



4/23/2017

Dear AUSKF Kenshi:

Thank you very much for all of your continued efforts and dedication to kendo. We have received questions from our membership as to the basis for our recent change in our membership and promotion fee structure, and would like to take this opportunity to provide the information we assessed in reaching this decision.

First and foremost, it was 2003 when we last changed the membership fees for AUSKF (\$36 to \$40 to adult). For the last 14 years, the general cost of living has increased by more than 30%. Moreover, AUSKF has endeavored to create additional programs, seminars, tournaments and other opportunities that benefit the kenshi in the United States. For example, AUSKF Education Committee has created new educational programs that benefit greater segments of our membership, such as an Adult/Mudansha Seminar, a Women's Seminar, the Mentor Program, Team USA Giving Back Program and other new programs. Our Competition Committee has successfully implemented a new annual Junior Open National Championships in order to invest in our future youth kenshi. We have also started sending a youth team to the All Japan Dojo Renmei tournament in summer. Our Promotion Committee has expanded the opportunities to take promotional exams, provided promotion seminars, and created new high-ranking senseis to lead USA into the next generation. Our Finance Committee has put together an online registration system, currently being used by four federations, which has automated majority of mundane tasks for dojo leaders and federation representatives. Lastly, our men's Team USA has placed in the Top 3 in the World Kendo Championships every time since 2003, an amazing feat considering that our team is made up completely of amateur kenshi and that the level of competition has been increasing over time.

All of these activities and achievements have resulted in additional costs to our federation. These costs include the costs of operating these programs and events, the costs of transportation, insurance, gym rentals, and other costs - all of which have risen since 2003 when the membership fees were last changed. We view these costs as an investment into our kenshi and in the future success of kendo in the United States. The fee increase of \$20 for adults, or, \$1.67 per month, will help offset these rising costs and support all the programs and initiatives mentioned above.

Regarding the promotional fees, they had remained the same for 20 years since 1997. We have compared our fee structure to that currently in place in Japan and other countries. As a result of this study, we felt that it is time to raise the fees to the levels where they are roughly consistent with those of Japan. In addition to the increase in costs, we have directed the Board of Directors to make their best efforts to reassess their budgets and make necessary reductions, which they have done as well. Together, these efforts will help ensure the success of our federation for many years to come.

AUSKF is committed to continuing to provide innovative, exciting kendo events and opportunities for our members. I greatly appreciate your continued support as we all work hard to improve kendo in the United States.

Sincerely,

Yoshiteru Tagawa
President, AUSKF