



BRITISH AIKIDO FEDERATION

Newsletter



Welcome...

Welcome to this interim edition of the British Aikido Federation newsletter.

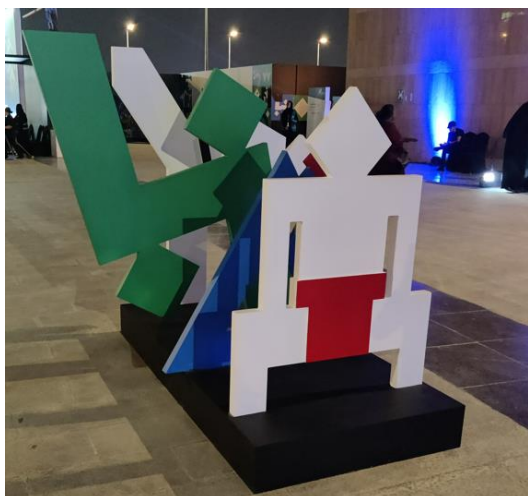
Happy New Year!

In this edition you will find an article from Caroline Smith 4th Dan, fukushidoin of Manchester Dojo about her recent visit to The World Combat Games.

If you wish to submit an article for the BAF newsletter, then please do so using the email address:

BAFnewsletter@outlook.com

Please direct any queries in relation to Summer school to the organizers.



World Combat Games 2023 Fan Village

World Combat Games 2023...

As a member of the International Aikido Federation, the British Aikido Federation was invited to send a representative to the 2023 World Combat Games which took place in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia.

Caroline Smith 4th Dan Manchester Aikido Club was selected from the eligible candidates to represent the BAF during this event.

Below is an article by Caroline Smith detailing the experience.

Introduction....

When it was confirmed that I would be representing the BAF at the World Combat Games 2023, I was excited and nervous at the same time. I had never taken part in an Embukai before and did not know what to expect.

I was honoured to be confirmed as the representative of the British Aikido Federation.

I spent hours on google searching for old footage to get an idea of what would happen.

I watched hours of demonstrations from the All-Japan Demonstrations. From this I was able to gauge the level of ukemi I would need to take, and preparation began in my own Dojo with the assistance from our senior instructors.

Before I knew it, it was time to pack my bags and catch the first flight to Amsterdam!

In Amsterdam Airport I got the first glimpse of what the Combat Games would be like. I was sitting at the gate reading my book when a gentleman approached me and asked 'Aikido?'.

I nodded and he burst out smiling 'me too!'. I met the first of many friends I would make at the WCG!



Caroline Smith and Roque from Alicante. WCG 2023 fan village.

After only 5 hours sleep, day one started with Dojo Cho taking a class at the Saudi Dojo Al-Shabab Club in Riyadh.

The class consisted of basic techniques with the emphasis being on good basic Aikido which is exactly what all the Hombu instructors who attended the BAF summer school emphasize.

In this class I had the opportunity to train with some of the students Dojo Cho had brought with him.

The second class of the day was taken by Tissier Shihan. Having never been in one of his classes before, it was interesting to see his style of Aikido and teaching points.

After lunch, preparation for Embukai began. I was partnered with a lady called Andrea from Uruguay. We were in group 5 which would be demonstrating suwariwaza / hamni handachi waza and katadori menuchi techniques.

To start, we just trained together to get a feel for each other's Aikido and learn how to harmonize with each other.

This turned out to be a very easy thing to do. We were able to flow together with ease! We were a great pairing!

Though we could harmonize our Aikido, there was a language barrier. Luckily Roque was on hand to translate between English and Spanish when hand waving failed!



Caroline and Adrea World Combat Games 2023

Day 1 of Embukai started with another training session in the morning at the King Saud University (KSU).

“The tatami was beautiful!”

As we arrived the atmosphere went from nervous excitement to palpable anticipation!

The demonstration area consisted of a white tatami big enough for the entire group to practice together before Embukai.



Demonstration area at KSU.

What really helped with Embukai was the friendship we had made as a group. Group 5 connected immediately on an Aikido and social level providing help and support to each other.

We bounced off each other's energy so that when it was our turn, it was excitement and not nerves which accompanied us onto the mat.

“The experience was amazing!”

The gong sounded and off we went! We flowed, we harmonized and then the gong sounded! It went so fast!

The hardest part of Embukai was containing our excitement until we were off the mat! As soon as we were clear from view, we all cheered, hugged and high fived each other! It was brilliant!

The second demonstration went as quick as the first and before we knew it, we had completed Embukai day 1!

After the demonstration we headed over to the fan village to socialize and take in some of the Saudi Arabian culture.

There were lots on offer in the fan village from food and drink to virtual reality game areas and traditional music.

After about an hour the traditional music stopped, and a DJ started playing. It didn't take long for our Aikido group to get up and start dancing.

After a few hours of socializing, it was back to the hotel for food and a good night's sleep ready to repeat it all again in the morning!

On day 2 of Embukai, we had a training session in the morning to work on our demonstrations.

During this time, I took the opportunity to train with a couple of other people and ask about how they approach certain ukemi from a teaching perspective.

Before I knew it, we had a group session going on, working on our ukemi and exchanging ideas on how to teach and execute tobi-ukemi safely.

When the time came for the demonstrations, it went just as fast as day 1 and before we knew it, we had completed our section!

During the closing ceremony we were presented with a certificate to commemorate our participation in Embukai.

Afterwards we returned to the tatami to take pictures and exchange a lot of facebook, Instagram and phone numbers!



When the time came to leave, there were many sad faces. Our time at the World Combat Games had gone quickly.

Hand on heart, I can honestly say this was one of the most rewarding experiencing I have ever taken part in.

Aikido transcends borders and cultural barriers allowing people from all back grounds to train together in a respectful and enjoyable way.

I met some amazing people which I am hoping to see on my travels and get to train with again.

Special thanks to the BAF for giving me the chance to go and the International Aikido Federation and all the organizers who put hours of work into making World Combat Games 2023 a great success!

Another Junior Shodan!

Manchester Dojo are pleased to announce the successful grading of Campbell to Junior Shodan, overseen by Sensei Steve Parr, Shihan of Chester Dojo.

Campbell started Aikido at Wa Go Kan dojo, Manchester in 2016 at the age of 10 and has trained diligently for 7 years.

Initially he trained only with a couple of other juniors, separated from the adult class and then within a dedicated class for junior members.

Campbell has developed his understanding of Aikido basics and has developed over time to have now attained the rank of Junior Shodan. He now needs to push forward to develop himself as he moves towards senior grades in the future.

Congratulations Campbell!

Upcoming National Courses

The dates for the 2024 BAF National Courses are now available on the BAF Website.

- Oxford Course: 23rd and 24th March
- Spring Course: 13th and 14th April
- Chester: 15th and 16th June
- Summer School 3rd to the 10th August
- Cardiff: 2nd and 3rd November