

NEWSLETTER



No. 109 October 2004
DOJO

AIKIDO YOSHINKAN BRISBANE

Report of September

New members 2 Total number of adults training 67 Total number of children training 53

Results of children's grading tests on 18th September

<u>3rd Kyu</u>	Kaido Mori	<u>7th Kyu</u>	Eloise Moss	<u>9th Kyu</u>	Oshan Shibasaki
<u>4th Kyu</u>	Steven Bannah		Beth-Leeander Coleman		Ashleigh McGregor
	Genevieve Sargent		Brittany Coleman		Jem Baker
<u>6th Kyu</u>	Hugo Clifford		Lainey Neucom		Hamish McDonald
	Marek Coleman	<u>8th Kyu</u>	Caleb Lyons		Isabella Shorthouse
<u>7th Kyu</u>	Melissa Pope		Luke-George Holna		Lucy Davis
	Julian Moss		Sam Holna		Kazahn Lopez
	Alexander Hanley	<u>9th Kyu</u>	Nathaniel Kelly		Anthony Gillespie
	Tim Pope		Jasper Garland-Fyfe		James Gillespie
					Taher Sadeghian

Results of Sogo Shinsa on 25th September

<u>Sandan</u>	Miki Yoshida	<u>Jun-3rd Kyu</u>	Jasmine Burge	<u>4Y3 step</u>	Jason
<u>Jun-Sandan</u>	Jason Sainsbury	<u>4th Kyu</u>	Brett Hampson	<u>3Y9 step</u>	Economidis Brent
<u>Shodan</u>	Ken Carse		Mark Wilton	<u>3Y1 step</u>	Weston
<u>1st Kyu</u>	Murray Davis		Lloyd Gainey	<u>2Y9 step</u>	Evan Chapman
<u>2nd Kyu</u>	Tadashi Oyaizu	<u>8th Kyu</u>	Viet Cao Ma	<u>2Y5 step</u>	Eric Kwok
<u>3rd Kyu</u>	Greg Beerling		Ben Glass		Shelly Hope
	Chris Neucom		Henry Yeh	<u>2Y3 step</u>	Matthew Watson
	Tzen Paredes		Niko Duncan	<u>S5 step</u>	Albert Lu
	Myles Frost	<u>9th Kyu</u>	Peter Read		Craig Sargent
	Matthew Jukes		Mitchell Farquhar	<u>S3 step</u>	Eagle Kao
<u>Jun-3rd Kyu</u>	Joshua McCormick	<u>4Y5 step</u>	Richard Diehm	<u>S2 step</u>	Yukari Kogi
					Tyrone Whelan

Events in October

1. Getsurei Shinsa

- ♦ 23rd Saturday, 1:00pm~
- ♦ Shinsa training starts on 16th Saturday.

2. Hajime Class

- ♦ 2nd Saturday, 1:00pm~
- ♦ Please note that we will have no regular classes on this day.

3. This Month's Holiday

- ♦ Dojo's Holiday 25th Monday

A bit of knowledge for Aikido

Training the power of harmony in daily life

The following episode was when Kancho Sensei (Master Gozo Shioda) was travelling with O Sensei (the founder of Aikido, Morihei Ueshiba) to a demonstration venue by train. They sat down face-to-face on two seats, one on each side and then O Sensei passed a *Tessen* (steel framed fan used by samurais as a weapon to defend themselves) to Kancho Sensei telling him to attack O Sensei whenever he had a chance to do so. As soon as he said so, he closed his eyes to have a nap.

Kancho Sensei, being very young then, was delighted with the words to have an opportunity to strike the Master as hard as he wished and waited carefully for the perfect time. The moment he thought that O Sensei had fallen into a deep sleep came and he was ready to make his move. But the next instant O Sensei opened his eyes. After a while the second chance came and Kancho Sensei was about to lift up his *Tessen* thinking this was the time, O Sensei said to him, "Whereabouts have we reached?" with his eyes shut. At the third chance, when Kancho Sensei was about to move, O Sensei smiled at him saying, "God tells me that you are about to attack me."

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Kancho Sensei thought that his words were ridiculous and aimed the next chance obstinately. However, no matter how hard he tried it always ended up in the same result and he was never able to even lift up his *Tessen* until they arrived at the station of the demonstration venue. Kancho Sensei was truly exhausted by the end, both physically and mentally without having a second of rest all the way and, for worse, he realised that he had to take *uke* for O Sensei from then.

I was very amazed listening to the episode directly from Kancho Sensei and, myself being young, I respected O Sensei as if he were a real superman. Kancho Sensei whom I knew was great enough for me made O Sensei beyond imagination. I was happy to have such great masters to aim for, to improve my Aikido.

Even though I was aiming for my great masters, I always thought that O Sensei was just special and who had supernatural powers according to his episodes of dodging bullets. I, however, began to think that there must be a way for an ordinary person to come closer to his level. I was just too honest to believe his every single word and I was deluded by the word of “God telling me” thinking that God tells me nothing. I don’t mean O Sensei was lying but I mean that I can consider the facts realistically.

There is a sequel story about him dodging the bullets. I’ll just write the two episodes briefly so that everyone can understand. One day O Sensei was walking with Kancho Sensei near an army base and saw soldiers practicing their gun shooting. O Sensei said that he would easily avoid those kinds of idle bullets. Soldiers got angry and they tried him. O Sensei dodged all the bullets as he said he would. Kancho Sensei was so amazed to see the scene that he talked to one of his acquaintances who was the master hunter. The hunter only shot through the eyes of birds and never missed. The hunter wanted to try him and Kancho Sensei brought him to O Sensei. Straight after O Sensei glanced the hunter he said, “I can’t dodge his bullets as he has no thoughts.”

This episode tells the fact that O Sensei was highly trained to read the thoughts of people and which led him to sense the movements of people. This became possible because O Sensei lived and survived in a situation of life or death or through the wars and real fights with other strong martial artists for a long time. I can say that his ability was not something supernatural or of mysterious powers at least but something that possibly trained or cultivated through certain disciplines. I cannot think that I will be able to do the same things as O Sensei did but I believe there is a future possibility. (Not as much as bullets but maybe steel fans or similar weapons. But everyone, please do not try hitting me from behind. To try me out with my ability, you need to face to me two mats apart and bow first, *please*.)

Most important ability in martial arts is to sense the movements of opponents. Because we will never be able to use our techniques without having this ability even though we know or can do the greatest techniques.

The ultimate weapon in Aikido is ‘the power of harmony’. To harmonise with someone, one needs to read the thoughts of him and harmonise with his movements which is led by his thoughts. It is too late to make a movement after the opponent began his motion. O Sensei mastered the ability to read and sense the thoughts of opponents before they began moving and simply harmonised with them. ‘The power of harmony’ in O Sensei made all the mysterious episodes possible.

Well, how can we train to achieve this ability, reading the thoughts of opponents and harmonising with their movements as an ordinary person living in a peaceful age? This is a difficult problem for the present martial arts practitioners.

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In my case, I had training of this ‘ability of sensing movements’ when I was still at the Headquarters. Reading the way I wrote, you probably thought I had some sort of secret training. But no, I didn’t. The best training of reading thoughts of someone didn’t happen on the mats but outside of Aikido training. The effort to find the way of harmonising with Kancho Sensei’s daily life was the best training.

For example, serving a cup of tea for him. Kancho Sensei had his own room next to our office and I had to sense the right timing when he finished his first tea to serve the second one from next door. You had to read the timing of his toilet patterns to open the door of his room before he got out by himself. While he changed into his gi I had to hold his clothes and pass him his gi in order, at the right timing, not too fast, not too slow. At an instant Kancho Sensei slipped a word, “ah~”, I had to answer by understanding (not guessing) what he wanted to say at the very moment.

I don’t have enough space to keep writing examples but what I wanted to say was that the training of *uchi-deshi* was not just on the mats but to harmonise with the master totally every moment, and that was the biggest training. I can think in this way now, but I did not realise this fact when I was working there then. I am truly grateful to Kancho Sensei and the Headquarters for providing me this valuable training while I was young.

Well, how do I cultivate the ability of reading people’s thoughts and movements to master ‘the power of harmony’, now? The answer exists in my daily life.

The first thing I can say is that of my English. I know that so many of my dear students have experienced difficulty with my poor English. But it is not only you who suffer from my English but myself too. This is good training for my Aikido. People usually understand the situations or problems by languages. In my case, firstly I need to guess what a person in front of me wants to say roughly from his expressions, atmosphere and gestures using the whole of my senses, and then try to narrow down the issues in details from some words that I could pick up from the conversation. My weakest point living in Australia trains my ability in reading the thoughts of opponents.

The second thing is the practice of harmony with my own partner. Using my partner as a trial horse, I can have the best training of harmony. To keep good harmony with her, I need to read her mood and feeling first and then help some of her work or give her gentle words. If she is in a bad mood I serve her in just the right manner avoiding unnecessary conflicts. This kind of training in daily life fits very well for my Aikido training. As a result, the training to cultivate ‘the power of harmony’ brings me improvement in my Aikido and also the upkeep of a peaceful and enjoyable home. How great! This is the true theory of ‘Aiki as life’.

Well everyone, shall we cultivate ‘the power of harmony’ in our daily life and lift the level of Aikido up? Then one day, we shall leave some superman episodes like O Sensei in Aikido history.

Osu!

Michiharu Mori