

Shinai Express

Issue 4 – October 2025 AGM Edition

Editorial

By Sue Lytollis Chair of the Board of Directors NZKF

This year has shown and next year will prove to be pivotal growth spurts in New Zealand Kendo. We are entering a phase where our senior dan grades (4th dan and above) are growing exponentially, and more and more Kiwi Sensei are challenging 7th Dan and ‘impossibly’ even 8th Dan (go Alex Sensei). Under the guidance of Sou-kantoku (National Coach Director) our men’s and women’s coaches supported by club teachers and dojo leaders, our Wolf Pack is beginning to take shape and prepare for three key events in 2026 – these are outlined below.

The Waikato Winter Seminar returned us to our roots in that it was common for clubs to host a Winter event in August pre-Covid. Therefore, we thank Waikato Kendo Association for bringing back Morioka Sensei with a very great ‘side’ of Eiga Sensei to inspire and inform our community of Kenshi. This balances the opportunities provided annually by Auckland at the February Seminar led by Alex Sensei.

Coming up on 12th of October in our 49th year (hard to know if it is our 49th AGM, but we hope so) are preparations for acknowledging and celebrating the history we have in this Federation. 2026 is our 50th year of operation. Fifty years for Kendo, but not necessarily for Naginata, Iaido and Jodo so I challenge those arts to begin to think about gathering their history to add to our Kendo history in our anniversary year.

Importantly in 2026, will be a call for applications for consideration and voting for new Board members. At least three board members will be retiring and our democratic voting process could also impact on other roles. Are you one of the next nominations? It is time to plan.

Upcoming News and Events

- a) **AGM** – 10am-12pm on Sunday 12th of October – Clubs will be nominating one representative to vote on motions. Anyone, however, can join the zoom link that will be posted, please feel free to learn about how your federation is run.
- b) **Kitamoto International Leaders Seminar** – The successful representatives for this special 50th event in Chiba, Japan are Jae Tsai (WKF) and Pawel Szymonczyk (AKC), we wish them the best.
- c) **Important P2P event Nelson** – 2026 Waitangi Weekend in Nelson, this is a selection for the ‘working wolves’ those who will be screened to attend the Trans-Tasman in Australia in April and possibly the First Asian Oceania Kendo Championships in Tokyo over Kings Birthday weekend.
- d) **Auckland International Kendo Seminar** – Usually in the third week of February and an annual feature for NZ Kendo, information to come soon. (There may also be a P2P event here)

- e) **NZ National Kendo Championships** – To be hosted by Yoshinkan in Wellington, dates are Friday 10th of July, Saturday 11th of July and on Sunday 12th of July, the New Zealand Kendo Team will have their first squad training session. Friday 10th of July will be a special 50th Anniversary dinner event at the James Cook Hotel in Wellington. Details to come in early 2026.

Reminders

- 1) Our newly created Complaints and Feedback process has been uploaded to Hello Club.
- 2) The revised Kyu Grading Guidelines and Exam Applications for gradings have been uploaded to HelloClub. Club leaders, please pay attention to the number of Examiners required and the minimum grade they are required to have to be a member of a Grading Panel.
- 3) Attached to the many things our secretary is sending out are our updated Long Term NZKF Strategic Plan; new Financial Policy; Financial Accounts – (with a simple explanation to help you understand them); and officials and clubs/Budo reports and remits. It is a lot to read and absorb but please do so to make our AGM go smoothly.

Below – our first NZ Team to Challenge the 6th WKC in Paris (1985)
Graham Sayer, Mike Hopley, Sue Lytollis with Imasato Sensei (Coach)

