

2015 CKF Annual General Meeting Minutes

Minutes compiled October 10, 2015 by CKF Secretary Neil Gendzwill

The Canadian Kendo Federation AGM was held electronically September 28-29, 2015. Representatives of CKF member clubs were invited to join a private Google Groups forum. There, various reports were presented and the representatives had an opportunity to discuss the reports and to also make general comments or inquiries.

Attendees:

CKF currently has 74 member clubs, plus 8 unpaid clubs in our database. The attendance of 41 club representatives plus CKF president D'Orangeville-sensei easily met the quorum requirement of 1/3 of members. Attendance was taken by having each club representative post in the Attendance thread.

Name	Affiliation	Name	Affiliation
Christian D'Orangeville	CKF President	Matthew Ricci	Hamilton Kendo Club
Neil Gendzwill	Saskatoon , CKF VP & Secretary	Alexander Cook	Ka Muso Kai
Hyun-June Choi	Jung Ko Kendo Club, CKF VP	Motoki Asaoka	Youshinkan Dojo
Patrick Suen	JCCC Iaido Club, CKF BOD	Eric Charles Chiu	Ryerson University Kendo Club
David Mori	Forest City, CKF BOD	Tom Yamashita	Manitoba Kendo Club
Hiro Okusa	SFU Kendo Club	Victor Nishi	Kelowna Kendo Club
Corie Namba	Winnipeg Kendo Club	Akané D'Orangeville	McGill Kendo Club
Derek Barr	Stratford Kendo Club	Karen Wagner	Regina Kendo Club
Brian Lampe	Algoma Kendo Club	Ryo Yasumura	Etobicoke Kendo/Iaido Club
Shane Spinney	Higashikaze	Thomas Groendal	Hoshu Dojo
Rob Yule	Cambridge Kendo Club	Daisuke Hayashi	UVIC Kendo Club
Emmanuel Beauregard	Dojo de Kendo St-Jean	Natan Cheifetz	Ken Wa Kai, Vancouver
Steve Quinlan	Kingston Kendo Club	Bruce Campbell	Matsu Kai Kendo and Iaido Dojo
Mark Kawabe	Hayakawa Kendo Club	Allan Nichols	UVIC Kendo Club
Lawrence Tsuji	Markham Kendo Club	Koichi Miyamoto	Toronto Kendo Club
Takashi Yamada	Vancouver Kendo Club	David Westhead	Tesshin Kendo Club
Dean Ara	Renbu Dojo	Jim Wilson	Kenshokan Iaido
Junko Ariyama	Montreal Kendo Club	Bryan Asa	JCCC Kendo
Dean Jolly	Shidokan Montreal	Ray Murao	Steveston Kendo Club
Jamie Fung	JCCC Kendo Club	Eddie Yamashita	Burlington Kendo Club

President's Message

The president's message is available on the CKF website [at this link](#). There were no comments on the president's message.

Financial Report

The financial report is available on the CKF website [at this link](#). There were no comments on the financial report.

Team Canada Reports

Reports from various people involved in Team Canada are available on the CKF website as follows:

[Manager Ray Murao](#)

[Men's Coach Matthew Raymond](#)

[Women's Coach Daisuke Hayashi](#)

[Women's Captain Akiko Fukushima](#)

[Trainer Manabu Ogawa](#)

Tom Yamashita of Manitoba Kendo Club commented:

“I would like to thank all the members of Team Canada for their sacrifices and for their dedication. You all thrilled us as we watched and cheered you on. We could see you give your all. You inspired me to try to work harder to improve my own kendo, so thank you all again”

Mexico Kendo Exchange

A report on the Mexico Kendo Exchange is available on the CKF website [at this link](#). There were no comments on the report.

General Discussion

A forum was made available for general comments and questions. Please note that although not every comment was addressed in the meeting (in particular Mr. Quinlan’s lengthy comments), the BOD will discuss them at our upcoming meeting on October 23. Here is what transpired there:

Mark Kawabe of Hayakawa Kendo Club commented:

“It's been mentioned before that the website could use an overhaul. Visually. Organizationally. Informationally. There was a questionnaire sent out in September 2014 asking CKF members what they wanted from the website. I haven't seen anything since then. Just wondering if there is any activity going on behind the scenes. I am willing to offer my assistance if it is needed.”

Neil Gendzwill, CKF Secretary replied:

“Yes, we would also like to improve the website but we need help. We have several times tried to recruit people for an IT committee but haven't had a lot of success. If you are willing to help, that would be great! I will be in Toronto for the Etobicoke re-opening. If you will be there as well, send me an email and we will get together for a chat about it.”

Tom Yamashita of Manitoba Kendo Club commented:

“1. Just a request from us on the Prairies. - for us to travel to events, it would help us if dates and venues could be confirmed as early as possible so we can make arrangements and get good prices for our travel. We are always having to travel in one direction or the other, and it is not just a short drive across the city. Thank you.

2. I would like to thank those involved - in the making of the yearbook, in arranging the tickets for WKC, and all the members of the Board of Directors of the CKF.

3. I second the question on the upkeep of the info and events listed on the CKF website. Sorry I would be of no help in this regard though.”

Brian Lampe of Algonquin Kendo Club commented:

“Point #1 is an important one for many. Members of my dojo also have to drive 7-8 hours to reach the nearest event. We ran into some trouble with hotel vacancy last year in Toronto.

A big thanks to all the volunteers of the CKF for your hard work, support and dedication. “

Neil Gendzwill, CKF Secretary replied:

“We hear you on the advance notice for gradings. It's something we are trying to improve but it is often difficult to coordinate things well enough in advance. I think we are not doing a good enough job, so we will continue to push this issue.”

Steve Quinlan of Kingston Kendo Club commented:

“I would like to submit an idea to the CKF for some new and/or extended spending regarding Team Canada. I apologize for the length of this post, but it is necessary.

This is just a few issues from my CKF 2015 Yearbook "manager" experience, and kendo experience based on my own kendo career as well as interacting with other kendoka from a number of dojos.

Team Canada is a large part of the expenses of the CKF, and it is money well spent. However, the key here is that I used to very much not think that way a number of years ago, and my experience with the yearbook reminded me of this as there are a number of people who currently feel the same and this is often not talked about. There are varying degrees of this of course, but the sense is there and that is an issue which affects the CKF membership.

I can sum this up from something Matthew Raymond Sensei , coach of TC, said at a TC seminar he hosted where non-TC people got to practice some TC-exercises and he along with some TC members helped everyone out, made comments, etc.. The important bit was at the end when Raymond Sensei focused on the question of "What does TC do for you?" To many people the answer is unfortunately "nothing". Or perhaps "raise my fees". Sarcastic perhaps, but these responses are paraphrased from actual people I have interacted with.

To expand on that, there is a sense, again of varying degrees, that the money for TC is spent on a special elite group, and that group along with the coaches, managers, etc... have no direct influence on kendoka outside of this elite circle. Perhaps worse than this, there is a definite sense from a number of kendoka, from a number of dojos, who feel that TC members, or prospective TC members, get "special treatment" or "priority treatment" in their own dojo.

The extreme extent of this is dojos refusing to participate in the yearbook purposely as a form of rebuke against this sense of elitism. This is not something the CKF wants to have exist. The question is, how to fix it?

From my own experience, and what changed my viewpoint of TC, was being able to interact with them directly, as well as a number of TC members, coaches, managers, etc.. having an immense input on my own kendo experience. Why were they able to have such an effect? Because they interacted within my kendo circle. For those who do not know me personally, my entire 16 year kendo career has been that of a small club, isolated from other clubs due to Canadian "geography", and no "in house" sensei. This doesn't happen often in Canada, but it does happen enough. TC members specifically helping to break the isolation had an immense impact, and IMO, I think this is a part of the issue at hand: more interaction.

TC manager Bryan Asa sensei and I had discussed this issue during the yearbook prep, and the focus on the yearbook altered somewhat from TC fundraising being a primary goal to attempting to foster a sense of "community" across Canada, to all dojos. This is only a start however, thus my proposal/suggestions to begin tackling the issue:

(1) The CKF delegate funds specifically to conquer the issue of Canadian "geography" with respect to making isolated clubs included; 3 hours outside of a major kendo event or 14 hours are both still effectively isolated.

(2) Funds to create more events with TC members and coaches specifically in clubs and dojos outside of the usual Canadian meccas. I would even suggest that EVERY Canadian club be visited 1/year. (visiting delegation sized according to dojo size) These seminars, or even just small friendly dojo visits, must occur frequently and to many dojo in order to have an active effect on perceived elitism.

(3) The idea of "what does Team Canada do for you?" needs to be stressed, but must also be actively perceived by the membership. The sense of TC "giving back" must be felt v.s. talked about. TC must also have an effect on those kendoka who are not interested in shiai kendo; TC lead events focused on kihon, bokuto waza, kata, kiri-kaeshi, etc... are needed as well. Essentially acting as "visiting sensei".

(4) Either the yearbook or the CKF website could devote a portion of its size / webspace to show photos/videos of TC making these visits. With future yearbooks and website traffic this will hopefully bring into focus what TC are doing for Canadian kendoka. A TC update message summarizing the events to each of these clubs, either posted on the CKF website or sent out in some kind of newsletter via e-mail...something... would make this activity more public.

There are 47 clubs I have listed during my work on yearbook preparation. Many of these are grouped and within relatively easy travel distance of major kendo centres, many are not. But if we assume a very blunt \$300 cost to visit each one, then the total cost is on the order of \$15,000. That is not cheap.

None of this will be easy, it will be expensive, and it will put heavy demands on active and former TC members. But if we do not at least acknowledge this issue and begin tackling it, now, it will only grow. The first step is for the CKF to set aside specific funding for the time and travel expenses of those TC members who undertake this task. The logistics can be dealt with later. “

Bruce Campbell of Matsu Kai commented:

“Could we get an update on the suggestion brought forward a while ago that only Japanese-made shinken would be allowed in gradings?

Has the CKF Board responded to this suggestion with the comments and concerns that Iai practitioners have expressed?”

Patrick Suen, CKF BOD Iaido Representative replied:

“I will be bringing this subject up in the Board of Directors meeting on October 23rd.

I'll have consulted Ohmi Sensei (Chief Examiner) and Cruise Sensei (East Examiner) regarding their recommendations.”

There were no further comments or questions.