

## EJF SUMMER GASSHUKU 2016. EL COLLELL (Catalunya, SPAIN)

The past 30th of July, until the 6th of August, we had the pleasure of bringing the traditional summer Gasshuku for the first time to catalan lands. The seminar took place in El Collel, a beautiful site located between Banyoles and Olot, surrounded by the typical scenery of Girona. Around a 100 people participated in the event, amongst them instructors and students from diverse european nationalities such as Spain, France, Germany, Switzerland, Portugal, Czech Republic, Finland, Russia and even visitants from Australia, Canada and United States.



The gasshuku was lead by the president of the European Jo-Do Federation and Menkyo Kaiden Pascal Krieger sensei, accompanied by the official professors of the EJF. *Nana korobi ya oki* (fall eight times and stand up eight) was the motto of the gasshuku.

The sensei were summoned the 30th of July to perform the professor training. The next day, they followed up with the group leader session. The participants arrived that same day, who, after the initial contact and room assignment, began settling and started preparing for the work they would have to carry out on the days to come. That afternoon during the second group leader session, a storm forced the participants, who were training at the moment, to take shelter in their rooms. After dining, the storm having receded, Pascal sensei took the role of master of ceremonies for a brief introduction to each of the groups participating in the meeting.



An so, almost without realizing it, the 1st of august came, the first day in which we would follow the regular seminar schedule: at 6:45 am the participants would appear on the football field, where all training would take place from that moment onwards. That first day, the attendants were divided in two groups; the ones that had not yet finished Omote, who would train kihon tandoku under the tutelage of Pascal sensei, and the rest which also practiced kihon tandoku under Danielle sensei. After an hour long session, we had to wait until 8:00 am for the dining room to open for breakfast. At 9:00, after breakfast and with renewed strength, we headed to the kamiza room, as we would on the next days. There, following the traditional salutation, we attended various expositions, such as the one offered by Pascal sensei regarding the formation and beginning of the European Jodo Federation, and the one from Vicente Borondo sensei, which taught us the meaning behind each of the components forming the Kamiza.



Afterwards, we practiced kihon sotai together for the rest of the morning, stopping after each of the exercises for the corresponding corrections. The senpai placed great emphasis on the fact that we should retain a single detail of each movement so that we could properly work on it.

At 13:00, we had lunch again in the big dining room that we had at our disposal. After eating, the participants had a small break time until 15:30, when the afternoon training would start, with a planned duration of 3 hours, equal to the morning session. That first day would settle the routine to follow the rest of the days; the participants were divided into 3 groups, those who had not yet finished Chudan, those that were progressing through Kage and the third, formed by the Senpai and advanced students. Once distributed we began with kata work, starting at the bottom and working each of them in depth, incorporating complementary exercises when needed and always taking into account the idea of retaining a single detail of each exercise in order to achieve a deep and improved learning. That work routine became a constant that could repeat during the rest of the seminar, as would the kenjutsu and tanjo practice, done the last half hour of each session.



The dinner was scheduled for 20:00, again repeated from the first to the last day. After dining and resting for a while, there would always be some programmed activity, such as the shodo demonstration that Pascal sensei delighted us with or the conference about the concept of liberty that Michael Novovich sensei gave us.

Wednesday, 3rd of August was the cultural day. Some of the participants decided to rest that day, while the others took the opportunity to do some tourism. These last group had the option to sign up for a visit to the Dali Theater-Museum in Figueres, followed by a tour through the old town of Girona, finishing with lunch in a terrace on a restaurant of the same town. That same afternoon we enjoyed a visit from two traditional catalan Falcons groups ([falconsdecastellcir.wordpress.com](http://falconsdecastellcir.wordpress.com)) who performed an impressive show of human figures.



Thursday morning, after the traditional salutation, Pascal sensei gave traditional certifications. Several professors were promoted: Yves Galley, Jean Claude Hamel and Michael Söderkvist receive the Go-mokuroku and Helga Wurth and Maria Rosa Valluzzi the Sho-mokuroku. It is noteworthy mentioning that this Gasshuku has been special for the Spanish group. Pascal Krieger sensei and Taisuke Watabe sensei Seiryukai Sandaime Kaicho Shihan, both Menkyo Kaiden of Shinto Muso Ryu Jo-Do have given Vicente Borondo sensei the title of Menkyo Kaiden. In addition, José Luís and Fernando have been officially recognized as Oku Iri in the school.

After a week of training, Friday 5th of August the exams of kyu and dan took place under the afternoon sun. All the participants of the Spanish group were successful in their tests, we congratulate them. Once the exams finished, the traditional enbu took place in the upper part of the compound, in the outdoors. After a brief rest, we receive a visit from a group of practitioners of traditional european swordsmanship (Associació Catalana d'Esgrima Antiga), which for half an hour showed us their skills with both the longsword and the rapier, and gladly stayed afterwards to answer our inquiries.



The day finished with a barbecue beside the pool. At the end of the dinner, the certificates were given to the participants that had successfully passed their exam. The next day, Saturday, we all began our journeys back home in the morning, some by themselves, others in the bus.



Written by Marc Serra and Aimar Rodriguez