

Campdo: The Way of Camp

By Matt Leong

Not everyone enjoys waking up at 5:30 in the morning, especially without a cup of coffee. Then again, not everyone enjoys kendo. I, on the other hand, and many others love Kendo. Despite having to wake up at 5:30, I thoroughly enjoyed Kendo camp. I would not label Kendo camp as fun. Fun is more like a trip to Disney world or some colorful amusement park. Fun is cheap; you have fun, then its over, and you gain nothing from it. Kendo camp though, unlike some cheap amusement park, is something you enjoy. At the end of the week, no matter how tired you are, you know that you spent that week constructively training yourself in the art of Kendo. Instead of riding roller coasters all day or eating cotton candy, you practice kendo throughout the day accompanied by breaks to relax and meals to fill your stomach (also showers to keep your bunkmates happy). I enjoyed the practices because of my love for kendo and the knowledge that I was improving myself. After watching 3 hours of TV, I feel like a fat blob. After a week of Kendo camp, there's no way to describe the way you feel, other than "good."

Kendo camp is a time to train your mind and body. I can absolutely say that I learnt a lot from the week. At the start of camp, I had no clue how to even put my newly acquired bogu on. After a week, I left proudly with the rank of Yon Kyu. Not only did I acquire a rank but also a better understanding of Kendo. I found Kendo to be a lot different with the aspect of bogu added, where I actually could be hit. I discovered how a shiai goes and received valuable aid from many experienced sensei, sempai, and other Kendoists. The geiko provided practice for my timing, speed, and accuracy especially

having such experienced motodachis. Also, Kendo camp is a great opportunity to meet other people, all who share the same interest of Kendo. Even after the last practice of the day, I still continued to learn by hearing more advanced people, of whom there were many, talk of how “he or she has good kendo” and other factors of Kendo. Kendo camp greatly sharpened my Kendo skills and myself.