

THE GUIDE BOOK OF NOMADOJO

野間道場のしおり



Moriji Mochida

KODANSHA KENDO CLUB
NOMADOJO DOKOKAI

Before the war, there were four civilian dojos called "the four great dojos of the eastern capital (Tokyo)." These were: Sasaburo Takano's Meishinkan which taught the Onoha Ittoryu style; Hakudo Nakayama's Yushinkan which taught the Shinto Munenryu style at the Shudo Institute; the Kodogikai, founded by Saburo Ishii, and the Noma Dojo, established by the well known kendoist and founder of Kodansha Publishers, Ltd., Seiji Noma. From the standpoints of both the scale and content of their kendo teaching, they were all well deserving of being named one of the "four great dojos," and many famous kendoists trained at there.

Pre-war kendo, however, still retained the strong influence of different schools and styles, and seldom would kendoists of different styles have the opportunity to practice with each other. It was in this atmosphere, then, that the Noma Dojo opened its doors widely offering kendoists a place to gather from all regions of the country.

From "The Noma Dojo Story" by Mitunori Harazono, published by Kodansha.

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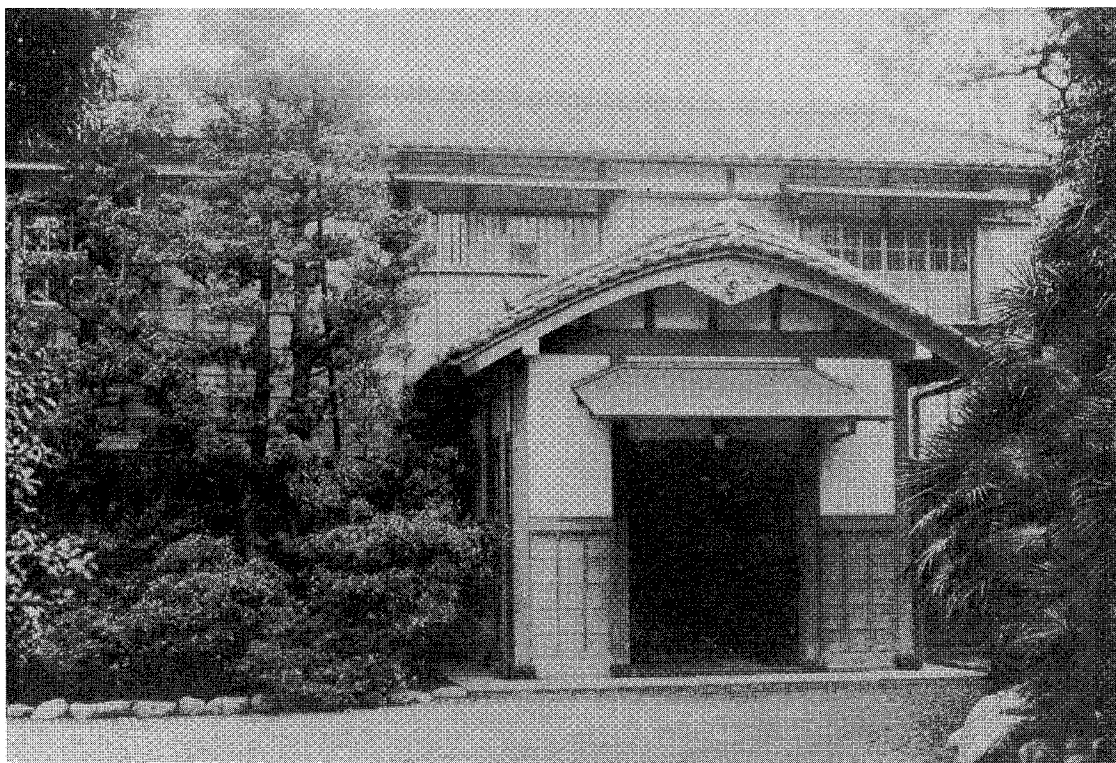
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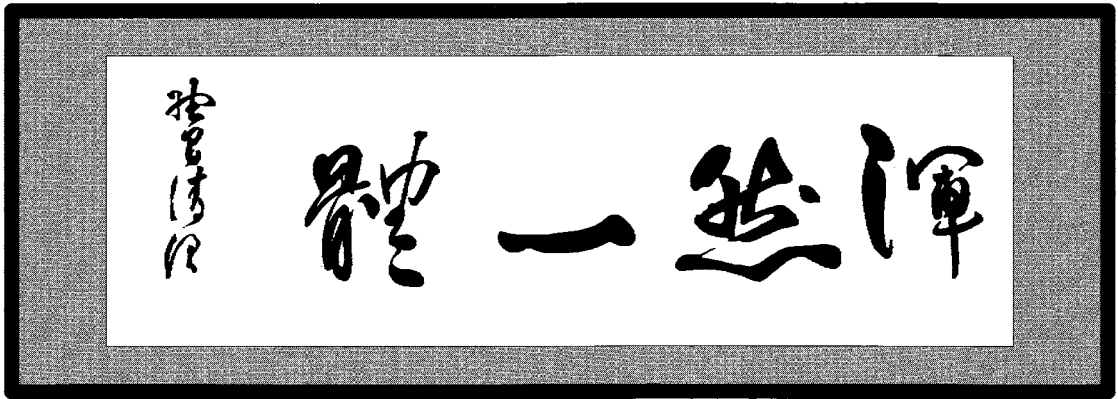
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KODANSHA
NOMA DOJO



NOMA DOJO



KONZEN ITTAI

渾然一體

(The Unified Entity)

This saying constitutes one of Kodansha's three great corporate mottos. As written in Seiji Noma's memoirs, "As each part becomes complete in and of itself, one's entire body works in accordance with the heart without distinction in order to achieve the greater good, everything cooperates as one, only then does one's sword achieve greatness. Think with the mind, move with the arms and feet, without admitting a hair's breadth, then all becomes united and the divine sword is born."

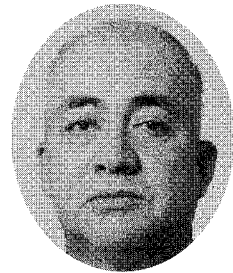
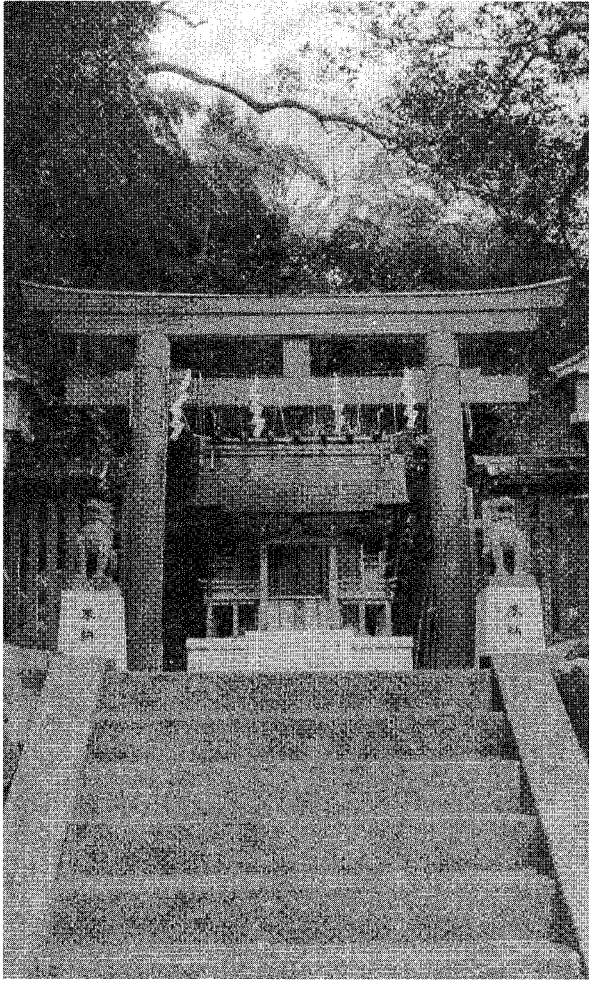


KENTOKU SEISEI

劍徳正世

(The virtue of the sword will rectify the world.)

This was Mochida Sensei's favorite saying. According to Chutarō Ogawa Sensei, the meaning can be rendered as follows: "The virtue of the sword rectifies the world. Not only does it rectify oneself, it rectifies society. If everyone is correct, then there will be no strife. Wars will be eliminated and the world will be at peace. Mochida Sensei was a living example of this principle. Kendo in the twenty-first century should make achieving this its goal."



THE GOKOKU JINJA

The shrine at the Noma Dojo

The Gokoku Jinja [Defence of the Fatherland Shrine] originally stood by a small waterfall in the noted garden of Seiji Noma, the founder of Kodansha. The Noma villa and its extensive garden were situated at the rear of the then new Kodansha headquarters, built in 1934.

Records show that the land utilised by the garden and the villa was previously owned by Akiyoshi Yamada, an earl and former justice minister of the Meiji period (1868-1912). The records also tell us that Lord Yamada was accorded the rare honour of by a visit to his residence from the Emperor Meiji. Consequently, in the Shinto faith, the location is considered blessed. To mark this, the establishment of a shrine was proposed in the early 1930s. The shrine itself, named Gokoku Jinja -- it is near the much older Gokokuji Temple -- was deified on November 3, 1934 and is associated with the god worshipped at the Meiji Shrine.

Unfortunately, most of the land around the Noma villa, including the garden, was expropriated for the route of the No. 5 Expressway in the 1960s. The shrine was therefore moved a short distance to its present, arguably equally fitting, location by the entrance to the Noma Dojo.

Shoichi Noma

"OPEN TO THE WORLD"

Sawako Noma
President and CEO of Kodansha Ltd.



Many decades have passed since the Noma Dojo was built on the then forested, Otowa hill-side site in 1925. Over those decades, the Noma Dojo has served as both a "home" and training hall for Kodansha employees who practiced morning and night; and ate, bathed and even slept under its wooden eaves. Though it no longer serves as a dormitory, the Dojo, now registered as a heritage building is still in daily use. Visitors come from far and wide to experience its special atmosphere and to practice with some of the strongest fencers in Tokyo. Stories from the Dojo's history, of its personalities, incidents and traditions are legion.

The Noma Dojo was founded by my grandfather, Seiji Noma, who was himself a very dedicated fencer. The philosophy of budo [the martial way] was very important to him, as this excerpt from his autobiography, "Watashi no hansei" [The Nine Magazines of Kodansha] reveals.

"At the heart of the study of budo there is the desire for peace. A prerequisite for peace is the idea of cooperation with others and cooperation, or movement in harmony with the heavens. This great harmony composes the virtuousness within 'bu'...It becomes 'splendid (or true) sword' only after each part is completed in turn, each working in unison to forge 'one mind, one sword', which creates the harmony of the whole... Teaching the Way of the Sword (kendo) does not begin and end with the sword alone but ...'Mastery of the Way of the Sword leads to Truth and Truth forges the man'."

Seiji Noma made the practice of kendo a quest; a quest for greater harmony through the study of the way of the sword and to explain and promote the virtuousness of "bu" and its continuing relevance to society. He was a man of principal. I quote again from his book.

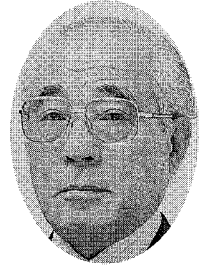
"The virtuousness within 'bu' assumes the glaive will remain sheathed as required in the seven tenets of the Agsa-den (shunju-sashiden). These tenets are: To avoid violence, to stop soldiering, to study, to work hard, to be content, to preach the shunju-sashiden and to defend the shunju-sashiden."

In following these tenets, I believe Seiji Noma was striving to create harmony through the practice of kendo. The Noma Dojo, where all were welcome, was a means to this end. (Even in the 1930s, fencers from overseas were visiting the Dojo. One of whom, Gordon Warner co-wrote a long-selling book on kendo.) Seiji Noma died in 1938 as the clouds of war were forming. Then my father, Shoichi Noma, decided to close the Dojo as the war took its toll on Japan and, alas, the members of the Dojo themselves.

Although some kendo was practiced fairly soon after the end of the Pacific War, it was not until 1962 that Shoichi Noma decided to reopen the Dojo to fencers from outside Kodansha. It was not long before it was a hive of activity under the guidance of Moriji Mochida sensei (10th dan), Ukichi Sato sensei (9th dan) and Sinsuke Masuda sensei (9th dan). Recently the Dojo membership has surpassed 400, thanks to the strength of the Noma Dojo Dokokai and the Kodansha Kendo Club. Foreign visitors to the Dojo have included fencers from Britain, the Czech Republic, Germany, Malaysia, Switzerland and the United States. Indeed, the reputation of the Noma Dojo is known today among martial artists around the world. I am delighted about this. By practicing together, sporting links as well as friendships are formed between people from different nations at the individual level. Once made, these links and friendships can only grow.

My father established links for cross-cultural exchange between Japan and other countries in tandem with his business activities. He sought to bring the outside world to the people of Japan, and also to present Japan to the people of the world through Kodansha's publications. His motto was "Kodansha open to the world." I am convinced that this philosophy is close to what Seiji Noma meant by "The great harmony of the world." Today the Noma Dojo is "open to the world." I invite fencers with true minds to visit the Dojo and to practice there in the spirit in which it was founded.

Toshiyuki Hattori
Kendo hanshi
National School Kendo Federation Vice-Chairman
and former Senior Honorary Advisor, Kodansha Ltd.



There is an adage in kendo lore which goes, "Mastery of the Way of the Sword (kendo) leads to Truth and Truth forges the man."

This has been the philosophic and ethical basis of kendo practice at the Noma Dojo since its founding in the early years of the twentieth century. The philosophy was first embraced by Seiji Noma, founder of Kodansha Ltd and the Noma Dojo. Today his memory is honoured in the daily clash of shinai on shinai (or men!) that resonates from the beautiful old dojo in Otowa.

Seiji Noma was a very successful publisher who launched his first magazine in 1909. By 1911 he had founded Kodansha Ltd. Since that time the names of Noma and Kodansha have been synonymous with kendo in Tokyo and, indeed, throughout Japan.

From its earliest days, the Noma Dojo was open to all. This was rare in Japan at that time because kendo was riven by factions and inter-dojō rivalry. But Seiji Noma, seeking only the furtherance of kendo itself, opened his dojo to anyone who wished to practice.

With the arrival of Moriji Mochida as resident master-teacher, the fame and status of the dojo increased steadily. The Noma family's commitment to kendo was immense and, in 1934, Hisashi Noma, Seiji's son, won the prestigious Emperor's Cup. A few years later, in 1940, Master Sinsuke Masuda and Kodansha employee Masafusa Mochizuki attained victories in their respective classes at the All Japan Championship. Mr Mochizuki, Torao Mori, myself and others won countless team and individual competitions in the Kanto [Tokyo] area. We were well known for our bravado! Truly, this period was a "Golden Age" of the Noma Dojo and I am very proud to be associated with it.

After the Pacific War (1941-45), Japan was occupied by Allied forces from 1945-52. Kendo and all other martial arts were prohibited throughout these years on the orders of Allied General Headquarters (GHQ). Not surprisingly, kendo went into serious decline.

GHQ rescinded its ban on kendo and the other martial arts in the late 1940s, and Kodansha employees resumed occasional practice at the dojo. In the autumn of 1962, however, regular, morning kendo sessions were restarted under Mr Mochida by then Kodansha president, Shoichi Noma. As before, practice at the Dojo was open to all. The move proved a resounding success and members new and old flooded to the Dojo. And so the tradition has continued to this day. Takeo Morishima (hanshi) is the current master. The intense morning sessions run from seven to eight a.m., seven days a week as the keen members of the Noma Dokokai come from all over Tokyo to practice.

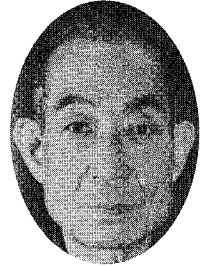
Recently, interest in kendo among young people has risen. This trend should be encouraged for kendo offers much in terms of physical and mental benefits to both young and old. The old adage about kendo "forging the man" rings true even today.

I sincerely hope that the succession of great teachers at the Noma Dojo will continue, and that kendo will continue its development in Japan and grow in popularity around the world. Enjoy your kendo!

A SHORT HISTORY OF THE NOMA DOJO

[Written in 1975]

Masafusa Mochizuki, former Master, Noma Dojo



The Noma dojo was established in 1925 by Kodansha's founding president Seiji Noma. A kendo enthusiast since his schooldays, Seiji Noma said that "the martial arts reflect the road of life." I firmly believe this is so. In kendo, we face an opponent armed with a "sword" three shaku [approx. 99cm] in length.

Our actions in the dojo are a mirror of our true selves; they reveal our personality, our faith and our moral character.

In addition, the practice of kendo requires awareness of religious wisdom or "Chi", bravery or "Yu" and a mind of love or "Jin". Consequently, therefore, I think that all facets of our society are represented in kendo. The philosophy of the Noma Dojo and its outlook on the martial arts is that "kendo reflects all of life." In training we promote the combination of sword skills and the growth of the individual.

The history of the Noma Dojo is a long and full one. Here I can only offer a condensed account of key persons and events. Next to Kodansha's offices in Otowa is a large police station which has a kendo dojo. This was also the case back in the 1920s. Hisashi Noma, the son of Seiji Noma, began serious kendo practice with the police at the age of fifteen in 1923, eventually becoming a member of the Yushinkan. Noma Sr. asked Abe Giichi to teach his son, and that same year he also invited Sinsuke Masuda and Tetsuzo Wasada to join the newly founded Kodansha Kendo Club. A small dojo was constructed in the grounds of the Noma home in the autumn of that year.

At that time, kendo practice was officially held from four to five p.m., mainly for the boy employees [ie, those who joined the company at age fifteen] as a health and fitness activity. However, because Seiji Noma came to the Dojo even when he was very busy, and since he took a great interest in the employees' practice and offered criticism and advice, practice became increasingly serious and the participants increasingly skilled.

In 1927 Moriji Mochida organised the first national kendo meet . Then in August 1930, in the presence of the Emperor of Japan, he won the Emperor's Cup. At the time, Mochida was teaching kendo at a dojo sponsored by the Governor-General of Korea. After his victory, Seiji Noma invited him to become resident teacher at the Noma Dojo, making him a Kodansha employee in the process. After Mochida arrived at Kodansha, requests to practice and take lessons at the Dojo came from all over the country. To meet this demand, extra evening practice sessions were started. The Dojo was also extended in November that year.

In addition to Mochida, other senior teachers at the morning sessions were Sinsuke Masuda, Sanzaburo Yagi, Tomonori Oono, Fukutaro Kuwata and Goichi Oohata. Moreover, the number of people with the rank of kyoshi [senior licensed teacher] reached fifty-four! In addition, there were non-Kodansha employees, both men and women who practiced regularly, as well as a children's club. Membership soon rose to over one hundred and the Dojo flourished.

In November 1933 the Dojo was extended to its present size. The dimensions of the Dojo are 9 x 28 m. This is very large indeed for a private dojo. In fact, the Noma Dojo had become one of the most splendid in Japan. After asageiko (morning practice), the fencers took a bath, chatted and then went off to their offices around Tokyo feeling refreshed after a breakfast of rice porridge and miso soup from the nearby Kodansha kitchens.

The leading fencers of the day were regular visitors to the Noma Dojo. The standard of kendo was extremely high. With Noma Hisashi as taisho or No. 1, Torao Mori as chuken or No. 2 and Chuji Tsuchida as sempo or No. 3, the Kodansha team tasted its first victory in the Kodo Gikai Tournament in June 1927. This was just four years after the opening of the Dojo. Kodansha went on to win this tournament again in 1933, 1936 and 1939.

One of the Dojo's finest hours came in May 1934. Hisashi Noma, representing Tokyo Prefecture in a two-day national open tournament, won a superb victory in the presence of the Emperor at the Imperial Palace. He was just 26 years old. This success firmly established Kodansha's kendo reputation.

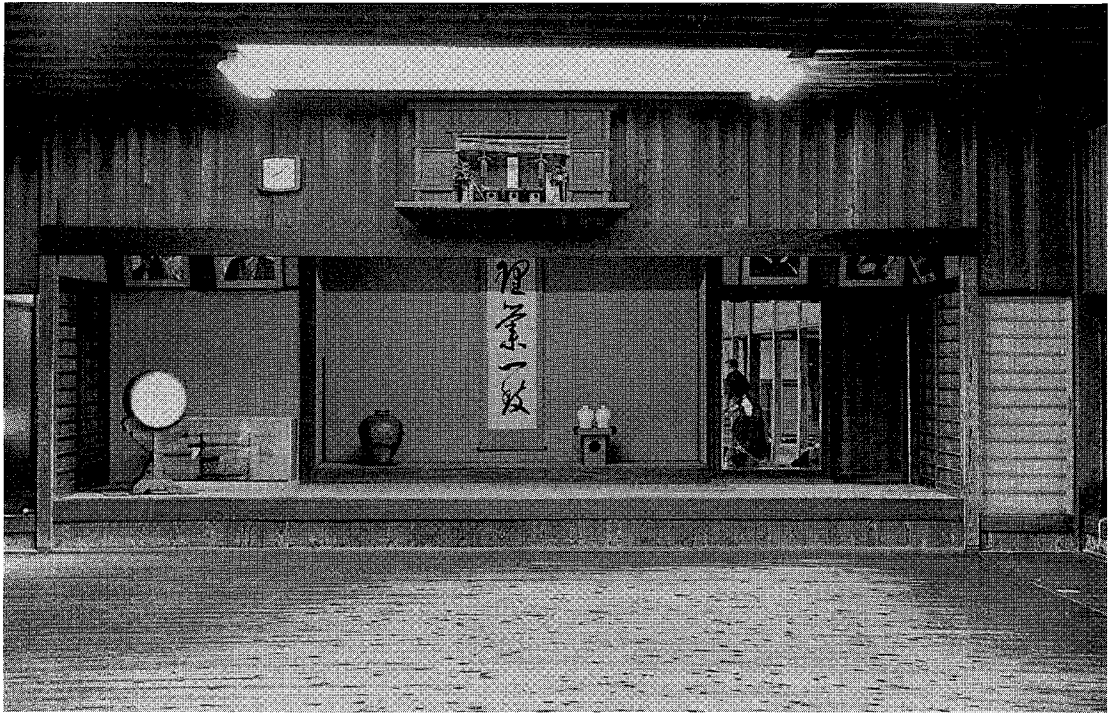
Kodansha enjoyed success in many of the other major competitions of the period, such as the All Japan Government and Business championships of 1937 and 1939. This is a remarkable record by any standard. Alas, the 1939 victories were without Hisashi Noma who had died aged only 30 the year before. His death was a huge blow to the Noma Dojo and to Kodansha. That the Kodansha team were still victorious without him shows the tremendous depth of kendo talent in the Company in those years. The Dojo records corroborate this. Among the Kodansha employees in March 1940, four were qualified at 5th dan, thirty-three at 4th dan, 21 at 3rd dan, thirty-two at 2nd dan and 106 at 1st dan. In addition, nineteen were qualified as renshi [licensed teacher]: Teiji Fueki, Masami Kuroiwa, Tadayoshi Haishi, Toshihiko Kurihara, Masao Abe, Kotaro Suwa, Masao Machida, Senbei Ueda, Ushimatsu Ogawa, Toshiyuki Hattori, Kinsaku Koike, Tomekitchi Kakinuma, Sei Nagaoka, Masafusa Mochizuki, Tokujiro Toi, Hashitatsu Otomo, Takeo Nagai, Makoto Shimizu and Hideo Ote.

Also in 1940, in June, a tournament was held in the presence of the Emperor to celebrate the end of 2600 years of Imperial rule. Sinsuke Masuda, a Noma Dojo teacher, took part as a seeded competitor, and Kodansha employee, Masafusa Mochizuki entered the field as a representative of Tokyo Prefecture. Each won through to the final. The match between master and pupil brought great honour to both competitors and, of course, to the Noma Dojo. Following this triumph, the Dojo was bathed in glory and its status was praised throughout the country! Unfortunately neither Seiji nor Hisashi Noma witnessed this triumph. At the helm of the company that year was Noma Sae, the widow of Seiji Noma, who continued to sponsor kendo practice at the Dojo.

In late 1941, the Pacific War began. It was not long before its effects were felt because many Kodansha employees and members of the Dojo were drafted into Japan's armed forces. Practice became infrequent and then, in 1944, the sounds of shinai were silenced when practice was stopped by then president, Shoichi Noma. With the end of the war came the occupation by Allied Forces. Kendo was banned for some time by order of GHQ. It was not until 1947 that Kodansha employees were able to use the Dojo once again for kendo. (It had in fact been used to house employees whose homes had been destroyed in the war.)

The Tokyo Kendo Federation was established in May 1952. Public interest in kendo gradually returned and a few years later, in the autumn of 1962, Kodansha decided to open the Noma Dojo for morning kendo practice. Soon the sessions were running year-round supervised by Moriji Mochida. Yet again the Noma Dojo flourished.

Time, however, presses on and now such great teachers and characters as Moriji Mochida-hanshi, Shinsuke Masuda-hanshi, Ukichi Sato-hanshi, Iwao Tsurumi-hanshi, Takashi Ozawa-hanshi, Chutarō Ogawa-hanshi, Sohichiro Ono-hanshi and Yasoji Nakano-hanshi have passed away. Today the Dojo is in the capable hands of Tateo Morishima hanshi (9th dan). Fencers at the Dojo include company workers from Kodansha and elsewhere, students and children. The numbers of kyoshi and renshi are increasing and the atmosphere reminds me in many ways of the pre-war days. Open training sessions are held every morning. The Kodansha Kendo Club practices in the evening three times a week. It is gratifying that the dream of Seiji Noma lives on, three generations later.



Noma Dojo



Kendo Practice

Noma Dojo after WWII

Takemori Kaburagi

The Noma Dojo was highly active as a great dojo maintaining the highest standards in Japan from the early Showa era (1926-1988) on. Although it closed temporarily when fighting in the Pacific War (WWII) intensified, it reopened in the autumn of 1962 under the tutelage of the unparalleled kendoist and founder of modern kendo, Moriji Mochida as chief instructor, and soon regains its former status.

Under the auspices of its initial foundation, Kodansha's Noma Dojo doors are open wide to the world, so that kendoists come to train not only from metropolitan Tokyo and its environs, but other regions of Japan and various foreign countries as well. These kendoists from outside the company are thus all included in the Friends of Noma Dojo Association.

Its basic principle is to represent Kodansha's martial arts dojo, furthermore without countering the trends of the age it welcome kendoists. At present many female kendoists practice here, in addition to beginners who join in order to learn the correct way of the sword.

Noma Dojo stands under the direction of Kodansha's Kendo Department, welcomes master instructors who excel in both disciplines of pen and sword, and is managed harmoniously by various sections assigned by the company; its business office is run by a head manager and several assistant managers, there is also a dojo manager and accounting manager.

Association members include a number of people active in various fields, including: the heads of local dojos, official and civilian groups, regional kendo clubs, kendo masters from the various government agencies, and school teachers with kendo affiliations. In concert with Kodansha Publishers Ltd.'s prosperity Noma Dojo continues to operate on a solid footing.

(Representative Manager; Chairman, Friends of Noma Dojo Association)

Noma Dojo's Three Great Strengths

1. Year-round practice

Since practice time has remained fixed for many years, even those who come from long distances are able to come to practice confident about the time and place. Since even police dojos and schools don't have Sunday practice, there is no other dojo which offers practice every day.

2. A large number of Sensei

Many famous Sensei, also a large number of extremely skilled but not well known Sensei, come to practice here, even from other regions in Japan and abroad.

3. No prejudice towards school or style

Before the war, Sasaburo Takano Sensei's students were not able to practice at Hakudo Nakayama Sensei's school, but at Noma Dojo, from pre-war years to present, people from all over Japan have been able to practice together.

THE NOMA DOJO DOKOKAI

Rules and Requirements of Membership

General

Use of the Noma Dojo for members and associate members of the Noma Dojo Dokokai is made possible by the goodwill of Kodansha Ltd. Members and associate members of the Noma Dojo Dokokai shall respect the traditions and history of the Noma Dojo; the philosophy of its founder, Seiji Noma; and the legacies of the kendo sensei who have given devoted service to the Noma Dojo over the decades.

The Noma Dojo Dokokai aims to further the development and wider appreciation of kendo through traditional teaching and regular practice at the Noma Dojo, and through the association of its members.

Individuals who fail to keep to accepted levels of decorum in matters of speech, behaviour and good manners toward their fellow members will forfeit membership of the Noma Dojo Dokokai and they will not be permitted to enter the Noma Dojo.

Acquisition of membership

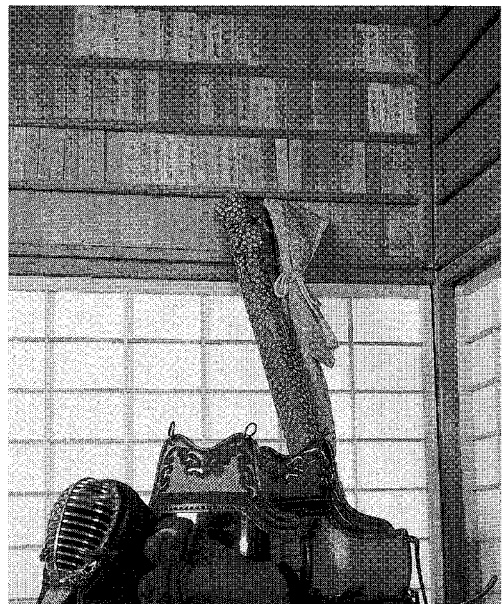
Membership is acquired solely by personal introduction from an existing member of good standing. Upon obtaining an introduction to the Noma Dojo Dokokai, the prospective member or prospective associate member must complete registration and other relevant application procedures, including the payment of the joining fee and dues, prior to commencing kendo practice.

Members who introduce a new member or associate member must attest to the new member's character and accept responsibility for the new member's conduct by signing and attaching their personal seal to the membership documents and written oath of membership.

The Noma Dojo Dokokai has the right to refuse and/or cancel an individual's membership at any time irrespective of fees paid and/or possession of completed membership documents, or length of time of membership.

Fees

1. Joining fee: 3,000 yen
2. Annual fee, Full Member: 12,000 yen;
Associate Member: 10,000 yen
3. All fees are payable in advance.



Types of Membership

1. Senior members ranked hanshi or 8th dan and above and/or members aged 88 and over are not required to pay fees in consideration of years of service and distinguished contribution to kendo and the Noma Dojo.
2. Full members including teachers ranked 7th dan and below are required to pay an annual fee of 12,000 yen.
3. Associate Members pay an annual fee of 10,000 yen or more to help with the support and upkeep of the Dojo.

Requirements for kendo practice at the Noma Dojo

All members, including member's guests, and members responsible for, or in charge of, visiting groups must sign the Guest Book at the entrance to the Dojo.

All persons taking part in a practice must wear a tare bearing their name and affiliation (ie, club name or area).

Members must show respect (ie, bow) to teachers and seniors when entering and leaving the Dojo. During practice, members are expected to behave in a polite and courteous manner to fellow members and visitors.

Smoking is not allowed inside the Noma Dojo except after practice in the designated place and only at the invitation of the senior member present.

Use of another member's equipment without said member's express permission on each occasion is prohibited.

Equipment, if kept at the Noma Dojo, must be stored neatly in its designated place. Members are also expected to keep the Noma Dojo tidy and to report any faults, damage or breakage promptly to the persons in charge.

Regular morning practice is from 7.00-8.00 a.m, Monday to Friday. (Saturday and Sunday practice or "holiday practice" also takes place.)

Members are expected to be changed and engaged in or ready for practice no later than 7.30 a.m. unless there are extenuating circumstances for late arrival.

The commencement of practice after 8.00 a.m. is not permitted.

Extended practice beyond 8.30 a.m. requires the permission of the Director of the Noma Dojo Dokokai or the Dojo Manager.

In general and unless members are notified to the contrary, practice is presumed to take place daily, including holidays, but excluding the New Year holiday period from late December to early January.

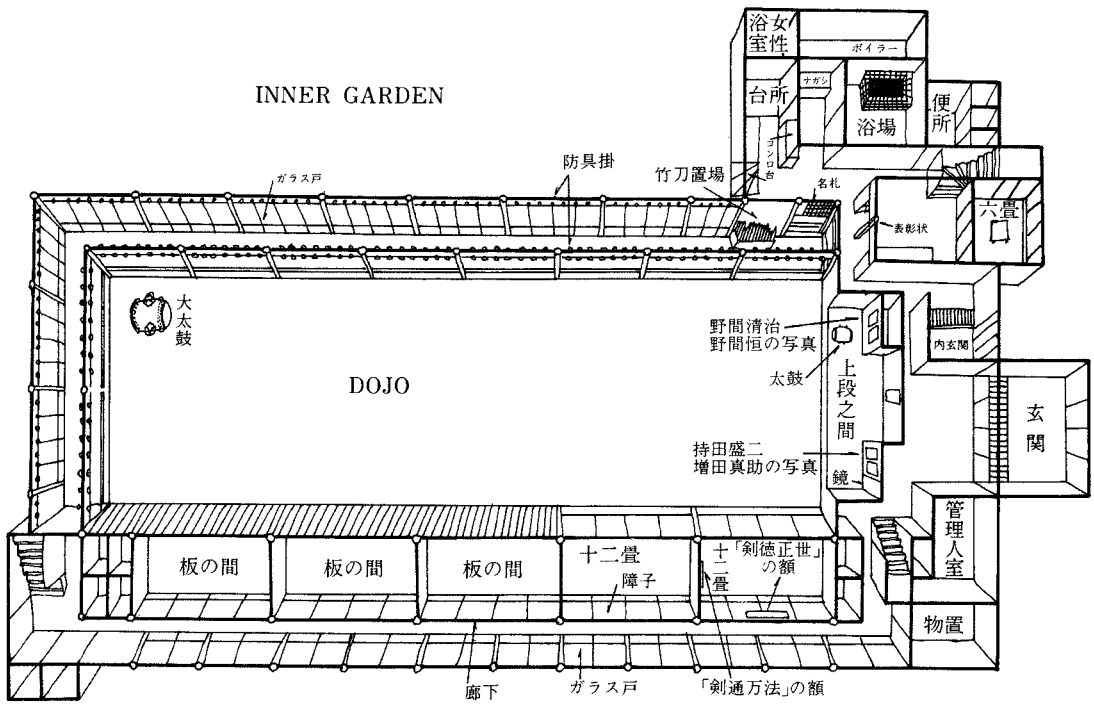
Members undertake to leave the Noma Dojo by 9.00 a.m. Kendo practice or entry into the Noma Dojo outside normal hours is not permitted.

Members travelling by car to the Dojo are requested to park in an orderly manner and to display the mandatory parking pass.

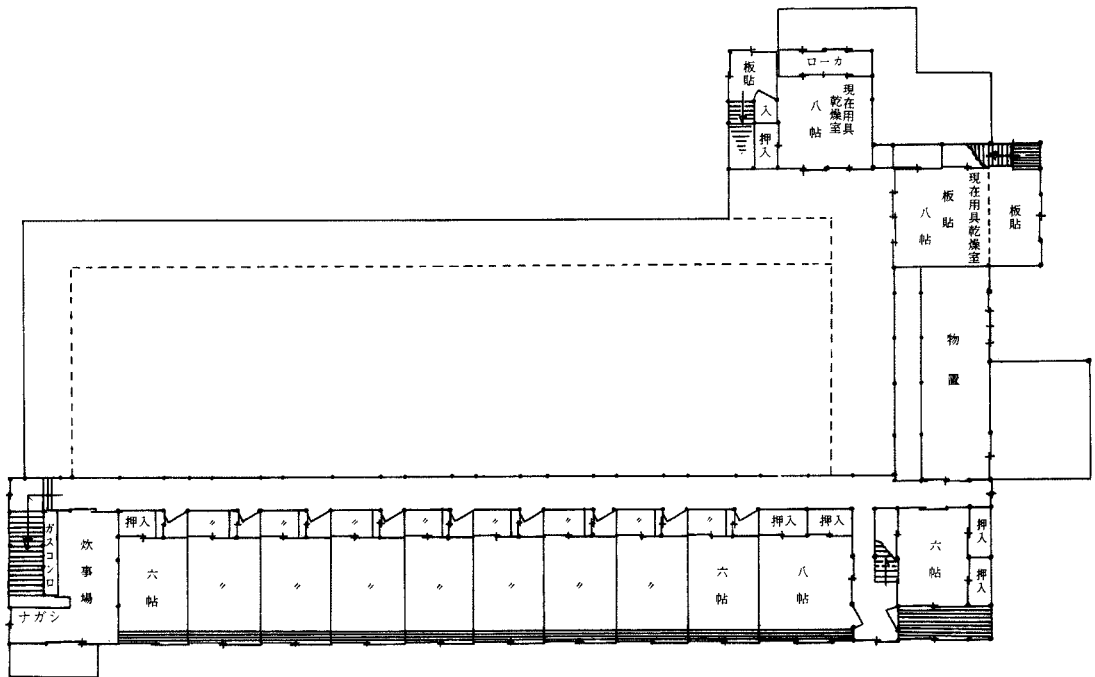
Members and Associate Members and their guests understand and agree that the directors of the Noma Dojo Dokokai, the manager of the Noma Dojo and/or his assistants, and the management of Kodansha Ltd bear no responsibility for any injury to the person, or loss or damage to property incurred while using or visiting the Noma Dojo.

Any complaints or suggestions from Members and Associate Members should be put in writing for the attention of either the Director of the Noma Dojo Dokokai or the Manager of the Noma Dojo.

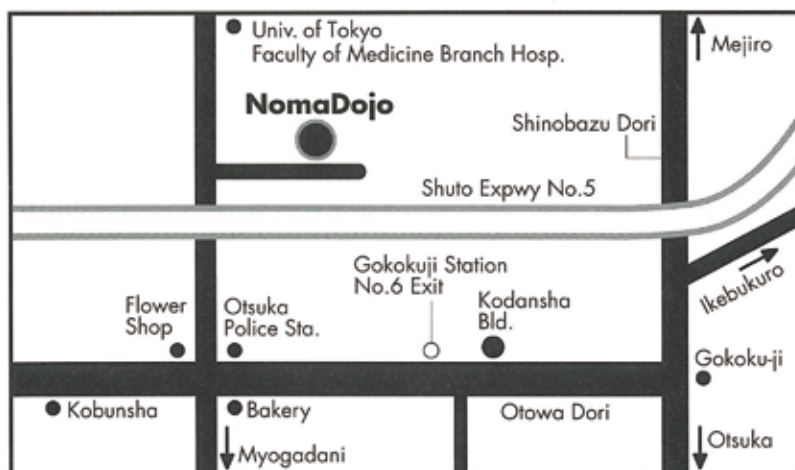
DIAGRAM OF NOMA DOJO



FIRST FLOOR DIAGRAM



SECOND FLOOR DIAGRAM



Noma Dojo: 12-21 Otowa 2-chome, Bunkyo-ku, Tokyo 112-8001

E-Mail: nomadojo@kodansha.co.jp



KODANSHA KENDO CLUB
NOMADOJO DOKOKAI

