

NEWSLETTER



No. 131 July 2006

AIKIDO YOSHINKAN BRISBANE DOJO

Report of June

New members 4 Total number of adults training 61 Total number of children training 67

Results of Sogo Shinsa on 24th June

<u>4th Dan</u>	Emmanuel Economidis	<u>3rd Kyu</u>	Greg Scanlon	<u>3Y 5</u>	Eric Kwok
	Richard Diehm		Jim Stanley	<u>2Y 9</u>	Vladislav NeklyaeV
<u>Shodan</u>	Alastair Wilkinson	<u>5th Kyu</u>	Joseph Stuart	<u>2Y 8</u>	Sam Gray
<u>Jun-Shodan</u>	Kanako Yamaguchi	<u>6th Kyu</u>	Helly Conroy		Eagle Kao
<u>1st Kyu</u>	Ryan Slavin		Vince Cubito	<u>2Y 4</u>	Murray Davis
	Aaron Stewart	<u>7th Kyu</u>	Duncan Mitchell		Myles Frost
<u>2nd Kyu</u>	Matthew Pethig		Brent Jones	<u>2Y 2</u>	Matt Carpenter
	Mark Davies	<u>9th Kyu</u>	Peter Truter	<u>S5</u>	Mark Frost
	Koray Karanfilci	<u>4Y 5</u>	Lee Stemm		Greg Beerling
<u>3rd Kyu</u>	Mark Coleman	<u>4Y 1</u>	Jason Williams	<u>S4</u>	Chris Neucom
	Manfred Beyrer	<u>3Y 12</u>	Matthew Watson		

Events in July

1. Getsurei Shinsa

- ♦Saturday, 29th 1:00pm~
- ♦Shinsa training starts from 22nd Saturday.

2. This Month's Holiday

- ♦Dojo's Holiday 31st Monday

Aikido Demonstration Raffle

This year for the Aikido Demonstration raffle, the dojo students are fund-raising to help offset the remaining costs for the new extension at the back of the dojo. This area keeps the demonstration mats in good condition.

The raffle this year will have the following prizes:

\$100 of ASICS products, 8 Aikido Polo Shirts, 2 Japanese cushions with Japanese motifs, and a carton of Asahi beer. There may be more items available as prizes closer to the Demonstration.

Tickets will be available for purchase at the dojo from **Monday 10th July**.

If every student or family group takes and sells at least **one \$5 book of tickets** we will be well on way to cover the remaining costs of the extension.

Thanks from the "Student Fund"

A bit of knowledge for Aikido

Aiki technique in mind

You know, there are some senior instructors with strong characters that appear in "Angry White Pyjamas." You may think the author wrote about them exaggeratedly, but no, how he described the instructors was quite true. To keep training as a beginner uchi-deshi at the Headquarters depended on how we could survive under these monsters. The hardest part to achieve uchi-deshi life was not actually the deadly-severe-training itself but the part in dealing with senior uchi-deshis after training. No one could survive the life there without growing strong mentally or gaining more twists in one's character.

At the beginning of my uchi-deshi life, my routine straight after the last class of the day, without being given time for taking a shower, was going out to get some food for my seniors and I got stuck with them as their mental punching bag while they had the food and drink (there were always heaps of alcohol, mainly cheap 'sake', to drink donated by students.) It did not finish early but went on and on up to one to two in the morning until they went to take a bath. The poor youngest uchi-deshi could not take a shower or rest lying down after a full day of training until that moment. You may think I was lucky that alcohol was given for free, but the time you shared with them was nothing like you would have at the pub, enjoying talking with your friends. They did not talk to you but gave you homily and lectures over every small issue and forced you to drink until you started suffering and vomiting. If you said no to it, feeling sick, sake was poured over your head. You were not free yet, even after they went to the bath because you had to go to the bath with them, still listening to their lectures and silly jokes, and responding to them either saying 'OSU' only or giving them phoney smiles. I quite often ended up going to bed around three in the morning. And, I was the first man to get up five in a morning to clean the dojo when we had morning class at seven. I thought it was impossible to keep up like this kind of life style, being a normal human not like Napoleon.

The duty of cleaning the dojo everywhere by myself in the early morning was not the problem but the duty of pleasing grumpy seniors with flattering attitude and words in the morning was very hard. After class during a

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break, I was not free but became a live toy for my seniors in the office. They studied (in other word, bullied) techniques on me; Nikajo, Sankajo, Yonkajo, lock techniques on neck and elbow, and wrestling techniques! To that extent of not studying Aikido, I was totally annoyed. However, if I burst out then, that meant the end of the uchi-deshi life.

I thought, I entered Yoshinkan as an uchi-deshi to learn Aikido from Master Gozo Shioda Sensei but this life was more like serving seniors without justice. I could not help thinking hard on how to seriously change this environment. One day around that time, I had an opportunity to talk to my father's teacher of our family religion, Tenrikyo, and I meant to explain my present situation which sounded, rather naturally, like whining about and seeking his sympathy. He said, "Good, good. Hardships at a young age are priceless to be a dignified person. Seek the pain!" As I was only nineteen or so without much life experiences as yet, it sounded beyond my understanding. Looking at my total confusion, he added more words to explain his words. "The key is how you take things in your mind. Say, man 'A' got angry and fought back when he was criticised. He felt better temporarily by expressing his anger but nothing remained in him. Man 'B' thought through what he was criticised about and put efforts into changing his criticised points. In the same situations, 'A' gained nothing but 'B' gained progress. Even worse, 'A' kept a grudge in his mind against the person who criticised him, when 'B' thanked the person for his progress. It's all depends how you take things in your mind. Which would you choose?" He cleared up the topic of my hell-like uchi-deshi life so easily and happily, as if it was nothing.

His words stayed in me. I had to repeat the words over and over in my head to make sense of them in my own words. How to take things into my mind, not about how to change my environment or my seniors but my own mind. How to harmonise my mind with them, not only about physical Aikido techniques on the mats but mental Aikido techniques off the mats. I could not avoid being with my seniors if I wanted to be a professional Aikido master. Creating harmony with these monsters was the essential trial given by Heaven to achieve my way.

Well, back to evening drinks with lectures every night. I started to try my Aiki techniques in mind, "harmony, harmony," telling myself frantically. As I tried hard, my way of accepting their words started to change eventually; I began to feel grateful, instead of feeling annoyed, when they were pointing out all my faults of Aikido. Since I started to feel grateful to my seniors I was able to set up things in the way they wanted and to offer topics and responses in the way they were happy, so smoothly and harmoniously. I applied this Aiki skill when I was used for their joints-lock study (bullying) as well. I took their bullying as if they were sacrificing their break time to strengthen Mori. Then, I started to feel joy in pain thinking my body was getting stronger. You know, push-ups become your muscular strength if you do them joyfully but if you do them unwillingly they become pure exhaustion. In the meantime I was trying to be joyful receiving their bullying, I realised that none of the general students' techniques gave me pain any more. My joints got tougher dramatically. Thank you, my wanton senior Sensei's!

I did not realise what this mental Aiki technique was going to bring me really, at that time. I was often chosen to be uke for this senior Sensei, who was bullying juniors night and day, and whose technique was close to Takeno Sensei's style, very brutal. Students were afraid of his techniques and so was I; I did not like to be his uke. However, my fear of his techniques during training or demonstration disappeared on reaching a certain time. As I was trying to establish harmonious mind skills between my seniors during evening drinks by reacting in the way they wanted from me, one day at a demonstration being uke for the brutal Sensei, there was a moment I felt or sensed what next technique was coming just naturally. Since that moment, my level of uke raised highly which meant I had enough margin of time to bring myself in the best position to do uke in each technique, reading and harmonising with shite's movements. The fear disappeared and being uke became not just easy but brought me so much fun. Honestly, each of his brutal techniques became like a spring breeze for me, giving me beautiful refreshment. Truly, the Aiki technique in mind became not just lubricant between relationships of people but also gave a profound impact in physical Aikido techniques.

Well, the mental Aiki skills saved my uchi-deshi life ages ago and it is still working hard for me as the key of maintaining my life; to help my relationship between my students and myself at the dojo and this skill is used mostly between the most difficult relationship, between husband and wife at home to retain a peaceful household. Our relationship holds 8th Dan added together in Aikido and that means we should be a super-harmonised couple, should be..... Literally, "Aiki, that is life", as Kancho Sensei always mentioned.

Well, well, I recommend all my students study this mental Aiki skill and apply it into their daily life.

OSU

Michiharu Mori