

## Report from the International KUDO Jr. Summer Camp in Lithuania

Kudo All Japan Federation  
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This report is regarding the International Summer Camp held in Lithuania from the 1st of July to the 6th of July.

Before I begin, I'd love to send gratitude to Mr. Tarasevičius (Secretary General of KUDO Lithuania) for this amazing opportunity. In addition, I'd love to express my appreciation to KIF for dispatching me to this summer camp and entrusting me with the responsibility.

We had 102 participants from Lithuania, Malta, Ukraine, Italy and Poland. On the first day, we went straight to *Daugai* where the venue was, after arriving at the airport. The first day of training involved introducing myself and KEIHON-KEIKO (基本稽古).



I communicated with the children to understand their KIHON level. Through this process, I created a training structure for the next 4 days of the summer camp.

The schedule was as follows:

- 7:40 – Getting up
- 8:00 – 9:15 - Wrestling training
- 9:30 – 10:30 - Breakfast
- 10:30 – 13:00 - Creative, logical games
- 13:15 – 14:00 - Lunch

15:00 – 16:00 - KUDO training U-9, U-11, U-13  
16:00 – 17:30 - KUDO training U-16, U-19, Adults  
18:00 – 19:30 - Dinner  
20:00 – 21:00 - Sports activities.  
21:00 – 22:30 - Movie, chess, free time  
23:00 – Rest

My previous trip was to join the 2nd Kudo European Jr. Championships held in Malta. Throughout the championships, I had learned what they need to improve in order to become better junior competitors. Therefore, I added into the trainings in the summer camp some of game-alike training which I let my students try in usual training in Japan.



During the free time, participants enjoyed the beautiful lake as well as the activities they were doing with their team. After training, children jumped into the lake, and it became their daily routine.

After dinner, there were other activities which were planned by organizers, such as powder Battle, a quiz rally and frisbee. It was quite fun to watch. I think this summer camp wasn't just about hardcore KUDO training but also it was created very special and enjoyable memories for participants. The most special element for me was that participants from different countries were able to communicate through training and activities. Normally, competitors concentrate on the tournament, which makes it difficult to communicate with each other. However, it is much easier to share knowledge and thoughts when competitors are spending the night together.



**“There is no man living who isn’t capable of doing more than he thinks he can do.  
-Henry Ford**

From time to time, children asked me several questions, from cultural questions, such as: “What is your favourite Japanese food?”, to deep athletic questions such as “How to keep motivated to stick with only one sport?”, “what should I do to become the champion?”, “How to get the Black Belt in KUDO?”, and “I feel I am not good enough, what should I do?” and so on. These questions are not unique among children, as we adults often ask ourselves the same. Through honest one-on-one conversation, I figured out it was time to face myself and look back on the path I went through. I was sharing honestly about my past and my experiences. Perhaps it was just ordinary story, however, through this communication I observed a shift in their perspectives, changing their language from “impossible” to “I can do this.” Through this experience, I came to realize that by just sharing these moments I was able to contribute much more than I had anticipated. Everything I learned from the path I walked, I was able to use to support and inspire people and give them courage for their journey. You may feel your experience is ordinary, but every story is special and one that no one is able to tell better than you.

Returning to the Summer Camp, at a certain point we had a chance to be interviewed by a very famous and popular Youtuber, Jesse Enkamp and his team. He is currently filming several martial arts all around world and creating videos about them. He has millions of followers, and on average each video receives to more than 5 million views.

Throughout the interview, I was asked what OSU(押忍) means and the KUDO Mindset. I believe Mr. Tarasevičius and I was able to show KUDO techniques and the unique qualities of KUDO itself. It has been over a decade since I retired from competing; however, I was still able to show some of my KUDO techniques because I have always focused on perfecting my foundation with KIHON(基本稽古) and IDO(移動稽古). Because KUDO is BUDO(武道), it is not only about competition but is also a lifelong journey. We all can practice the spirit of BUDO through KUDO at any level.

I hope Jesse’s video goes up to millions of views so that it helps to increase the awareness of KUDO throughout the whole world.



I'd love to mention that a coach from Malta named Dilyara inspired me a lot. In this camp, each morning training was conducted by a coach from a different country. Dilyara’s training was nothing special. However, the way she demonstrated techniques and the way she attracted people was so dignified and brilliant. Her training stages were all linked to each other, starting from warming up to punching skills, to tackle, and then ground techniques (寝技/Newaza). Her training was not only about technique but also attitude. If she saw unpleasant attitudes among students, she would point it

out without any hesitation. She performed her role diligently and with confidence, and her teaching was unpretentious, focusing on the growth of her students rather than trying to be flashy or praiseworthy. She is always the one who inspire me and give me courage as another women who lives KUDO. I sincerely feel gratitude towards her.



The last training was focused on sparring to summarize what we learned during the camp. The focuses of the camp were the following three points:

1. Accurate punches and kicks,
2. Side steps,
3. Self-confidence.

I believe I was able to positively influence the participants on these three points. For the first and second, I received positive feedback from coaches and participants and as for the third, my work was rewarded with hugs. I believe the training concluded with warm and happy feelings. It would be so lovely if I can see them again in championships in the future.



At the end of the summer camp, we jumped into the lake with wearing DOGI(道衣) as is their tradition. The person who gave me courage to jump into the lake was Anastasiia from Ukraine. During the camp, she often dragged me out from being shy. She was so patient and sometimes with a laugh, she helped me practice Russian conversation. I feel gratitude for her as well. These days, all of Ukraine's air transportation is grounded. Because of this, she travels by bus with her students and takes multi-day trips for crossing the border. I have deep respect for the efforts she has gone through.



In conclusion, I'd love to share the following:

We are not growing by ourselves. Growth and learning are brought through our connections with each other. You might say, you read a book and absorbed its information by yourself. However, you might not better to forget that there is a writer behind the scenes that contributed to your learning. Many believe growth is an essential human need. Therefore, it is important to challenge yourself and keep growing, especially because KUDO is BUDO, a life-long journey.

The summer camp gave me an abundance of inspiration and new experiences. This would have been impossible without support, good advice and love, and as I have learned, there will always be people who come forward to provide all three. With that in my mind, I'd love to conclude this report with enormous gratitude and love.