



INTERVIEW: SIMON HALE

Fay Goodman, martial artist

World champion and European gold medallist Fay Goodman is one of the world's highest qualified female martial artists. In our text message interview, she explains how iaido – the art of the Samurai sword – has become so central to her life

"I BELIEVE IN SHARING MY KNOWLEDGE OF MARTIAL ARTS, SO AS MANY PEOPLE AS POSSIBLE CAN USE IT TO IMPROVE THEIR WELLBEING"

How did u become involved in martial arts?

When I was a teenager, I was confronted by 3 men. Wasn't badly hurt but convinced me to develop defences to protect myself & others.

Were there any other motivations?

Used to play Pink Panther games with my older brother. He was Kato to my Clouseau & kept leaping out at me from behind doors. Had to stop!

Where did u train in martial arts?

Joined local class where teachers were also SAS trained! Very hard work but also real challenge – inspired me to learn other martial arts.

What has been the highest point in ur martial arts career?

Passing 6th dan and winning gold medal in same weekend. Received so much support from people all over the world at that point. It was wonderful.

And the lowest point?

Failed to reach my 7th dan. Was not able to take my sword into Japan. But experience of competing there useful for this year's attempt.

How do u use your Orange phone in your career?

Need to keep in touch with people wherever I am and Orange phone is vital for that. Also for personal safety, especially when abroad on self-defence courses.

What benefits do u get out of martial arts?

Mental alertness, discipline & fitness.

Also sense of fighting for a cause – feel like the samurai of old who fought to protect their people.

Doesn't martial arts attract unsavoury characters?

A myth. Weekly class has diverse range of people – professors, priests, people with disabilities, students & housewives.

How did u become a martial arts teacher?

Seemed a natural progression to teach. Also believe in sharing my knowledge of martial arts so as many people as possible can use it to improve their wellbeing.

What plans do u have for the future?

Martial arts now seen as fastest growing leisure activity in Britain. Want to produce my own TV series to demonstrate its great value to people.

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