

2024/2025 WA Kendo Campaign Plan

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1. BACKGROUND

This document provides a brief overview of the 2024/2025 WA Kendo Campaign plans and goals.

The Squad Leadership Team's **vision** for the AKC 2025 WA campaign is:

To develop the physical and spiritual vigour (kihaku) of West Australian players.

The **objectives** of the campaign will be to:

- Support, foster, grow, and strengthen Kendo interests, skills, and community in WA.
- Train and prepare competitors for AKC.
- Identify and train future potential competitors.
- Engage and introduce complementary skills and services to improve and support the development, recovery, and maintenance of Squad members' physical and mental wellbeing.
- Improve communications and increase awareness of the AKC campaign and WA Kendo.

The campaign will aim for the following **goals**:

- Field a full team of competitors across all divisions at AKC 2025.
- Collaborate with WA Kendo club instructors and Seniors to align training approaches and methods.
- Work with the WA Kendo Board and senior leaders to coordinate additional Kendo events, e.g. seminar, competition, and workshops; see section 7. *Event Proposals*.
- Regular Squad training (approximately once a month), providing lessons in both practical and theory.
- Regular communications (at least once a month) for updates, topics for thoughts, homework, etc.
- Seek additional funding and support to increase participation for the Squad and Team.

2. CAMPAIGN THEME

The overall theme for this campaign is **kihaku**.

The *All Japan Kendo Federation's Kendo Dictionary* defines *kihaku* as:

The strength of spirit to face any situation. A strong mind capable of responding properly to a pressing matter or an attacking opponent.

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Kihaku, sometimes also translated as "vigour", is about:

- Having the mental preparation and clear plan of action, even before entering the *shiai-jo* (court).
- Achieving a state of readiness and being able to choose to act reactively or proactively.
- Giving a focused physical and spiritual effort in the movements and actions that matter.

The Campaign will assist WA players in understanding and applying this concept in their Kendo.

3. CAMPAIGN SCHEDULE

Activities	Description
Sunday 14 July 2024	<p>Squad Training #1</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Introduce campaign theme: <i>Kihaku</i>. Squad Training theme: Thoughtful, purposeful <i>kihon</i>; building <i>tame</i>. Squad warm-up routine, <i>Kihon</i> (basics) practice, drills, <i>jigeiko</i>.
Sunday 4 August 2024	<p>Grading Workshop #1 + <i>Godō-geiko</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mock grading practice for Dan grades with guests from Japan. <i>Gōgo-geiko</i> (free <i>jigeiko</i> rotation).
Sunday 11 August 2024: Western Taikai + WAKR AGM	
Sunday 25 August 2024	<p>Squad Training #2</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Introduce the concept of seeking complementary services and skills. Guest: Exercise physiologist. Squad Training theme: Attitude and discipline; cruising vs <i>ishshou-ken-meい</i>. <i>Kihon</i> practice, drills, and patterns. Samples of drills for home practice.
Saturday 7 & Sunday 8 September 2024: UniSport Nationals Kendo Competition	
Sunday 22 September 2024	<p>Squad Training #3</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Squad Training theme: Awareness, <i>zanshin</i>, selling. <i>Kihon</i> practice, drills, and patterns.
Sunday 6 October 2024	<p><i>Reiho</i>, <i>Bokuto-Waza</i>, and <i>Kata</i> Seminar.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Seminar (open to all, but aimed at higher grades) for the alignment of <i>Reiho</i> (etiquette procedures), and dissemination of most recent <i>Bokutō-waza</i> and <i>Kata</i> interpretations, based on teachings from AJKF delegates.
Sunday 20 October 2024	<p>Squad Training #4</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Squad Training theme: <i>Shiai</i> procedures; mental approach to competition. <i>Shiai</i> practice and strategies.
Sunday 17 November 2024	<p>Squad Training #5</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Squad Training theme: Connection and <i>aiki</i>. Timing exercises; <i>ai-uchi</i> (simultaneous striking), <i>debana-waza</i>, <i>oji-waza</i>.
Sunday 1 December 2024	<p>Squad Training #6</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Squad Training theme: <i>Waza</i>; <i>seme</i>, <i>kuzushi</i>, <i>tame</i>.

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Sunday 15 December 2024	<p><i>Kihon</i> Competition</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Competition for Beginners and Kyu grades, supported by their <i>motodachi</i>, examining both <i>Kihon</i> (basics) and <i>shiai</i> (match). <p>Grading Workshop #2</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mock grading practice for Dan grades.
Sunday 12 January 2025	<p>Squad Training #7</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Squad Training theme: Completeness.
Sunday 2 February 2025	<p><i>Jodan</i> & <i>Nitō</i> Workshop</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Introduction to <i>Jodan</i> (upper stance) and <i>Nitō</i> (two-swords style).
Sunday 23 February 2025	<p>Squad Training #8</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Squad Training theme: <i>Shiai</i> preparation, strategy, team <i>shiai</i> procedures. Team <i>shiai</i> practice.
Sunday 16 March 2025	<p>Squad Training #9</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Squad Training theme: <i>Shiai</i>. <p>Grading Workshop #3</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mock grading practice for Dan grades.
Sunday 6 April 2025	<p>Squad Training #10</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Final <i>shiai</i> preparation.
47th Australian Kendo Championships 2025 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Friday, 18 April 2025: Early registration and <i>shinpan</i> briefing. Saturday, 19 April 2025: Individual Events. Sunday, 20 April 2025: Team Events. Monday, 21 April 2025: Seminar. Tuesday, 22 April 2025: Seminar and grading. 	
Sunday 18 May 2025	Post-AKC debrief and watch-along party.

4. TRAINING AND EVENT DETAILS

4.1. Squad Training

Squad Trainings will be scheduled on **Sundays** in the afternoon, approximately **1:00pm to 4:00pm** (3 hours).

Each Squad Training will build upon the previous ones, focusing on the overall campaign theme (*kihaku*), as well as a specific theme for each Squad Training.

- Introduction (10 minutes).
 - Introduce the theme of the Squad Training.
- Warm-up (20 minutes).
 - Squad warm-up out of *bōgu*, including *suburi*.
 - Squad warm-up in *bōgu*, consisting of *kirikaeshi* and basics.
- *Kihon* (basic) training (30 minutes).
 - Focus on basic training while keeping in mind the theme of the day.
 - May include *waza* (technique) practice.
- Break (5 minutes).
- Focused training (60 minutes).
 - Focus on specific training drills according to the theme of the day.
 - May include *shiai* practice.
- Break (5 minutes).
- *Godō-geiko* (30 minutes).
 - Free sparring rotation.
- Cool down (10 minutes).
- Debrief (5 minutes).

4.2. Grading Workshops

Grading Workshops are scheduled on:

- Sunday, 4 August 2024.
- Sunday, 15 December 2024 (after *Kihon Competition*).
- Sunday, 16 March 2025 (after Squad Training #9).

The purpose of this workshop is to provide an opportunity for higher grades to get together and run a practice session specifically focusing on grading, i.e. *jitsugi* and *kata*.

The format will be:

- Warm-up.
- Rounds of *jitsugi*, followed by comments and feedback from high-grade instructors.
- Rounds of *kata*, followed by comments and feedback from high-grade instructors.

4.3. Reiho, Bokutō-Waza, and Kata Seminar

The *Reiho, Bokutō-Waza, and Kata Seminar* is scheduled on **Sunday, 6 October 2024**.

The purpose of this seminar is to provide a more in-depth understanding of *reiho* (etiquette procedures), *Bokutō-Waza*, and *Kendo Kata* – in accordance to the official AJKF books, lessons learnt from various seminars, and teachings received from the last few years. The intention is to increase awareness and up-to-date understanding and standardisation within the WA Kendo clubs across all levels.

Note that the purpose of the seminar is to update the attendees' knowledge, not to teach the *Waza* or *Kata*. Members participating in each section must already know the *Waza* or *Kata* being covered.

Members are welcome to join and stay as far away as they can; however once the group has reached a *Waza* or *Kata* they do not know, they must break away from the main group; they may either watch quietly, or practise amongst themselves.

The seminar will consist of several sections:

- Introduction
 - Provide an introduction to the purpose and format of this seminar.
 - Duration: ~5 minutes.
- Section 1: *Reiho*
 - This section will cover a quick overview of proper etiquette surrounding: standing (*shizentai*), kneeling (*seiza*), bowing (*rei*), *taito* (ready position), *nuketo* (drawing), and *sonkyo* (squatting).
 - Format: Direct instructions and practice on the spot.
 - Duration: ~10 minutes.
- Section 2: *Bokutō-Waza*
 - This section will cover a quick overview of the finer details in each *Waza*.
 - Format: ~2 minutes instruction before, and ~2 minutes practise in pairs, for each *Waza*.
 - Duration: ~40 minutes.
- Section 3: *Kata*
 - This section will cover the finer understanding of the techniques within *Kata*.
 - Format: ~5 minutes instruction before, and ~5 minutes practise in pairs, for each *Kata*.
 - Duration: ~120 minutes (with a ~5 minutes break in between).

A total of approximately 3 hours is required for the seminar.

4.4. Kihon Competition

The Kihon Competition is scheduled on **Sunday, 15 December 2024**.

The purpose of this competition is to provide an opportunity for lower grade participants, particularly beginners, to compete in Kendo that is not strictly *shiai*.

The competition will be between clubs; each one to field in a *motodachi*, and lower grade competitors.

The format of the competition will be across 3 divisions:

- *Reiho, Footwork, Suburi:*
 - Competitors (one club at a time) to line-up in front of the judging panel (*shinpan*). *Motodachi* to issue commands for the competitors.
 - Exercises to be shown are:

- *Reiho* (bow, 3 steps in, draw and *sonkyo, kamae*).
- Footwork (*mae mae, ato ato, migi migi, hidari hidari*).
- *Suburi* (*men, sayuu-men, kote, dō, kote-men*) x20 each.
- *Haya-suburi* x50.
- *Reiho* (*sonkyo*, sheathe, 5 steps back, bow).
- Participants to fetch their *kote* and *men*, line up, and *men-tsuke*.
- Judging panel to provide a score (out of 10) for each team. Judgment criteria:
 - Correctness / crispness of the techniques performed.
 - Understanding of commands.
 - Synchronisation of speed and tempo.
 - *Kiai* and *zanshin*.
 - Speed / fluency and correctness / neatness of putting on *kote* and *men*.
 - As a rough guideline:
 - 1 = please redo the beginners' course.
 - 5 = decent basics, should be a *Kyu* grade.
 - 10 = great basics, just about a *Dan* grade.
- *Kihon*:
 - Two teams will be competing at a time (red and white).
 - *Motodachi* to stand in the *shiaijo* and remain there.
 - Each competitor to come in one by one, and perform techniques with their *motodachi*:
 - *Reiho* (start and finish).
 - *Kirikaeshi*.
 - *Kihon* (*men, kote, dō, kote-men*) x2 each.
 - *Kakari-geiko* (at the call of the *shushin*) for approximately 10 seconds.
 - *Shinpan* to signal *hantei*.
 - Each flag awarded will count towards the team's score.
 - All teams to compete against each other (round robin).
- *Shiai*:
 - Two teams will be competing at a time (red and white).
 - The number of team members should be maximised (i.e. the highest number of members that all team can equally compete at).
 - Competitors will fight in standard team matches, 2 minutes duration, *ippon-shobu*.
 - Team order to be arranged by grade and age, with the team *motodachi* fighting last.
 - Each flag awarded will count towards the team's score.
 - All teams to compete against each other (round robin).

Total scores across all divisions are tallied up to determine the placement winners.

A total of approximately 3 hours is required for the competition.

4.5. *Jodan & Nitō* Workshop

The *Jodan & Nitō* Workshop is scheduled on **Sunday, 2 February 2025**.

The purpose of this workshop is to provide an introductory lesson to fighting in or against *jodan* or *nitō*.

The intention is to provide an opportunity to members to familiarise themselves with the two *kamae*, so that they have a better appreciation of them, as well as a basic understanding of how to fight them. It is noted that *jodan* and *nitō* players have been competing in AKC for many years, and the number is rising.

The workshops will cover:

- Introduction (5 minutes):
 - Introduce the purpose of this workshop.
- *Jodan* Workshop (1 hour 20 minutes):
 - Introduce the concept of the *kamae* and its *maai*.
 - How to assume *jodan no kamae*, and its spiritual attitude.
 - Footwork exercise (left foot forward).
 - *Debana (katate) men* – the bread & butter of *jodan no kamae*.
 - *Seigan no kamae* against *jodan*.
 - Manipulating the *chuushin* (centre line).
 - *Katake kote, morote kote, morote men, gyaku do*.
 - *Kamae, footwork, and attitude against jodan – seigan and kasumi*.
 - *Waza against jodan: hidari kote, migi kote, nuki/suriage men, debana kote, tsuki*.
 - Tricky *waza* for *jodan*: cancel *tsuki*, dodging *kote*, *otoshi*, *sayū men*, flicking / whipping.
 - Fighting as / against *migi gyaku jodan*.
 - *Jodan vs jodan*.
- *Nitō* Workshop (1 hour 20 minutes):
 - Introduce the concept of *nitō-ryu* and its *maai*.
 - Different stances of *nitō* (recommended: *gyaku-nitō*, right foot forward).
 - *Harai men* – the bread & butter of *nitō*.
 - *Harai kote, dō, hiki men, hiki kote, hiki do*.
 - *Waza against nitō: tsuki, ni-dan waza, sayū men, hiki do, otoshi*.
 - Tricky *waza* for *nitō*: zig-zag *kote*, off-centre *men*, flicking / whipping, *tsuki*.
 - Fighting as / against *sei-nitō*.
 - *Nitō vs nitō*.

5. CONTACT

Visit www.WAKendo.com.au for more details, or contact us on Contact@WAKendo.com.au