassy Cup is the highlight of our calendar."

"We hope that people will take the opportunity to come and see this dynamic and unique Japanese martial art and will be tempted to try it out for themselves."



A Kendo demonstration takes place with members engaging in combat.

The Kendo Federation of Trinidad and Tobago is the governing body for the sport locally and is recognised by both the International Kendo Federation and the Confederation of Latin American Kendo.

The sport of kendo began formally in the twin-island republic in 2004 and members practise on a weekly basis in Port of Spain.

Members have competed in a number of tournaments worldwide, including events in Chile, Mexico, Venezuela, Aruba, Cuba, Ecuador and Colombia.

In addition to local Kendo members, the National Championship will be attended by foreign guests from the United Kingdom,

Mexico and Japan. Photo and video coverage of the event will be found on the KFTT's Facebook page: www.fb.com/kendo4tt.

THANK YOU

I wish to thank

- Ambassadors of Japan in T&T Koichiro Seki, Yoshimasa Tezuka, Mitsuhiro Okada and Tatsuo Hirayama and their staff throughout the years. They contributed so much to our development with their help and recognition of our efforts. I hope we continue to maintain our high standard of practice and discipline, and retain this close relationship.
- All the Sensei who helped guide me along the many years, Senseis Goulet, Benoit, d'Orangeville, Yamaguchi, Yamamoto, Ariga. In particular Taro Ariga sensei who as a friend and Kendo sempai has helped & supported me throughout my journey as a kendo leader in my region, by pushing me towards a very high standard of teaching and practicing Kendo.
- Mario Kalloo, Ebihara sensei and Errol Blake who never hesitated to step in and help how they could in my early days in T&T.
- Sergio Velasquez who welcomed me in the region practically the day I arrived in T&T and leaders of the region such as Fernando, Ariel, Jorge, Carlos, Freddy, Esteban, Steve, Martin, Nic... too many to mention. All of you share the same struggle to establish a new Kendo culture in your country.
- All the students who stuck to the hard practice; you understand that we are all a “work in progress” and it never ends! Also thank you to those who may not be training with us anymore physically but are still supporting us in their own ways.

Finally my (our) greatest supporter, my sweet wife, who has had to endure the frequent absence from home, the occasional noisy Kendo party in “Scenic Santa Cruz” and the smelly equipment.

Eddy Devisse

Head Instructor - Kendo Federation of T&T



WHAT IS KENDO

KENDO is a Japanese Martial Art developed by samurai who wanted to practice their craft. Kendo has evolved into a modern fencing art that blends tradition and sport.

Since 1868, the official martial arts recognized in Japan are: Judo, Kendo, Iaido, Aikido, Kyudo, Karate and Shorinji Kenpo.

Kendo as we know it was formalized around 1910 when leaders of various Koryu (traditional schools of swordsmanship) came together to create a standardized Kendo curriculum to be spread within Japan and eventually internationally.

Very little has changed since then, including most rules, examination standards, techniques and training methods.

THE CONCEPT OF KENDO

The concept of Kendo is to discipline the human character through the application of the principles of the Katana (sword).

("The Concept of Kendo" was established by All Japan Kendo Federation in 1975.)

THE PURPOSE OF PRACTISING KENDO

To mould the mind and body,

To cultivate a vigorous spirit,

And through correct and rigid training,

To strive for improvement in the art of Kendo,

To hold in esteem human courtesy and honour,

To associate with others with sincerity,

And to forever pursue the cultivation of oneself.

This will make one be able:

To love his/her country and society,

To contribute to the development of culture

And to promote peace and prosperity among all peoples.



