

## **Belgium Special March events**

As you may know, starting from 2016 and, more formally, from the beginning of 2017, a small Jodo group has been established in the Brussels area (Belgium) practicing regularly twice per week.

But last March has been a special month for the group:

First, on March 21<sup>st</sup> and 22<sup>nd</sup>, thanks to the kind visit of Lorenzo Trainelli *sensei*, we have been glad to swap the weekly training sessions with the first -although unofficial- SMR Jodo seminar in Belgium! The full set of practitioners from the newborn international Belgian group attended the first class: Juan Carlos and Jose Maria from Spain, Franco from Italy, Alan from Slovakia, and finally (at least one!) Edouard from Belgium. Lorenzo wisely managed the short time (just 1.5 h) to go through the basics of the *ryu*, ranging from *suburi* to *uchi-komi* exercises and eventually focusing the work on the first-half set of *kihon tandoku*. Participants had the chance to learn and review several details following Lorenzo's stepwise approach. The following day the training continued, but this time Lorenzo gave a special class for the instructors: in this way, we had also the first SMR Jodo instructors' seminar in Belgium! After the practice, we finalized the seminar with a tasting session of Belgian beers.

Thanks to everyone for the participation and especially Lorenzo for his patience and time.



Second, on the 31<sup>st</sup> Franco, Juan Carlos and Javier (who just arrived from Madrid) travelled to Amsterdam for joining the Friday's evening class at Fred Quant *sensei's* dojo. It was not the first time that we (Franco and Juan Carlos) were there. We would like to thank Fred *sensei* and all the components of his group for the warm welcome we always had there and, of course, for all the knowledge they share with us.

Finally, the next day the three of us went to Kees Bruggink *sensei's* dojo for practicing during Saturday morning and afternoon. We would like also to thank Kees *sensei*, his wife Wil and his group because they always make us feeling as if we were at home. Thanks for all the knowledge you share with us.

We would like also to take the opportunity to inform that the Belgium group will continue practicing regularly up to this summer. After that, sadly, we will not be able to continue practicing in Belgium as Juan Carlos will come back to Spain in July and Franco to Italy in October. It has been an incredible experience and, at the same time, not a trivial one since starting a new group in a foreign country where you are not fully aware of rules and customs and where it is hard to find a place for practice is not easy at all.

We would like to finish thanking for all the support we have been receiving from the very beginning, starting with our teachers Maria Rosa Valluzzi *sensei* and Vicente Borondo *sensei* and later on by all the EJF teachers, especially from Kees Bruggink *sensei* that allowed us to practice in his *dojo* several times during this year and finally Fred Quant *sensei*, who kindly accepted to be the group reference and who has been always keen in supporting us.



Thanks to all the European SMR Judo community: we hope to see all of you in the practice field soon!

Greetings from Brussels,  
Franco and Juan Carlos