

VIII Guadarrama gasshuku 2015

Between the 29th of April and the 3rd of May took place the VIII edition of our traditional jo gasshuku in the small town of Guadarrama, near Madrid with a total participation of some 30 people who came from different European countries (Holland, Switzerland, Hungary, Portugal, France and Japan) as well as from different regions within Spain.

Again and for the third time we were pleased to have Watabe Taisuke shihan and Kitta Masami shihan (both Menkyo kaiden from Nishioka shihan) who came accompanied by Kariya-san, who lives in Okinawa.



The Japanese trio arrived on Saturday night and from the very next morning until Tuesday evening we had the occasion of training intensively in our dojo in Madrid (dojo Tai itsu kan) along with some of the participants who came during those previous days: Kees and Will from Holland, Helga from Austria, Joao from Portugal and Didac from Barcelona as well as some members from the group in Madrid. Actually it was as if we had another seminar due to the amount of hours that we trained and the quality of the teaching.

On Wednesday morning we departed for the nearby mountains of Guadarrama where we arrived at noon with an excellent weather. We had lunch, a little siesta and then the gasshuku itself started.

Training started every day at 9.30 after breakfast and lasted till 1pm, we had lunch at 1.30pm and at 4pm we were again out in the field to continue till 7.30 in the evening. Dinner was at 8pm and after every day we had something: on Wednesday a small theory class for those holders of traditional certifications, on Thursday presentations and questions to the masters and on Friday and Saturday night we could watch some jo-do videos.

On this occasion Watabe shihan chose to concentrate on small details in every kata and tried to take the uchidachi roll for each one of the participants so they could feel the techniques first hand.

Every session started with suburis and uchikomi followed by explanations on a couple of kihon movements that were practised in tandoku dosa right after. Besides we had a chance to perform all the kihon in sotai dosa as well. The rest of each session was dedicated to kata keiko.



As we progressed in the different series of kata people grouped in their correspondent level and everyone who had permission from his/her teacher was shown new stuff. And then on the last hour of Sunday morning practise the sempai took the bokken and did as uchidachi for the rest, giving them the opportunity of reviewing what was learnt.

Apart from all this we were lucky with the weather and except for a couple of moments in which we actually had a few rain drops (which were well received), we enjoyed a very nice temperature that allowed us to train outdoors and barefooted. Some even got a bit more than tanned...



On top of all this we have to mention the quality of the food, always well washed with a free bar that included beer and Rioja wine that gave non Spanish the chance to taste and get an idea of the variety of the Mediterranean cooking.

I think everybody enjoyed this gasshuku and took a lot of homework to practise back home with them. We hope we can repeat this again next year.

Vicente Borondo