

MUKEN Training Camp 2018

TREVOR LAW[©]



On the 4th May, 56 kendoka of MUKEN and Monash Kendo Club departed Melbourne to embark on a training camp taking place at Ballarat. This two day intensive experience would be the culmination of the MUKEN beginner's course, whereby it also served as a welcome to become fully fledged members of the club.

All members were pushed mentally and physically, with early starts, cold weather and 5+ hours of training. Perseverance and determination became invaluable lessons learnt, and should follow us back to our dojos! Beginners, juniors and seniors all took something away, as 100 percent effort was given by all.

Many thanks to Yakov Sensei and Sugimoto Sensei. In particular, many of the new implementations were designed by Sugimoto Sensei, who gave the 2018 camp its unique identity.



SUBURI

Suburi are the backbone of any kendo training, and this year's routine was altered. In the past, there was a *trial-by-fire* by way of the infamous 1000 sho-men suburi, whereas in 2018 this was modified to 100 jogei buri, 100 sho-men, 100 saiyu-men and 200 consecutive hay-a suburi!

Inaugural Teamed Kirikaeshi Competition

Winner: The Sword-Fish Harem

This year marks the commencement of a new tradition; a teamed kirikaeshi competition. It was thought that the teamed context would force beginners and seniors alike to pull together, strategize and focus on overcoming personal weaknesses as to produce a better result. This new structure added to the atmosphere and spirit of kendo, whereby selflessness and respect for others was learnt.



Team Work Themed Experience

For the first time, participants were separated into groups of 5-7, consisting of a high dan, as well as a mix of kyu grades and beginners. These groups would also inform the room allocations.

This effort was done as a means of providing direct guidance to the beginners, as well as allowing the seniors an experience in coaching and mentoring.

This theme of team work informed the vibe of the training; where the senior dan member often became tasked with giving targeted advice aimed at individuals which was more focused than was possible at home dojo.

Planned By and For the Club

For the first time, all Dan grades of the MUKEN club were involved in the planning of the training. This made the experience more accessible and relatable to junior members. For senior members, this became an opportunity to 'pass on' the knowledge bestowed on them, and was also a reflection of the club's culture.

Jodan Seminar

This year, all kyu and dan grades participating the camp had the opportunity to train Jodan. This involved learning the requisite arm movements, Jodan-specific (opposite to our habits!) footwork, and even techniques to counter against Jodan, and defenses against these counter attacks. Afterwards, members were allowed to use this stance and techniques in free sparing jikeiko as well as concluding shiai competition.



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