

VII GUADARRAMA GASSHUKU REPORT



Between the 30th of April and 4th of May took place the seventh edition of our international gasshuku in the village of Guadarrama in the northern mountain range of Madrid. Actually the seminar had started earlier for some of us since the group from Japan had arrived the previous Friday and from that moment intensive training was conducted at the Tai itsu kan dojo.

This occasion has been very special because apart from having with us Watabe shihan, Seiryukai Japan sandaime (appointed successor to Nishioka sensei in Japan) and Kitta shihan, we were honored as well to have Pascal Krieger shihan, our president, to whom we had invited and as a surprise and delight for many, decided to accept in the last minute.

Some 40 participants in total from Japan, Holland, France, Swiss, Austria, Portugal as well as from different regions of Spain enjoyed the superb facilities of the complex and a fantastic weather that made it possible to train outdoors the whole gasshuku.





Due to the high level of many of the participants, the seminar format differed from what we usually do; Watabe sensei decided to emphasize specific important points within kata and explained about the tempo or rhythm (Kankyu) of each technique within the context of kata. Sessions started with suburis, uchikomi and the explanation of one or two kihon

movements followed by sotai practice. After this we continued with kata keiko, moment in which the attendants were divided in groups according to each person's level as we move on along the different series of kata in SMR. Beginners were supervised for the most part by Kitta sensei and in a couple of sessions by Pascal sensei who insisted in taking care of them as he arrived on Thursday. The most advance people had the chance to spend lots of time going through the finest points in the series that we in general practice the least, highlighting the fact that almost the whole Saturday afternoon and evening was dedicated to Okuden practice much to the joy of all the highest level people. Is not usual to be able to train with (and not only under the guidance of) some of the teachers of our Federation, among them 3 Menkyo kaiden (out of the 5 that we had in total in this occasion), two Gomokurouku and two Okuiri sho. Very luxury!

In a very respectful, cordial and amicable atmosphere in line with Nishioka Tsuneo sensei wishes it was remarked by Watabe sensei as well as Pascal sensei the fact that no "way or style" is better than the other and that whatever we do or teach is just our own interpretation of what we received from our teacher. We all know and agree in the fact that Nishioka sensei evolved during his life and therefore he taught different things depending on where he went and to whom he taught.

To end with, Pascal sensei put all of us "back in our places" when he reminded us that none of us has really experienced a fight to the death and therefore most probably we don't really have an idea of what could work or not. This obviously takes away the authority of those who go around saying that they know the "only truth".

It was then, very interesting the exchange of ideas about certain technical points. Both Watabe sensei and Pascal sensei expressed their satisfaction to this respect and I truly believe that the link with our Japanese mates has been strengthened.



The last session on Sunday morning was dedicated to Shinto ryu Kenjutsu and during the last hour the less advanced people had the opportunity to practice with the highest level ones who took the role of uchidachi for them. This was important since everybody learnt some new kata during the gasshuku and although during the different sessions time was made for people to practice with the sempai, in this last part they could give an extra polish to the stuff they had learned and finish the gasshuku in high spirits.



I would like to thank to all of the participants for their presence and especially to Watabe sensei, Kitta sensei and Kariya sensei for coming all the way to Spain and show us first hand different aspects of the Japanese culture, and to Pascal sensei because beside showing us new interesting things related to the usage of the weapons in SMR, he managed to dedicate time to the shodo students in a couple of formal classes which I know made them extremely happy.

We all hope that this experience can be repeated in the future.

Vicente Borondo