

REPORT FROM CIBEP 2015

Children's International Budo Exchange Program (CIBEP), organized by Meiji Jingu Budojo Shiseikan, was held 22-30 March 2015 in Japan. The invitation was offered to children from ISBA. Due to organizational challenges, this time it could be accepted only by 5 children (10-13 year old) from Poland. They were: Grzegorz, Szymon, Gorm, Michał and Mateusz. Their accompanying tutor was Antoni Płoński from HARA Dojo Łódź, supported by translator Natalia Kosiak. The Polish coordinator was SOTO Dojo of Tomasz Sowiński, supported by www.fundacjawschodslonca.pl (FWS). Programme was generously financed by Shiseikan, while travel, insurance, pocket money, interpreting were paid by parents and FWS (4100€), supported by ISBA (600€) and voluntary work.

This seminar was in fact for children of 3 nationalities: 5 Polish, 5 Russian and 10 Japanese. Trainings were conducted by Araya kancho, Sasada sensei and Aoki sensei, with assistance of Takahashi sensei and Okuda san. All supported by Uematsu Jimucho, Endo sensei and Ashida san from Shiseikan Office. CIBEP also included a one-day sightseeing (Emperor Palace, Tokyo Skytree Tower, Sumida Aquarium, Japanese Sword Museum) and three-day Budo Training Camp in Atami (visiting Odawara Castle on the way). These things have shown us how the Japanese cherish their history and create the future. I was also amazed by the generosity of our hosts, who understood the needs of children. I watched with pleasure and admiration, how our Japanese hosts looked well after everyone and made sure everything was going according to plan.

In the educational process a child can be viewed like a garden, into which we seed different things. Sometimes you have to wait for the effects for several years. Sometimes the effects come from day to day. I remember the opening words to the children: "Do not overdo, but do your best." It's true this should be the attitude of mind during any activity.

I wanted to know how Japanese children behave in training and after it. Now I know that Japanese children are as innocent, sincere and joyful as ours. Just like our children, they love to laugh, move spontaneously, they love sightseeing, food and computer games. Japanese children also showed us their traditional toys and plays.

Araya Kancho has a very magnetic personality. It seems to me that, for children and adults, he is the role model of the samurai. I am glad that Araya Kancho trainings focused on what is the most important in Budo. I liked the fact that all children had to mingle with each other and practice with concentration. Then the emotional distance between them melted away. The trainings among Poles, Russians and Japanese made their cultural differences no longer important! In conclusion, I am convinced that CIBEP was both educational, relationship building and fun.

Antoni Płoński - Hara Dojo leader



Visiting Meiji Jingu



Polish, Japanese and Russians together at Shiseikan