

NEWSLETTER

No.101 February 2004



AIKIDO YOSHINKAN BRISBANE DOJO

◎ Report of January

New members 11 Total number of adults training 70 Total number of children training 40

◎ Results of Getsurei Shinsa on 31st

<u>4th kyu</u>	Paul Neale	<u>8th kyu</u>	Mishelle Shorthouse	<u>9th kyu</u>	Ryan Slavin
	Stian Selland	<u>9th kyu</u>	Matthew Jukes	<u>3Y8 step</u>	Miki Yoshida
<u>5th kyu</u>	Matt Carpenter		Alison Alick	<u>3Y3 step</u>	Lee Stemm

◎ Events in February

1. Getsurei Shinsa

- ◆Saturday, 28th 1:00pm~
- ◆Shinsa training starts from Saturday 21st.

2. This Month's Holiday

- ◆1st March Monday Dojo Holiday

Sharing the feeling of Black Belts

When sensei asked me to write for the newsletter I was a little hesitant, after all, life had been so busy lately and training had been quite exhausting. All I really wanted to do was relax for a week or two until things settled down and got back to normal. However, when I sat down and started tapping away I realised that this was a perfect time to reflect on my time at the dojo and think about my attitude towards training.

There is a passage from Gozo sensei on the notice board that stresses the importance of total effort while training. To paraphrase it, "when you train with your whole heart you discover the beauty of Aikido". After thinking about its meaning I realised that it reminded me of another saying that I'm sure we have all heard, "You only get out of something what you put in".

It is an important ideal to strive towards every time we step onto the mat (actually a good lesson for everything we do). I'm sure that we have all 'felt good' after successfully completing a technique and I'm equally sure that its success wasn't gained by a lazed approach to training; it's simply sweat and effort. It is also important to remember that there are two people that practice a technique and that it is done in unison. As Shite relies on uke's intent for good technique, being uke is no invitation to relax. In fact, Uke sets the pace for Shite's technique so uke is obliged to focus at the same level as shite. Consequently, I would like to thank all those that have pushed me out of my comfort zone and helped me to develop my technique and approach to Aikido.

We're very lucky to have the dojo that we do. It's quite large and has a good surface, thus, it provides the perfect (although at some times hot) environment to train. But there's more to the dojo than four walls and a few mats. The backbone of every dojo has always been its people and the spirit (Zanshin) they maintain while training. Sensei sets this standard for us and watching him reminds us of where we would like to be. But we must remember that our 'Aikido careers' are in our hands and the attitude we have will determine how we develop. How will we set this standard in 2004?

OSU!

Paul te Braak

My first experience with Martial arts came about from my Fathers constant harassment to play Soccer / G.A.A (similar to AFL). Most of my Dad's mates at the time were professional footballers (Dublin GAA team) and all their son's were set to follow in their fathers footsteps, with one exception ME !!

When I was 12yrs old I began studying Judo in the local Community Centre (hall), I found it much more satisfying than kicking a ball around with the future exponents of round ball Rugby. I loved the break balance technique's and the follow on ground work that finished the technique, some of the moves/

principles are similar to Aikido (using the opponent's force against them etc). In my mid teens I moved to Athens Greece and discontinued my training, I was too busy with puberty, girls, music etc. My next Martial experience came when I was 19 yrs I began studying under Eddie Ince (Bushido Karate Gendi -back in Dublin). Eddie and his Instructors were well skilled (a substantial part of the Irish Kick-boxing Team). Training was physically challenging I enjoyed sparring with senior belts and the subsequent pints of Guinness that followed all classes. From time to time Eddie (sadly no longer with us) would do an Aikido Style class, I was amazed how a wrist lock could be so effective. As a partner in a Security Company I found Aikido an invaluable means of Control / Restraint & most importantly Avoidance!!

I later sought out an Aikido Dojo (a strand of the Tomiki style). I then knew the true meaning of the word "Frustration", I asked myself how can something so frustrating keep bringing me back to the mat? The Answer is: "There is no answer -It just happens" The most valuable piece of information I can give to anyone thinking of trying Aikido is "Time on the mat ". Aikido is the perfect example of the old saying" You only get out of something what you put into it" To clarify this comment: A student needs to take every available chance to train, and resign himself/herself to the fact that most of the moves will seem un-natural at first, however when they start to come together the sense of achievement far out ways the Sore feet, Split toes, Aching back and the many other components of preparing your body for a life of Aikido.

When comparing Aikido with any of the kick punch arts there is one factor that stands out for me, Aikido is like a good Irish Whiskey it gets better with age, How rewarding is it to continue your training and know you will only get better and better with age (To polish a stone so to speak). This is not the case with many of the competition orientated sport styles, as its only a matter of time before the young blood will "kick *yours* before your get a chance to even lift your leg to kick *theirs*." Having said all of the above there is so much more than to Aikido than the physical attributes.

The principles of Aikido can be applied to day to day life outside the Dojo. Most of us encounter conflict / aggression /negativity etc as part of our lives, it is part of Human nature (especially Western Society) to meet these head on and oppose them. This is one option, conversely if we welcome the enemy into our space where he/it can be subdued and controlled or we may decide to side step it altogether thus allowing it to carry on its way with minimal impact. This is the metaphorical answer to either having a blow by blow fist fight (complete with haymakers) or taking the fight out of "the fight". Allow me to explain: I've been in fights where I was trying to punch or kick my way to over powering my aggressor, while in an angry state of mind you trade blows aimlessly. It soon became apparent (in the Security industry) that your general health and professional reputation could greatly benefit from welcoming your enemy.

As a security manager in Dublin city I always welcomed large Buck's night groups to the door of our venues in many cases it was necessary to sell them another option (venue) - the welcome and hospitality shown mitigated hostility. Contrary to competing pubs and clubs we gave 20 handshakes rather than waiting for them to get too unruly a short time later (removing 20 drunk/angry patrons from any venue is never pleasant for anyone involved). In summary Aikido has taught me to try (where possible) to be part of the solution rather than be part of the problem. The Harmony of movement that we practice, has a direct paradox in life should we choose to use it, I.e. Harmony is to blend yourself to a moment rather than try to squash it. Where possible try to redirect energy that will affect the Harmony that we all need in our lives

At this point I would like to thank Sensei and Shuko-san for the welcome and endless supply of patience they have shown me in the last nearly 3 years. I would also like to thank Paul Te Braak for showing up for all those 4.30pm starts. Richard (Duracell) Diehm for all of his help in the lead up to my Shodan (black Belt) grading. Jason E for steering me in the Yoshinkan direction and last but not least my wife Julia for being Mum & Dad to our son while I was putting in the hours required to complete the Shodan Grading. OSU !!

Greg Dickenson