

A lifelong of Budo in text and pictures Amsterdam, August 2019



Louis Vitalis & Jolanda Dekker

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Preface Koos van Hattum Sensei

Louis Vitalis is a remarkable personality and I've known him for a very long time. At first somewhat from a distance. He trained in Amsterdam at Shin Bu Ken (later Museido) and I at Fumetsu in Rotterdam. Louis is a few years younger than me, and he started a few years earlier with kendo.

Gradually, we came across each other with increasing frequency. Initially during the central training, then at matches and later also as national team members and much later as fellow referees during European Championships.

Over this long period I have learned a lot from Louis. Apart from kendo technical guidance, Louis contributed a lot to my development as an international referee and as a kendo teacher. He has advised me and coached me during the preparations for my dan examinations.

Louis contributed not only to my kendo development. His greatest merit is his commitment over the past few decades to the entire Dutch Kendo, Iaido and Jodo. His inexhaustible knowledge and technical skills, coupled with didactic insight, have inspired and raised the levels of many practitioners in The Netherlands. For the Dutch Kendo Renmei, Louis is an important link between the Netherlands and Japan. He has brought us into contact with Edo sensei, Iijima sensei and Ishido sensei. Many other renowned teachers came in their slipstream and that stream is still going on. Every time there are new top instructors present at seminars. Equally important, NKR members can travel to Japan to train with these teachers. In this way, we are assured that the levels of Kendo, Iaido and Jodo in The Netherlands remain as high as they can be and that we in turn can make a contribution to the developments in Europe.

I am pleased and grateful that Louis has found the time to write his memoirs and that it is now possible for everyone to read them.

Koos van Hattum
(President NKR)

Preface Hein Odinot Sensei

From almost the foundation of the kendo Renmei in the Netherlands, it is certain that Louis Vitalis was involved with kendo training. Iaido and Jodo came some years later in the focus of interest in our country.

Louis was promoted Shodan Kendo and Iaido on the 13th august 1977 and Shodan Jodo on the 12th august 1984.

After many years of hard and intense training Louis reached the 7th dan level in all three disciplines!

He was the only European, together with a member of the British Kendo Association, with three 7th dan grades.

Now he has been involved in a long period of teaching, not only in the Netherlands, but also in many countries in Europe.

He can also look back at excellent career as an important and skilled International referee.

May I conclude with the remark that Louis Vitalis can be mentioned an icon of Budo and that this conclusion justifies my opinion that we can be very proud of him and that he is an outstanding member of our federation!!

Hein Odinot,
honorary President NKR.

Preface Edo Kokichi Sensei

Louis Vitalis自叙伝

42年前、日本の伝統的身体文化としての剣道・杖道・居合を学ぶため、オランダアムステルダムから古都金沢に弱冠18歳ルイ ビタリス君がやってきました。

現在、剣道世界一を決める世界剣道選手権大会決勝戦の副審判員として重責ある決定を任された、剣道教士七段・杖道教士七段・居合道教士七段を有する欧州きっての武道家に成長しました。この偉業は一人彼のみでなく共に日本武道の身心技法を磨いた私としも心から賛辞を表したく存じます。

その上で、この度60歳に向かって、更に日本武道継承を深め極めんと、波乱万丈(劇的に変化に富んだ)の武道修養過程を振り返る自叙伝を表しました。

日本武道を愛する世界の武道愛好家の皆様におかれましては、是非ともルイ武道家自叙伝を参考に、日本武道の愛好者・継承者となって頂きたいものと祈念いたしております。

金沢大学名誉教授・NPO法人日本武道修学院代表理事 惠土孝吉

以上

42 years ago, at only 18-year-old, Louis Vitalis came all the way from Amsterdam to the old city of Kanazawa to learn Kendo, Iaido and Jodo, which are part of the traditional Japanese physical culture.

Recently he was active as referee at the finals of the World Kendo Championships, where the best team of the world is decided, which is a great responsibility. He has grown to the most able Budoka in Europe, with Kyoshi 7th Dan in Kendo, Iaido and Jodo.

For me, as someone who has practiced Japanese Budo together with him, as a way of improving body, mind and technique, this feat is something to make a big compliment on.

Now he is approaching 60 years of age, and he is looking back on the process of his Budo training, with all the ups and downs and very rich in drastic changes, in his memoires, with the intention to further deepen the inheritance of Japanese Budo.

For everyone all over the world, who has an interest in Japanese Budo I am hoping that the memoires of the Budoka Louis will be helpful into becoming Japanese Budo enthusiasts and successors.

Edo Kokichi

Kanazawa University Honorary Professor; NPO Nihon Budo Shugakuin Director

Preface Iijima Akira Sensei

「ルイ・フィタリス」自分史に寄せて

「出 会」

ルイ氏との出会いは、40年前になります。1978年剣道の師である恵土孝吉先生から、日本語のできるオランダ人青年に剣道指導をしてくれないかと依頼をうけ、世界大会出場後北本市での外国人剣道講習会に参加をしているルイを迎え、下館での生活が始まりました。日本語ができると思いましたがほとんど話すことができず、辞書を片手に長い時間苦勞をしながら剣道についての話をした思い出は忘れることができません。

剣道の稽古を目標に来宅したのですが、稽古について満足したか定かではありませんが、楽しい時間を過ごすことができたと思います。

60歳になる、ルイ氏が自分史を作ることに当たり過去を振り返り、どうして武道を始め、現在に至ったか知ることができると思います。

剣道・居合道・杖道の三道を修練し、数多くの先生方と知り合い、学んだことを後進への指導に大いに生かされること、また継承されることと思います。

I met Louis for the first time 40 years ago. My Kendo teacher, Edo Kokichi Sensei, asked me to take care of teaching Kendo to a young person from the Netherlands, who was able to speak Japanese. So, I went to meet Louis, who was participating in the Foreigners Kendo Seminar in Kitamoto, which was held after the World Championships, and took him to Shimodate, where we were living.

I assumed he could speak Japanese, but he could only speak a few words, so we ended up spending a lot of time with a dictionary, to talk about Kendo. This is something I still remember very well up to today.

He came to our house to train Kendo and I'm not sure if he was satisfied with the trainings, but we did spend an enjoyable time together.

Louis is now turning 60 years old and he is now looking back, writing his own history. We can learn why he started Budo and how it evolved until recent times.

He practices 3 Arts: Kendo, Iaido and Jodo, and met many teachers and what he has learned he will teach and hand over to successive generations.

Preface Ishido Shizufumi Sensei

序

近年、日本において受け継がれている「武道」は、他の国にも普及し大きな広がりを見せています。剣道は勿論のこと、居合道、杖道に対する関心を持つ方々が増えるのは、大変喜ばしいことです。

1983年イギリスにて、私とルイ氏は出会い、そして彼は私の直門となりました。現在、オランダにおける直門は、彼一人です。

彼は四十年もの永きに渡り、武道に深い興味を持ち、来日し各地を訪ね、本格的な修業を行い、オランダ剣道連盟の発展に大きく寄与致しました。その間の数々の苦難、偉業は一言では言い表せません。

彼は、現在のヨーロッパにおける剣道、居合道、杖道の地位繁栄の構築に直向きな努力を重ねましたし、EKF居合道・杖道大会の開催については、彼の尽力によるものと言っても過言ではありません。

その彼の歴史を回顧録として発刊されることは、大変意義の有る事であり、将来この道に携わる方々は是非、そして、初心者は勿論のこと、高段者の方には参考となると信ずるものであります。

令和元年

石堂倭文

In recent years, the Japanese Budo, which has been transmitted in Japan, has been spreading to other countries as well and has seen a great expansion.

It is very fortunate that there are more and more persons who show an interest in Kendo, naturally, but also in Iaido and Jodo.

I met Louis in 1983, in the UK, and he became my “Jikimon”, or direct student. In The Netherlands he is my only direct student.

For a long period of time, more than 40 years, he has kept a deep interest in Budo, visited many areas in Japan and trained very seriously. He has made a great contribution to the expansion of the Nederlandse Kendo Renmei.

During this time, he has faced many difficulties and this feat cannot easily be summed up in one word.

He made direct efforts in setting up thriving regions for Kendo Iaido and Jodo and it is no exaggeration to say that the starting up of the EKF Iaido and Jodo Championships is a result of his efforts.

The publishing of his memoires is a truly important event and I am convinced that it will be reference material for those who want to get involved in Budo in the future, for those who are beginners and for those who are high Dan grade holders in Budo.

First year of Reiwa (2019)

Ishido Shizufumi

Introduction

I was born on 9th August 1959 in Amsterdam.

As you can see in this picture, my childhood period was very different from present times. Here's me at the age of 3, with my mother and younger sister Esther. Few cars on the road, no TV in every home, we didn't even get telephone in our house till I was 9 years old.





Where is young Louis? (about 8 years old)

When I started Judo and Jujitsu in Amsterdam in 1972, as a 13-year-old boy, I had no idea I would end up being a Kendo/Iaido/Jodo teacher many decades later.

I developed a deep interest in Japanese Martial Arts as a young boy and bought the books which were available in the early 1970's to learn about them as much as possible. Especially the books by Don Draeger Sensei were very well made and described most of the Japanese Martial Arts in detail. I remember I used to read them repeatedly and was always fascinated with learning about these exotic Arts.

After a few years of twice a week practice, I achieved 1st Kyu in Judo and Jujitsu, and I was ready to start serious training for my Shodan. However, by the time I was 16, I found I was unable to beat the much bigger and stronger guys in the Dojo, and I started to develop an interest in Martial Arts with weapons.

At one point, I had a Nunchaku, a long Bo, a Sai, a Tonfa, and a Shinai in my room. I practiced by myself and had many painful encounters with the Nunchaku!

Finally, I found a Kendo Club in Amsterdam, where Willem Alexander was teaching Kendo. I joined in 1976, and I have been practicing Kendo ever since.

My biggest fortune has been that I have met three wonderful Sensei: In 1977 I met Edo Kokichi, my first Kendo teacher, in 1979 I met Iijima Akira, student of Edo sensei and a great influence on my Kendo career, and in 1983 I met Isihido Shizufumi, who generously accepted me as one of his European Deshi (close student), and who has been my Iaido and Jodo Sensei ever since.

Now I'm 60, achieved 7th Dan Kyoshi in Kendo, Iaido and Jodo before I was 50 years old, and retired from a 30-year career in Nippon Express, a big Japanese Logistics Multinational Company. There is only one other person outside Japan who achieved 7 dan Kyoshi in all three ZNKR disciplines, it's my long time Budo friend and Sempai, Jock Hopson.

It's about time to fulfill the wish of Edo Sensei: write down my Budo memoirs so that my own students get to know my Budo history in full.

Of course, my Budo history would have been impossible to achieve without the strong support of my wife, Jolanda Dekker. Not only was she far better than me in Kendo, in which she achieved 6th Dan, she also was very strong in Jodo (5th Dan), and even achieved 4th Dan Iaido in the days that Iaido Dan Grades were still a very rare thing in Europe! Unfortunately, she was forced to stop practice after her severe stroke in 2010, but she still joins me on many Taikai and Seminars and enjoys the company of the Sensei and Students a lot.

Because I have students in several countries, I have decided to write this document in English, which is not my native language. I will also add several articles which I wrote in the NKR Zanshin Magazine in the past, these are all in Dutch.

A big thanks to my long time Budo friend and Sempai, Jock Hopson, who provided many of the pictures of "the old days"!

Gei Ni Asobu 芸に遊ぶ: my motto in Budo Practice



Because of my close relationship with Iijima Sensei, who lives in Ibaraki Prefecture, I build up a good connection with Miyamoto Sensei, Kendo 8th Dan Hanshi, who was president of the Ibaraki Kendo Renmei and a close friend of Iijima Sensei.

One day, Iijima Sensei arrived at Schiphol Airport, carrying a huge frame under his arm, wrapped in paper. "What is that, Sensei?" I asked. "This is a present for you from Miyamoto Sensei, it's a copy of the famous Gei Ni Asobu frame in Mito".

This frame still hangs in the Kodokan building in Mito, Ibaraki.

The Kodokan was a famous Samurai School, where Samurai were taught all the Arts and Sciences which were deemed good education in the later Edo period. Besides the Martial Arts, it also included Classical Texts, Calligraphy etc.

Gei: Art.

Ni Asobu: to enjoy, to live by

Gei stands for all the arts that Samurai were schooled in, but for us it stands for Budo. In order to continue study of Budo for a long time, you must keep enjoying it. Because it is no longer a killing art, and it is meant to enrich your mental and physical health, you will stop training Budo if you lose the enjoyment of training. Already at the end of the Edo period (1603-1868), the Samurai of Mito discovered that basic principle, and this resulted in this wonderful concept.

Since I received this present from Miyamoto Sensei, I decided to make it my motto in Budo.



The Gei Ni Asobu Kanji in Frame present from Miyamoto Sensei, former president of Ibaraki Kendo Renmei.



Under the original Gei Ni Asobu, Mito Kodokan, April 2019

About Onshi 恩師

Onshi is the teacher with whom you have a special relationship. On means gratitude, Shi is teacher, therefore a teacher to whom you own a lot of gratitude because of their special teachings to you. My three Onshi are (in order when I met them):

Edo Kokichi Sensei



Originally from Aichi prefecture, he joined the Chukyo University. In all the four years he was a student there, he managed to get to the finals of the All Japan University Student Championships. This record is still unbeaten! Two times he won and two times he came second.

After graduation, he became assistant at Chukyo University, under Mitsuhashi Sensei, a famous Hanshi of that time.

He participated in the All Japan Championships for nine (!) times, and for a non-policeman that is an unbelievable achievement.

One time he made it to the finals, and three times he came in third place.

Besides that, he has done many other tournaments, and he was one of the great Shiai Kendoka at the time.

I met Edo Sensei for the first time in 1977. I was 17 and Sensei was 37.

He has been my Kendo Sensei ever since. He was also my first Jodo teacher in 1981.

Sensei is now 80 years old and still heavily involved in the teaching of his brand of Kendo.

Iijima Akira Sensei



Iijima Sensei was a student of Edo Sensei at the Chukyo University.

In 1979 I spend three months in Japan. By this time, I could speak only a few Japanese words, but Edo Sensei told Iijima Sensei to take care of this Orandajin who spoke fluent Japanese!

40 years later, Iijima Sensei is still my Kendo teacher and helps me with my deeper study in Kendo. I still visit him, every year to train together and he still comes to our home at least once a year.

Iijima Sensei is a very famous Kendoka in Ibaraki prefecture, which has a very large Kendo population still. For many years, until well in his fifties, he was member of the Ibrakai Kendo team on various prefectural Taikai and he was a highly respected Shiai Kendoka all over Japan. In his young years he was All Japan High School Teacher Champion. Besides being my Kendo teacher, we also developed a very close personal bond, and we consider each other as family as well.

Ishido Shizufumi Sensei



Already in the 1970's and early 1980's we invited Jock Hopson and Mike Davis from the BKA to come to Amsterdam to train Kendo with us. In those days they were the only Europeans who had lived and trained Kendo in Japan, so they had much more knowledge than us beginners in Amsterdam.

Because I had been in Japan as well and spoke Japanese, Jock and I had something in common, and Jock and Mike stayed in Jolanda's parents' home for a week in 1980 in Amsterdam.

In 1979 I was in Japan to do mainly Kendo, and some Iaido during the Kitamoto Gaijin Seminar, where I passed my 2nd Dan Kendo and Iaido. At the same time Jock was in Japan as well, and he was even elected as referee at the WKC in Sapporo!

During this time, Jock met with Ishido Sensei and they became good friends. Jock Hopson, Len Bean, Vic Cook, Lee Loi and Chris Mansfield were the first students of Ishido Sensei in the UK.

In 1983 Jock organized a bigger Iaido and Jodo Seminar in the UK, to which Hiroi Sensei was also invited.

Because I already learned all the Jodo Seitei Kata in 1981, Jock considered me a "Jodo Specialist" and asked if I wanted to join this Seminar to assist Hiroi Sensei as a translator.

I was already teaching Kendo, Iaido and Jodo in Amsterdam, so I happily accepted Jock's invitation.

So, this was the first time I met Ishido Sensei and we developed a warm relation from the start. Ishido Sensei was training Kendo and Iaido under his father from a very young age and worked for a company after graduating from University.

In 1975 he stopped his career and started to as "Fukukancho" (sub Head of the Dojo) under his father in the Shinbukan Dojo in Kawasaki.

At present he is the Kancho (Head of the Dojo) of this Dojo, where Kendo, Iaido and Jodo are practiced.

Ishido Sensei has been All Japan Iaido Champion in the 7th Dan Division, and also won many other big Iaido Tournaments.

At this moment he is one of the most senior and influential Iaido teachers in Japan, and he has also published an important book on Muso Shinden Ryu.

Because I did not have a fixed Iaido teacher at that time, and because I realized that Ishido Sensei's Iaido was of the highest level, I consulted with Jock and asked him if he was ok to invite Ishido Sensei to the European Continent as well.

Fortunately for me, Jock had no problem with this and from the next year we asked Ishido Sensei to teach both in the UK and in The Netherlands.

Ishido Sensei appreciated the friendship of Jock and me, and my energy to make Ishido Sensei our teacher in continental Europe, so I was also added to the list of "Monjin", or Deshi of Ishido Sensei. Now more than 35 years later, thanks to Ishido Sensei I have been able to build up a big group of Iaido and Jodo students all over Europe, who all belong to the Ishido Family!

About Deshi and Oshiego 弟子と教え子

In traditional Budo, a teacher had a limited number of close students, to whom he would teach all the knowledge he had accumulated over the years.

These would be called Deshi.

At the same time, he could have many people who he had been teaching, either during Seminars, or during teaching in another Dojo as a guest teacher.

These students would be called Oshiego.

In the case of my teachers, Edo Kokichi and Iijima Akira for Kendo and Ishido Shizufumi for Iaido and Jodo, they have made it clear that I am their Deshi, and that we have a very close relationship. This relationship is several decades long.

In the case of Edo Sensei, it is even more than 40 years!

In the same spirit I have been considering appointing my own Deshi.

I have decided to divide them in two generations: the people that I have been teaching since the 1980's or early 1990's, and the people that I have been teaching since I returned from Japan in 2002.

In my case, my Deshi are all 5th Dan or higher, and have proven to be loyal students for a long period of time.

In the meantime, my first generation Deshi are Sensei in their own Dojo, and they have their own students. These students are all training in the same "family" and it is important that we educate the next generations, in accordance with what we have learned from Edo Sensei, Iijima Sensei and Ishido Sensei.

The list of my Deshi is now final, and I will not appoint any new Deshi in the future, for the simple reason that I will be too old when they reach their 5th Dan.

In the case of Kendo, my Deshi are simply following me in the teachings of Edo Sensei and Iijima Sensei, but of course they are free to get teachings from any other Kendo Sensei.

This is the freedom that we have in modern Kendo.

However, in the case of Iaido and Jodo, we also have Koryu Lineage to consider.

For Iaido it is Muso Shinden Ryu, in the way that Ishido Sensei has been teaching us for many years.

For Jodo it is the Tokyo Style of Shindo Muso Ryu, in the way Ishido Sensei has been taught by Hiroi Sensei.

Although Hiroi Sensei did not teach a lot of Koryu during the seminars in Europe, Jolanda and I did learn Koryu directly from Hiroi Sensei for a short time during one of our stays in Tokyo.

For the Deshi who train in Iaido and Jodo, it is very important to realize that it means they are part of the Ishido Group for Koryu as well, and they should keep faithful to this way of training as much as possible

Lineage

Before going into the chronological development of my Budo career, I want to explain where my Kendo, Iaido and Jodo lineage comes from.

I started kendo in Amsterdam on March 20, 1976, under Willem Alexander. He learned Kendo from a Japanese Judo teacher, Morioka sensei, who was teaching Judo in the Netherlands at that time and taught some kendo to a limited number of people.

In 1977 I went to Japan with Ed and Roelof Roosterman, to join the Kitamoto Kendo Gashuku for foreigners, and to receive teaching from Edo Kokichi Sensei.

Just before I started Kendo, Edo Sensei had been teaching Kendo in Amsterdam for 6 months, and Ed and Roelof had been joining his classes.

In 1979 Edo Sensei introduced me to one of his senior Deshi, Iijima Akira Sensei.

Almost 40 years later Iijima Sensei and I are still very close, and he still helps me with my study in Kendo.

In 1983, my long time Kendo friend and Sempai, Jock Hopson asked me to join a seminar in the UK that he organized with Ishido Sensei.

Because I already learned the Jodo Seitei Kata from Edo Sensei in 1981, and because I could help with translating, he invited me to attend this seminar and help.

Since then I have developed a close relation with Ishido Sensei as well and I was appointed as one of the European first generation Deshi, together with Jock Hopson, Vic Cook and Lee Ah Loi.

Kendo Lineage

	Kendo Lineage		
	Maeda Haruo (†)	Maeda Sensei was Edo Senseis Kendo teacher	Chukyo Shogyo High School
	Mitsubishi Hidezo (†)	Student of Takano Sasaburo, one of Kendo founding fathers. He introduced Edo Sensei to scientific research of Kendo	Chukyo University
	Sato Ukichi (†)	Most senior student of Takano Sasaburo. Sato Sensei taught Edo Sensei Nihon Kendo Kata and also the original forms of it	Chukyo University
	Edo Kokichi	Renshi 6 dan	Kanazawa University
	Iijima Akira	Kyoshi 7 dan	Museido Ishioka
	Louis Vitalis	Kyoshi 7 dan	Museido Amsterdam
	Jolanda Dekker	Renshi 6 dan	Museido Amsterdam
1st Generation Deshi	Rene Bonne	Renshi 6 dan	Museido Amsterdam
	Guido Minnaert	Renshi 7 dan	Museido Amsterdam
	Mark Herbold	Kyoshi 7 dan	Museido Amsterdam
2nd Generation Deshi	Donatella Castelli	Kyoshi 7 dan	Museido Amsterdam
	Marije Wouters	5 dan	Museido Amsterdam
	Fleur Smout	5 dan	Museido Amsterdam
	Ton Loyer	5 dan	Museido Amsterdam
	Kris Lazarevic	4 dan	Museido Amsterdam

Iaido Lineage

	Iaido Lineage		
	Ishido Sadataro (†)	(Father of Ishido sensei and one of the first generation iaidoka in Kanagawa Prefecture)	Shinbukan Kawasaki
	Ishido Shizufumi	Hanshi 8 dan	Shinbukan Kawasaki
	Louis Vitalis	Kyoshi 7 dan	Museido Amsterdam
	Jolanda Dekker	4 dan	Museido Amsterdam
1st Generation Deshi	Rene van Amersfoort	Kyoshi 7 dan	Kiryoku Zoetermeer
	Aad van de Wijngaart	Kyoshi 7 dan	Kendokai Den Haag
	Andre Schiebroek	Kyoshi 7 dan	Renbukan Eindhoven
	Karl Dannecker	Renshi 6 dan	Karate Dojo Villingen
	Richard Boel	5 dan	Museido Amsterdam
	Hans Pegtel	5 dan	Kai Sei

Jodo Lineage

	Jodo Lineage		
	Edo Kokichi	(Edo sensei studied Jodo under Hamaji sensei and was my first Jodo teacher in 1981)	Kanazawa University
	Ishido Shizufumi	Kyoshi 8 dan	Shinbukan Kawasaki
	Hiroi Tsunetsugu (†)	Hanshi 9 dan	Renbukan Tokyo
	Louis Vitalis	Kyoshi 7 dan	Museido Amsterdam
	Jolanda Dekker	5 dan	Museido Amsterdam
1st Generation Deshi	Rene van Amersfoort	Kyoshi 8 dan	Kiryoku Zoetermeer
	Andre Schiebroek	Kyoshi 7 dan	Renbukan Eindhoven
	Edwin de Wit	Kyoshi 7 dan	Kendokai Den Haag
	Aad van de Wijngaart	Kyoshi 7 dan	Kendokai Den Haag
	Karl Dannecker	Renshi 7 dan	Karate Dojo Villingen
	Hans Pegtel	6 Dan	Kai Sei
	Bernhard Merkel	Renshi 7 dan	Gaggenau
	Roland Tropschug	5 dan	Geishinkan Mannheim
	Richard Boel	5 dan	Museido Amsterdam
2nd Generation Deshi	Robert Voelkmann	6 dan	Aikido Yoshinkan München
	Susi Berko	6 dan	Aikido Yoshinkan München
	Marie-Louise Tomasek	5 dan	Aikido Yoshinkan München
	Albrecht Kluwer	5 dan	Aikido Yoshinkan München
	Robert Ringlstetter	5 dan	TSV Landsberg am Lech
	Cenet Bauer	5 dan	Geishinkan Mannheim
	Emanuele Covino	5 dan	Seishinkan Bari

The Sempai of European Kendo, Iaido and Jodo

Based on the famous EKF Green Book (version 1998), I made a list of the Sempai in Europe, who were the first to take Shodan in Kendo and Iaido and in some cases Jodo. I did not list the persons who only took a Kendo grade, but of course there are some in the UK, France and Germany who have obtained their Kendo Shodan before me. As you can see from this list, I am one of the early Shodan in Kendo and Iaido, only a small number of people took their grades before me. Still, Jock Hopson and I are the only ones who achieved 7 dan Kyoshi grades in all three disciplines.

Name	Country	Kendo Shodan	Iaido Shodan	Jodo Shodan
A.P.Hopson	UK	1963	1979	1981
Andre Tuvi	FR	1969	1970	1976
J.P. Reniez	FR	1969	1973	1976
L.Bean	UK	1969	1976	1981
B. Durand	FR	1970	1976	1976
T. Holt	UK	1970	1975	
J.P. Niay	FR	1973	1977	
H. Odinet	NL	1974	1978	1986
J.P. Raick	FR	1976	1979	
L. Vitalis	NL	1977	1977	1984
R. Oquendo	NL	1977	1981	
J.Dekker	NL	1981	1985	1985

1972 – 1979

In the early Seventies, there were only 2 channels on TV, and for us young kids, it was normal to spend most of our time playing outside. In those days, Anton Geesink was already very famous as a Judo player, so Judo was quite popular in our country.

One of the boys in our street, Bert, with whom I used to play soccer outside, joined a Judo Club in Amsterdam. When I was about 13 years old, I decided to join that club as well. In those days there was a kind of Dutch Jujitsu system, which was loosely based on Japanese Jujitsu, and our teacher, Dijkshoorn Sensei, taught both disciplines to us.



Louis at the age of 15.

I enjoyed the practice a lot and moved through the Kyu Grade system until I reached 1st Kyu when I was 15. Because I was the smallest person in the Club, it was very hard for me to really beat the older and much bigger and stronger guys. Of course, the Bruce Lee films made the weapons such as Nunchaku and Bo very popular, and I build a whole collection of mostly Okinawa Kobudo weapons, such as Nunchaku, Bo, Sai and Tonfa.

Dijkshoorn Sensei once showed us a Kendo Bogu, and I was much intrigued by it. I bought a Shinai and a book on Kendo and started reading about it. I hung the Shinai on the wall above my bed and dreamt about Kendo.

In 1975 I met Jolanda, who was in the same class as me in our high school. I was 16, Jolanda was 17.

As you can see from the picture, she was a very beautiful girl, and I had a lot of competition of other boys, whom I had to overcome in order to win her over.

Because we were sitting next to each other during some classes, we did not always pay attention to what the teacher was saying.

Once our Physics teacher said: “your relation might be very happy on the school yard, but here in the class room you’re not paying any attention to what I’m saying!”.



I told all my students that I would never show this picture. Just 16 years old, a few months after I met Jolanda. The last of the hippies!



Jolanda & Louis already with a bit shorter hair in 1975.



Louis' room around 1976: on the wall Nakayama Hakudo Sensei, Jolanda making fun of my Kendo Kiai

In the days before Internet and Social Media, it was not so easy to find information about where Kendo was practiced, so it took me till March 1976 before I found the Kendo Club where Willem Alexander was teaching Kendo.

Willem Alexander was one of the first Kendoka in The Netherlands, together with our honorary President Hein Odinot he was one of the very few persons who knew enough about Kendo to teach a group.

Willem Alexander, Jaques Bouma, Jacques van der Linden (I still meet him at Jodo seminars, which he is still joining!) and me were the guys who practiced regularly.

In one of my first practices as a beginner, I went to a central training where Hein Odinot was teaching.

I believe Hein was the only 2ndDan in the Netherlands. I still had no Bogu, and was training Kendo footwork.

Jolanda was watching me during this training.

After the training was finished her comment was: “what a stupid, boring thing to do!”.

It took her two and a half years to realize that Kendo wasn't so bad, and she joined our trainings under Willem Alexander in November 1978.

For more than a year I trained Judo/Jujutsu and Kendo, but I chose for Kendo when I joined the first big Kendo Seminar in Europe, which was organized in Papendal in April 1977.

By this time I found out that there was another Kendo group in Amsterdam.

Ralf Oquendo and Ed Roosterman were training Kendo in the Karate Dojo of Kallenbach Sensei in Amsterdam, which was called Shinbuken.

I practiced in both Clubs for a few years, until we merged in one Kendo Club, under the name of Shinbuken.

The Papendal Seminar was the first major Pan European Kendo seminar, and some very famous Kendo Sensei from Japan were there: Nakakura Kyoshi Sensei (the modern-day Miyamoto Musashi he was called), Ishihara Sensei, Oka Sensei and Matsunaga Sensei. I will never forget that Nakakura Sensei taught us the first five kata from Muso Shinden Ryu Omori, so this was also the beginning of my Iaido career! The Papendal Seminar was limited to several participants per country, and since I was just a beginner, I got permission at the last moment from the NKR to join it.



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INTRODUCTION OF INSTRUCTORS

Kiyoshi NAKAKURA

Age: 66
Occupation: Kendo Master of Chuo
University
Grade: Kendo 8-Dan Hanshi
Iai 8-Dan Kyoshi



Tadayoshi ISHIHARA

Age: 60
Occupation: Kendo Master of Okayama
Police Force Head Quarter
Grade: Kendo 8-Dan Hanshi



Kenjiro OKA

Age: 50
Occupation: High school teacher of
physical education
Grade: Kendo 8-Dan Kyoshi



Masami MATSUNAGA

Age: 44
Occupation: Kendo instructor of Police
Academy
Grade: Kendo 7-Dan Kyoshi



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The Sensei of the Papendal Seminar 1977

Nederlandse Kendo Renmei

LIST OF PARTICIPANTS
SEMINAR '77 PAPENDAL



オランダ剣道連盟

ISSUE: 05
DATE: APRIL 2, 1977
NUMBER OF PARTICIPANTS: 54

<p><u>INSTRUCTORS</u> 01. NAKAKURA, K. 02. ISHIHARA, T. 03. OKA, K. 04. MATSUNAGA, M.</p> <p><u>ASSISTANTS</u> 01. YOSHIMURA, K. (FRANCE) 02. KANEDA, Y. (W.GERMANY) 03. FUJII, O. (GR.BRITAIN)</p>	<p><u>ITALY</u> 01. BENATO, L. 02. BOTTONI, M. 03. BRAMBILLA, L. 04. CAPPIO, M. 05. LIVOLSI, P. 06. NAVILLI, M. 07. TSCHANG, S.</p>
<p><u>BELGIUM</u> 01. DUCARME, A. 02. DUPONT, J. 03. HAECHE, J. 04. PAPANICOLAOU, S. 05. STERCKX, G. 06. STERCKX, P. 07. TISSEYRE, C.</p>	<p><u>PORTUGAL</u> 01. CABRAL, B. 02. MENEZES, F. de 03. OLIVEIRA COELHO, V. de 04. PLATH, X. 05. SILVA, C. da</p>
<p><u>FRANCE</u> 01. BRESSET, C. 02. DELORME, P. 03. HAMOT, C. 04. LOPICCOLO, J. 05. POMES, JP. 06. RAICK, JP. 07. TRAN, G. 08. STEIGER, F. 09. YOSHINAGA, K.</p>	<p><u>SPAIN</u> 01. MARGENAT, P.</p> <p><u>SWITZERLAND</u> 01. ISENSCHMID, R. 02. SCHOEB, A.</p>
<p><u>GERMANY W.-</u> 01. DEMSKI, W. 02. JAGEMANN, P. 03. SHIMIZU, Y. 04. WALSDORF, G.</p>	<p><u>SWEDEN</u> 01. ANDERSSON, R. 02. ANDO, I. 03. KAMIYASU, K. 04. LUNDBERG, H. 05. NURTIG, L. 06. SÜDERSTRÖM, K. 07. TSUCHIYA, S.</p>
<p><u>GREAT BRITAIN</u> 01. DOYLE, J. 02. KELLY, M. 03. OWENS, S.</p>	<p><u>THE NETHERLANDS</u> 01. BEKINK, W. 02. BROUWER, G. 03. ODINOT, H. 04. OS, P. van 05. OGUENDO, R. 06. ROOSTERMAN, R. 07. SMALLEGANGE, M. 08. VITALIS, L. 09. WOLFS, H.</p>

Participants to the Papendal Seminar.

From the photo album of my good friend Jacques van de Linden: the early days with Louis and Willem Alexander in the Piet Mondriaanstraat, Amsterdam.



Above: Louis and Willem Alexander
Below: Jacques Bouma and Louis

In the Summer of 1977, I was still a high school student, I saved up enough money to go on my first trip to Japan.

Together with Ed and Roelof Roosterman we went to Japan for about a month.

The first two weeks we joined the Kitamoto Gashuku, which was a special training camp for foreigners.

The one of 1977 was only the second time it was organized, but it is still held every year.

I spend half a day training Iaido, under Haga Sensei, and half a day Kendo under various sensei.

After two weeks I passed both Kendo and Iaido Shodan.

Probably, with the level that I had at that time, one would not even pass 1st Kyu nowadays, but the Japanese were so happy that a young European was practicing Kendo and Iaido, they let me pass my Shodan anyway.

After the Kitamoto Seminar, Ed, Roelof and me went to spend a week at Edo Sensei's house in Tokyo.

Edo Sensei was assistant at the Physical Education Department of Tokyo University, and he was trainer of the Kendo Club there.

At that time I had just turned 18, so Edo Sensei was just 38 years old and still competing for the All Japan Kendo Tournament.

At the All Japan Kendo Tournament, Edo sensei was often with the best 4 or best 8 players, so you can imagine the level at which he was training in the days when we first met him.

Being an unexperienced, young European Kendoka, I had no idea who Edo sensei was, and at what level he was doing Kendo.

I will never forget my first 5 minutes Keiko with him.

Here's me, a cocky 18-year-old, just passed Shodan Kendo, against this very small Japanese Kendo player.

How could I not hit him easily?

We came up from Sonkyo, I gave a loud Kiai (at least I could do that properly!), and the next thing I know is that my hands are empty.

Where is my Shinai? I looked around, and there it was, a few meters behind me.

I went to pick it up, took my Kamae, gave a loud Kiai, and the next second, I stood without Shinai again.

This situation repeated for a few times.

I don't remember even attempting a hit, I only remember me picking up my Shinai from the floor.

We all three stayed at Edo Sensei's small house in Tokyo, and we had our private training with him for about a week.

My first encounter with Edo Sensei made such a big impression on me, that I decided to learn Kendo from him. More than 40 years later, I still think it was one of the best decisions I ever made in my entire life.

Although most Japanese top Kendo players and high-ranking teachers start Kendo at a very early age (sometimes at kindergarten age!), the fact that I started at 16 years of age has been a great advantage in my Budo career.

There were only very few Yudansha when I started, so owing to my young age and many years of training in Japan, I was the highest-ranking person in Kendo, Iaido and Jodo by the end of the 1980's in The Netherlands.

In April 2019, I visited Edo Sensei's house, and he explained me in great detail how he started Kendo and with what kind of Kendo Giants he was practicing as a young man.

In 1961, as a 4th Year Student at Chukyo University, he was already allowed to attend the First All Japan Kendo Teachers Study Group.

On this photo, Edo is 4th from the left on the first row. We can see famous Sensei such as Nakano, Sato, Watanabe, Haga.

The picture is signed on the right hand side with Nakano Yasuji, one of the very famous Sensei in the history of modern Kendo.

Of course in 1977, at 18 years old, I had no idea what kind of a Kendo Giant I was dealing with, I would only realize this many, many years later!





Hilversum 1977: Louis (Kendo Shodan) and Jaques van der Linden showing Kendokata



Hilversum 1977: Louis (laido Shodan) showing Seitei Iai

In 1979 the Kendo World Championships were held in Sapporo.

By this time I was 19 years old and just finished High School.

Before the Taikai, I spend almost three months at Edo Sensei's new work place, Kanazawa University.

During this visit I could already speak some basic Japanese, which I had taught myself from books and cassette tapes.

Edo Sensei taught me one of the most important lessons in my Budo career:

“Katei Enman” means to have a harmonious, stable and peaceful private life.

Without a stable situation in your private life outside the Dojo, it is impossible to achieve the best results from your training.

If you have too much stress, you cannot focus on your training in a proper way, and it will be impossible to continue a lifelong career in Budo.

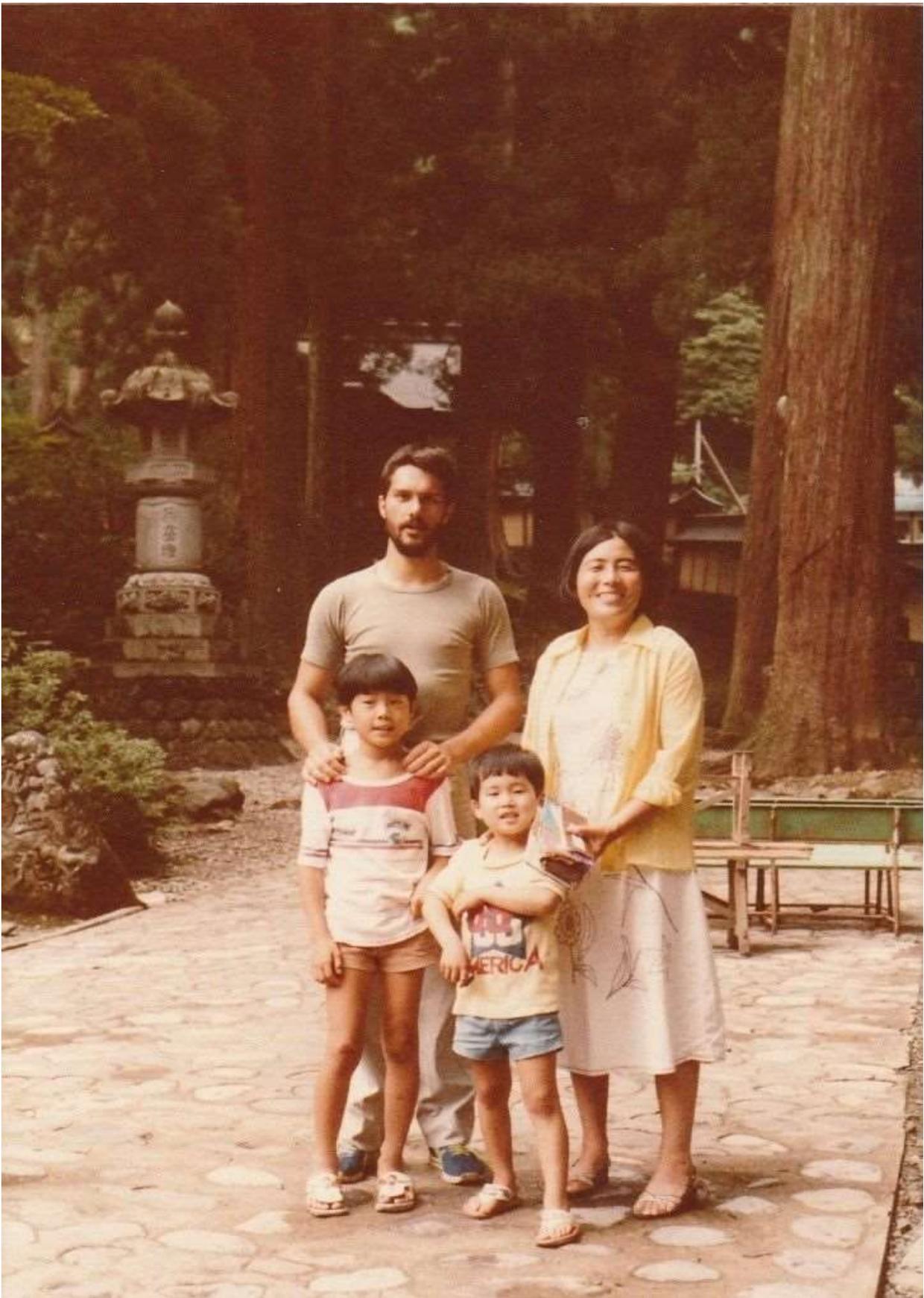
40 years later I still remember this lesson from Edo Sensei, and I fully believe that it is a true statement.



Louis (left) Edo Sensei (right) Kanazawa 1979

Besides being my Kendo teacher, Edo Sensei also taught me many things about Japanese Customs, Culture and how to behave as a proper human being. One visit that made a deep impression on me was to the Eiheiji Temple, the main center of Zen Buddhism in Japan.





Louis and Edo Sensei family at Eihei-ji Temple, 1979

I trained together with the students, and I learned to do Kakarigeiko.

After this I joined the Dutch Kendo Team for the Taikai. Because I was able to stand for more than 4 minutes in a Shiai with a Japanese 7th Dan, I was awarded the Fighting Spirit Price.

I was still a Shodan during the Taikai.



Dutch Team WKC 1979, Sapporo



敢闘賞（優秀選手賞）獲得者。左から、アルントホルツ（ドイツ）、スベンソン（スウェーデン）、デイビス（イギリス）、ロビコロ（フランス）、フィタリス（オランダ）の各選手

19-year-old Louis, with beard on the far right, award ceremony.

After training in Kanazawa, I also spend a week at one of Edo Sensei's students, Watanabe Kaoru Sensei, who is now 8th Dan Kendo. Watanabe Sensei was Kendo Teacher at the Chubu University, and later also visited Amsterdam with his students.





Watanabe Sensei and me in Chubu University

In this period I also met Iijima Sensei for the first time.

He was Physical Education Teacher at Shimodate nr. 1 High School, and trainer of the Kendo Club there.

Edo Sensei had introduced me to Iijima Sensei telling him that I spoke very good Japanese.

However, in those days my Japanese language skills were still very basic, so our conversations took

forever, using a dictionary. We spent till 2 in the morning explaining basic Kendo stuff, such as Heijoshin, Zanshin, Shishin etc etc.

Iijima Sensei had just turned 30 years old, and lived in a very small house (maybe 40 m2?) close to the school grounds. Because of my passion to learn Kendo and his passion to teach it, we developed a close relationship from the start.



Iijima Sensei, Sumie and Sumie's parents in 1979

I will never forget the Kitamoto Seminar of 1979. Iijima Sensei was picking me up after the Seminar, so he joined the final Jigeiko. In this Seminar, the whole Korean Kendo Team was participating, and they soon found out what a fantastic Kendoka Iijima Sensei was.

The whole team was lining up for Keiko with Iijima Sensei, and for one hour he fought all of them. I don't think any of them was able to get an Ippon on him, and I clearly remember that he was all over them for one hour, without slowing down for even one second.

Of course much later I found out that Iijima Sensei was a very high-level Kendo player, and even All Japan High School Teacher Champion!

He was also a member of the Ibaraki Kendo Team on prefectural Tournaments, which he continued till well in his forties.



A very young Iijima Sensei scores Ippon with Hanmen at the Kokutai Taikai 1974.



秋季国体剣道で総合優勝したロフィーのブロンズ像を手に
喜ぶ選手たち = 1974年10月23日、旧下館市の下館中体育館

Iijima (yes that's him!) and Miyamoto Sensei celebrate the 1974 victory for Ibaraki.



Young and Handsome Iijima Sensei



第4回世界剣道選手権大会

1979札幌

主催 国際剣道連盟
全日本剣道連盟

主管 北海道剣道連盟

FOURTH WORLD KENDO CHAMPIONSHIPS
SAPPORO 1979

INTERNATIONAL KENDO FEDERATION
ALL JAPAN KENDO FEDERATION
HOKKAIDO KENDO FEDERATION



N

オランダ NETHERLANDS

団長 LEADER



N. 1. J. H. オディノ
J. H. ODINO

選手 PLAYERS



N. 2. G. ドラジエ
G. DRAAIJER
28 ①



N. 3. A. ヴァンドール
A. VAN DER WAARD
44 ①



N. 4. J. G. ヴァンデンリンデン
J. G. VAN DEN LINDEN
32 ①



N. 5. ヴァンデンニューベンディック
J. NIEUWENDIJK
41 ①



N. 6. W. ウステンベルグ
W. OOSTERVELD
31 ①



N. 7. C. J. ポルス
C. J. PORS
31 ①



N. 8. R. テヴォーケル
R. DEVOUREL
IDAN 39 ①②



N. 9. G. ブロウザー
G. BROWUER
2DAN 35 ①



N. 10. E. ルンスタマン
E. ROOSTERMAN
2DAN 43 ①



N. 11. L. ヴィタリス
L. VITALIS
IDAN 20 ①



N. 12. J. ブリンクスマ
J. BRINKSMMA
35 ①



During this period I did not have a formal Iaido teacher. I was taught during the Kitamoto Seminars, and on some of the rare Iaido trainings that were held in Europe with Japanese delegations. In 1979 I did my Kendo and Iaido 2nd Dan exam in Kitamoto. As far as I know, Iaido Dan grades were still a very rare thing in Europe at that time. Two Sensei that helped me a lot during this time were Tanaya Sensei and Yamashibu Sensei, who visited Europe and taught us Iaido.



Tanaya Sensei, 8th Dan Hanshi, teaching at ZNKR Iai Seminar in 1987



Yamashibu Sensei, second from the left on one of his trips to Europe





Louis laido 1979

1980 – 1989

Kendo Developments

In 1980 I entered Leiden University, department of Japanology.

Because I wanted to learn all there was to learn about Kendo, and because Edo Sensei and Iijima Sensei's English was very limited, there was only one solution for me: become proficient enough in Japanese, so that they could teach me all the details in their own language.

In 1980 and 1981 I won the Dutch Kendo Championships.

Because I had been training in Japan in 1979, and because I was the youngest Kendoka in The Netherlands, I had a big advantage over the other Kendoka.



Louis and Ralf Oquendo demonstrating Kendokata



Jolanda on the way to Keiko





Kendo in Shinbuken Dojo Amsterdam 1980

Also in April 1980, I invited Iijima Sensei to come over to Amsterdam and he and his wife stayed in our house for a week.

I still lived with my mother in those days, but we had a great time together.

After one week in our house, Iijima Sensei stayed on the House Boat which Ed and Roelof Roosterman owned.

Iijima Sensei and his wife had been without child for ten years, but on the House Boat they had help from the floating feeling, and it was here that their only son, Toshikyuki was conceived.

Ever since, Toshikyuki has been named “made in Holland”.



Iijima Sensei's first visit to Amsterdam, with Furuya Sensei and Ogura Sensei, 1980



Dutch Championships 1981 Final: Louis v.s. Raph, both Nito!

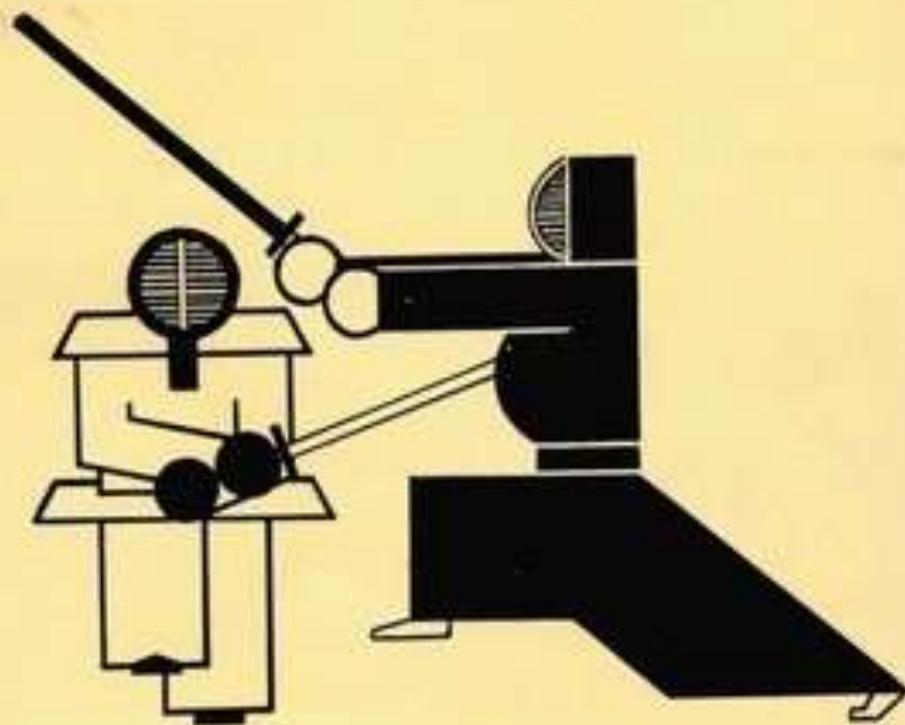


Ralph (2nd), Louis (1st), Jaques and Hans (3rd) NKK 1981



Young Jolanda and Anette 1981

KENDO



Fourth European Kendo Championship Berlin 1981

organized by:
Deutscher Judo Bund Sektion Kendo

NL

Coach



L. Vitalis
NL5, 2 Dan, TI
Team



E. Roostermann
NL1, 2 Dan, T



S. Nieuwendijk
NL6, T



R. Roostermann
NL10, 1 Dan, I

Netherlands

Del. leader



H. Odinet
3 Dan



J.V.D. Linden
NL2, 1 Dan, T



J. Bouma
NL3, 1 Dan, TI



H. Oosterling
NL4, 1 Dan, T



H. Herben
NL7, I



K. Latings
NL8, I



C. Möller
NL9, I



A. Prazsky
NL11, I



J. Dekker
NL12, I



Dutch Team EKC Berlin 1981

In the summer of 1981 I went to Japan again, this time on a Cultural Visa, and stayed for a year. I was very lucky that Edo Sensei became my sponsor, because in the early 1980's there was no organized Kendo Curriculum for foreigners at Japanese Universities.

I had to organize and finance everything myself, and without Edo Sensei's help it would not have been possible.

Edo Sensei first arranged an apartment for me.

This was not easy, because at that time it was not common to rent out to foreigners for only a one-year period.

Fortunately Edo Sensei found a real estate agent who was willing to rent a room to me, but without Edo Sensei's strong back up this would not have been possible.

He also supported me financially. I gave English lessons to his son, for which Edo Sensei paid the fees.

After arriving in Japan, I first went to Iijima Sensei for some time, and he and his father in law brought me to Kanazawa by car.

This took all night, and when we arrived in Kanazawa, we immediately had to go to the Dojo for a Keiko with Edo Sensei.

In the Winter of 1981 Jolanda, who was Shodan Kendo, joined me and stayed in Kanazawa with me for three months.

This was the start of a special relationship between Edo Sensei and Jolanda. Because he had no daughters but two sons, Jolanda became one of his "Kendo Daughters".

Oda Yoshiko, his other "Kendo Daughter", was a young first year student in the days I was there, and she became one of Edo Sensei's most proficient female Kendo students.

Not only was she very strong in Shiai, she also made profound study of Japanese and Korean Kendo and eventually passed her 7th Dan.

The practice at Kanazawa University was very tough.

We practiced 6 times a week, for two and a half hours each time.

The Wednesday practice was so called “Training”, which meant that we were mostly outside, doing running, jumping, running upstairs or slopes, and Suburi with a heavy Shinai.

The Sundays were mostly filled with Taikai, but sometimes we had a day of as well.

After three months I was sick for about a week.

When Sensei came into my Tatami Room which I rented, he laughed out loud: “you’re over trained! Take a break for a week and you’ll be fine”.



Kanazawa University Dojo 1981

After this, I could finally keep up with the training every day.

I did Keiko with Sensei almost every day, and most of the times I was so exhausted fighting him, that I lost consciousness many, many times.

I can't do that with my students in Europe of course, but in those days, no one would complain about it.

After three months I also scored the first real Ippon on Edo Sensei: I went for the Men hit, he tried to block it, so I could hit his Kote. I still remember this situation clearly.

I even know where in the Dojo we stood, and how happy he was that I finally hit him!

Of course in the next few minutes he hit me about a hundred times, but I still had my first real Ippon on him.

The winter of 1981/1982 in Kanazawa was very severe.

As an inhabitant of The Netherlands I had never seen more than 10 centimeters of snow, but one morning I woke up and could not leave my apartment, because the snow was covering the whole height of the front door!

We had to remove the snow, which was over one meter in height until we could reach the road.

In this winter I also joined the Kan Geiko of Kanazawa University Kendo Club.

Of course the Dojo was not heated, and they even opened all the doors and windows, so that the temperature inside would be the same minus 5 degrees as outside!

The training would start 7 in the morning and last for about one and a half hour.

I clearly remember a few things about this training, which lasted for 5 days.

First, Edo Sensei and I were the only ones who attended every day.

Most of the students skipped at least one or two days.

Second, because the Dojo was so cold, once we took our Men off, a small cloud of dampness would develop around our heads.

And lastly, I remember my feet would be so cold at the end of the training, that I could kick the concrete wall with my toes, and not feel anything.

My feet were completely numb.

Fortunately every training would end in Sensei's room with some typical Japanese winter foods, so we would warm up quickly.

Being a very small person, even for Japanese standards, Edo Sensei developed incredible footwork, but also an ability to use almost every technique that exists in Kendo in Keiko or in Shiai. Basically he taught me everything: Jodan, Nito, Katate Waza, various attack and defense options and how to set up your strategy towards your opponent.

Because of my mediocre talent, I was never able to use this training and win a major Tournament such as the European Kendo Championships.

But it did work out for Jolanda, who was much more talented in Kendo than me, and who would become the first official European Lady Kendo Champion in 1989.

Edo Sensei also taught me how to be Shinpan in Kendo Shiai.

We did a lot of Shiai practice and because I was a little older than the 4th year students, I was acting as Shinpan many times a week.

This was the basis of my career as a Kendo Referee.

Because of this experience, I was already used to refereeing Japanese Kendo and this is one of the reasons I was selected as referee on the WKC team finals for many years.

I also remember my final Keiko with Edo Sensei at the end of my one-year stay.

Because it was impossible to hit his Men, I decided to try something I had learned during my stay: a faint attack under his Shinai to the Kote, and then jump forward to hit Tsuki when his Shinai moved sideways to defend the Kote.

It worked perfectly, and it was only the second Ippon I scored on him in the whole year.

During my year in Kanazawa, I was one of the students who were in Edo Sensei's "Kendo Kenkyu Shitsu" (Kendo Study Group) every day.

I could read Japanese pretty well by this time, and started to translate all of Edo Sensei's studies on Kendo.

After my return to Amsterdam Henk Oosterling helped me to turn this into a Kendo Book, written in Dutch.



Jolanda and the girls from Kanazawa Univ. Kendo Club

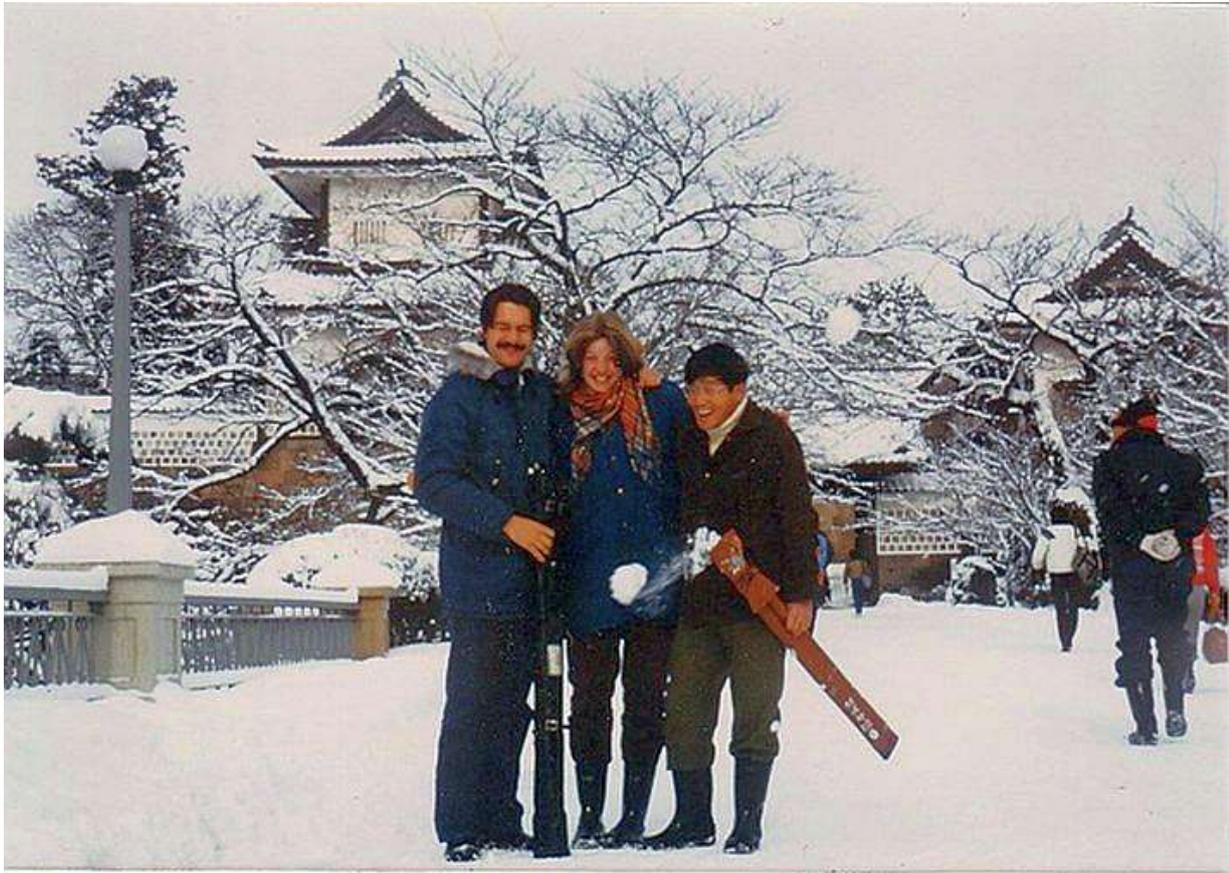




Dutch beauty in Japanese snow



Biomechanical Study on Kendo by professor Edo





**In the 1980's Kanazawa University was inside the castle,
*now it is a famous tourist attraction.***

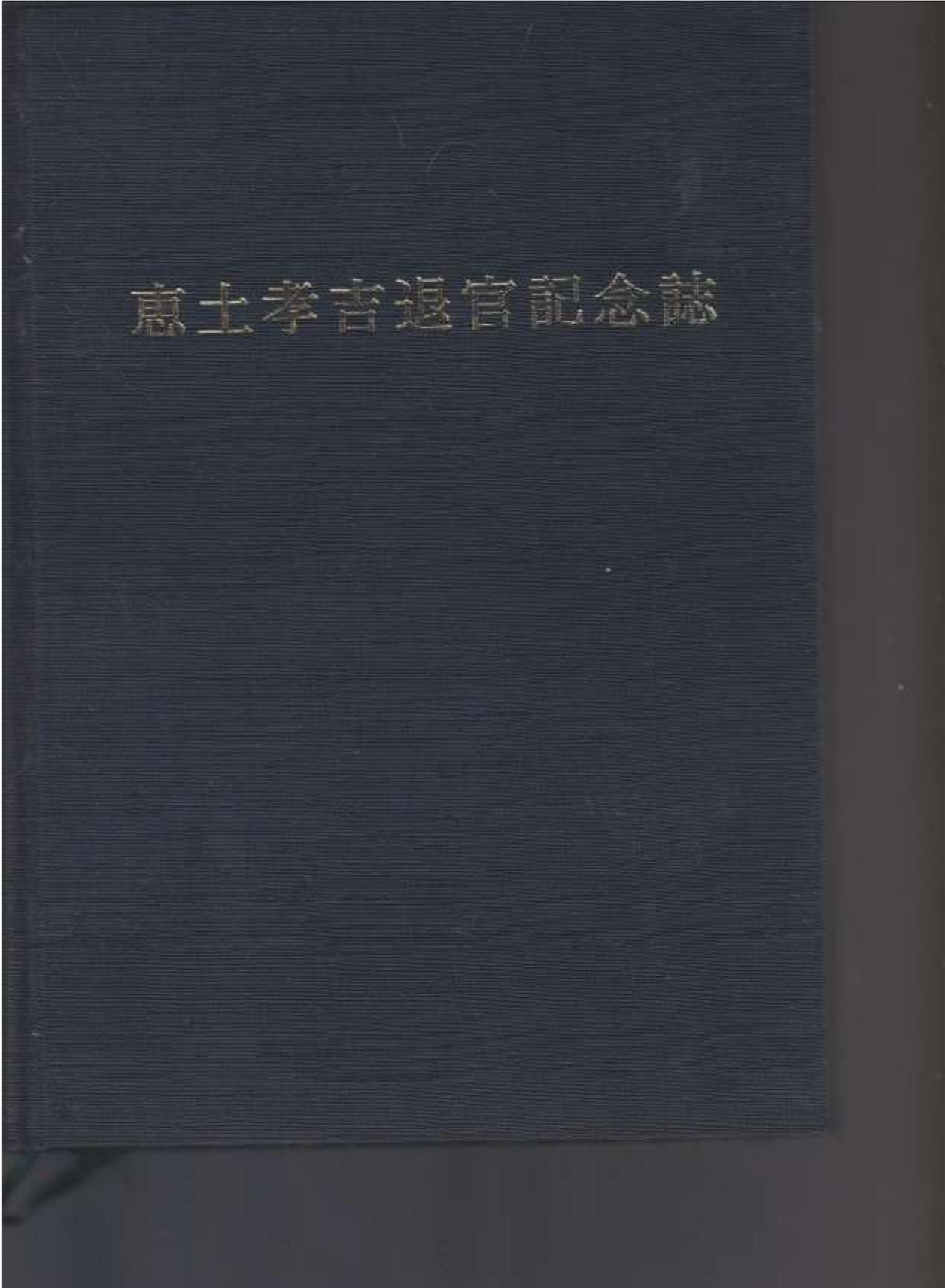


Louis in Edo Sensei's Kendo Study Department, Kanazawa University



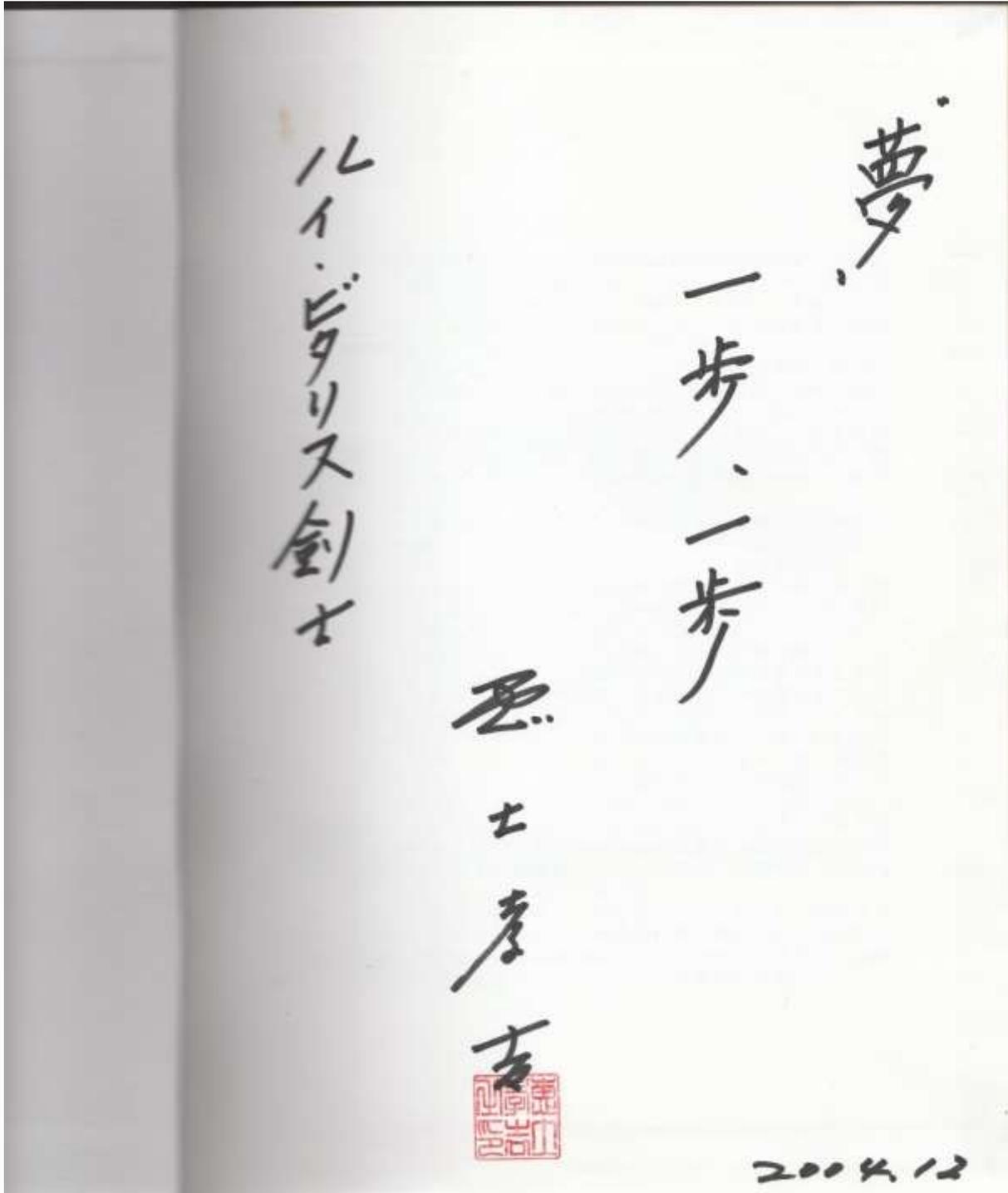
金沢大学剣道部卒業記念 s57. 1. 23 於蛇ノ目寿司

Kanazawa Univ. Kendo Club Graduation Party January 1982

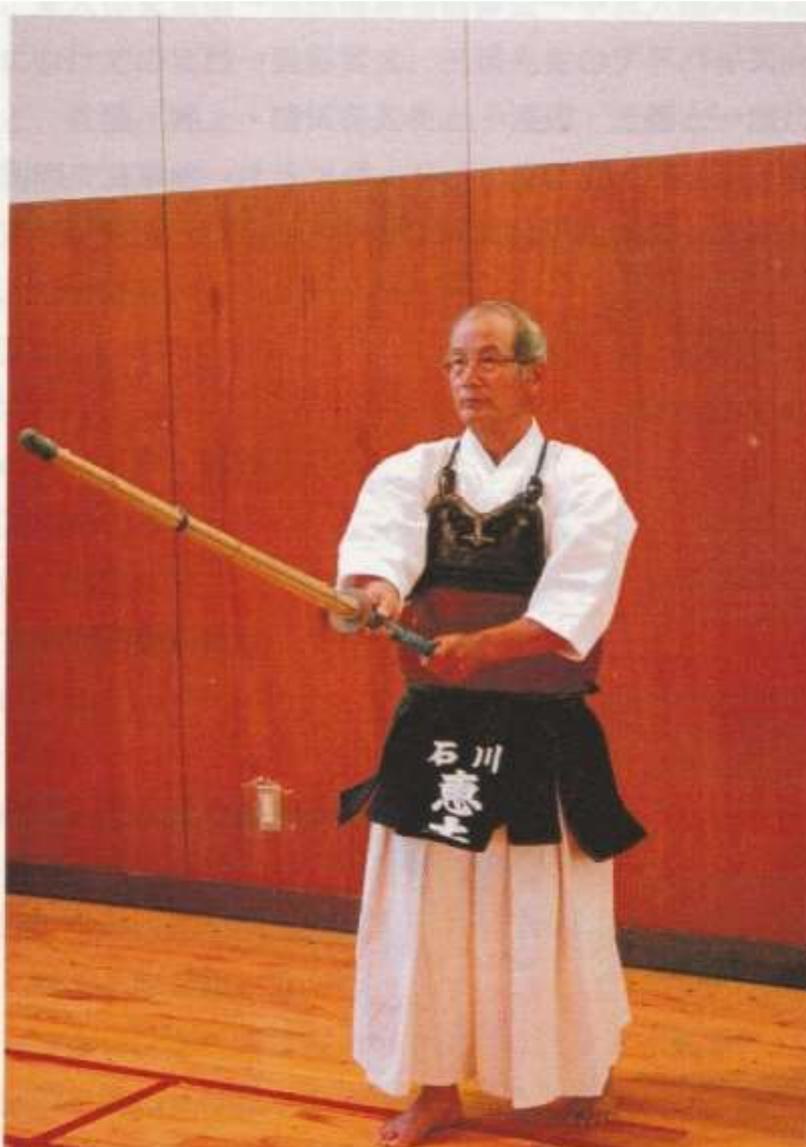
The image shows the front cover of a book. The cover is a dark blue color with a fine, woven texture. In the upper center, the title is embossed in gold Japanese characters. The title reads '志士孝吉退官記念誌' (Shishi Kōkichi Taiikan Kinenshi), which translates to 'Commemorative Volume for the Retirement of the Samurai Kōkichi'.

志士孝吉退官記念誌

When Edo Sensei retired, he assembled a kind of memoirs of his lifelong Kendo career. Here are some parts of that (in Japanese), where my stay in Kanazawa are mentioned.



Message from Edo Sensei to me: “Yume, ippo, ippo” : Dream, step by step.



退官記念写真 金沢大学体育館(平成16年10月15日)

Edo Sensei at his retirement age.



Louis & Jolanda in Kanazawa, 1981.



38 years later: April 2019 Edo Sensei insisted we took a picture on the same location!



オランダ・アムステルダム 剣道講習会1990
金沢大学剣道部とともに 相手、若きオランダ剣士ルイ・ピタリス



Edo Sensei teaching in Europe.

アムスの剣士達

事始め

今でこそ、国際交流華やかで市民権を得ているが、三十数年前までは、仕事で外国へ出かけるのも、また外国人と日常的に交流を図ることも、社会的、経済的問題があり大変困難な時代であった。何と言っても、当時一ドル三百六十円がこのことを示す。

恵士が昭和四十九年、日本の伝統文化としての剣道に興味を抱いて門を叩いた数名の者Ed・ward Koesterlin、RALPH Ogundo、等数名の者にオランダアムステルダム国立競技場の一角で剣道を教えた。(写真1)そのうちの一人の剣士の紹介で、ルイ・フタリス (Louis Vidal) が、名聞兼六國統きの石川門をくぐり金沢大学剣道部(金大)にふらりと一人で防具を担ぎ福古に来たのは、今から約二十三年前、昭和五十四年、弱冠十八歳であった。そして、ルイが本腰を入れて私費留学生として再び日本を訪れて、一年間金大剣道部に武者修業に来たのは二年後の昭和五十六年九月であった。(写真2)

私費留学生を世話する手始めは住まいであった。

金沢大学 剣道部
部長 恵 土 孝 吉



(写真1)



(写真2)

当時としては当然のことながら、たとえば、地元大
学教官が保証すると言えども、訳の分からない留
学生の住まいをしかも一年契約（通常二年間）で
貸してくれる不動産屋などありはしなかった。幾
つか不動産屋を当てる内に幸運にも金大法学部出
身の理解ある不動産屋に巡りあい、彼の好意で明
日住む宿が得られた。次は生活費問題であった。
国立オランダライデン大学日本語科で日本語を
学びながら、学校帰りにリンゴやパンをかじりな
がら三年間、夜のアルバイトして貯めた百万円は、
物価の高い金沢では生活できなかった。新聞
に英語の家庭教師の広告を出してアルバイトをさ
せようと考えた。効果があり問い合わせがあった
が、彼が英国人でないと語りことから、折角の希
望者に応募していただけなかった。やむなく、貯
めて持ち込んだお金と私の長男の家庭教師料とで
食い繋ぐことになった。

ルイの金沢における剣道修業生活は、概ね二時
ごろ研究室に現れて、惠士の指導法や剣道の科学
的知見について質問し、それを下宿に持ち帰りオ
ランダ語に翻訳すること。午後五時から剣道部員
と杖道の練習をすることであった。祖国を遠く離
れ、真剣に剣道に取り組む姿勢や稽古に、ほぼ同
年齢の本学剣道部員は大きな影響を受け、共に切
磋琢磨した。一方では時折聞かれる、剣道部
のコンバやレクレーションに参加していただき
友好を深めた。また、剣道と翻訳の合間に私と兼
六園などを散策したが、そんな折、ルイを見る観
光客や金沢人は、奇異な目で彼を見つめた。中で
も、高校女子生徒は我々に聞こえる大声でアッ！



外人だ！」と叫び大騒ぎするのであった。ルイは
帰国後一九八五年オランダで「KENDOJOURNAL」
「JIKUO JOURNAL」を上梓した。現在では、剣道
全般に未だ未熟とは言え、世界剣道大会のファイ
ナル戦の副審判を任されるようになった。

ハーバード大の女子剣士

ここ数年、皆様に存じのように、多くの国立大
学では国の方針で留学生を多く受け入れている。
ご多分に漏れず金大でも多くの留学生を受け入れ
ていることもあって、最近では、さすがに驚いた
り、「アッ！外人！」と叫ぶのは聞かなくなった。

平成七年、四十五人の金大剣道部に青い目の女子
三剣士が同時に入学してきた。（写真3）通常、留
学生は年に一人か二人の入学であるから、女子三剣
士は珍しいことであった。一人は、フロリダ州出身
でハーバード大学生ロビー・ミラー（二十一歳）。
二人目はルイジアナ州出身、ウイリアムアンドメア
リー大学生ジョネル・オクルー（二十一歳）。三
人目はドイツ国籍でボン大学のザンドラ・クーン
（二十三歳）。三人とも、日本のスポーツをしてみ
たかったという理由で竹刀を握った。練習を通じて
ミラーは「最初は怖かったが、続けていくうちに
敵は自分の中にいることを学んだ。オクルーは「相
手との緊張感が楽しい。クーンは「部員の団結心
の強さなど、日本人について多くのことを知ること
ができた」と、それぞれ感想を述べた。一方、北陸
地区国立体育大会に団体戦のメンバーとして出場し、
優勝に一役買った。（写真4）

その後、毎年一、二名の外国剣士を剣道部に迎
えているが、平成十四年現在ではニューヨーク出
身で本学理学部で鉱物学を研究しているガリウス・
グリニッジ先生（四十歳）、ドイツ国籍でハノファ
大学教官のイエルク・ペーターズ先生（三十四歳）
と稽古を通じて国際交流を回っている。

Rough Translation: The Kenshi from Amsterdam

This article was originally written by Edo Sensei for the 50th year anniversary of the All Japan Student Kendo Federation magazine in 1989.

Now it is very common to have international relationships, but 30 years ago it was very difficult to have regular contacts with foreigners or to go abroad for work, because of social and financial barriers. In those days, it was 360 yen for one US\$!

In 1974 a few individuals such as Ed Roosterman and Ralf Oquendo had developed an interest in Kendo as a traditional Japanese martial art, and they joined my trainings in the Olympic Stadium in Amsterdam, where I was teaching Kendo.

One of the Amsterdam Kenshi, Louis Vitalis, came walking past the Kenrokuen Park in Kanazawa, through the Ishikawa Gate of the castle, with his Bogu on his shoulder, in 1979 at the age of 18. Two years later he came again to Kanazawa Kendo Club on “Musha Shugyo” (proper samurai training), as an overseas student, all paid by himself.

The first thing that I had to arrange for him was a place to live.

However, in those days it was not so easy to find a real estate agent who would rent out a room for only one year, even though a university teacher would guarantee payment for it.

Fortunately I found a real estate agent who had graduated from Kanazawa University who understood the situation and we found a place to live for Louis.

The next problem was the cost of living.

As a student of Leiden University Louis had saved up some money from his side jobs, but this was not enough to survive in an expensive city as Kanazawa.

Because Louis was not a native speaker of English, it was hard to find students for English lessons. Therefore I decided to let him teach English to my eldest son, and with that money and his savings he could just survive.

Louis Kendo training in Kanazawa would start at 2 pm, when he came to the Kendo Kenkyu Shitsu (Kendo Study department of Physical Education Division) where he would study my teaching methods and the scientific studies we were doing into Kendo.

He would then translate these into Dutch. We would also practice Jodo, besides the daily Kendo training.

The other students, who were about Louis' age, were very impressed by Louis attitude and training, even being so far away from home, and together they would improve and polish their skills in Kendo.

Of course Louis would join the Kendo Club parties and a real friendship with the students would develop.

Sometimes I would walk with Louis through Kanazawa, and in those days the people of Kanazawa and the many tourists would look at him with an expression of surprise on their faces.

Some of the girls students would shout out loudly: “hey look a foreigner!”.

After his return to Amsterdam Louis would publish his work in a book called {Kendo, techniek tactiek en didactiek} in 1985.

Although he is still far from skilled in Kendo, he has been selected to referee the finals of the world Kendo Championships.

In the Summer of 1982 I returned back to Amsterdam. The first thing I did, was to move with Jolanda into our own rental flat in Amsterdam.

I started to teach Kendo, Iaido and Jodo from this period.

Although I was young, unexperienced and totally unqualified to teach, there was no one with more



Nakakura Sensei, 9th Dan.

knowledge in the Amsterdam area, so automatically I was teaching the things that I had learned during my one year stay in Kanazawa.

During the year I was in Kanazawa, I not only trained Kendo and Jodo every day, I also studied Kendo History and Biomechanics under Edo Sensei.

I translated most of his studies into Dutch and brought all this with me to Amsterdam. Together with Henk Oosterling, one of the founding members of Fumetsu Dojo in Rotterdam, I started to compile everything into a book.

It took more than 2 years to finish, but I'm still very proud of this work.

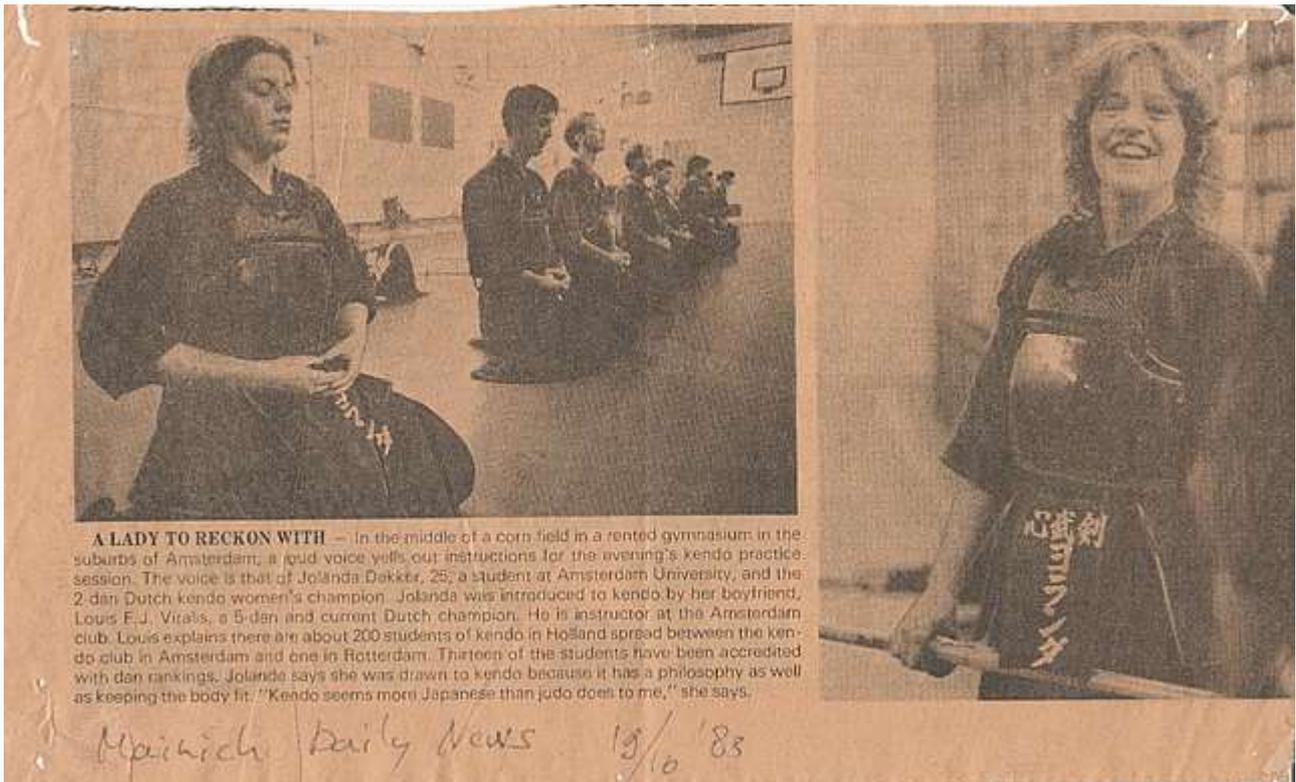
Because of Edo Sensei's high standing in Japan, we were even honored by a written introduction and a beautiful calligraphy by the famous Nakakura Sensei, 9th Dan.

Many years later, Nakakura Sensei took me for Kendo to the Imperial Police Dojo, inside the Imperial Palace in Tokyo.

Also, because most of the work on this book we did at Henk's home in Rotterdam, I was teaching Kendo in Rotterdam for almost 2 years, on a very regular basis.

Both Koos van Hattum and Gerard Barbier trained with me in that period. They are now 7th Dan and 6th Dan and still very good friends of us.

In 1983 we were interviewed by Mainichi Newspaper.



In 1983 I participated in the European Kendo Championships, in Chambéry, France.

Although I should have won this tournament, I lost my Heijoshin in the Quarter Final and lost from Rainer Jattkowski from Berlin.

He would be second in the Tournament, and I was awarded the Fighting Spirit Prize.

In 1984 I again made it to the best eight at the European Kendo Championships in Brussels, but I lost from the guy who won the Tournament and I was awarded the Fighting Spirit Prize again.



Louis scores Men in Chambery EKC, 1983

In these years there was no official Ladies division on the European Kendo Championships, but after her three months stay in Kanazawa, Jolanda was already developing a great insight in Kendo matches, and she already won prizes at the Mumeishi 3's Kendo Tournament in London. This was the biggest Kendo event in Europe in those days, even bigger than many European Championships.



Dutch delegation to Mumeishi 1982



Another Mumeishi Award for Jolanda



And another first place for Jolanda!

Sixième
championnat
du monde
de kendo
Paris
1985



International
Kendo Federation
Comité mondial
du kendo
IKF-IAI

Sixth
World Kendo
Championship
Paris
1985

第6回
世界剣道選手権大会

Programme





10018



10019



10020



10021



10022



10023



10024



10025



10026



10027

Pays-Bas Netherlands オランダ

HO

COORDINATE

- 10018 Dijkster Yolanda, 2 dan
- 10019 van Amerongen Rina (20)
- 10020 Barber Geralt (17), 1 dan
- 10021 de Haan Wim (17), 2 dan

- 10018 Othman Hiam
chef de la délégation, coach/Staff of
délégation and coach
- 10019 DeLan Yolanda (officer/officer)
- 10019 Schouten Jan (manager)
- 10021 Vrolijk Lieve (17), 4 dan
- 10022 Oostering Henk (15), 2 dan
- 10023 Harvey Bert (25), 2 dan
- 10024 Spoorburg Ron (26), 2 dan
- 10025 Oostering Ron (17), 1 dan
- 10026 Walman Andre (11), 1 dan
- 10027 Borecker Nick (10), 1 dan



In the 1980's Jolanda was practically unbeatable in Europe! She was 2nd at WKC 1985 Ladies Goodwill, only an American-Japanese woman was (a little) stronger than Jolanda.





Famous Iaido Enbu of Nakakura Sensei, WKC 1985



Dutch Kendo Team WKC 1985



Louis ready for Shiai, WKC 1985



Nakakura Sensei, his wife and Louis at WKC sayonara party



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Holland

Officials



Mike Ollman
Delegation Leader
U.S. J. Officer



Johanda Dekker
Team Manager



Jan Schouten
Coach



Team members

Louis Vitalis
4th Dan

Ron Oosterling
2nd Dan

Bert Heeren
2nd Dan

Henk Oosterling
2nd Dan

Nick Boersma
2nd Dan

Andre Raboan
1st Dan

Sergio Velasquez
1st Dan

Nederlander Karate Bond
c/o Mr. Mike Ollman
Goudstein 14
3085 DB Rotterdam

In the mid 1980's, Jolanda and I were still University Students.

We did not have a lot of money, but all the money that I earned by teaching Dutch to Japanese expats, Japanese to Dutch students and translating for the "King of Japanese Brothels", who wanted to open a brothel in the Red-Light District in Amsterdam, we spent on Budo.

We trained Kendo, Iaido and Jodo as much as we could, and my first-generation students in all three disciplines started training with me in this period. (See Lineage).

In 1984, we invited Edo Sensei and Iijima Sensei to Amsterdam.

We were still living in our small, two room apartment, so the two Sensei had to sleep in the living room. Japanese are used to live in small houses, so this was never a problem, and we all had a great time, combining Kendo and sightseeing.

Because we wanted to have our own Kendo/Iaido/Jodo Club, and separate from the Karate Club Shinbuken, I asked Edo Sensei for a name for my Dojo.

There is a very famous Dojo in Japan, called Museido.

It was a Dojo in Kanazawa, which was later moved to Nagoya to function as a kind of museum. Because of my strong connection with Kanazawa, Edo Sensei came up with the name Museido, which we have been using ever since.

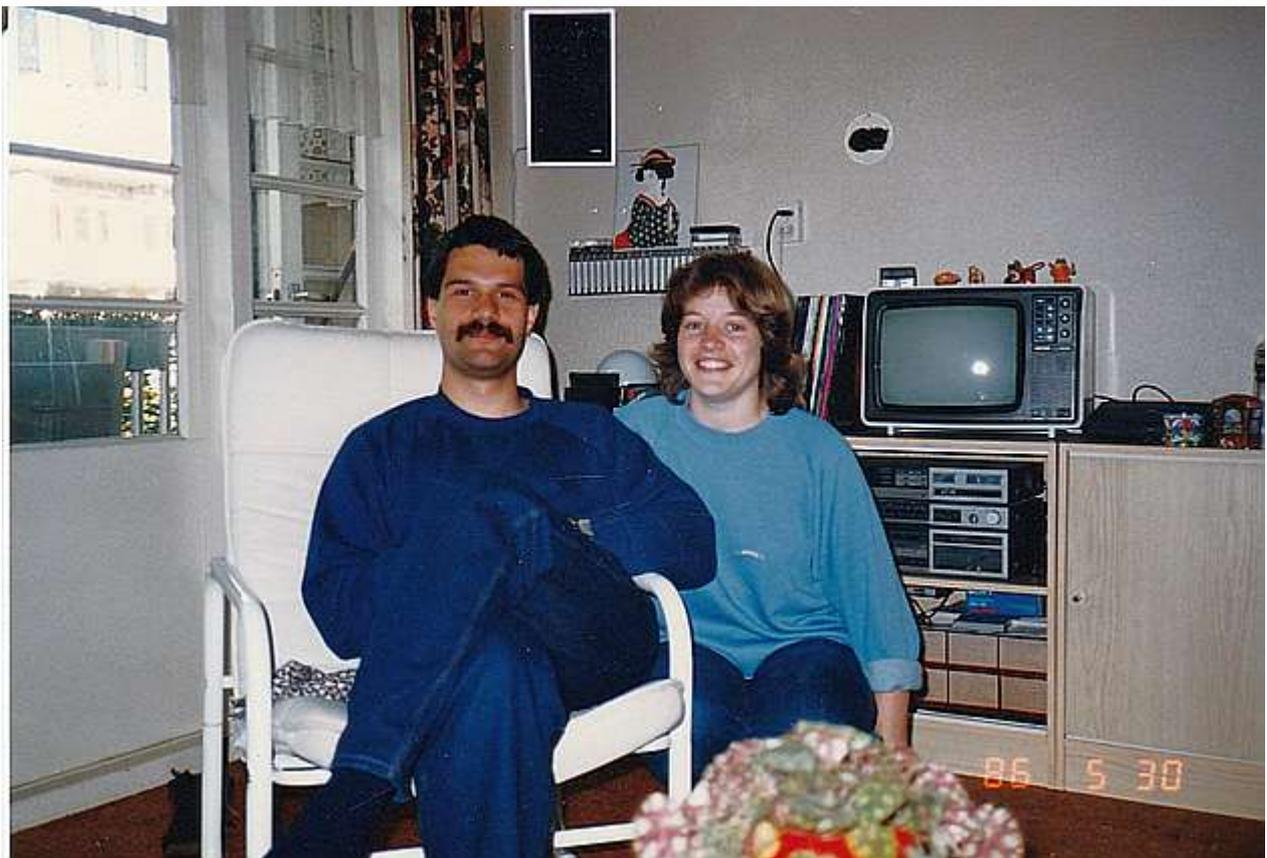


Edo Sensei in Amsterdam 1984

Jolanda and I were also deeply involved in the activities of the Nederlandse Kendo Renmei, NKR.

I was appointed Technical Commissioner, and Jolanda took care of the ordering of Kendo equipment. We had a good relationship with Hitachi Budogu, a small Kendo shop in Ibaraki Prefecture, and they even sponsored the NKR Kendo Team on some events.

We organized Seminars with Iijima Sensei and Ishido Sensei's Group, Regular Central Trainings and also Kendo/Iaido/Jodo tournaments.



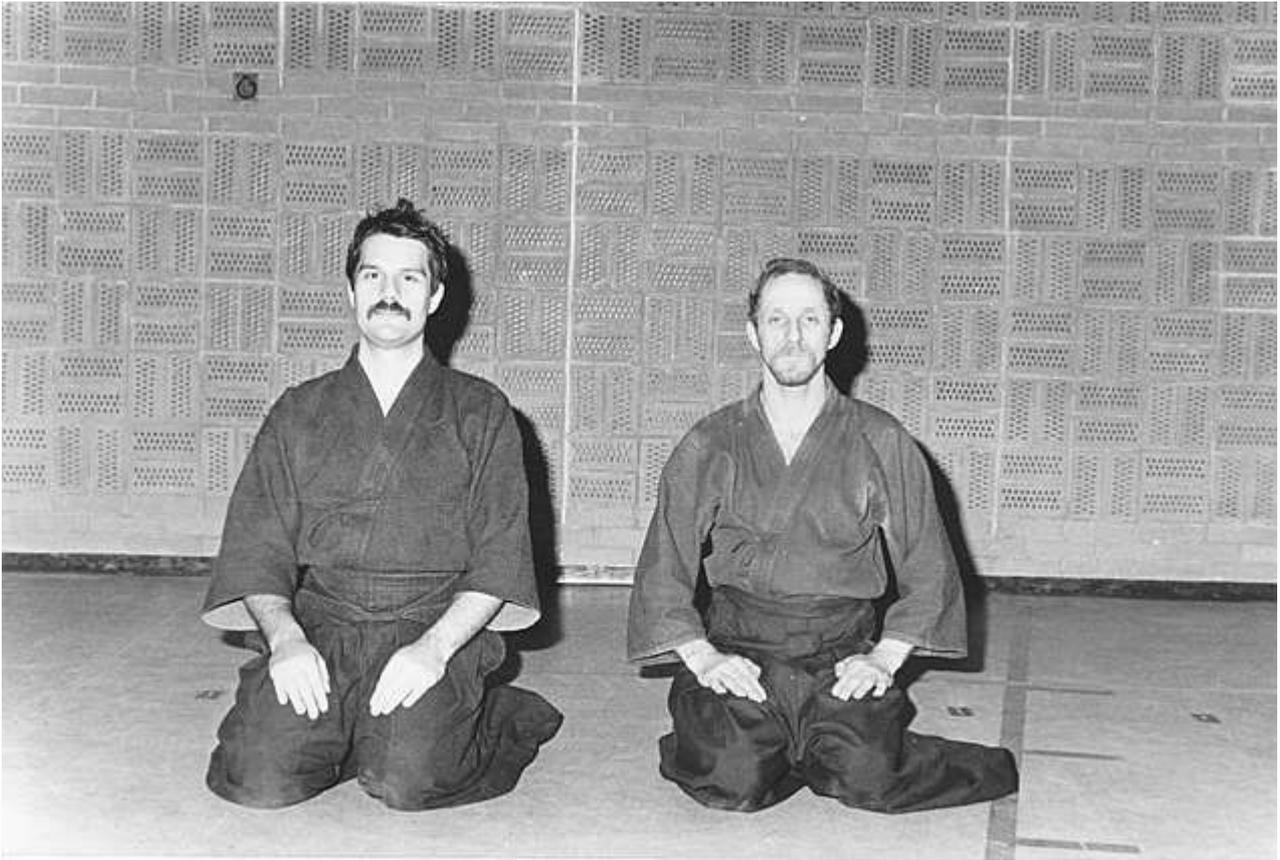
In our first apartment in Amsterdam, May 1986.

After my return from Japan in 1982 till I started working for Nippon Express in 1988, I spend many hours teaching in various Dojo in The Netherlands.

I was teaching regularly in Heerlen, where Rene Bonne and Guido Minnaert were my students.

Working on the Kendo Book with Henk Oosterling in Rotterdam every week brought me to teaching in Fumetsu Dojo from 1982 till 1984.

I also taught in Groningen, where I trained with the founder of Shinbuken Groningen, Anton Kemmerling.



Louis & Anton in Groningen



In the background Willem Riesenkamp, now the Dojo Leader in Groningen

We were also active in participating in Budo demonstrations, to make our activities more known.

Niko Bijl and Dick Lindhout, unfortunately both no longer alive, were one of my first Kendo/Iaido/Jodo students in Amsterdam.



Niko and Dick showing off in Amsterdam Osdorp



Louis open air Iaido Enbu: look at the length of my sword!

From December 1985 till February 1986, Jolanda and I spend a few weeks training in Japan. We trained in Kanazawa University with Edo Sensei, Shimodate Dai Ichi High School with Iijima Sensei, Shinbukan Dojo with Ishido Sensei and the Shiseikan Dojo of the late Takizawa Kozo Sensei.

Nakakura Sensei also took us to the famous Saineikan Dojo, which is the Dojo of the Imperial Police, inside the Imperial Palace in Tokyo.

Here Jolanda could not train because the training was only for male Kenshi, but after the training Nakakura Sensei arranged a short trip through the Imperial Palace Grounds with a big imperial limousine.

At this time we were staying in Otake Sensei's house, and he was very jealous of our direct access to Nakakura Sensei and the trip to the Palace.

During this trip we trained Kendo, Iaido and Jodo, almost every day with very little sightseeing.

Jolanda also participated in the Ibaraki Prefecture Katei Fuji Taikai, which is a Kendo tournament for amateur ladies.

Only the opponent of the final was stronger than Jolanda, so she ended with a second place.

The Ibaraki Kendo Federation President mentioned Jolanda's superb Kendo in his closing speech, and he was happy that the local lady won it, otherwise Jolanda would have had to represent Ibaraki at the all Japan Katei Fuji Taikai!



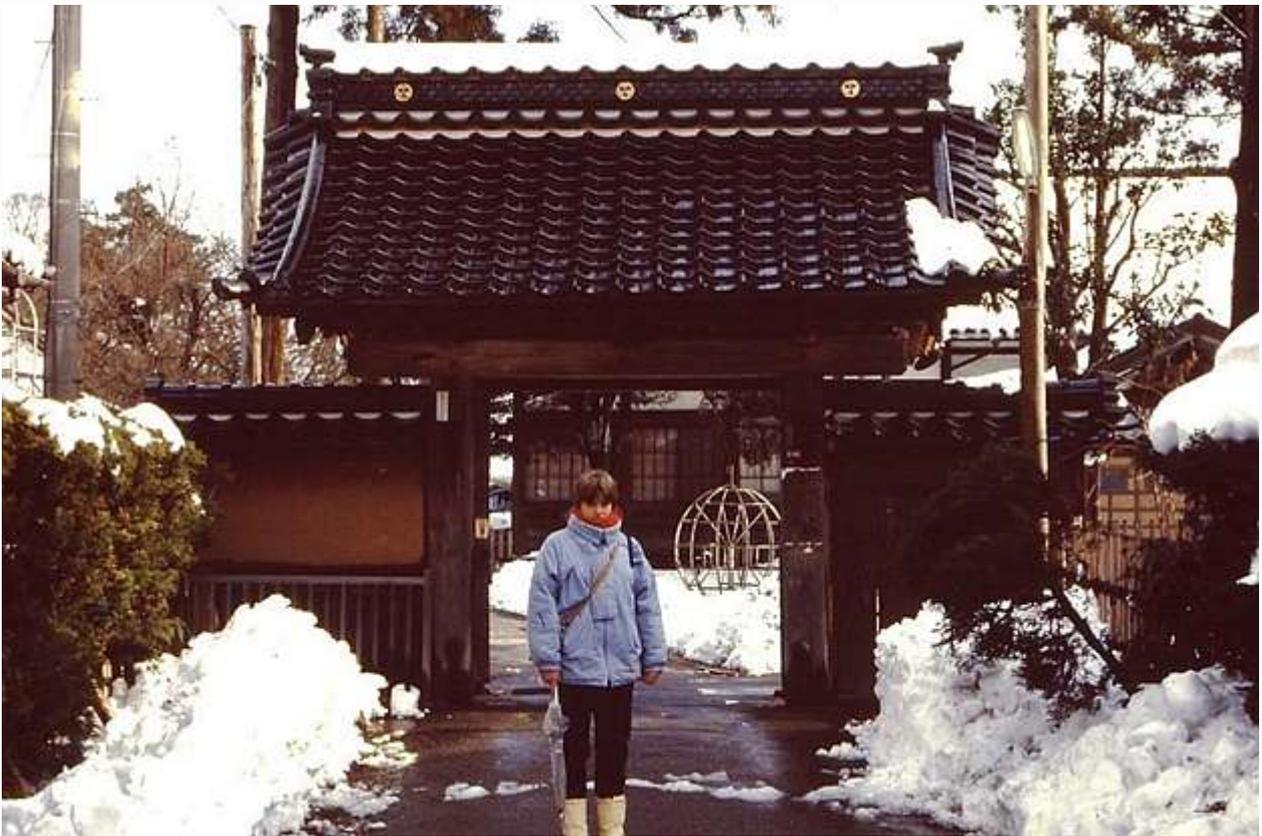
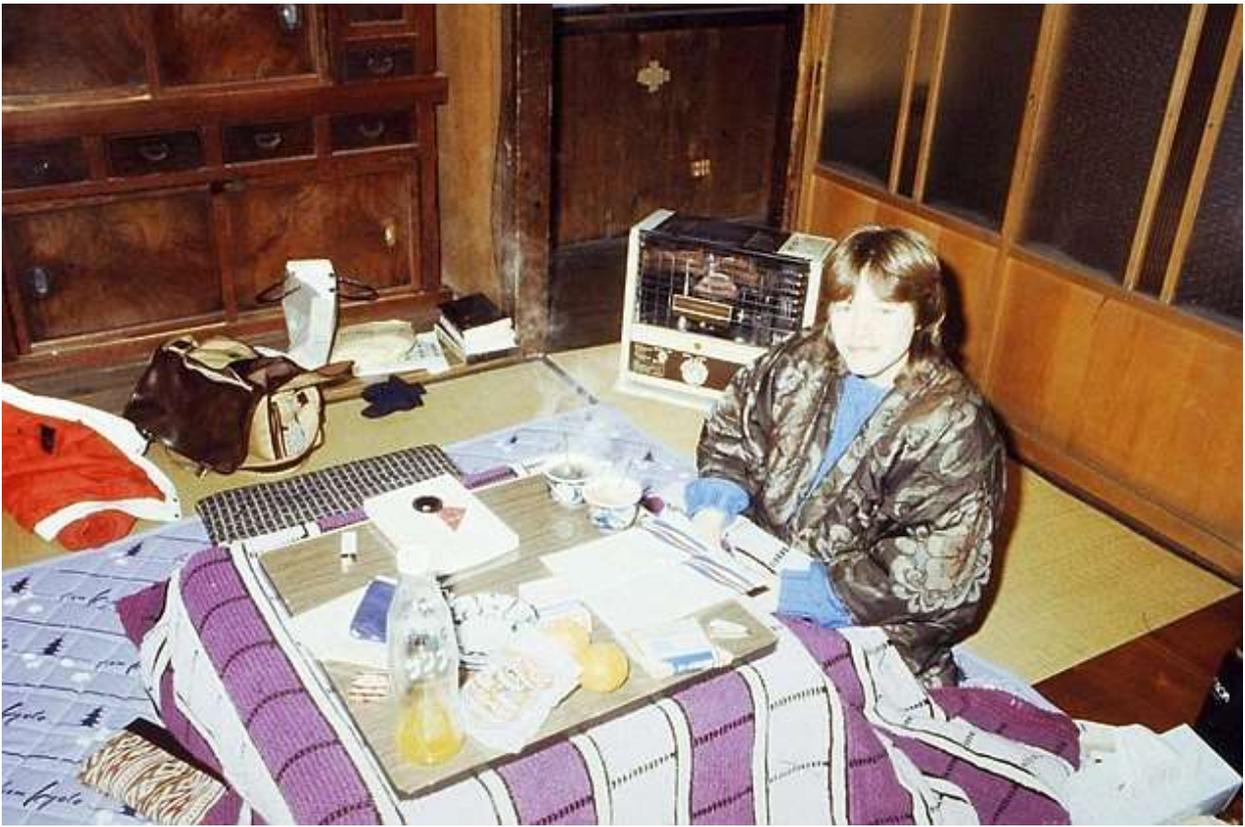
Winter 1985 in Ishioka at Iijima Sensei



Louis and Iijima Sensei making Mochi



Louis and Jo at Furuya Sensei's Dojo, winter 1985





Winter 1985 Kanazawa was very coooold!



Louis and Jolanda at Takizawa Sensei's Dojo



Nakakura Sensei watching Louis in Imperial Palace Dojo



Louis tries Men in Imperial Palace Dojo



After Keiko in Imperial Palace with Tajima Sensei, Nakakura Sensei and Kato Sensei



Jolanda won 2nd place at Ibaraki Katei Fujin Taikai 1986

Although I was the first Dutch Kendoka who won Fighting Spirit Prizes in World- and European Tournaments, the first real results came in 1986, when the Dutch Kendo Team got 3rd place in the European Kendo Championships in the UK.

In 1987 we organized the first international Kendo Seminar with Iijima Sensei, and this was the Seminar that finally developed into the NKR Summer Seminar with Nabeyama Sensei of recent years.

Because Iijima Sensei has a very well-respected reputation in the Ibaraki Prefecture Kendo Renmei, we could also organize Kendo seminars with some high-ranking Sensei from Ibaraki Prefecture. Especially Miyamoto Sensei (†), 8th Dan Hanshi and president of Ibaraki Prefecture Kendo Federation and Takasaki Sensei, 8th Dan Hanshi became close friends with the NKR Kendo members.

In 1987 I met Mr. Kumagai, the Managing Director of Nippon Express Nederland.

He was a founding member of the Nippon Express Kendo Club, and he joined Museido to practice Kendo with us.

Even though he was only a 4th dan Kendo, and already in his early fifties, he was a very experienced tournament player, so training with him was always a great pleasure.

We became good friends, and in June 1988 he asked me if I was interested in joining Nippon Express Nederland. I said yes immediately, and I never left the company until my retirement in 2018.

In August 1988 Jolanda and I decided to get married, and invited Edo Sensei as witness to the official part of the wedding ceremony.

Of course we combined this with many Kendo trainings, and especially Jolanda's level of Kendo was growing to a very high level.



Kumagai Sempai, Louis, Jolanda, Edo Sensei



Edo Sensei as witness at our wedding



Edo Sensei and the Happy Couple

In 1989, we felt confident enough to organize the European Kendo Championships in Amsterdam. Fortunately Iijima Sensei helped us a lot in managing the official delegation from Japan and the tournament was a great success for the NKR as well: Sergio Velasquez made it to 3rd place in the men's individual tournament.

In this tournament, the European Kendo Federation organized the first official Ladies Division. Jolanda had been going through a gruesome training period with Iijima Sensei before the tournament in Amsterdam, and she won this first official Ladies Kendo European Kendo Tournament in a fantastic manner.



Jolanda receives the first European Ladies Championships Award

In 1989 Iijima Sensei and his wife, son, mother and father in law came to visit us, and we visited Paris.

Still a famous story in the Iijima family: in Paris Iijima and I tried some special fried fish. The next day we both had diarrhea when we had to stand in line for the Louvre Museum.



Iaido Jodo Developments

In 1981 I was training Kendo at Kanazawa University. One day Edo Sensei told me to come to the Dojo early next morning, without Bogu and only with a Bokken.

Of course I thought that we were going to do Kendo Kata. I had already experienced Kendo Kata with Edo Sensei, which was completely different from what I had learned so far. His approach to Kendo Kata was “Shinken Shobu” (real fight), and once he tried to surprise me in Kata Number 2, where Uchidachi is supposed to attack Kote, with a Katate Men to the side of my head. Fortunately I was able to deflect it with Suriage Men, which caused a big grin on Sensei’s face.

I was in the Dojo on time, only with my Bokken. Edo Sensei appeared in the Dojo with a wooden stick, and he told me to take Chudan no Kamae. The next thing I remember was that my Bokken was flying through the Dojo behind me, for many meters! It was outside the Shiaijo that we were in, so it must have been more than 10 meters. I asked “Sensei, what is this?”. He replied: “this is Jodo. How do you like it?”.

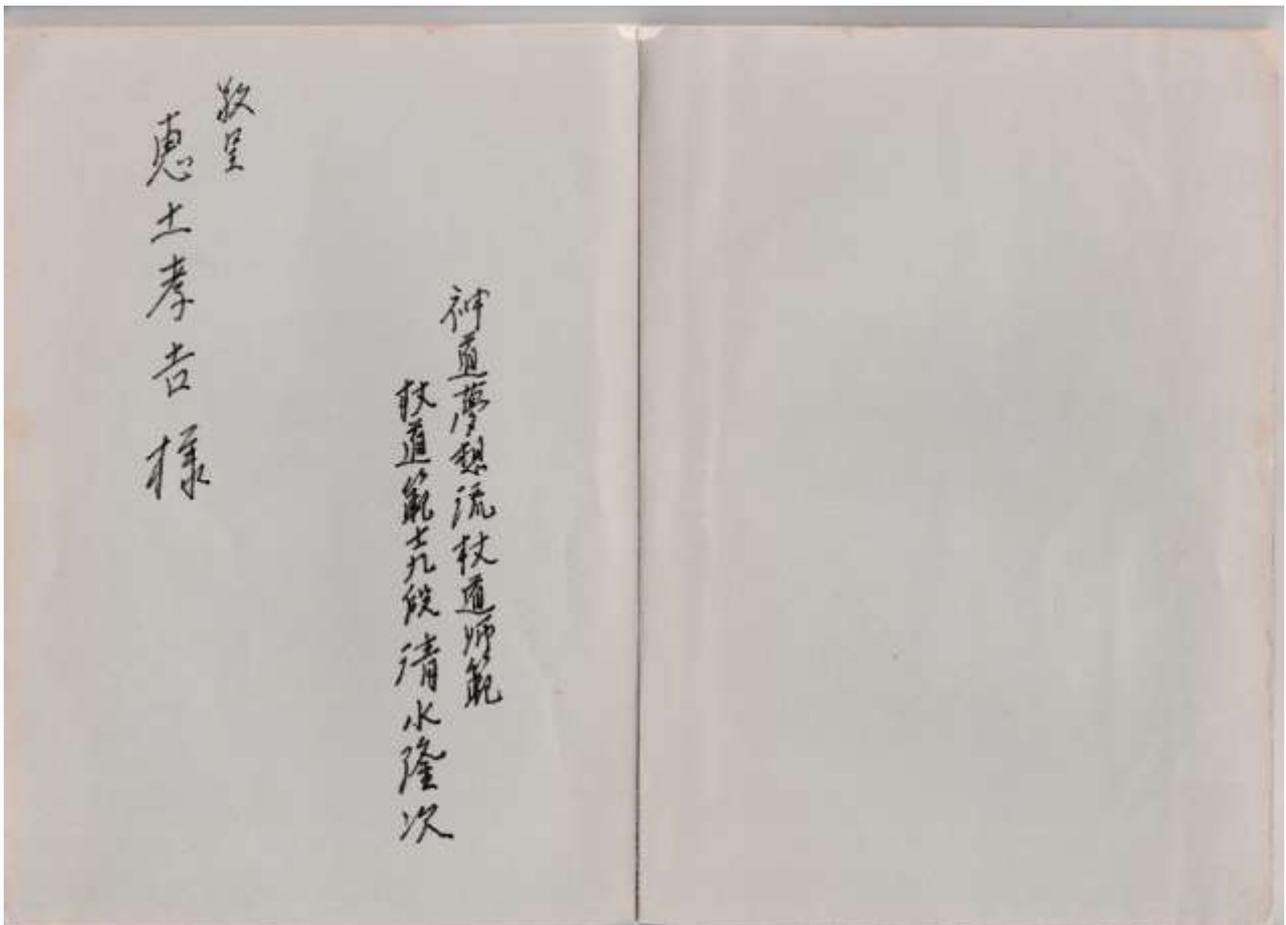
Then I remembered that I read about Jodo in Donn Draeger’s books on Japanese Martial Arts. I had never seen it in real life, and never felt the impact of a “Hikiotoshi Uchi”, the technique that Sensei used to hit my Bokken. I was so impressed with it, that I asked Sensei to teach me this art.

Edo Sensei had learned Jodo from Hamaji Sensei, a student of the famous Shimizu Sensei, and also holding the highest diploma of the Shindo Muso Ryu Jodo, a so called Menkyo Kaiden.

杖道教範

神道夢想流杖道師範
全日本剣道連盟杖道教範
清水隆次 著 杖道
関

The first publication of Seitei Jodo by Shimizu Sensei Hanshi 9th Dan



For Edo Kokichi, signed Shimizu Takaji 9th Dan Hanshi

As can be seen in this book, which I got from Edo Sensei during my visit in April 2019, Edo Sensei and his teacher visited Shimizu Sensei's Dojo and practiced Jodo there!

Edo Sensei holds a 6th Dan Renshi in Jodo and he explained to me his motivation to learn Jodo.

Because of his ambition to become one of the strongest Kendo players in Japan, he found that Jodo could support this.

The way you can hit the sword with a kind of sliding technique, and the Taiatari from left and right side, and the fact that you use techniques both on the left and right side, were Edo Sensei's motivation to start Jodo training.

During my one year stay in Kanazawa he taught me all the Kihon moves and the twelve Kendo Renmei Kata.

We trained three to four times per week, so after one year I had made a big progress.



Louis and Edo Sensei doing Shinto Ryu and Jodo in 1981



Jolanda and Bert Heeren could never seriously train Jodo.....it always ended like this!



After my return from Japan in 1982 I started to organize Judo seminars in Holland. Hein Odinot and Koos van Hattum were also there!



Niko Bijl, Richard Boel, Dick Lindout, Andre Raboen, Wil Abels on one of my first Judo Seminars in Holland.





I have known Jock Sensei since the 1970's and we invited him to teach Kendo and Iaido many times

In 1983, my long time Kendo friend and Sempai Jock Hopson asked me to join the Iaido and Jodo seminar that he organized in the UK.

At this seminar, Ishido's father, Hiroi Sensei and Ishido Sensei were the head teachers. Because I had already learned the Jodo Kata in 1981, and could speak Japanese, I was assisting Hiroi Sensei in demonstrating the Kata and translating his teaching at the same time.

Because I was performing the Kata with Hiroi Sensei during his explanation, my own Jodo made a big improvement.

Although I had received Iaido teaching from several very famous Iaido teachers (remember my first Iaido teacher was no one else than the famous Nakakura Sensei, and my second teacher was Haga Sensei!), I did not have a proper Sensei for Iaido.

Fortunately, Ishido Sensei, who had already been teaching Jock, Vic, Len and Loi in the UK for a few years, was so kind to accept me as one of his European Deshi.

Since then Ishido Sensei has helped me with achieving all my Iaido and Jodo Dan Grades.

After consulting with Jock, we also invited Ishido Sensei's group to The Netherlands.

In 1984 we organized the first Iaido Jodo Summer Seminar, in Krommenie.

On this first occasion we were able to get 35 people to join the seminar, and this number grew year by year.

During the Seminars with Ishido Sensei's group, we also organized international Iaido and Jodo Tournaments.

I participated in all Jodo Tournaments as a player, and from Mudan Division to Yondan & Godan Division I managed to win all the Shiai that I participated in.

Later these Tournaments would grow into the official European Iaido and Jodo Tournaments.



*Eishinkan Jodo Taikai Prize winners and Judges
(l. to r.) V. Cook, C. Mansfield, L. Vitalis, W. Abels, J. Van Rey, J. Decker, G. Masters, A. Banguard
Front row: Aoki Sensei, Hiroi Sensei, Ishido Sensei*

First Eishinkan Taikai 1986. Wil Abels and I won Shodan Division, Jo and Jos won Mudan Division.



The first group of Iaido & Jodo in Museido Amsterdam.

Rear Line: Rene van Amersfoort, Dick Lindhout, Richard Boel, Arno Adelaars, Niko Bijl, Wil Abels.

Front Line: Jolanda, Louis, Ishido Sensei



Louis, Hiroi Sensei, Ishido Sensei at one of the first Seminars in Holland

From 1984, I was very active in promoting Kendo, Iaido and Jodo in the Netherlands, Belgium and Germany.

I set up a Iaido beginners course in cooperation with the Zendokan Magazine, a Martial Arts Magazine. We had participants from Holland and Belgium.

Prijs : f 4,95 / Bfrs 89- 3e jaargang nr. 7, september 1984

**ZEN
DO
KAN**

INTERNATIONAL
MARTIAL ARTS
MAGAZINE

**GUARDIAN
ANGELS:
Vechtsporters
tegen
straatterreur**

RANGLIJSTEN: De beste vechters ter wereld!

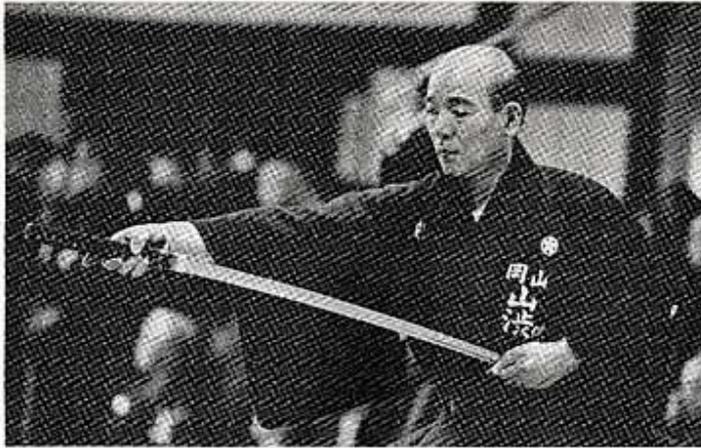
BOKSEN: Acropolis Cup

IAI-DO: Op het scherp der snede...

KUNG FU: Een man en zijn droom...

JUDO: All Japan Championship

Graciela Cassillas krijgt les van Nederlander



Yamashibu sensei (8e dan) tijdens een demonstratie op de Kyoto Taikai. Yamashibu sensei is een van de iaido leraren van Louis Vitalis

Hij is de leraar van Nakakura Kiyoshi (kendo 9e dan iaido 9e dan) de leraar die mij de eerste iaido basis technieken leerde op het kendo stage te Papendal in 1976. Uit bovenstaand verhaal blijkt dus duidelijk dat het Muso Shinden Ryu iaido in kendo kringen is ontstaan en verder is ontwikkeld, en alle belangrijke sensei van deze Ryu zijn aangesloten bij de Zen Nihon Kendo Renmei, die naast kendo en iaido ook het jodo onder haar hoede heeft. In verband met deze historische ontwikkeling van het Muso Shinden Ryu iaido is het niet meer dan logisch dat de Nederlandse kendo Renmei, de Nederlandse "tak" van de ZNKR, het iaido onder haar hoede neemt. Iai dangraadhouders van de NKR hebben allemaal een ZNKR Menkyo (diploma) en zij kunnen alleen examen doen bij officiële ZNKR examen commissies. De laatste examens in Europa waren in Brussel in mei 1984 onder leiding van bovengenoemde Nakakura Kiyoshi sensei. Om het verhaal van de geschiedenis van het iai te vervolgen, dankzij Nakayama sensei's inspanningen werd iai geleidelijk aan populairder maar na de tweede wereld-oorlog werden alle budo activiteiten door de Amerikaanse bezettingsmacht verboden. In 1952 werd iaido samen met kendo weer toegestaan. De ZNKR werd opgericht en met het populairder worden van kendo kreeg ook het iaido meer aandacht. Sinds het iai onder de vleugels van de ZNKR gekoesterd wordt, heeft men hetzelfde dangraden-systeem ingevoerd als bij kendo, namelijk 1e dan tot en met 10e dan en de titels renshi (assistent leraar, vanaf 5e dan), Kyoshi (leraar, vanaf 6e dan) en hanshi (meester - leraar vanaf 8e dan). Om het iai voor meer mensen (in de eerste plaats voor kendoka, maar natuurlijk ook voor mensen van de andere budo-disciplines) toegankelijk te maken, heeft de ZNKR

tien seitei kata samengesteld, waarin kata uit verschillende Ryu werden opgenomen met hier en daar een kleine aanpassing of verandering. Deze kata kregen de naam Zen Nihon Kendo Renmei Seitei iaido kata en ze vormen een goede basis van waaruit men naar de verschillende Koryu (oude scholen) over kan schakelen. De seitei kata bestaan uit drie kata vanuit seiza positie, één vanuit tate-hiza, en zes vanuit staande positie, de zogenaamde tachiwaza. Het seitei iai is dus opgebouwd uit diverse Koryu kata en een voorbeeld van een aanpassing is bijvoorbeeld de Furikaburi (het opzwaaien van het zwaard). In de Omori Ryu gaat men na het trekken van het zwaard (Nukitsuke) met het zwaard langs de linkerarm naar achteren en dan omhoog en in de Eishin Ryu gaat men vanuit Nukitsuke direct omhoog. In de Seitei kata is dus voor een tussenvorm gekozen waarbij men het zwaard langs het linker oor naar achteren

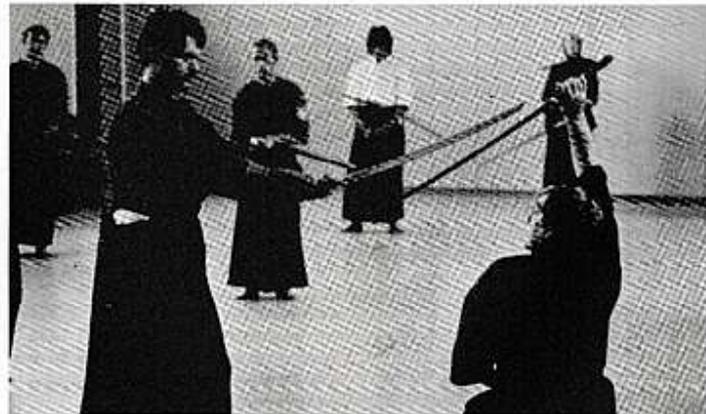
steekt bij het opzwaaien. Ook bij het groeten voor het zwaard heeft men de manieren van de twee belangrijkste Ryu overgenomen. Aan het begin van de training gebruikt men de Omori Ryu manier en aan het eind van de training gebruikt men de manier van de Eishin Ryu. De Seitei kata zijn op de volgende kata gebaseerd:

- Ipponme "Mae"** — komt van de Shohatto van de Omori Ryu. Hierin komen alle iaido basistechnieken in voor.
- Nihonme "Ushiro"** — Lijkt op Atarito van de Omori Ryu.
- Sanbonme "Ukenagashi"** — Is opgenomen van de Omori Ryu, Hoki Ryu en de Muso Shinden Eishin Ryu.
- Yonhonme "Tsuka-ate"** — Lijkt op de kata van de Eishin Ryu maar het plaatsen van de handen verschilt.
- Gohonme "Kesagiri"** — Komt van de Hoki Ryu.
- Ropponme "Morotezuki"** — Deze techniek komt in meerdere Ryu voor maar de manier van steken komt uit het kendo.
- Nanahonme "Sanpogiri"** — Ook van deze techniek zijn meerdere variaties te zien in diverse Ryu.
- Happonme "Ganmenate"** — Komt van de Moniri en Yukichigai uit het Oku iai van de Muso Shinden Ryu.
- Kyuhonme "Soetozuki"** — Is een beroemde techniek van de Hoky Ryu en het is de moeilijkste kata van de tien.
- Jipponme "Shihogiri"** — Deze techniek lijkt op een techniek uit het Oku iai en komt ook voor in de Hoki Ryu.

Deze tien kata vormen de "ingang" voor het iaido en als men deze kata goed beheerst kan men zonder problemen overstappen naar Koryu Kata (oude scholen)

Vertaald door Louis Vitalis uit: "Zen Nihon Kendo Renmei iai" door Kamimoto Eiichi iaido 9e dan, verschenen in de "Kendo Nippon".

Louis Vitalis en Jock Hopson (3e dan Gr. Britannia) geven iaido les tijdens een iaido en jodo weekend, juli '84



Already in the 1980's Jock and Louis were teaching together

In 1984 I was a kind of “missionary”, busy to promote the teachings of my Japanese teachers in Europe.

Because I had competition from Iaido and Jodo outside the Kendo Federation, I asked Hiroi Sensei to write a letter of recommendation, stating that Jodo in The Netherlands should be developed by the NKR, under me.

English translation of Hiroi Sensei's letter:

My teacher Shimizu Takaji (ZNKR Jodo Hanshi), always mentioned to us that he wanted to develop Jodo all over the world, but he passed away when he was 81 years old.

I was waiting for an opportunity to teach Jodo to foreigners, as was Shimizu Sensei's wish, when I was approached by Ishido Sensei (BKA Iaido teacher), to join him on a Iaido and Jodo Seminar in the UK.

This was my first opportunity to meet with Jodo enthusiasts within the Iaido group in the UK, and I was very impressed with their eagerness.

Iaido started there with just three persons five years ago, but now there are two hundred Iaidoka. So I am indeed convinced that all Budo (Kendo, Iaido, Jodo), if they are organized in the Kendo Federations, we can see a great development.

Being one of the students of my teacher who received the highest Jodo diploma (Menkyo Kaiden), I am aware of my responsibility to teach the traditional Jodo to foreigners.

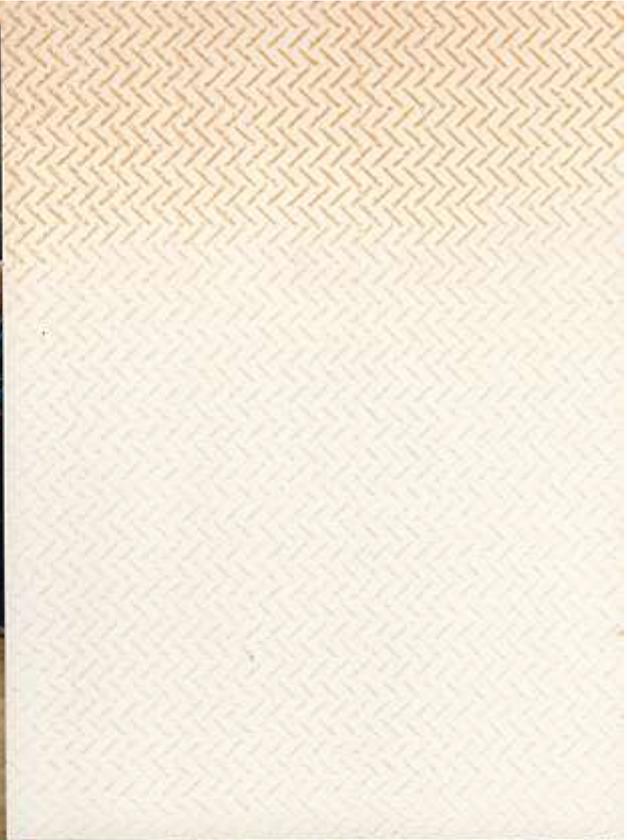
Therefore, if there are people in The Netherlands who want to learn Jodo, they should join the Nederlandse Kendo Renmei. Fortunately in The Netherlands the accomplished Louis Vitalis is living, so I would like the Jodo to be organized around him.

Hiroi Tsunetsugu

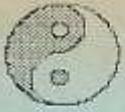
Jodo Kyoshi 8 dan

Kendo Kyoshi 7 dan

Iaido Kyoshi 7 dan



Second Iaido Jodo Seminar with Ishido Sensei and Hiroi Sensei in Holland, 1985



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Jolanda and I also started to teach Iaido and Jodo in Belgium.

One of my first students there, Jean Trembloy was kind enough to dig up some old pamphlets and foto's of the earliest seminars in Belgium.

Pamphlet for one of the first Iaido Jodo Seminars in Belgium, of course the prices are in Belgian Francs!



Jolanda and Louis teaching laido in Belgium 1987



Ishido Sensei and Louis in a serious discussion



Hiroi Sensei explaining some interesting stuff, translated by me



Who can you recognize?



Jolanda & Louis demonstrating Tanjo around 1986

During our stay from December 1985 till February 1986 Jolanda and I spend a few weeks in Kawasaki and Tokyo to deepen our Jodo training.

We stayed in Otake Sensei's house for a week and in that time we trained directly with Hiroi Sensei in Tokyo and learned Omote, Chudan, Shinto Ryu and Uchida Ryu Tanjojutsu.

I will never forget how Hiroi Sensei demonstrated Hojo Jutsu with a Tanjo and a rope, hidden inside his Keikogi.

This happened during the Wednesday afternoon training in Shinbuken Ishido Dojo, which was a kind of elite training for 7th Dan only, to which we were allowed to join. Present were Ishido's father, mother, Aoki Sensei, Ishido himself of course, and Hiroi Sensei.

Hiroi Sensei told me to do the Tachi side of Tanjo Ushiro Zue, but when he controlled my elbow with the Tanjo, he kept pushing down, until I was with my face flat on the floor!

Then, without me being able to see it, he pulled out the thin rope from inside his Keikogi, and within two or three seconds he tightened my hands behind my back, with a kind of loop figure of the rope.

Then he told me to get up and walk away.

After three steps he pulled the rope, and the loop around my neck immediately tightened so hard that I could not take any more steps.

I even had difficulty breathing normally!

Because Jolanda only learned the Tachi side and I learned the Jo side, we could learn many Koryu Kata in a short time, and after we returned to Amsterdam we shared this with the other people in the Dojo.

Besides teaching in the Netherlands, I also started to teach in Belgium and Germany.

Many of my students of the early 1980's have either passed away or have stopped training, but the ones that are still active are now 6th or 7th Dan and are teachers in their own countries.

I met Karl Dannecker through Kendo in 1984, when we organized an Amsterdam – Hannover Kendo event. My first Iaido Seminar in Germany was in Hannover, in April 1987.

When Karl moved to Villingen later in 1987 we soon started to organize Iaido and Jodo seminars in Villingen, and many Germans joined our Ishido Seminars in the Netherlands from this time as well.

Before the Deutsche Jodo Bund was founded, the German Jodoka were mostly members of the NKR, because it was not organized within the Deutsche Kendo Bund (DKenB).

In 1988, when the Ishido Group was doing the Seminar in The Netherlands, Ishido Sensei, Hiroi Sensei, Aoki Sensei and others joined Jolanda and me on a belated Honeymoon.

We went by train to Koblenz, took a Rhine river cruise and visited Rotenberg ob der Tauber, which is a must see for Japanese tourists, who visit the "Romantische Strasse" in Germany.

Although Hiroi Sensei was known to be a very strict and serious teacher at our seminars, during our Honeymoon he was very relaxed and extremely funny!

We had many great laughs on the deck of the cruise ship, where Hiroi Sensei was telling jokes and acting funny.



Ishido Sensei and Aoki Sensei joining our honeymoon



Honeymoon 1988

杖道はあらゆる武道に通じる 廣井常次範士八段

昭和26年に杖道を始めました。当時、私はいまだに清水隆次先生を講師とする杖道の講習会が開かれたんです。

それに仕事から参加して指導を受けていたとき、清水先生に「杖を一生懸命にやりなさい」と一言声をかけていただきました。筋がよかったのか、単に頑張りなさいとの意味だったかは、いまでもわかりませんが、それ以降、清水先生の杖道の講習会に参加しました。

もともと私は剣道の助教になりたくて一生懸命に剣道をつづけていたのですが、昭和31年に警視庁担当の剣道助教になりました。このときの仲間ともいえるのが、我妻守雄先生と米野光太郎先生のお二人です。

いま思えば杖道始めた動機は、勤務のためと、ったところですが、清水先生の杖道のすばらしさと人柄にひかれたからだと思います。

初めは杖道なんてしたこともないし、迷いがあったとはいえませんが、しかし、その反面、とても興味がありました。当時は杖道をしている人はなく、現在とはくらべようもありませんでした。

杖道は、相手(太刀)の「先」を打つのが本筋です。先を打っていくのは、剣道に大きく通じます。清水先生は「杖道をすれば剣道にとっても役立つ」とよくおっしゃっていますし、私自身も立会ってみてその先を知ることもできました。

また、杖道は、受けは杖、私には太刀、持た

や呼吸にはとてもよい影響を及ぼします。

現代社会では、ひとつのものに固執せず、できるものは何でも修業するほうがいい。武道の心はすべてに通じています。段をとるばかりが武道の目的ではありませんが、剣道、居合道、杖道の三道をすれば、同時に昇段できますし、それぞれを深め合える。本人のやる気と興味次第ですが。

私は海外で指導する機会もありますが、三道を併行していることがとても役立っています。地域によってその差はありますが、だいたいこの間で三道の指導が行なわれています。剣道しか知らない人は、居合や杖道に対しての質問をされてもわかりません。やはりその道にはその道の人が一



番です。

私は杖道の範士八段なので、ほかの人たちが私に対して注意することはありません。ですから私の修行は、清水先生に習った原点を忘れず、つねに初心にもどって研究、鍛錬しなければいけないと思っています。

(談)

Article Kendo Nippon 1987 in which Hiroi Sensei explains about Jodo

Translation Hiroi Sensei Interview Kendo Nippon September 1987

Jodo can be used in all kinds of Budo

I started Jodo in 1951. During that time I was still employed as a regular police officer (in Tokyo) and Shimizu Takaji Sensei was just starting up Jodo Seminars for us.

I joined these seminars, and Shimizu Sensei told me to do my best in training with the Jo. I still don't know whether he was just being friendly or whether he recognized my aptitude for Jodo, but I decided to join Shimizu Sensei's seminars.

I was trying to become a Kendo teacher at the police, so I was training Kendo very hard, but in 1956 I became Keijojutsu (police stick art) teacher for metropolitan police. Yoneno Kotaro was one of my colleagues.

Of course I started Jodo from a professional point of view, but it was the fantastic technique and personality of Shimizu Sensei that really attracted me to the Jo.

In the beginning I had no idea about Jodo and I did have some doubts at first. However on the other hand it was really interesting. In those days there were very few people training Jodo, and you cannot compare it to present day.

The most basic point of Jodo is to take the initiative (Sen) when hitting the opponent (Tachi). This point is very beneficial for Kendo. Shimizu Sensei always told us that Jodo would be very good for our Kendo development, and learned a lot about this when actually facing an opponent.

Also in Jodo there is a saying: "when you thrust it is a spear, when you sweep it is a naginata, when you hold it is a sword.

So you can use these principles in Spear, Naginata and Sword techniques as well.

Because movement in Jodo is front, back, left, right, it will be very beneficial for your Taisabaki and breathing technique.

In modern society, it is better not to focus too much on one thing only, but try to get proficient in various things. "Budo no Kokoro" can be applied in everything.

Getting Dan grades is not the only purpose of Budo, but if you train the three arts: Kendo, Iaido, Jodo, you can advance your Dan grades simultaneously and get a deeper understanding on each of them. I am also teaching outside Japan and it is very beneficial that I know all three arts.

In most countries all three arts are taught. Someone who only knows Kendo, cannot answer any question about Iaido or Jodo. For every art, the specialist knows best.

I am now 8th Dan Hanshi in Jodo, and other people will not teach me anything.

Therefore, my training is to keep the teachings of Shimizu in mind, and train and study as if I were a beginner.

ちがいを認識した上で学ぶという
石堂徳文 教士十七段



私が始めたのは中学生のとき。ちょうど30年くらい前になります。父に「これからは杖も知らなければいけない」と言われたからなんです。当時は剣道、居合道を稽古していたのですが、どうして杖道もしなければいけないのかと思いましたが、いまになってその理由がようやく理解できた気がします。つまり、剣道は防具をつけており、居合道は真剣を持ってするが相手はいない。しかし、杖道では防具もつけず、相手と対する稽古であるにもかかわらず、正しい切りつけ、正しい打ち、正しい間合のとおり方、正しい攻め込みといったものを学べます。防具をつけていないだけに、打つべきところはしっかりと正しく打ち、止めるところでしっかりと止める、ということの重要性にあるのではないか、と思います。

これは剣道形をするとよく理解できます。防具をつけていれば打たれても安心ですが、素面、素小手で打って止めるところをしっかりと止めることはなかなかできないものです。剣道五段、六段の人でもバツと目標のところを止めることはできない。

い。どうしても手前手前で止め、しかもブレが出るものです。ケガをするという考えがあるでしょうが、その見切りを正しくつけられないんです。剣道形ではこれが大切だと思うんです。自分が面を切るときに危いといった意識があるために、十の力で切らなければいけないところを七か六の力でしてしまう。これでは本来の剣道形に示されている奥儀のすばらしさが十分に活かされなくなってしまいます。

杖道はそのような部分をしっかりと守り、打つときは打つ、突くときは突くので、学ぶべき点や影響を受ける部分が多い。しかし、ちよつとまちがえると、生爪をはがしたり、骨折したりする場合も出てきます。そんななかで真剣につづけていくところが、ひとつの武道の道としてよいところだと思えます。

私はこれをひとつの肥しとして、剣道、居合道に還元したいと考えてます。

また、剣道連盟に所属している人でしたら、せめて三道はしていただきたいですね。その上手下手は関係なく、ひとつの部門として習われた方がよいと思います。そのなかで中心としてつづけていきたいと考えているものに、その他の二道から学んだものを充分にとり入れ、血肉としていけばいい。庵沢光三先生は「剣道と居合とは、打ちと切りのちがいがあって、けれども居合を習って剣道に活かそうとおっしゃっていました。ちがいはちがいとして認識した上で学ぶことが、重要なことです。絶対にマイナスになる部分などありません。」

Article Kendo Nippon 1987 in which Ishido Sensei explains about Jodo

Translation Ishido Sensei interview Kendo Nippon September 1987

It's better to learn Jodo bearing in mind the differences.

I started Jodo when I was in Junior High School, which is exactly 30 years ago.

My father simply told me that I had to understand Jodo. I was already training Kendo and Iaido, and I was wondering why it was necessary to learn about Jodo. Now I finally begin to realize why.

In Kendo you wear a Bogu, and in Iaido you have a real sword but no opponent. However, in Jodo you don't wear a Bogu, but you still train with an opponent and you must learn to correctly cut, strike, take distance and prepare your attack (Semekomi).

Because you don't wear a Bogu, it is vital that you hit correctly and try to stop the hit correctly.

You will understand this clearly when you practice Kendokata. If you wear a Bogu you can feel safe, but if you hit actually on head or wrist, it is necessary to stop your hit in a correct way.

Even Kendo 5th Dan and 6th Dan people cannot stop their hit with the Jo right on target. They tend to use the arms and hand only, and the Jo will tremble at the end of the hit. Of course one is worried about getting injured, so it is difficult to correctly judge how far one can go. Especially in Kendokata this is important. Because one is worried about injury, the actual hit to the head is only done at 70%, and this destroys the original deep meaning of Kendokata.

In Jodo this principle is still preserved in detail. Hits and thrusts are done with full force, and this is very beneficial for Kendo practice. If you make a small mistake with the Jo, you may end up with a broken fingernail, or even a broken bone. So this is a very fine Budo, in which you can train sincerely and hard.

So in my case, I use it to complement my Kendo and Iaido.

For everyone who is member of a Kendo federation, at least knowing about the 3 arts would be nice.

Being proficient or not doesn't matter, but learning something else is always recommendable.

So if you have one main art, you can use the other two arts to make your main art more complete. Takizawa Kozo Sensei (Kendo 8th Dan Hanshi from Kanagawa) used to say: "Kendo is hitting and Iaido is cutting. But Kendoka can learn a lot from Iaido."

Learning another art while understanding the differences is most important. There will never be a negative influence on your training.



Ishido Sensei also asked Matsuoka Sensei to come over. Now the Shinkage Ryu is well established in Europe



The only two non-Japanese triple Nanadan on one of our many trips in Japan.

In November 1989 Jolanda and I also practiced in Shinbukan Ishido Dojo in Kawasaki, where Hiroi Sensei was teaching us Jodo Koryu.



Hiroi Sensei teaching us Neya no Uchi from Shindo Muso Ryu Omote Waza

1990 – 1999

Kendo Developments

In 1990 we had a very strong male Kendo Team in the NKR, and they won 2nd place on the European Kendo Championships in Berlin.

Sergio Velasquez even won the male individual championship, the first time a male Dutch Kendoka won a major tournament.

In order to improve the Kendo level in The Netherlands further, I proposed two new Kendo Tournaments: The Edo Cup and the Iijima Cup.

These tournaments are still held, and the Iijima Cup has grown to be a major Kendo event in Europe, with more than 150 participants from more than 15 countries.

In 1990 I invited Edo Sensei to come to Amsterdam again.



Louis v.s. Edo Sensei: guess who's winning?

The first Iijima Cup of 1990 was also my last Kendo Tournament as a player.

By this time I was 31, and at the end of my career as a Shiai player.

It wasn't much of a career anyway, but the results that Jolanda was still obtaining in Kendo Shiai was satisfying enough for me.



Yes it's true, Louis won the first Iijima Cup!

The younger generation, such as Sergio Velasques and later Mark Herbold were gaining strength, and they were much better athletes than me.

However, I still felt obliged to Iijima Sensei to join the first Iijima Cup Tournament, and I fought the best way I could.

I beat Sergio in the final, which was no small feat, considering the fact that he was the European Champion!

In the late 1980's I started to focus more on teaching and refereeing in Kendo tournaments.

I also started my career at Nippon Express in 1988, which meant I could not train for Shiai as much as would be needed to get high level results.

In 1991 I joined the World Kendo Championships as a referee.

Although I was still a 5th dan, they selected me to referee the quarter final.

This was the start of my long career as a WKC referee.

After the tournament I challenged my 6th dan, and I was the only candidate out of a group of 19 who passed.

Jolanda was at her peak of Shiai Kendo, and she made it to the best 8 of the WKC.

It would take more than 20 years until another Dutch female (Sayo van de Woude), would achieve the same result.

Jolanda passed her 5th Dan Kendo in 1992.



Look at Jolanda's focus before the grading



Any doubt that Jolanda was the best 5th Dan in Europe at this time?



Of course she also excelled in Kendo Kata!



Edo Cup 1992: Mark commenting to Jolanda about someone's footwork.....



1993 Mark, Jolanda, Thea and Anita spend a few weeks in Japan

In

Iijima Sensei was also the coach of the Dutch Kendo Team for a few years



Who is that Japanese with the mustache? Trying to copy Louis? And Rene Bonne (far left) with hair!





In 1995 we organized a seminar with high ranking Sensei from Ibaraki. The late Miyamoto Sensei (Kendo 8 dan Hanshi) was leader of the delegation. Takasaki Sensei is still active now, even in his mid-nineties!

On the WKC of 1997, my student Wing Tan and Jolanda both won a fighting spirit prize. I was referee at the Men's Final, and for the coming years I would be selected as referee in the finals of the WKC.



The Dutch Kendo team of 1997 in front of Iijima Sensei's house.

Nakakura Sensei was very fond of Jo.

During one of Sensei's many visits to the Brussels Winter Seminar, Sensei was doing jigeiko with Jo. There were dozens of other Kenshi lining up in front of Sensei, but Sensei was having so much fun training with Jo, that he completely forgot the time and the Keiko lasted many minutes.

Finally, Hirakawa Sensei came over and told Nakakura Sensei to stop training with Jo and give the other Kenshi a chance as well!



Nakakura Sensei and Jo

At the end of the 1990's, the EKC had grown to a really big tournament, and of course the level of Kendo in Europe was getting much better across the board as well.

In 1998 my student Mark Herbold became the second Dutch male to win the EKC.

Jolanda made it to 2nd place, but by this time she was already 40 years old. Still only few females in Europe could beat her.

One year later Mark was in the final of the EKC again, and this time he got 2nd place.

In 1999 Jolanda and I made a big decision in our life: we moved to Japan, where I could get a job as an expat employee for my company.

This was the start of a 7 years period in which we were not in The Netherlands, and my students had to take over the teaching and training, both in the NKR and in the Museido Dojo.

Iaido Jodo Developments

In the 1990's my first generation Iaido and Jodo students were becoming teachers in their own Dojo, and we really build up a strong foundation for the Iaido and Jodo development in The Netherlands.

The Seminars with Ishido Sensei's group were by now well established, and we organized these Seminars every other year. One year in the UK, one year in The Netherlands.



1990 Summer Seminar UK (Hendon): Who can you recognize?



Sensei.....how can I do Kuritsuke this way?????????????



1990 Summer Seminar UK (Hendon): Who can you recognize? (part 2)



**1990 Eishikan Jodo Taikai 3/4/5 dan division won by Jo & me.
Handsome Couple, don't you think?**



Jolanda & Louis at Jodo Taikai. O Sensei is referee

I passed my Iaido 6th Dan in 1992 And Jodo 6th Dan in 1998.

Ishido Sensei taught us the Muso Shinden Ryu of Iaido, and we even had a Tachi Uchi no Kurai Seminar in Museido Dojo in 1992.

The video that was taken of that Seminar is still the reference material for this.



The Beauty and the Sword

The first generation Deshi of Ishido Sensei were also allowed to join the Muso Shinden Jushin Ryu, which was taught by Ishido Sensei to a small number of students.

This style is still practiced in the traditional way of the old schools, so the number of students will stay very limited.

Only those who are personally vetted by Ishido Sensei are allowed to join this group.

At this moment only Rene van Amersfoort is still active in this school of Iaido.

Ausschreibung zum Jodo und Iaido-Lehrgang mit Louis Vitalis

Veranstalter	Karl Dannecker, 4. Dan Iaido, 3. Dan Jodo
Lehrer	Louis Vitalis, 6. Dan Iaido, 4. Dan Jodo
Ort	Turnhalle des Gymnasiums am Romäusring Romäusring-Ecke Kalkofenstraße. 7730 VS-Villingen,
Datum	Samstag, den 16.1.1993 Sonntag, den 17.1.1993
Jodo	Sa. 9.30 Uhr - 12.30 Uhr
Iaido	Sa. 14-18 Uhr, So. 9.30-12.30 Uhr
Teilnehmer	Anfänger und Fortgeschrittene
Lehrstoff	Seitei-Jodo, Seitei-Iaido, evt. Muso Shinden Ryu,
Unkostenbeitrag Jodo	10 DM
Unkostenbeitrag Iaido	40 DM
Haftung	wird nicht übernommen
Mitzubringen ist	Jo und Bokto für Jodo, Iaito für Iaido
Übernachtungstips	siehe Rückseite
Anfahrhinweise	siehe Rückseite
Meldung	erwünscht an folgende Adresse: Karl Dannecker Sperberstr. 47 7730 VS-Villingen Tel. 07721-7 39 37

Hinweis: Anfang Juni wird wahrscheinlich in Villingen ein großer Iaido-Lehrgang über zwei volle Tage stattfinden. Eine gesonderte Ausschreibung folgt. Halten Sie sich den Termin bitte frei.

Ich wünsche allen eine gute Anreise.

Also in the early 90's I was teaching in Germany regularly

Ausschreibung zum Iaido-Seminar mit Ishido-Sensei und Louis Vitalis

Veranstalter Karl Dannecker, 4. Dan Iaido, 3. Dan Jodo, 2. Dan Kendo

Lehrer Shizufumi Ishido, 7. Dan Iaido (Kyoshi),
7. Dan Jodo (Kyoshi), 7. Dan Kendo (Kyoshi)
Louis Vitalis, 6. Dan Iaido (Renshi), 4. Dan Jodo
6. Dan Kendo (Renshi)

Ort Turnhalle des Gymnasiums am Hoptbühl
Güterbahnhofstraße, 7730 VS-Villingen,

Datum Samstag, den 5.6.1993, 9.30 Uhr-12.00 Uhr, 14-18 Uhr
Sonntag, den 6.6.1993, 9.30 Uhr-12.30 Uhr

Teilnehmer Anfänger und Fortgeschrittene

Lehrstoff Seitei-Iaido, Muso Shinden Ryu

Unkostenbeitrag 75 DM

Haftung wird nicht übernommen

Übernachtungstip siehe beigefügtes Blatt

Anfahrhinweise siehe beigefügtes Blatt

Meldung bis 9.5.1993 mit beigefügtem Formular an:
Karl Dannecker
Sperberstr. 47
7730 VS-Villingen
Tel. 07721-7 39 37

Ich wünsche allen eine gute Anreise.

The early seminars in Villingen was just with Ishido Sensei and me as teachers



The laido Jodo Seminars in Holland grew into major events



Louis: Sensei, Dutch Herring is soooo Oishi (delicious)! Hiroi Sensei: mmmm not so sure

Ishido Sensei, Jock and I had one big dream: European Championships in Iaido and Jodo.

Although we had already organized international tournaments in both disciplines in The Netherlands and UK, it took till 1993 for the first European Iaido Championships to be organized. It would take until 2002 for the first European Jodo Championships to be organized.



Iaido EM 1994 Sittard, Holland

Jock and Louis doing Embu at the Iaido European Championships 1994

By now these events are very well established, but in the 1990's it took a lot of effort to get these tournaments officially organized within the EKF.

Because the NKR was able to take care of the organization, we could prove to the EKF that it was worthwhile to do these tournaments.

In 1998, at the age of 38, I passed my 7th Dan Iaido. Of the more than 200 participants on this grading, I was candidate A1: the youngest of all. Thanks to the great support of Ishido sensei in the preparation of the exam (Jock and I trained like madmen for 6 hours a day in Sensei's Dojo) and his support in the background, I was able to make a good performance on the grading.

Jock also passed 7th Dan Iaido at this exam.

Unfortunately by the time of the grading my knees were already getting painful, and when I had to get an operation on my elbow I had to give up Iaido completely.

I'm still very grateful to Ishido Sensei for his teachings, it made me the first European ever to pass 7th Dan Iaido before the age of 40.

Now most of my first generation Deshi are 7th Dan Iaido themselves, and very well qualified to take over the teachings in the lineage of Ishido Sensei.

Also, Ishido Sensei started to invite Sensei from other Ryu to join the Seminars: Jikiden, Tamiya and Shinkage followers own a lot to Ishido Sensei for bringing the very best Sensei to Europe. Without Ishido Sensei's open mind to make Iaido accessible for other Ryu as well, the development of Iaido in Europe would have been much more limited than it is now.

During the Iaido Jodo summer seminar in Sittard, unfortunately Ishido Sensei lost his wallet, with a lot of cash in it.

All the students did their best to collect cash as much as possible, so I was able to hand over an envelope when I met Ishido Sensei two months later.

Here is Ishido Sensei's thank you letter:

親愛なる剣士の皆様

謹啓 各国では、初冬並びに秋のさなか益々御健勝にて御精武の段
大慶に存じ上げます。

扱手、1998年8月シタードニに於けるセミナーから、2ヶ月に
成ります。本年のセミナーでは皆様のご協力によりまして一人の
怪我人もなく又楽しく和気あいあいの内に多大なる成功あげる事が
出来ました。私にとりまして、同行致しました各先生方も同じ気持ち
にて、良き人生の経験と勉強そして皆様方と親しく接する事が出来
武道をしていて良かったと心より思っております。

又本日ルイさんより、私しの不注意でおきましたオランダでの
アクシデントに皆様方の心のこもった厚いご芳情を戴き、心より厚く
御礼申し上げます。20年間無事故なので同行した人達に気お付けて
と言いながら注意した本人が一番注意が足りなかった次第でした。
大変貴重な経験を致しましたが、一度でたくさんです。とにもかくにも
私は、大変幸せを感じております、それは心の温かい友達を沢山持って
居ることです、重ねて御礼申し上げますと共に皆様と御家族の方々の
お健康と幸せとご発展を心より御祈念申し上げ、又次ぎに御会い
出来ます事を楽しみに先ずは大変失礼とは存じますが、手紙にて御礼
申し上げます。

敬具。

1、10、1998。

石 堂 俊 文

Rough Translation of Ishido Sensei's thank you letter.

Greetings,

Already two months have passed since the 1998 August Summer Seminar in Sittard. Thanks to everybody, this year's seminar was a great success, without any injury and in a relaxed and enjoyable atmosphere .

For me and the other teachers who accompanied me, it was a great life experience and study for us, and the great contact that we have with everyone made us all think that we were very lucky to have started Budo.

Furthermore, I received from Louis san the support that all of you were so kind to collect, and I want to thank everybody very deeply for this.

For 20 years I have been telling my fellow travelers to be careful when traveling, but now it was the one who has been telling this who made the mistake of not paying attention.

I really hope this will be a one-off incident.

In any case, I feel really lucky to have so many friends with a warm heart.

I want to thank you from the bottom of my heart and hope you and your family will enjoy continued health and happiness and prosperity.

October 1998

Ishido Shizufumi

I think this letter shows clearly that Ishido Sensei not only developed a teacher student relation with many people in Europe, also it has grown into a relation of deep friendship between Ishido Sensei and the Sensei that accompany him and many of us in Europe.

On 17th January 1999 we also organized the first Ishido Cup.

Convocaties

veel lonender om je te concentreren op wat niet goed gaat. Het springen gaat op dat moment toch (nog, maar dat weet je niet) goed? De "houding" is de verantwoordelijkheid van de kendoka zelf! Hij of zij heeft het totaaloverzicht, altijd en overal, niet de sensei of leraar. Luister dus naar de signalen en vraag en onderzoek de situatie als er problemen zijn of je die vermoedt. Durf ook NIET mee te gaan als er dingen worden gevraagd waarvan je zelf denkt dat het niet gaat. Geen goede leraar of hij/zij kan het wel degelijk uitleggen. Overigens, het is dus weer niet de bedoeling om een "carte blanche" te propageren voor algehele weigering, rebellie of het vragen van ellenlange uitleg. Het lichaam kan veel hebben, enorm veel. Het gaat er echter om om het verschil te blijven zien tussen het trainen van je lichaam en vaardigheid en het gebruiken van je lichaam en het verdoezelen van je gebrek aan vaardigheid.

Als je echt geblesseerd bent, merk je vaak pas hoe jammer het is dat je niet kan meedoen en dan is het toch jammer dat je het zo laat hebt ontdekt. Leer dus van een blessure, niet alleen van die blessure, maar meer nog van de oorzaak, trek dat ook door naar andere zaken. Op die manier heb je er een extra "leermeester" bij en krijgen blessures toch een educatieve waarde. Vaak zullen blessures zelfs de woorden van de leraar of de theorie van hoe het wel moet onderstrepen. Maak er gebruik van.

Mark Herbold



ISHIDO-CUP voor jodo en iaido

Zondag 17 januari 1999 van 10u00-17u00
Gemeentelijke Sporthal "Coevering" te Geldrop

Er is getracht een unieke combinatie te maken tussen wedstrijden en gewoon trainen: voor mensen die liever niet aan wedstrijden deelnemen is er gelegenheid om onder toezicht te trainen...

Afhankelijk van het aantal deelnemers zal er een competitie zijn die anders is dan bij de NK. Ook afhankelijk van het aantal deelnemers is het feit dat men 3 of 5 kata zal moeten doen.

De beoordeling is vooral bij jodo anders: je wordt NIET per team, maar INDIVIDUEEL beoordeelt. De details zullen in de convocatie worden bekend gemaakt.

Kosten: f 10,00 pp per onderdeel.
Training is gratis!

Laat deze unieke kans om (je) met anderen te meten of te trainen niet aan je neus voorbij gaan.

Info: A. Schiebroek 06-53738537/ E. de Wit 06-53706683

7e Furuya cup voor junioren

Zaterdag 30 januari van 10u00-17u00
Sporthal "Bankras" te Amstelveen

Voor junioren vanaf 6 -16 jaar,
met en zonder bogu/ervaring

Voorafgaand aan de wedstrijden zal een speciaal kendo-seminar worden georganiseerd voor onze jeugdige kendoka, onder leiding van Inoue sensei

Deelname is gratis!

Convocaties worden naar de dojoleiders gestuurd

Info: B. Heeren 0297-534835/Y. Kurogi 020-6436059

Many years we took Sensei and the group to various cities in Europe, Paris, Venice, etc.



On a trip with Ishido Group.

2000 – 2006: our years abroad

Kendo Developments

In 1999 Jolanda and I moved to Tokyo.

I was appointed manager in a new global sales organization in Nippon Express Co., Ltd. We lived in Japan for 3 years and 9 months.

Although most of time I was working, I still found some time to do Kendo regularly.

Nippon Express has a very high-level Kendo Club, and we tried to train there every weekend as much as we could. We also trained Kendo on Friday evenings in Ishido Sensei's Dojo a lot.

In those days Ishido Sensei was still very active in Kendo and I did a few Keiko with him where we were both competing at our limits. I will never forget that once our Keiko was so fanatic, that Ishido Sensei's wife came down from the living room upstairs, to see if we were not really killing each other!

Thanks to my training at the Nippon Express Kendo Club, where I was doing Keiko with people who were 15 years younger than me, I was able to pass my Kendo 7th Dan in Kyoto on my first attempt.

In preparation of the exam, I went to Iijima Sensei a few times and did man to man Keiko with him. Although it was always easy for Iijima Sensei to hit me, I managed to score a Men Kaeshi Do on him, which was really a boost for my self-confidence.

I was 39 years old at the time, and my exam was in court number three. This means I was still one of the younger candidates of the grading. The youngest take their 7th Dan at the age of 34, in the first court. The oldest candidates are well in their seventies.

Now 20 years later, I still remember my 2 exam Keiko very well. First of all, I did Kiai as loud as I could. Because I was used to train with much younger people, the opponents of my own age seemed slow in comparison. The first opponent never got close to a hit on me. I started with two Debana Kote which were hitting so clear, that people on the stands could hear them. I then followed with a Kote-Men, and then it was Yame.

My second opponent was taller than me, which happened to me only very rarely in Japan.

He scored a Men on me, but I was able to keep cool. Just before the end I scored a Tobikomi Men, so we ended in Hikiwake. Both me and him passed the exam. After the grading he came up to me and praised my strong attacking spirit. We actually both enjoyed our fight a lot, although we both didn't make it easy on the other and we really worked hard to convince the panel that we were worth 7th Dan.

During our years in Japan we also visited many Kendo Tournaments, especially the so called "Jitsugyodan Taikai", which were Tournaments for Kendo Clubs belonging to a company.

Nippon Express is one of the founding members of the Jitsugyodan organization, and still has a formidable Kendo Club.

Both Men and Women are still competing at high levels. The motto of Nippon Express Kendo Club is “Bunbu Ryodo”. This means that “Bun” = originally literature or study, but now it stands for work, and “Bu” = Budo, have to be practices in good harmony. Ryodo means the two ways.

One of the largest Jitsugyodan Taikai is the Kanto Taikai. This is held in the Nippon Budokan, and about a thousand Kendoka join it. The whole floor is filled with thirteen Shiaijo, and there is no space between the lines of each Shiaijo. The lines of one Shiaijo are also the lines of the Shiaijo next to it!

There are no preliminaries. It starts at nine in the morning sharp, and it is finished at five p.m. sharp. Most of teams that loose don't stay to watch the rest of tournament. Once their Taikai is over, they go to a restaurant and enjoy the rest of the afternoon getting drunk and eating!

Compared to the level of the European Kendo Championships, the level of this Taikai is extremely high. The reason is that the companies that want to have a strong Kendo Club, select the best players from Universities and offer them a job in the firm. This way, talented Kendoka can combine a full-time job with regular training, and still be active in the various Taikai.

The teams that end with the best eight in this Taikai will easily beat the best teams of any European Country.



Jolanda at Nippon Express Kendo Club



Louis at Nippon Express Kendo Club, together with Ooka Sempai and Ushihama Sempai

おまじのアルバム 2



●剣道部御用達の居酒屋にて



●收拾がつかずに「ハイチーズ！」



●2002年山梨での夏合宿



●夏合宿疲れていても食べます



●合宿の合間にハスラー対決キマッテます



●ルイフィタリス先輩ご夫婦と



●平成13年納会にて皆ご機嫌

In 2002, after three years and nine months stay in Japan, I got a new job at Nippon Express in Germany. When we arrived at Frankfurt Airport, I was met by my colleague Yoshiko, but also Uwe and Kazuko Kumpf from Katana Frankfurt. They were a great help in getting us settled in, during the first weeks. Of course we joined the Katana Frankfurt Kendo Club, and we trained there till we moved back to The Netherlands in 2005. Because I had been training Kendo in Japan for more than three years, I was very fit and quick. Not many people in Europe could hit me easily. Roberto Kumpf and Sabrina Kumpf were still very young, and I helped them and the other members to improve their level of Kendo.

In the years we were there, Yoshiko Oda was also working in Frankfurt at the Japanese School, so our paths crossed again after many years.



Jolanda and Louis after a training in Germany

We also trained Kendo at the PSV Mainz Kendo Club, where we became good friends with Alex, Hanns-Peter and all the other members



Jolanda and Louis with PSV Mainz in 2005 at a Junior Kendo Seminar



Many years later, we were awarded a certificate for our contribution to the Hessen Kendo Federation.



For our contribution to the Hessen Kendo development we got these in 2014.

During our stay in Germany I was also able to invite Edo Sensei and Ijima Sensei to do a Kendo seminar with us. I was very happy that I could show my German Kendo friends who my teachers were, and I think the seminar was much enjoyed by all the participants.

We still have many Kendo friends in Germany, and we still join the Tengu Cup in Frankfurt every year, together with a large delegation from The Netherlands.

In 2005 we also organized the Kendo Summer Seminar again in Amsterdam, with Iijima Sensei, Nishino Sensei and Nabeyama Sensei. There were 75 participants from 6 European countries.

Iaido Jodo Developments

In Japan I was of course working like a Japanese: get up at six in the morning, commute for an hour and a half on the Tokyo trains, and get back home at eight if I was lucky.

However, because of my job in Global Sales, I was out of Japan on business trips most of the time. I traveled regularly in Asia, but also in the USA for about 5 times per year.

This meant I had little time to practice Kendo/Iaido/Jodo, but we managed to get a few Jodo lessons in Ishido Sensei's Dojo. Iaido was too painful for my knees by that time, but we practiced Kendo on Friday evening in the Dojo regularly.

After some time, our Kendo/Iaido/Jodo friends in Europe found out that we had a nice apartment in a nice area of Tokyo (an area called Setagaya). Jock visited us for several times, and also the 5th Dan Jodo grading of Jolanda in 2000 was quite an event: Edwin, Karl, Jef, Bernard stayed with us, and joined Jolanda on the 5th Dan Jodo grading in Yokohama. Thanks to Ishido Sensei's training, of course everybody passed! Also Vic Cook stayed with us when he challenged his 7th Dan Iaido exam, and I treated him to a nice Tempura Dinner at the Ginza to celebrate his wonderful grading.



Jock during one of his many visits to us in Japan



We visited Hakone area many times



We were both working close to the Ginza area

In 2005 I went to Japan with Rene van Amersfoort to challenge our 7th Dan Jodo. After a week of six hours a day training under Yano Sensei 8th Dan Hanshi, we both passed the exam on our first attempt.

Also in 2005 was the first Jodo Koryu Seminar, organized by Rene. There were 33 participants from Netherlands, Belgium Germany, Switzerland and France, teachers were Jock, Rene and Louis.

Since then, Rene has organized this seminar and it has contributed to the correct understanding of the Tokyo Line of Shinto Muso Ryu Jodo.

2007- present

Kendo Developments

After seven years abroad, we came back in Amsterdam and started our Kendo practice again at Museido Amsterdam.

I am truly grateful to my Deshi of Museido Amsterdam, Rene, Guido and Mark.

They were teaching all the time that we were abroad, and when Jolanda and I came back, there were many new members.

Now it was time for me to start building up my second generation Deshi: Marije, Fleur and Donatella, who joined us from Italy. Ton Loyer who joined Museido Amstedam in 2003 and Kris Lazarevic who joined Museido in 2004 became my final Deshi for Kendo in Amsterdam.



Louis' Chudan No Kamae 2008

I also continued to organize our Kendo Summer Seminars with Iijima Sensei, and gradually these Seminars were growing to quite big events.

Miyamoto Sensei, Takasaki Sensei, Nishino Sensei, Nishino Sensei were senior members of the Ibaraki Prefecture Kendo Federation, and they attended several of our Seminars.

Because of Iijima Sensei's strong connection with Tsukuba University, we also started to invite Nabeyama Sensei and other teachers from Tsukuba University.

In March 2010 I was teaching Jodo in Bari, South Italy, when Jolanda's elder sister Marjan called me. Jolanda had been taken to hospital because she had suffered a stroke in the left side of the brain. Her speech and left arm were affected, and she was taken into the neurology division of the OLVG hospital in Amsterdam. I still had to stay in Bari for one night, because my flight was the next day. I think this was the worst night I had ever experienced in my life. Of course I could not sleep, but being away from Jolanda at this time was extremely frustrating.

A week later, Jolanda was able to spend a weekend at home, complete disaster struck.

She was sitting on the sofa after a short walk around the house, when a second, massive stroke hit her. I called 112 immediately and the ambulance arrived within 10 minutes. Already she was losing consciousness, and by the time she was taken to hospital she was already in a state of coma.

She had suffered a major stroke and the first days the doctors were not sure if she would live or not, but they already informed us that, even if she would survive, she would be heavily disabled, and not able to live a normal life anymore.

After a few days she awoke from the coma, but she would not recognize me or other family members.

However, under these extreme circumstances, the true fighter in Jolanda emerged. She came out of the coma, and started a very difficult revalidation process, which I experienced every day from close by.

After two years of revalidation, she was able to speak Dutch at a simple level, and she could walk short distances with a stick.

I am convinced that, without Jolanda's many years long Kendo training, and her strong fighting spirit and willpower, she would not have been able to recover in the way that she did.

During the Iijima Cup 2012, Jolanda was awarded the NKR honorary membership.

Because of her long career as Kendo player, and the great work she did for the NKR as team manager, the board of the NKR decided to give her this special award.

Van de Voorzitter

ERELIDMAATSCHAP NKR VOOR JOLANDA DEKKER

Het initiatief tot het besluit om Jolanda Dekker erelid te maken van onze NKR is eind vorig jaar genomen. De algemene ledenvergadering moest hiervoor goedkeuring geven en dat is met veel enthousiasme en waardering gedaan. Daarna heeft onze secretaris de nodige stappen genomen om een mooie oorkonde te laten maken. Hiervoor bestond al enige know-how, namelijk bij Marinus, een oud-lid van Fu Metsu, die al eerder een ontwerp gemaakt had. Ook Machi Miyahara heeft haar bijdrage geleverd door de Japanse tekst te verzorgen.

Er was besloten tijdens de Iijima Cup wedstrijden in Groningen de oorkonde uit te reiken.

Het was dus een extra feestelijke dag in Groningen, waar onze vrienden aldaar hun deel van de organisatie van dit evenement op zich hadden genomen.

Bij de opening van de wedstrijden heb ik toen gezegd, dat er in de geschiedenis van de NKR natuurlijk veel belangrijke en mooie voorvallen hebben voorgedaan en zulk een zeldzaam en vreugdevol voorval deed zich dus nu weer voor bij de Iijima Cup wedstrijden. Het was extra feestelijk, daar Iijima sensei zelf weer aanwezig was, want dat geeft toch weer wat meer allure aan het evenement. Jolanda was natuurlijk ook aanwezig en het was voor mij heel bijzonder de uitreiking van het erelidmaatschap aan haar te mogen verrichten.

Doordat deze gebeurtenis nogal wat emoties losmaakte, mag ik bij deze duidelijk maken, dat een kleine groep oldtimers in de NKR gedurende heel lange tijd veel met elkaar hebben meegemaakt. Op het gebied van organisatie, reizen naar vele delen van de wereld, het bijwonen en meedoen aan allerlei wedstrijden, waaronder natuurlijk Europese- en wereldkampioenschappen en natuurlijk het delen van lief en leed. Dat schept een bijzondere band en ik weet zeker, dat die oldtimers vele mooie herinneringen aan die vele jaren hebben overgehouden. Jolanda - en natuurlijk ook Louis - behoren tot die groep oldtimers.

De verdiensten van Jolanda zijn groot, want zij heeft onder andere vele jaren op voortreffelijke manier als manager van het Nederlandse team gediend en zij heeft alle reizen, van Lutjebroek via Taipei naar Tokio, altijd feilloos georganiseerd.

Ik spreek de wens uit, dat Jolanda nog lange tijd aanwezig zal zijn bij vele evenementen van onze NKR en het is mijn wens, dat zij moet weten, dat zij erbij hoort en dat haar mening over vele gebeurtenissen natuurlijk op prijs wordt gesteld.

Als voorzitter of ik natuurlijk, want bij wedstrijden mag ik altijd naast Jo zitten en dat doe ik met liefde!!!

Van harte gefeliciteerd, Jo!

Hein Odnot



In 2012 she was strong enough to join me on my trip to Japan and we stayed in Iijima Sensei's house for 10 days. Edo Sensei and his wife came over all the way from Kanazawa to Tokyo, and we

spend an evening together. When Edo Sensei came out of the train station, we were already waiting for him. When he came out, Jolanda stood up from her wheelchair to greet him. When Edo Sensei saw this, his eyes filled with tears, and soon we all were crying.

I thought this showed how Jolanda had a special place in Edo Sensei's heart, as one of his Kendo daughters, and we were really very happy that he took the trouble to make the long journey only to meet with us for a short time.

In the evening Edo Sensei had arranged a dinner meeting with the famous Miyazaki Sensei. Of course Miyazaki Sensei knew me well, because I refereed him at the WKC various times. We had a very nice talk about Kendo, refereeing, world championships etc.





November 2012, Jolanda's first visit to Japan after her stroke, at Iijima Sensei's house..

From November 2012, at the age of 53, I started to challenge 8th Dan for Kendo. I went to Iijima Sensei in November for a week, and also attended an 8th Dan preparation seminar at Iwatate Sensei's Shofukan Dojo in Tokyo.

Iwatate Sensei personally invited me to join this seminar, because in his opinion I was the only European who had a "Japanese Style of Kendo", which would improve my chances on this exam. Because I was still working full time, I could only spend one week in Japan preparing for the exam, which is of course far from ideal. I tried the exam for 3 times, and failed miserably on most of them. Only one time I had a real good fight, where we only hit three times in the two-minute exam. The first was Ai Men, which we both missed. Then I invited his Men, and hit a perfect Kaeshi Do. Then we hit Ai Men again, and he was able to hit a split second earlier than me.

He passed this round but did not make it in the second round. However, for me it was very encouraging: it meant that I was not miles away from the level that was required on this exam. But since the pass rate has dropped under 1 per cent (it is now at 0,5%), it will be almost impossible for me to ever pass this exam.

After 2014, I started to develop serious health problems. First my neck hernia stopped me from any training for more than a year. When my neck problem was under control, fortunately without surgery, I developed a severe inflammation in the right shoulder, which also kept me from training. In total I did not train much at all in 2015, 2016 and 2017. Only since I stopped working in May 2018, I started to work on revalidating and getting back to the Dojo again for twice a week Kendo training.

Iijima Sensei and I decided that from 2014 the Summer Seminar should be held under the responsibility of Nabeyama Sensei. In 2014 he brought two other young 7th Dan with him, Iwamoto Sensei and Kawakami Sensei, accompanied by some top-level students from Tsukuba University Kendo Club. From this year on, the number of participants increased till over 100, from more than 10 different countries. In 2017 there were more than 170 participants, and Nabeyama Sensei told us that he wanted this Seminar to become the most successful Kendo seminar in Europe.

In 2014 we also decided to do a new setup for the Iijima Cup Taikai

Thanks to the help of Werner Karnadi, Guido Minnaert and Marije Wouters, we have changed the Iijima Cup into a major Kendo Tournament in Europe. Top players from France, Poland, Belgium and other countries are now participating, and the tournament is now so big that we have more than 150 players. Because of the large number of Shiai, the tournament is now held over two days. Of course Iijima Sensei is always visiting the tournament and he is still making some of the prizes by hand.

The 30th edition was a very successful Taikai, and we had gold medals of Makoto van der Woude (Men Individual) and the Dutch Team.





In 2014 the three Sensei who made the biggest impact on the development of the NKR, Edo Sensei, Ishido Sensei and Iijima Sensei were given a Commendation Award. For me personally this was extra pleasant, because these three are my personal “Onshi” (teacher to whom you own the highest of debt), and in the case of Ishido Sensei and Iijima Sensei I was also the one who introduced them to The Netherlands.

Ishido Sensei’s award was handed over in presence of the Japanese Ambassador during the Iaido Jodo Summer Seminar in Eindhoven.



Iijima Sensei got the award in the Museido Amsterdam Dojo, during the Kendo Summer Seminar.



Because Edo Sensei cannot travel long distance flights anymore because of his back injury, I went to Kanazawa in November 2014 to hand over the Award to him in person.



In front of Edo Sensei's house

I had not been to Edo Sensei's house in many, many years and this time I stayed with him for two days. It was just like old times: for two evenings we spend our time eating his wife's lovely food and the sashimi we bought at the Kanazawa fish market. We talked about the old times of course, but mostly we talked about the development of Kendo in Japan and the world.

When I handed over the NKR award, he was very honored to receive it. Just a few months earlier, he had refused a similar award from the ZNKR, for his many years contribution to the development of Kendo in Japan. His comment was: " Why should I accept an award from that amateur organization? This award from the NKR is worth ten time more to me, and I appreciate it very much. I'm really proud of this award."

In 2016 the NKR celebrated the 50th year anniversary of the founding of our federation. With help of many of my students and other NKR members, we were able to organize a very successful event.



All the Kendo, Iaido, Jodo teacher who played a major role in the development of the NKR were present, except Edo Sensei, who could not travel because of his back injury.

It was one of those rare seminars where all three disciplines came together

Ishido Shizufumi Sensei iaido Hanshi 8th dan, jodo kyoshi 8th dan

Yoshimura Keiichi Sensei iaido kyoshi 8th dan, jodo kyoshi 7th dan

Otake Toshiyuki Sensei jodo kyoshi 8th dan, iaido kyoshi 7th dan

Shoji Keiichi Sensei jodo kyoshi 8th dan, iaido kyoshi 7th dan

Matsuoka Yoshitaka Sensei iaido kyoshi 8th dan

Kinomoto Miyuki Sensei iaido kyoshi 8th dan

Nabeyama Takahiro Sensei kendo kyoshi 8th dan

Iijima Akira Sensei kendo kyoshi 7th dan

Iwamoto Takamitsu Sensei Kendo Kyoshi 7th Dan

Kawakami Arimitsu Sensei kendo kyoshi 7th dan

The Next Generation in Dutch Kendo

Since many years, my Deshi Mark has been coach of the Dutch Kendo Team, recently followed up by my Deshi Guido.

On the WKC of 2015 in Japan, my Deshi Fleur Smout won the fighting spirit award, and achieved a place with the best 8 female individuals of the word! The Ladies Team was with the best 8.



Fleur and Sayo both with best 8 and a fighting spirit award!

In 2017, our ladies team finished third on the European Kendo Championships.



Dutch Delegation at the EKC 2017

At the 2019 edition of the Tengu Cup Frankfurt, at which I am always acting as Shinpancho (Head of Referees), Jo and were awarded a special present, for our contribution to the 30 years anniversary of Katana Frankfurt Dojo.





30th Anniversary Katana Frankfurt, with signatures of all the members

In 2019, the Dutch Kendo ladies had their most successful EKC ever.

The ladies won the Team final of France with 3-1, after beating strong countries such as Poland, Germany and Italy.



My Deshi Fleur Smout, who has already won so many tournaments, got third place in the Ladies Individual as well.



Olga and Fleur of Museido Dojo played an important role in the Dutch success, which we celebrated in our Dojo.



With Mark and Guido and Donatella now all 7th Dan, I'm pleased to see that I have built a strong foundation for the next generation of Kenshi in The Netherlands.

Main achievements of my Kendo Deshi

Mark Herbold 7th Dan Kyoshi Kendo

- 1st place Iijima Cup 1992, 1995, 1998
- 2nd place Iijima Cup 1996, 1999, 2000
- 3rd place Iijima Cup 1993
- 1st place European Championships 1998 + FOG Topsport price
- 2nd place European Championships 1999
- Fighting Spirit EKC 1992
- 3rd Place EKC team 1993
- 1st place Nakakura Cup 1998, 1999
- 3rd place EKC Teams 1999
- 1st place NKK Team 1993, 1994, 1997, 1998, 2001
- 2nd place NKK Team 2002
- 3rd place NKK Team 1995, 2000
- 1st place Edo Cup 1992, 1993, 1995, 1998
- 2nd place Edo Cup 1999

1st place NKK Kendo 1995, 1997, 1998, 2001

3rd place NKK Kendo 1993, 1996

1st place Fumetsu Cup 1997

2nd place Mumeishi 1995

3rd place Tournoi de Paris 1993



In the 90's Mark was one of the strongest Kenshi in Europe and very successful on many National and International Kendo Tournaments.



Here's Mark with a replica of one of the Iijima Cups

Guido Minnaert 7th Dan Renshi Kendo

NKK Individual

1st Place 2000, 2005, 2006

(+ various 2nd and 3rd places)

NKK Team

1st Place 1997, 1989, 1990, 2008, 2009

(+ various 2nd and 3rd places)

NKK Students

1st Place 2005

Iijima Cup Individual

1st Place Iijima Cup 1999, 2002, 2005, 2006, 2007

(+ various 2nd and 3rd places)

Iijima Cup Team

1st Place 2006, 2007, 2010

3rd Place 2009, 2015

Edo Cup

1st Place 1989, 1995, 2005, 2009

(+ various 2nd and 3rd places)

Fumetsu Cup

1st Place 2000

EKC Men Team

3rd Place 1993, 1999, 2010

Paris Open Taikai Men Team

3rd Place 2009

Japan East West Student Championships

Fighting Spirit 2001

Kasahara Cup Team

3rd 2006

Alessandria Cup Individual

3rd 2010



Only few people in Europe have as many awards as Guido: more than 70!

Marije Wouters 5th Dan Kendo

1st NKK Ladies Individual 2014
(+ various 2nd and 3rd places)
1st place NKK teams 2009
(+ various 2nd and 3rd places)
3rd place EKC Ladies Team 2011 + 2013
2nd place EKC Ladies Team 2014
Fighting Spirit Prize EKC Ladies Team 2008
Fighting Spirit Prize Nakakura Cup 2004 + 2014
3rd Place Ladies Individual London Cup 2012
3rd Place Ladies Individual Open de Paris 2009
3rd Place Teams Coppa Italia 2009
1st & 2nd Place Teams Iijima Cup 2014
3rd Place Ladies Individual Iijima Cup 2014
Fighting Spirit (Edo Do) Edo Cup 2006
1st & 2nd Place Team Edo Cup 2009



Look at all these prizes won by Marije!

Fleur Smout 5th Dan Kendo

1st Place NKK Ladies 2008 + 2009 + 2011 + 2015 + 2018

(+ various 2nd and 3rd places at NKK)

1st Place EKC Ladies team 2019

3rd Place EKC Ladies team 2011 + 2017

2nd Place EKC Ladies team 2014

3rd Place EKC Ladies individual 2019

Best 8 WKC Ladies Individual 2015 and Fighting Spirit Prize

Best 8 WKC Ladies Team 2018

Best 16 WKC Ladies Individual 2018

3rd Place Coppa D'Italia Team 2009 + 2011

Fighting Spirit International Triscele Tournament of Kendo Italy 2011

3rd Place Iijima Cup Ladies Individual 2014 + 2015 + 2016

Fighting Spirit (Edo Do) Edo Cup 2018

(+ various 2nd and 3rd places at Edo Cup)



Fleur played a major role as captain of the Dutch Ladies in the 2019 EKC victory



Look at all these prizes won by Fleur!



Dutch Ladies Team: European Team Champion 2019!



Fleur also won 3rd Place at the EKC 2019.



Look at Fleur's technique: top level!

Iaido Jodo developments

Since our return to The Netherlands, the development of Iaido and Jodo in Europe has gone very well.

When we moved to Germany, we started to join the Jodo training at Karl's seminar in Villingen again. During our stay in Germany we also met with Marie-Louise, Robert & Susi of Munchen, and with Emanuele of Bari. Since 2005 I started to teach these new groups, and in the mean-time many of the first participants are 5th Dan Jodo, and Robert & Susi even passed their 6th Dan in 2018.



Munich Jodo Seminar 2011. Participants from Italy, Germany, Netherlands, Switzerland.



Jock

joined the Munich Judo Seminar in 2017.



Munich Judo Seminar 2018: 35 participants from Germany, Italy, Hungary, Netherlands, Belgium, Austria, Switzerland.



Participants are now ranging from Mudan up to 7th Dan!



Judo Seminar Bari, 2005.



My Deshi and good friend Emanuele in his Garden in Bitritto.



Jodo Seminar Bari, 2018. Jodo friends from UK and Sweden joined as well!



Cosimo and Emanuele, my crazy Jodo students in Italy.

My first generation Deshi not only are teaching in their own Dojo, they are also regularly invited to teach abroad. They are also acting as referees on the Iaido and Jodo European Championships. between us (Louis, Rene, Aad, Andre, Edwin, Karl, Bernard), we have played a large role in the development of Iaido and Jodo in: The Netherlands, Germany, Belgium, Italy, Switzerland.

The European Iaido and Jodo Championships are now large events in their own right, but they all started in The Netherlands, with the great support of Ishido Sensei.

Although I cannot do Iaido anymore myself, I still sometimes act as a panel member on an Iaido grading. Because Ishido Sensei trained me so well in the points to watch for in Iaido, I can still manage to be a judge for Iaido gradings. My ability to see a lot of details has fortunately not faded away.

One of highlights of my Jodo career was when my Deshi Rene van Amersfoort passed his 8th Dan Jodo in Japan in 2016. I think this is the summum for a Budo teacher: when one of the earliest students surpasses the teacher after so many years, it's a truly joyful event.

I will never forget my first phone call to Ishido Sensei, just after Rene's exam. I called Ishido Sensei on his mobile, and the whole group were in a restaurant in Kyoto, celebrating Rene's great success.

He picked up the call and I congratulated him on the event. To my surprise, the first thing he said: "the first thing I told Rene when he passed the exam was to never forget that Louis is his teacher, and will always remain just that!". Only after he had mentioned this, he congratulated me on the great achievement of one of my longest Deshi. This clearly shows the importance Ishido Sensei puts on the human relations within our Iaido Jodo family.

I think the main reason why Rene was able to achieve this is his complete devotion to Jodo training. Therefore I presented him the beautiful calligraphy that I got from Nakakura Sensei in 1985 for my Kendo book. The Kanji are Shisei 至誠 literally "go to" and "truth" but it means devotion to training in the case of Budo.



Shisei Calligraphy by Nakakura Kyoshi 9th Dan



Rene During his 8dan Jodo exam. 100% focus!



Rene with Namitome Sensei, 8dan Hanshi Jodo and a regular visitor to Europe.

In January 2018 we organized the 20th edition of the Ishido Cup. In the mean time this tournament has grown to a full international main event. On the 20th edition Ishido Sensei himself was present. There were 112 participants for Jodo and 203 for Iaido, from 17 countries. Unfortunately after this event Ishido Sensei was involved in a serious car crash when he was driving from airport back home, and he suffered serious injuries. In the mean time he has recovered remarkably, and he is planning to come to the Netherlands again in August 2019, to celebrate the 40th year anniversary of his visits to Europe.



Ishido Cup 2018 Jodo part.



Ishido Cup 2018 laido part.

Muso Gonnosuke Jinja (Shrine)

In April 2019 I stayed in Japan for a whole month, mostly in Ishioka, but I also visited Edo Sensei and Ishido Sensei.

Finally, I had time to make a long-time wish come true: pay a visit to the place where according to tradition of the Shindo Muso Ryu Jodo, it all began: the hills outside Fukuoka City, close to the present Kamado Jinja.





Text on the big stone: Shindo Muso Ryu. Jodo Hassho no Chi (the original location of Jodo)

Ishido Sensei's History in Europe

In April 2019 Ishido Sensei gave me his personal notes on his teaching history in Europe. I will not translate the whole document, but here are only a few highlights. He doesn't name any names of Europeans, just events. He describes his first meeting with me in 1983.

This was used for Sensei's Hanshi Diploma application.

1979

First time visit to UK. Research of actual situation of Budo and the BKA in the UK and finding out what people think about Budo.

1983

Third Seminar. For the first time met the Technical Director of the Oranda Kendo Renmei (NKR) and three others from The Netherlands. (This is Sensei's reference to me, since he doesn't name any person's names in this document).

1984

First time Seminar in The Netherlands, followed by the 4th Seminar in the UK.

1994

After the 8th Seminar in The Netherlands, first official EKF / NKR Iaido European Taikai is organized. From now on it will be organized by different countries every year. My Dream came true.

2000

12th Seminar in The Netherlands. Based on a request by the NKR, the Jodo Championships will be held together with the Iaido Championships.

2000

November. The Netherlands, Papendal. 11th European Iaido Taikai, combined with 1st European Jodo Taikai. (Ishido Sensei is part of the official ZNKR delegation).

It also mentions the seven times that Sensei was part of the official ZNKR delegation.

The New Jikimon System under Ishido Sensei

In April 2019 I visited Ishido Sensei in Kawasaki and asked him about re-organizing the Monjin system under Ishido Sensei. By this time, Chris Mansfield and Len Bean had left the Ishido group so it was time to revise the Dojo organization under Ishido Sensei.

He decided to use the classical term “Jikimon” (直門), which he found in the old Muso Shinden Jushin Ryu writings that were given from each teacher to their most trusted students.

The following persons were appointed as Jikimon in Europe:

Jock Hopson (Iaido Kyoshi 7 Dan, Jodo Kyoshi 7 Dan, Kendo Kyoshi 7 Dan)

Vic Cook (Iaido Kyoshi 7 Dan, Jodo 5 Dan, Kendo 4 Dan)

Lee Loi (Iaido Renshi 7 Dan, Jodo Renshi 7 Dan)

Louis Vitalis (Iaido Kyoshi 7 Dan, Jodo Kyoshi 7 Dan, Kendo Kyoshi 7 Dan)

Takao Momiyama (Iaido Kyoshi 7 Dan, Jodo Renshi 7 Dan, Kendo 5 Dan)

Andy Watson (Iaido Renshi 7 Dan, Jodo Renshi 7 Dan)

Dominique Losson (Iaido Renshi 6 Dan, Jodo 5 Dan)

Jolanda's Career as a Kendoka

After Jolanda's stay in Kanazawa in 1981/1982, she developed a great skill as a Kendoka and became very successful in Kendo Shiai.

Here is a list of some of Jolanda's main awards as a Kendoka, but she also won fighting spirit awards at the WKC, and even joined the best 8 on the WKC, only to be beaten by a Japanese Kendoka. She also won many smaller Kendo tournaments in The Netherlands and Belgium.

In the early 1980's the Mumeishi tournament in London was the biggest Kendo event in Europe, much bigger than the EKC at the time. The first time Jolanda joined it she became 2nd, and then she won it three times in a row.



Mumeishi 1983 2nd place



Mumeishi 1984 1st place



Mumeishi 1985 1st place



Mumeishi 1986 1st place

Jolanda also entered in the Nederlandse Kendo Kampioenschappen, which were a mixed tournament in the old days, so she was fighting with the men and women.



NKK individual 1983 3rd place



NKK individual 1984 Fighting Spirit



NKK 1987 team 3rd place



NKK team 1988 3rd place

Another major Kendo Taikai in Europe is the Tournoi de Paris. Here Jolanda won as well.



Tournoi de Paris 1989 1st place

Also at the famous Nakakura Cup she was successful, but we don't know exactly in which years.



Nakakura Cup 2nd place



Nakakura Cup 3rd place

In 1985 there was no official ladies division for the WKC, there was a women goodwill tournament. Only an American Japanese Kendoka was strong enough to beat Jolanda!



The first editions of the Iijima Cup were mixed, so she had to fight the men as well. Still she won the Taikai 2 times, once in 1993 and once in 1996.



Iijima Cup 1993, 1st place

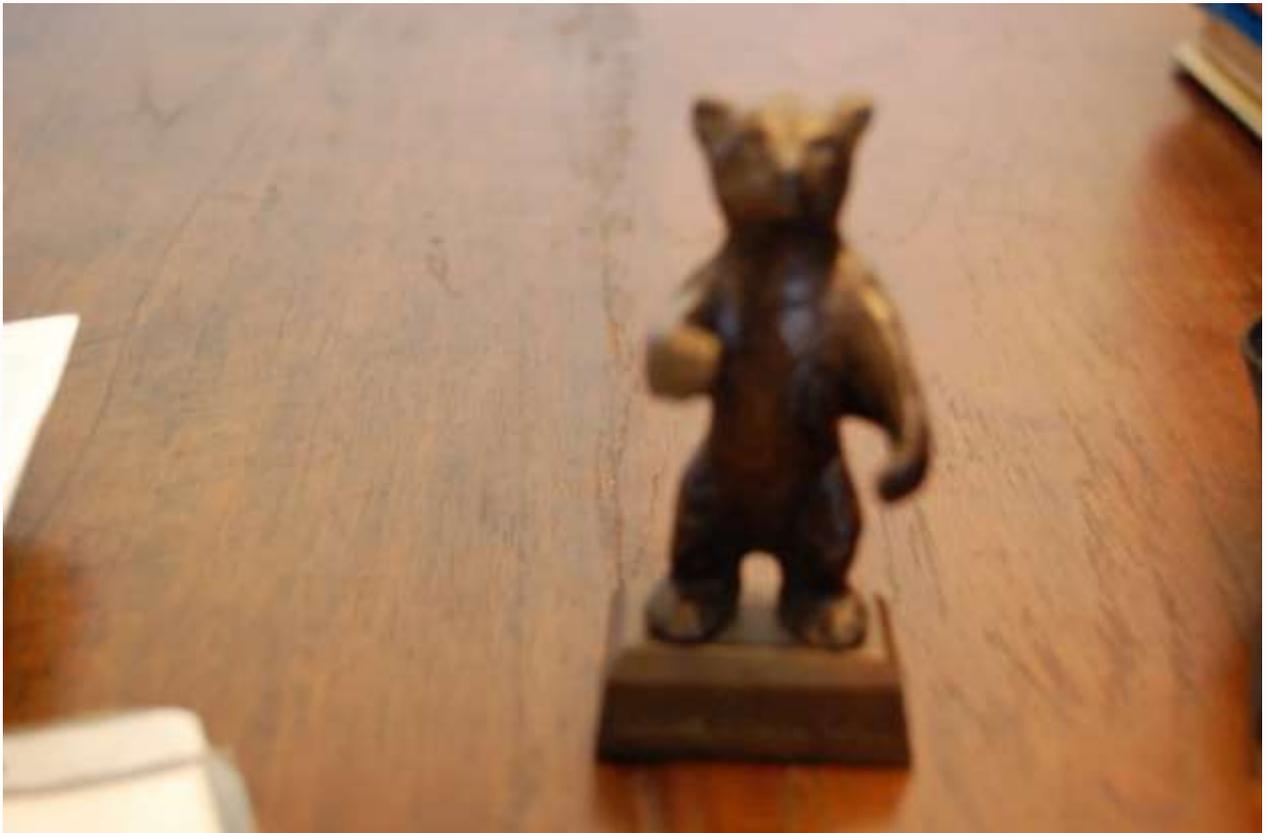


Ijima Cup 1996, 1st place

1989 was the first time an official lady's division was held on the EKC, in Amsterdam.



EKC individual 1989 1st place



EKC individual 1990 fighting spirit



EKC individual 1993 fighting spirit



EKC individual 1996 2nd place

In 1997, Jo was already 39 years old, she still was active in Kendo Shiai, and was able to compete with much younger opponents.



1997 WKC Kyoto, Fighting Spirit



Overview of other medals Jo won, such Dutch Championships, Coupe des Coupes, etc

In July 2000 Jolanda participated in the Kawasaki city amateur Kendo championships, Ladies Division.

Here she won 3rd place. Please keep in mind that Kendo in Kanagawa prefecture and Kawasaki is extremely high level, even in Japan, so this is no small feat!





My career as a Kendo Shinpan

As a player, I joined 3 WKC: 1979 (fighting spirit award), 1985 and 1988. I also played at the EKC, and won fighting spirit awards in 1983 and 1984.

I learned how to referee Kendo Shiai in 1981, during my one year stay at Kanazawa University. Because we did a lot of Shiai training, and because I could not be a real player in the student's tournaments (I was already older than the 4th year students), I got a lot of experience in judging Japanese Student Shiai.

In 1990 I joined the EKC as referee for the first time. I have been refereeing on the EKC, except for the years when we lived in Japan for most of the times.

In 1991 I was selected as referee for the WKC in Toronto. I was only 5th Dan at the time, but because of my experience as student Kendo referee in Kanazawa, the ZNKR selected me. I was judging up to the quarter finals, and on this WKC I passed my 6th Dan Kendo.

In 2000 on the WKC in the USA I was refereeing the finals.



One of my most memorable moments as a referee was the finals of the WKC in Glasgow in 2003. Japan and Korea were in the team finals, and Mike Davis, Rainer Jatkowski and I were the referees.



The teams ended equal, so a Daihyo Sen (deciding match) was needed. For Japan Naoki Eiga was selected, and for Korea Kim. Kim was a famous Kendo player in Korea, never beaten in Shiai in his own country. He was one of the few Koreans who could compete with the top Japanese players.

The first five minutes of the Shiai saw only very few hits, both players were very cautious. In the Encho, both players did not do many strikes, they were just looking for an opportunity. Eiga attempted Tsuki for a few times, but none of them got close to the target.

Then after ten minutes, Eiga did a Katate Tsuki (one handed Tsuki), which I saw from the side. Because the Men of Kim moved, I knew it had to have hit the Tsuki flap. If it would have been on the body or on the Do, the Men would not have moved. I immediately raised my red flag, and Mike and Rainer followed me immediately after.

Kobayashi Sensei was the coach of the Japanese team in Glasgow. I had known Kobayashi Sensei already for many years, and Jolanda and me even stayed in his small house in Kawasaki for a week when we were training in Japan in the 1980's.

Many years later, when we were living in Germany, I met Kobayashi Sensei in Berlin during the winter seminar. He came to me and said: "Louis, I owe you so much. Because you were the first to raise the flag for Eiga's Tsuki, the other two referees followed you and we won the final match against Korea. Thanks to you my career as a coach of the Japan team did not end in a disaster!".

Tagawa Sensei (now president of USA Kendo Federation), and I did many WKC final together. In recent years the Kendo Team finals have gotten rougher and rougher, and very difficult to judge. I have always been neutral as a referee, but in many cases the Korean Kendoka thought I was too strict. From my point of view, because I have grown as a Kendoka in Japan, of course my reference in Kendo is Japanese Kendo. In my mind, many of the Korean techniques are not fulfilling the 5 items to make an Ippon (please see the Kendo Rules and Regulations), so I denied many of their attempts. From Korean point of view probably they don't like my refereeing, but the ZNKR kept selecting me to do the finals, so for me personally I'm convinced that my refereeing skills are one of the best in the world. So far there has not been any referee who has judged so many WKC Team and Individual finals as me, but I hope some other young referee from Europe zone will attempt to beat my record of WKC final matches.

Lessons in Life from Budo

I would like to conclude with a few lessons in life that Budo taught me.

Katei Enman 家庭円満: a stable home front

The first lesson Edo Sensei taught me in 1979: if you want to continue a lifelong career in Budo, you need a stable and peaceful home front. Fortunately my wife and lifelong partner, Jolanda, was a fabulous Kendoka herself, so I had never any issue explaining why I needed to spend another weekend in the Dojo, teaching or refereeing. I have met many fine Budoka who did not have enough understanding in the family, which made them either quit completely, or drastically scale down their ambitions in Budo.

Heijoshin Kore Michi Nari 平常心これ道なり: a stable mind set

Although I have never been a great Champion in any of the Budo that I practiced, mostly because I never mastered the principle of Heijoshin in a proper way, I find this idea something that you can apply in both Budo and daily life.

In my Budo career it has helped me to achieve three 7th Dan grades, which I all took in Japan and which I all passed on the first attempt. It has also been a great help during the many finals of the World Kendo Championships that I had to referee. The pressure on these occasions is really beyond imagination, and only a few referees can really keep cool when Japanese and Korean teams are fighting each other.

Seme 攻め: how to read your opponent

The principle of Seme is very hard to translate with one word or to explain in short. Often it is mistakenly translated as “attack”, but it is much more complex than just that.

Especially in Kendo and Jodo it is a vital part of obtaining the higher grades from 5th Dan and up.

Instead of just jumping forward and hitting the target, it requires that you spend a split second of time in observing your opponent and then act accordingly. Basically what you are doing is communicating with your opponent without words, and observe him or her before you attack yourself or counter an attack. As a result of your Seme, you will discover the weak point with your opponent, and you will be successful.

Of course this whole process takes only a split second of time, and in order to make this work there is only one solution: many hours of practice in the Dojo! There is no shortcut, unfortunately.

In my professional career in Global Logistics at Nippon Express this has helped me the most. In the case of Kendo and Jodo you are actually attacking and defending with a real opponent. In my work I used to negotiate a lot, both internally and with customers. During negotiating with other people,

basically you can apply principle of Seme. Finding out where the weak point is in the opponent's reasoning, without showing your own intentions, will give you the best result. Because I was able to apply this knowledge in real life, I was very successful in my job, and in the final years I was even promoted to Director Global Sales Europe of this giant multinational logistics firm.

Shuchu 集中: focus and concentration

In Kendo/Iaido/Jodo it is very important to be able to focus and concentrate. First of all you need it to be able to train the difficult techniques. Second, you need focus when you are facing your opponent. If you miss focus for a split second, you'll get hit in Kendo, or you'll miss a hit in Jodo. If you develop this, of course you can use it in daily life as well.

Kento 健闘: fighting spirit

In Kendo/Iaido/Jodo we are fighting a real or imaginary opponent. If you want to be successful in a match or on a grading, you need to have a very high level of fighting spirit.

If you have a good balance of fighting spirit and Heijoshin, you can become very successful in Budo.

But this aspect of Budo can be applied in daily life as well. The best sample that I know of is Jolanda, who used her enormous fighting spirit after her stroke, during the two-year revalidation period.

Zanshin 残心: Awareness and Respect

The main difference between Kendo and other sports is the clearly defined concept of Zanshin.

There are the following elements in Zanshin:

1. Migamae 身構 (physical posture). After hitting you need to move your body in such a way that you can prevent the opponent to make an easy counter-hit, and at the same time make it possible for you to observe the movements of the opponent.
2. Kigamae 気構 (focus, concentration). After hitting you need to keep your focus and attention towards the opponent. If you stop looking at your opponent (and focus on referees for example), you will be hit easily.
3. Sonkei 尊敬 (respect). This is an important part of Zanshin. In Kendo we don't shout "I won" or even make a victory gesture. We always have to realize that we are only able to practice our beloved Kendo because we have other people who are willing and able to practice with us. Without them there would not be any Kendo at all! It is also part of the Confucianist idea of Humility that still survives from old times. Bragging about our victories is not very welcomed in our Kendo Culture.

Shugyo 修業: devotion to training through study

In the dictionary, Shugyo means study or learning. But in Budo it has also a deeper meaning. As Edo Sensei described in his book, when I studied in Japan for a year, it was called "Musha Shugyo" 武者修行. It refers to Samurai (Musha) who traveled around to learn (Shugyo) from teachers from various schools. It also means that you have to devote yourself completely in order to learn as much as possible during a young age. At the same time it also means that the learning process never ends.

In Budo you learn the most when you are young, especially learning with the body is important. But this is of course true for all things in life, be it work or sports. At a later age, you can still continue the process of learning Budo. It will be less physical, and will focus more on mental stability, concentration, reading your opponent and of course how to maintain a healthy body! Finally, when you start to prepare for the final Dan exam, the Hachidan Grading, you will find out that there is a whole new world in the Budo that you thought you already knew very well. I learned this during a Hachidan preparation seminar at the Shunpukan Dojo in Tokyo under Iwatate Sensei. Small details that I could ignore before, are now vital in passing this exam. Even though I have no realistic hope that I will ever pass Kendo Hachidan, I still study for it, as if it would be possible. This study gives enough motivation to keep training Budo, even when I'm approaching the age of 60 now.

Shogai Budo 生涯武道: Lifelong Budo

One of the nice features of Budo is that you can practice it as long as your arms and legs are basically working. I started Kendo and Iaido 42 years ago, and Jodo 37 years ago, but I am still not finished learning. Although young Kendoka and Jodoka are much faster than me in their movements, I can still practice with them, and not even get hit so many times. Because my insight and experience is much better than the younger people, I can still keep up with them. Of course I could not get very far in a Kendo tournament, but in our regular training in the Dojo I can still train together with people who are 30 years younger than me.

Basically I recognize three levels of practice.

Fundamental Phase.

The first few years of Kendo/Iaido/Jodo training you need to establish the fundament of the rest of your Budo career. Depending on your age and talent, this phase could last between five years and ten years.

The Sports Phase.

If you are interested in competition, Kendo/Iaido/Jodo can be applied as a Budo Sport as well. There is enough possibility to participate in various tournaments, and depending on your age and talent, you can train on very high level and try to join international tournaments as well.

The Cultural Phase.

If you are not interested in competition but still want to pursue a study of Budo, Kendo/Iaido/Jodo also has a lot to offer. Just training the arts and try to achieve higher Dan grades is a very nice way to pursue a hobby.

Also, when you have reached an age at which competition is not suitable anymore, you can simply switch to the Cultural Phase and start to learn about the cultural aspects of our Budo. Since a few years I have pursued this path, and the first thing I learned was that there is no end to learning Budo. Maybe I'll never win a big tournament again, Maybe I never achieve 8th Dan ever, but the fact that there are always teachers in Japan who can teach me new things, I will always be motivated to keep training and teaching Budo.

Keisho 継承 Inheritance

Now that Edo Sensei (80) and Ishido Sensei (75) are getting older, their thoughts are not so much focused on how they can practice Budo, but on how they can make sure that their legacy is handed over to the next generation correctly.

In April 2019, I spend many hours in Japan with both Sensei talking about this. Since both Sensei appointed me as their Deshi in The Netherlands, I'm responsible for making sure that their teaching is handed over in the best way.

For Edo Sensei it is important that we keep the tradition of his style of Kendo alive, even though no one of us can copy his kind of Kendo of course. Modern Kendo has lost many of the old techniques, such as, but not limited to:

- Hanmen (one handed Men strike hit from the side)
- Nito Ryu
- Katate Jodan Migi & Hidari (left and right Jodan with only one hand on the Tsuka)
- Combinations such as Hanmen followed by Gyaku Do
- Men Kaeshi Do with Taiasabaki to the left instead of to the right

I will make sure that my Deshi will learn these techniques, as long as I can still demonstrate them.



Jacket with [KEISHO] presented by Edo Sensei to his main Deshi, such as Iijima and me

For Ishido Sensei it is important that the organization of his affiliated Dojo in Europe is working properly. Besides appointing his direct students in Europe (Jikimon), we have decided to set up the organization in a transparent way, and make sure that all the Dojo and individuals (more than 800 by now!) know the rules of engagement in practicing Iaido and Jodo in the Ishido family in Europe. For this we have created the “Shinbukan Ishido Dojo European Network” and a Memorandum Of Understanding (MOU) which will be signed and acknowledged by all Jikimon and the respective Dojo Leaders.

Thanks!感謝!

Finally, I would like to thank a few people.

First of all thanks to my wife Jo. We have been doing Budo together from the time she started in 1979 till the time she was hit by the unfortunate event in 2010, which forced her to stop training.

All the Sensei who were kind enough to write a preface to this document: Koos van Hattum Sensei, Hein Odinot Sensei, Edo Kokichi Sensei, Iijima Akira Sensei, Ishido Shizufumi Sensei.

With all these Sensei I have a long standing and very warm relation, thank you all for your continued support!

Of course I want to thank my Deshi, and all the other students that I still teach on a regular basis. Without them I would not have been motivated to continue the endless study of Japanese Budo.

A special thanks goes to Hein Odinot Sensei, who has played a vital role in keeping the NKR as a stable and financially healthy organization, where Kendo, Iaido and Jodo could develop wonderfully.

And last but not least a big thanks for Jock Hopson, my great Senpai in Europe. We have been Budo friends since the 1970's and he connected me to Ishido Sensei and Hiroi Sensei, for which I owe him forever the deepest gratitude.

Amsterdam, August 2019

Louis Vitalis & Jolanda Dekker