

## **Western Area Technical Grading Assessment weekend**

**May 22<sup>nd</sup>/23<sup>rd</sup>, Banwell School Somerset.**

**During this last weekend, I had the pleasure of attending the above course that was conducted by Dave Horton-Jones, the BJA National Technical Director. The course was attended by 15 members of the Western Area, who were attempting to move up a grade by completing the two-day intensive course. Also in attendance was our own Director of Examiners, Alan Kimber, who played an active role on the mat.**

**The day began at 0900hrs on Saturday with DHJ giving a brief on what was expected of the candidates in order to complete and pass the content of the two days. It was made very clear that whilst every effort would be made for the candidates to pass, there was no guarantee that this would happen. DHJ expected certain criteria to be achieved before he would “sign off” anyone for promotion.**

**The course started at 0930hrs with a general warm up and then into the technical content of the course. The first item was Katame-no-kata (15 techniques), one of two Katas the candidates had to get to grips with during the morning session. These were to prove a valuable asset to the individual techniques that the candidates later had to demonstrate in their pairs. The second Kata was Gonosen-no-Kata (13 techniques) into which were added some movement and skills based instruction on general Ne-Waza and Tachi-Waza techniques.**

**The course broke for lunch at 1300hrs and returned at 1330hrs. The afternoon session was intensive, working on**

**movement, entries, grips and execution of techniques, direction and counters in Tachi-Waza with escapes in Ne-Waza situations; this included Shime-Waza and Kansetsu.**

**The techniques were picked at random by DHJ from the official Dan Grade Technical Sheet for each set of candidates. They had to prepare and present the movement in all its forms to DHJ and the course. If corrected, they then had to reproduce the element to the satisfaction of DHJ. The session concluded at 1715hrs. A great deal of work was covered on Saturday and so was not a day for the ill-prepared or lazy.**

**At 0930hrs on Sunday, the candidates warmed up and then the Examination started. Their first task was to perform the two Katas in their pairings, and then move on to the techniques. These had to include all the elements of a technique, whether Ne-Waza or Tachi-Waza, gripping, movement, breaking of balance, direction, escape or counter, with an explanation of why and to what effect these had on the technique, by the candidates.**

**The Exam concluded at 1230hrs. There was no give away here and no automatic promotion. Many valuable lessons were learned and the candidates' rewards were achieved purely by effort. It was a very good and thorough instructional weekend. Congratulations to all those taking part, well done.**

**Dave Allen    Chairman Western Area BJA**