

NEWSLETTER



No.239 July 2015

AIKIDO YOSHINKAN BRISBANE DOJO

Dojo: <http://yoshinkan.info>

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June Report

New members 1 Total number of adults training 58 Total number of children training 43

Results of Sogo Shinsa on 26th & 27th June

| | | | | | |
|---------------------------|-------------------|-------------------------------|--------------------|---------------------------|-----------------------|
| Yondan | Sam Gray | Jun-3rd Kyu | Peter Ternouth | 8th Kyu | David Herron |
| | Ryan Slavin | 4th Kyu | Neale Windress | | Ken Livingston |
| | Lawrence Monforte | | Ross Macpherson | 9th Kyu | William Kitchin |
| Nidan | Murray Booth | | Charlotte Crampton | 5Y5 step | Jason Williams |
| | Cameron Blake | 5th Kyu | Samuel Herron | 5Y3 step | Matt Carpenter |
| Shodan | Stephen Cuthbert | | Bastian Hartmann | 4Y9 step | Kaido Mori |
| 2nd Kyu | Mark Cocquio | 6th Kyu | Simon Grant | 4Y2 step | Lee Stemm |
| | Viktor Ovcharenko | 7th Kyu | John Lam | 2Y3 step | Lu Jiang |
| | Andrew Crampton | | | S4 step | Andrea Troncoso Salas |

Events in July

1. Getsurei Shinsa

- Training starts, Friday 17th 7:15pm~
- Steps, Friday 24th 7:15pm~
- Shinsa, Saturday 25th 1:00pm~

2. This Month's Holiday

- Dojo's Holiday – Monday 27th

A little more knowledge for your Aikido training

Annual Demonstration

"You, so weak." This were the first words I heard from my father when he saw me at the Headquarters' annual demonstration during my second year uchi-deshi life. I wore a black belt and was honoured to take *uke* for other senior uchi-deshis including the top Shihan at that time, though not for Master Gozo Shioda yet. Straight after I graduated high school, I left my country hometown for Tokyo to learn Aikido. I did not have anyone to turn to in the big city nor had anyone to take me to where I could learn Aikido. I found Aikido Yoshinkan Headquarters by pure luck and managed to get employed as an uchi-deshi after a year of trial. I was a hundred percent beginner at Aikido and within two years I was taking *uke's* for tough and strong senior uchi-deshis. I was so proud of myself and it was natural to expect a nice compliment from my father. The words devastated me indeed.

I knew how hard I had trained and how much I had progressed in two years. But the fact was that my father, not being an Aikido practitioner, could not see it from the way I displayed in the demo. After a while when I overcame the initial shock from the comment I could see where his view came from. Martial arts are about fighting for general people, win a fight or lose a fight. The most common Japanese martial arts are Judo and Karate-do which have competitions to decide champions. On the other hand, Aikido does not hold competitions, except some styles, but we have demonstrations instead to show our art for the public. As the nature of demonstration is not competing, we have two opposite roles to perform, *shite* or *uke*; *shite* executes Aikido techniques and *uke* receives them. People usually see the *shite* side only and praise them for their powerful and dynamic techniques.

Aikido practitioners, however, see the demonstration in a different view. Knowing how powerful Aikido technique can be, we admire the skills of *uke* when he shows a graceful *ukemi* (breakfall to minimise the damage from the technique) against a deadly technique. When you see a *uke* falls drawing an elegant arch and lands smoothly as if nothing happened it makes you feel as if you saw a beautiful painting. I remember a moment from one of Master Gozo Shioda's demonstrations that gave me true delight and excitement to watch. It was Takeno Shihan who took *uke* for Master. As Master's Irimi-zuki

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hit *uke*'s chin aggressively he flew backwards in a most beautiful arch and he rebounded gracefully in a blink as his back touched the ground. I was so impressed and could not get my eyes off *uke*, watching his more than *shite*'s performance. But, for general people, even this sensational scene appears as a picture of a strong Master and a weak disciple who was smashed badly.

Well, these experiences became food for my thought. I decided to make sure that all the levels of students, even beginners, can perform their skills that attract an audience at my dojo's demonstration. There are fourteen programs in this year's our annual demonstration and the very first one is "Kamae-niyoru-Atemi & Shumatsu-dosa." I think that any beginner who can practice for about a month can learn the movements and it looks spectacular as a whole when everyone performs together, including black belts. Even participating in this one program, you can be proud of yourself and you definitely appear to be strong, I believe.

Everyone is welcome to participate in the "Kyogi-enbu Jiyu-waza," having an equal chance to win an award. White belts may think "I cannot do Jiyu-waza yet," but that is wrong. As it is Jiyu-waza, free to decide any techniques you like; you can practice even just one technique and repeat it over and over. If you are 9th Kyu rank, you should know "shiho-nage-kuzushi renzoku" at least and if you practice one more from 8th Kyu syllabus "Ikkajo-nage renzoku," then there are already two techniques you can perform in turn. It is not about variety of techniques but more about balance, posture, lines, timing, strength and harmony. In fact, one of beginners, a boy with 8th Kyu rank, won a trophy last year. I know that the trophies are not everything, but it definitely encourages students as a reward for their hard work. Our awards offer an opportunity for everybody to win –mark all the pairs on the day, then divide them in four blocks from the top to bottom, and award the top of each block to acknowledge their performances as being excellent as the top of each level. The best pair of the top group on the day receives "The Best Overall Award." So, please everyone, be encouraged to participate in this program to raise your skills on both *shite* and *uke* sides.

Furthermore, students who haven't practiced weapons yet being interested in them should try to sign up for "Tanto-soho and Tanto-dori" or "Ken-soho and Ken-dori" to learn how to use basic weapons and take *uke* using weapons, not needing to wait until you reach black belt's syllabus. The demonstration practice offers you to boost your knowledge and skills of Aikido in various ways. So, please use this once a year opportunity to train hard and enjoy this particular season.

In Chinese saying, "The reason for employing soldiers for one hundred years is to use them for a single day."

We train a martial art day after day and if the skill you have mastered saves your life on a single day, when you are confronted with a danger, it is absolutely rewarding. Yet, that kind of circumstance is not something we search for and it is much better if we are not confronted with danger. Therefore, we appreciate this once a year opportunity to show one's ability to the fullest in front of audience, with a feeling of tension but without losing one's calm head, which is similar to what would be required in a realistic scene on the street.

This year's demonstration marks our 20th anniversary, Brisbane Yoshinkan's 20th birthday. We shall celebrate our birthday by performing our best Aikido Yoshinkan techniques and enjoy the day in harmony and in unity as the family members of Brisbane Dojo.

Osu,

Michiharu Mori