



No.159 November 2008

AIKIDO YOSHINKAN BRISBANE DOJO

Report of October

New members 6

Total number of adults training 65

Total number of children training 66

Results of Getsurei Shinsa on 18th October

Jun-Shodan	Jamie Baker	8 th Kyu	Oliver Bradshaw	3Y12 step	Sam Gray
	David Shepley	9 th Kyu	Justin Titmarsh	2Y5 step	Ryan Slavin
Jun-3 rd Kyu	Anthony Williams		Jocelyn Fergusson	2Y3 step	Kanako Yamaguchi
6 th Kyu	Wayne Harris			2Y1 step	Greg Beerling
	Matthew Ryan	5Y1 step	Brendan Stuart		Tom Bannah
8 th Kyu	Brendan Lee	5Y4 step	Richard Diehm	S1 step	Adam Sawyer

Events in November

1. Self-defence Class & Demonstration

♦Self-defence class; Saturday, 29th November

1:00pm~2:30pm

- ♦The class is not for public but only for the members.
- ♦Although there is no class fee, students' fund is collecting some money for the BBQ party held after the demonstration.
- ♦BBQ Party will be held after the demonstration and everyone including your family and friends are welcome to join us.

♦Demonstration; 2:50pm~

- ♦All of the black belts and Mori Sensei will display their demonstrations after the class. You can invite your family and friends for the demonstration.

2. Getsurei Shinsa

- ♦ 22nd November, Saturday 1:00pm~
- ♦ Shinsa training starts on 15th Saturday.

3. Children's Shinsa

- ♦ 22nd November, Saturday 10:00am~
- ♦ Rehearsal starts from 9:30am.
- ♦ Children can come in any time after 9am to practice beforehand.

4. This Month's Holiday

- ♦ Dojo's Holiday 24th November, Monday

Sharing the feeling of Black Belts

As the years pass I seem to reminisce about the 'old' days more frequently. I can remember childhood and going to the local store for candy – at 1 cent per Jube, I think we can all agree, it was a bargain. Life moved on, school and friends all came and went. The only constant was my family. Then at 21 I was introduced to Aikido. The following 10 years have been a blur, but one thing has been constant and that was training at the dojo. This has been something that I have devoted my adult life to and I am proud that I have extended my family through training. My entire journey from my first general class through to last night has been one of learning. Not just learning Aikido, but harmony, humility, discipline and self-examination. I thought that I would share some of this with you:

What I have realized through my training is that harmony in life is key. Harmony within yourself, with a partner, with family and friends, with colleagues and strangers. I am no master of harmony and I think this will be my life's challenge. And no Richie, I don't mean to put the 'harm' in harmony.

I've also realized that if you cannot contain your pride and live with humility you will stop learning and growing. You will struggle endlessly without reaching your potential. I am constantly reminded of this as Sensei re-teaches me techniques my tired mind already knows. This is when I admire Sensei's patience.

Sensei will probably laugh at our Western use of the word 'discipline'. However even in a culture such as ours with a relaxed attitude to just about any topic, our dojo still displays discipline in every class. Students with disabilities and injuries keep taking to the mats with almost a sense of frenzied



desperation. It takes courage, spirit and discipline to return to the mats following an injury and continue to do so class after class.

Although our style of Aikido has been acclaimed as the 'young mans Aikido' because of its power and physical training, Yoshinkan is also training your mind. We may not practice overt mental training such as visualization or meditation but each and every class starts and ends with a form of introspection. Time to clear your head and look inwards for the patience to learn, the spirit to complete a class and the calm to promote harmony with your partners. But also remembering the 1000s of techniques is, in itself, mental training.

As my second family I know there will always be 'ups' (think drinks after Hajime class) and 'downs' (frequently going splat on the mats) at the dojo. But I want all of you to know that I value your friendship and patience, respect your spirit and commitment but most importantly I appreciate your support in our Aikido/life journey together.

OSU,
Jason Williams

Four and Forty – The importance of persistence

My promotion to Yondan has happened in the year I turned 40. Both are important milestones which bring new opportunities, as well as fresh challenges. The most significant challenge I find nowadays is managing the increased demand on my time. Ultimately, managing one's time is a skilful juggling act which involves focussing on the important things, careful prioritisation and good timing. Aikido has some interesting parallels here. Think of the way *shite* must prioritise which of his *uke* he will deal with first in *tasu dori* (whether they be 2 or 7 in number). Then there is the need for excellent timing when dealing with each uke, one at a time. Though people may not be conscious of it, Aikido teaches people how to manage time and to prioritise very well, and how to focus completely on each task as it arises.

I have in my time at Brisbane Yoshinkan seen hundreds of students join the dojo and later leave, and some of these people had tremendous talent. Everyone trains for different reasons. All students have varying levels of coordination and skill. To me these are not the most important things. Throughout my own *Budo* career, I have always felt that persistent and dedicated training, despite its hardships, always serves to improve a person's character, and to strengthen their spirit. I have no doubt that my 8 years of Aikido training (and before that 7 years of Karate) has given me the courage and strength to persevere during difficult times. It also made easy times all the more pleasurable. In my view these are very important consequences of *Budo* training. Everyone at some point will be required to meet and deal with challenges in their life. Success in these matters depends on many factors, but having a "never say die" attitude will always ensure that a person gives a very good account of themselves. Though extreme historical examples, think of the Spartans at Thermopylae or the ANZAC's at Gallipoli. Back in November 2005 when I wrote my last article, I talked about the concept of *Aiki soku seikatsu*. I am very pleased to see that so many new students have embraced that principle, as I have. The things I have touched on this article, timing, prioritisation, focus and perseverance are all good skills to have in order to successfully negotiate life's trials and tribulations. When you look at things from that point of view, Aikido and life really are one.

Congratulations to Mori Shihan for building the Brisbane dojo and taking it to new heights. Your dojo is truly a place to study the Way. It is heartening to see international recognition of this. To all the old hands of the dojo, it has been a pleasure to know and train with you over the years. Let's work



together with Mori Shihan to confirm this dojo's standing as the best in the world. For the junior students, remember: timing, prioritisation, focus and perseverance.

I take this opportunity to thank my wife Tamaki, whose unconditional and stalwart support of everything I do, including of course Aikido, has been incredible.

OSU!

Brent Weston

For me my journey to Shodan started back in 2000 & just like most others I struggled with training in the beginning (still do sometimes). My journey came to an abrupt end after about 9 months as I moved to the Netherlands and spent a few years based there but travelling throughout Europe alot.

I eventually moved back to Australia in 2004 as I was diagnosed with Cancer (tumour) in my spinal cord. For the next 2 odd years I spent having treatment & then recovering from this. I am currently cancer free and have been since 2006. However once I got through this trying period in my life, it was suggested by my doctor that I should take up a sport of some sort to improve my general health & fitness. This reminded me of what I had started years earlier.

So in 2007 I returned to Brisbane Dojo to start my journey again. It was not easy coming back at the start as I didn't know how well my body would cope after what I had just been through the previous couple of years and with such a long break it was like starting all over again, (which it was). The great thing about coming back to Brisbane Dojo is knowing that no matter your age, fitness, abilities or personality you are never alone, as there is always someone to help in whatever you choose to be your goal or how far you wish your journey to go.

I feel so grateful of having such brilliant guidance, understanding & teachings from Sensei & Shuko both on and off the mats. I am also very grateful for the guidance and help from all the senior students who have helped me along the way. I would also like to make a special thanks to Lee, who has helped me so many times over the past 18 months & Lawrence for all the help leading up to Shodan, but also a thankyou to all who have helped along the way.

I look forward to the journey ahead.

OSU!

Francis Hollingworth

I would love and be honoured to say thank you to everyone in this wonderful dojo from Sensei and Shuko to all the students I have the privilege of training with everyday. Thank you Sensei and Shuko for putting your love and effort into this wonderful dojo and creating such a strong atmosphere of harmony and learning. I am extremely grateful to be a student of this dojo, having the students and yourselves to be around.

To begin with I believe it is important to tell of an event that will make even a beginner feel more confident. It was only a recent event one that will never be forgotten. You would think that a person who has trained for two years could have avoided this, but it seems that there is always something to learn. One night in first class we were practicing shomen- irimi nage and after Sensei made the command to change partners I had spotted Aaron and paired up with him. After throwing each other a couple of times it was my turn again, I was trying very hard to make the corrections Sensei had shown

NEWSLETTER



me, and obviously not doing the correct thing. As I stepped through with the back leg and guided Aaron to the ground he seemed to of just dropped out of sight and all of a sudden I felt his knee collide with my backside which forced me to thrust forward holding my bum like a six year old being hit with a wooden spoon. Next thing you knew Sensei had taken notice of what had happened and paused then all of a sudden exploded with laughter and even turned to the wall and leaned up against it and hit it he was laughing so much. Aaron was literally on the ground hitting the mat in laughter, I was still in shock with the smallest hope that it was something else they were laughing at. That hope was shattered when Sensei had walked up still in hysterics and said in over twenty years of practicing marshal arts that was the first time he had seen that happen. (Not something to be proud of) HOW EMBARRASING!) Hopefully that story will get rid of the nervousness of any beginner and if it does I will be happy that my donkey antics were not completely in vain.

On a more serious note however it is important to mention what a beautiful martial art Aikido is and how it has the power to improve us as human beings. Training here for the short time of two years has helped me to see the world in a different way and also instil a sense of discipline that was barely existent. It seems in the most subtle way to make us realise our strengths and weaknesses and how they impact on our lives, maybe that is to some extent a small imprint of harmony we all have the luck of harnessing. On a personal level and I'm sure shares a common ground with others that being a student of Aikido teaches us to persevere with pain and struggle through learning difficult techniques and as we slowly overcome these challenges I believe that we become stronger people in what can be a harsh world. Training through pain and discomfort I have found has the power to eliminate the small weaknesses we have and help us become better human beings.

To conclude I would like to say thank you to Helly and Amy (two people have encouraged me and been great support from the beginning) Aarjaun (who has always given me good advice and who's name I'm only now starting to pronounce properly) Ryan a very good friend and mentor, Aaron (for giving me a kick in the butt that I will never forget. Emmanuel (who had shown me aikido in a different perspective and who still scares me), Jason (who is able to skim me across the mat equal to the number of his Dan), Chris Swinton (a very tough man to train with) and Jason Williams (in more ways than you know. Brendan for your unflinching guidance in teaching techniques, Lee (Small but deadly) Michael and Tommy Bannah (both have a great skill of telling you the truth about your technique) and Matt (for all the beatings at lunch times), and thank you to every other student I have had the luck and honour of training with. Thank you sensei for letting me train in this great place and guidance in a truly magical art. I may now have a black belt but I must never forget the white imprinted on it (advice given by Jason Sainsbury)

OSU!

Lawrence Monforte