

President's Report for April 2004 to April 2005 Year

(Note: Lin Wei Chen was president from the 2004 AGM until October when she had to leave to Taiwan. Michael Dunn was elected as the new president at an SGM.)

Another busy and successful year for UMKC, with memberships at a record high and solid results in many competitions. While our regular training remains the core of the club, the camp and Sensei visits have added to the opportunity to improve our Kendo. Our many social events have also provided ample opportunity for our members to get to know when another outside of the dojo.

Membership

Over 110 people attended our first free session of our beginners course this year, similar numbers to that of last year. We have had 69 people sign up since then and we hope that they continue to train with us. This will be in addition to the 110 members we currently have registered with the VKR.

Competition

At the Australian Kendo Championships (AKC) in March in Canberra, Avinesh Ganesan, Chiaki Kobayashi, Andrew Lam, Jon Teo, Eric Tsai, Kenji Sugimoto all represented Victoria in various events. Avi, Andrew, Jon and Eric were all members of the winning Victorian Kyu Grade team. Congratulations also to Yakov Macak Sensei on his runner's up in the Veteran's competition.

At the Victorian Kendo Championships (VKC) in August, 2004, held at Fudoshin, we had some very good results. Jon Teo placed 2nd in the Kyu Grade Individuals, and our Kyu Team (Takeru Stewart, Avinesh Ganesan, Jon Teo, Kevin Chin, Taiki Matsueda) won the Championship. Our Women's team placed 2nd (Chiaki Kobayashi, Lin Wei Chen and Jesse Jeung). Kenji Sugimoto and Chiaki Kobayashi placed 2nd in the Kata Pairs, and Kenji was also awarded a Fighting Spirit Award in the Open Grade.

At the Australian University Games (AUG) in Perth, we had another successful year, with the Kyu Grade team (Takeru, Avi, Taiki, Michael Dunn, Jimmy Leong) taking Gold against Monash. Taiki won Bronze in the Individuals, and Avi came 4th.

Eddy Wu was a member of the winning team at the Otsuka Memorial Competition.

Grading

Chris Panagopolous received his San Dan. Chiaki Kobayashi and Josh Orth both achieved the grade of Ni Dan. Andrew Lam received his Sho-dan. Jon Teo, Kevin Chin, Jesse Jueng, and Avinesh Ganesan all received their 1st Kyu Grades. We also had over 40 members successfully pass their respective Kyu grades.

Sensei Visits and Nittaidai Visit

The club was honoured to have a number of prominent and experienced Sensei visit the club this year. In July, Chiba-Sensei and Sato-Sensei, conducted a training session at the club, with around 30 Kendo players from other Melbourne Clubs joining the training.

In October, Terry Holt-Sensei, from the Mumeishi club in London, trained with the club as part of his visit to Australia. In March, this year, the Nittaidai school visited Melbourne again and a number of members attended a joint training session with the school.

Camp

In May, forty members left for Ballarat on a Friday night for a two day intensive training session. Members of the Ballarat club also joined us for some of the training, and the camp has become a keenly awaited event each year.

Demonstrations

We conducted a joint demonstration with Monash Uni Kendo Club as part of a Year 10 Japanese Cultural Day, held at Monash Uni. We also conducted a demonstration at Footscray Secondary College, and received a \$200 donation.

Thank you to all those who helped with demonstrations throughout the year.

Social Events

To raise money for our AUG trip we held a Band and Auction Night in early September at the Prince Alfred Hotel. Our equipment suppliers, Amplus Trading, kindly donated \$500 worth of equipment which we then auctioned on the night. In total over \$1000 was raised and put towards subsidies for the AUG team. Thanks to the two bands, and all those that helped out on the night.

A number of dinners were held throughout the year, including the End of Beginners Course dinner and the End of Year Dinner. Thanks to Kevin Houg for his work as Social Officer. Organising how to feed a big group is becoming his speciality.

Ben Sheppard Sensei

Ben Shepard joined UMKC in the early 1990s and has been a regular member of the club since then. Last year at the AKC, Ben Sensei was awarded his 5th Dan and only the 2nd UMKC member to do so. After Yakov Sensei, Ben Sensei was the most senior member of our club and his Kendo experience and knowledge has been greatly appreciated over the years. Unfortunately, Ben Sensei is no longer able to train with the club on a regular basis and will concentrate his efforts on the club he has founded in Brunswick West.

I would like to formally recognise and thank Ben Sensei for his tireless work and commitment to UMKC over the years, and we hope he can visit us often in the future.

Yakov Sensei

I would also like to thank Yakov Sensei for his guidance and support over the year in the running of the club.

Many thanks to the committee for their help and work throughout the year. As the club grows in size, a well functioning committee is a necessity and I have been fortunate to have hard working people fulfilling their roles.

The club could also not function with all the help from Yudansha during training, and the various smaller things that members do to help the club run smoothly. Thank you to all!