

2024/2025 WA Kendo Campaign

Squad Training #3

Version: 1.0
Last Updated: Sun 17 Nov 2024

SUMMARY

Lesson Summary
<ul style="list-style-type: none">The 2024/2025 WA Kendo Campaign aims to engage the entire WA Kendo community and develop everyone's skills. Everyone including beginners are welcome (see requirements).Campaign theme is <i>kihaku</i> (physical and spiritual vigour), which will be continually revisited through the application of supporting themes and concepts at each session.Squad Training #3's theme is <i>awareness</i> and <i>zanshin</i>.Goals for Squad Training #3:<ul style="list-style-type: none">Understand the meaning and purpose of <i>zanshin</i>.Practise how to display <i>zanshin</i> during training.Spirit training with concentration and <i>zanshin</i>.

TRAINING SCHEDULE

Time	Description
1:00pm	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Overview of the campaign objectives, goals, and theme.Recap of previous squad training themes:<ul style="list-style-type: none">1: Thoughtful, purposeful <i>kihon</i>; building <i>tame</i>. Learned Squad warm-up routine, focused on basics.2: <i>Professionalism</i>. What does it mean to train, eat, rest, etc. like a professional. What can we do to improve our Kendo?Introduce this squad training's theme:<ul style="list-style-type: none">3: <i>Zanshin</i>. Meaning, purpose, and how to display it in our movements, strikes, and attitude.
1:10pm	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Warm-up routines.
1:30pm	<p>Squad warm-up in <i>bōgu</i>:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><i>kirikaeshi</i>.3x <i>big men</i>, 3x <i>small men</i>.3x <i>kote</i>, 3x <i>kote men</i>.3x <i>dō</i>, 3x <i>gyaku dō</i>.3x <i>tsuki</i>, 3x <i>tsuki men</i>.<i>men taiatari hiki-men</i>, <i>men taiatari hiki-kote</i>, <i>men taiatari hiki-dō</i>, <i>men</i>.

2024/2025 WA Kendo Campaign – Squad Training #3

Time		Description
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 3x <i>jigeiko</i> rotations.
1:40pm	45m	<p>Basic practice (<i>kihon</i>) in <i>bōgu</i> – 2x each, repeat until <i>yame</i> (3+ seconds in <i>kamae</i>).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • big <i>men</i>. • <i>men</i>. • <i>kote</i>. • <i>kote-men</i>. • <i>dō</i>. • <i>hiki-men</i>. • <i>hiki-dō</i>. • <i>men-debana-kote</i>. • <i>men-kaeshi-dō</i>. • <i>ai-men</i>.
2:25pm	10m	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Break.
2:35pm	30m	<p>Spirit training – maintain concentration:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>kirikaeshi</i> – normal. • <i>kirikaeshi</i> – “one breath”. • <i>kirikaeshi</i> – fast. • 3x <i>men</i>. • 3x <i>men, taiatari hiki-men, men</i>. • 4x <i>kote-men, taiatarai hiki-dō</i>; finish with a <i>men</i>. <p>The last <i>men</i> in each exercise must be done in full spirit, claiming an <i>ippon</i>.</p> <p>Quick rotations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 20s <i>uchikomi-geiko</i>; finish with a <i>men</i>. • 10s <i>kakari-geiko</i>; finish with a <i>men</i>. • 5s <i>ai-kakari-geiko</i>; finish with an <i>ai-men</i>. • 4x <i>ai-men</i>.
3:05pm	10m	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Break.
3:15pm	25m	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Free <i>jigeiko</i>.
3:40pm	10m	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Finish and cooldown.
3:50pm	10m	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recap and debrief.

Home training exercises:

- Perform *suburi* with *zanshin*.

SQUAD TRAINING #3 NOTES

Campaign Theme: *Kihaku*

The purpose of the 2024/2025 WA Kendo Campaign is to engage the WA Kendo community and train together to help develop everyone's Kendo skills.

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.



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.

Examples of practising or implementing *kihaku*:

- Maintaining concentration throughout set-up, execution (striking), and *zanshin*.
- Display of *sutemi* (striking in full spirit with "complete abandon").
- Having a *tokui-waza* (best / favoured technique) to aim for during *jigeiko* / *shiai*.
- Management of stress and competitive arousal (avoid being over- or under-aroused).

Recap of Previous Squad Trainings' Themes

Thoughtful, purposeful *kihon* means actively thinking about how you perform your basic techniques, focusing on one specific part at a time. Examples: how you hold your *kamae*, gripping with your toes, pushing with your left foot, pulling up the back foot quickly, ensuring *tenouchi* at the point of impact, loud *kiai*, etc.

Tame refers to the time and effort you need to "build" or "charge up" when preparing to strike. We need to be conscious on when we enter and exit the different phases of readiness and concentration. Applying this when doing our *kihon* will significantly improve the quality of your strikes.

Professionalism is about dedicating time and effort into activities that better ourselves in a specific skill, such as Kendo. *"Acting like a professional means working and behaving in such a way that others think of them as competent, reliable and respectful."* Steps we can do to improve ourselves include:

- Play like a professional: Take *shiai* seriously. Work as a team. Focus on the goal. Understand the rules and regulations well.
- Train like a professional: Take basics, *kakari-geiko*, *jigeiko*, etc. seriously. Add complementary training outside the *dōjō* – running, lifting, cardio exercises.
- Eat like a professional: Understand basic diet and nutritional balance. Consider reducing junk food, and increasing healthier alternatives; at least for a duration (e.g. stop drinking 6 months leading to AKC).
- Sleep or rest like a professional: Manage your injuries. See a physiotherapist. Don't go to training if you are injured or unwell; or if you do, stay on the side and do exercises that don't make it worse.
- Prepare like a professional: Rest up before a *shiai* (e.g. don't train for the last 2 days to rest your muscles). Study the rules and regulations and ensure you understand everything. Drink water regularly in the last 24 hours leading to the *shiai*. Check and maintain your *shinai*.

- Behave like a professional: Clean up your *reihō*. Be polite in and around the *dōjō*. Be friendly to everyone. Win or lose with grace. Pack up your gear neatly. Remember that you are always representing your *dōjō* and WA.

Squad Training #3 Theme: *Zanshin*

Zanshin, roughly translating to “remaining spirit / mind”, refers to a *state of awareness* or *relaxed alertness*.

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- In Kendo, we generally describe *zanshin* as the state of mind to be in after striking, in that we are ready for any potential follow-up (either responding to an opponent's attack, or take an opportunity to do another strike).
- Initially we would physically display *zanshin* by moving through after striking. Later we also learn that *zanshin* can take many forms, such as after a *tai-atari* or *hiki-waza*.
- *Zanshin* is also a crucial part of *Bokutō-Waza* and *Kata*, despite being displayed differently.

In *shiai*, the benefit of understanding and displaying *zanshin* may include:

- A way to relax / reset your mental state in preparation for the next move.
- Completing your strike for the purpose of *yūko-datotsu* (setup, execute, follow through).
- Avoiding the opponent's follow-up (don't get scored on).
- “Selling the point”.

Points to consider:

- How to apply *kihaku* (spiritual vigour) into *zanshin*?
- What are the similarities and differences about *zanshin* in *shinai* Kendo and *Kata*?
- Is the display of *zanshin* different in the following scenarios:
 - While doing basics / *kihon* practice at a normal club training.
 - When scoring in a *shiai*.
 - When attacking during a grading *jitsugi*.
 - When doing *Bokutō-Waza* or *Kata*.

Next Sessions

- Squad Training #4: Sunday, 1 December 2024, 1:00pm – 4:00pm, UWA
- Squad Training #5: Sunday, 15 December 2024, 1:00pm – 4:00pm, UWA

CONTACT

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