

Christina Gutz

Wado Pentecost Training Course 2011 in Berlin

Budo – a way of life

More than 100 participants met at the traditional Wado Pentecost training course 2011 in Berlin. The course was led by Shuzo Imai, 8. Dan, Takamasa Arakawa, 6. Dan, JKF Wadokai Japan and Christina Gutz, 5. Dan.

The training

The training course reflected the whole variety of Wado: Kihon, Kata and Kata-Bunkai, Idori, Kihon Kumite, Ohyo Kumite, self-defence, Tanto Dori and Tachi Dori were taught.

The training consistently covered principles of Budo such as Chushin Tadasu (proper body posture), Kansetsu (joint blocking), Kuzushi (balance breaking), Tai Otoshi (body dropping), Irimi (to carry one's own energy forward to the attacker) and Tai Sabaki (evasive movements) were consistently trained.

With examples from Kihon Kumite 6 and 7, Takamasa Arakawa placed emphasis on the need for cooperation between partners, who should confide in and connect with each other, giving rise to harmony between partners (Wa): At best, attacker and defender become a solid unit. That is why finding the correct distance between partners is more important than sticking rigidly to certain steps.

With regards to self-defence against knife attacks, Christina Gutz demonstrated that little evasive movements along with Wa-Uke can be the starting point of several effective self-defence strategies. Takamasa Arakawa took up the idea and shared a variety of additional techniques. Both trainers emphasized that the Budo-principles mentioned previously can also be used in self-defense.

The highlight of the training course was Shuzo Imai's class on Tachi Dori. He demonstrated three possibilities of attack and defence, which trace back directly to Hironori Otsuka (1892 – 1982), the founder of the Wado Ryu. In doing so, Shuzo Imai clearly showed an understanding of the principles of the Wado in general and more particularly, the relation between Kihon Kumite, Tanto Dori and Tachi Dori.

Budo – a way of life

During the training course for trainers and examiners, Takamasa Arakawa reported new developments in Karate in Japan:

In Japan, Karate is a school subject and there are many possibilities to learn Karate at university too. However, often only Competition Karate is taught and many Japanese students stop practising Karate in adulthood.

Currently, efforts are being made to reintroduce Budo to the Karate education. Karate has the most members of all Budo types. Karate is increasingly offered to elderly people and it turns out that they take much pleasure from it. Competitions for people over 40 have existed for about ten years. The competitions are open to all styles and approved by the Japanese Ministry of Culture. Generally this approach is successful. Elderly people also visit the school of Takamasa Arakawa. Therefore, in addition to Budo, the health benefits of Karate are gaining importance for trainers and students too. Takamasa Arakawa assured us that once he is back in Japan, he will talk and write about the Berliner Wado Pentecost training course, saying that many elderly people practise Karate with joy and success in Europe.

Dan Exam

The Dan Exam was passed by: Mathias Gäbel (5. Dan), Frank Steffen (4. Dan), László Künsztler (2. Dan), Daniel Steffen (2. Dan), Ildiko Czigány (1. Dan) and Marion Thanner (1. Dan).

Wado Pentecost Training Course 2012

Next year there will be another Wado Pentecost training course. We invite all Karateka to come to Berlin to join the training!