



## Report of August

New members 3

Total number of adults training 54

Total number of children training 66

## Awards of 11<sup>th</sup> Annual Demonstration

### ◆Jiyu-waza

#### 1<sup>st</sup> Award

Jason Economidis & Eagle Kao

#### 2<sup>nd</sup> Award

Ryan Slavin & Aaron Stewart

### ◆Renzoku-waza Award

Helly Conroy & Joseph Stuart

### ◆Aubrey Bannah Award

Matt Carpenter

Ryan Slavin

Mark Davies

Jim Stanley

## Results of Getsurei Shinsa on 26<sup>th</sup> August

<u>Jun-Shodan</u>	Heather Wood	<u>9<sup>th</sup> Kyu</u>	Urs Batting	<u>2Y 5</u>	Myles Frost
<u>Jun-3<sup>rd</sup> Kyu</u>	Joseph Stuart	<u>3Y 7</u>	Eric Kwok	<u>S2</u>	Aaron Stewart
<u>4<sup>th</sup> Kyu</u>	Vince Cubito	<u>2Y 10</u>	Sam Gray		
<u>5<sup>th</sup> Kyu</u>	Robert Austin		Eagle Kao		

## Events in September

### 1. Sogo Shinsa

◆Saturday, 23<sup>rd</sup> 1:00pm~

◆Shinsa training starts from 9<sup>th</sup> Saturday.

### 2. No Kids' class on the 30<sup>th</sup> Saturday

◆Please remember we are not holding children's class on the 30<sup>th</sup> Saturday morning.

### 3. This Month's Holiday

◆Dojo's Holiday 25<sup>th</sup> Monday

◆Dojo's Holiday 30<sup>th</sup> Saturday: Due to Sensei participating in Aikido Shinobukan Dojo's 15<sup>th</sup> annual demonstration.

## Coffee Break

### A travel piece to India

One day after I received my Shodan in December 1986, I was relaxedly practicing the Yudan syllabus during March shinsa training, aiming for my Nidan grading in the end of 1987. Unexpectedly, Kancho Sensei (Master Gozo Shioda) stood behind me and said, "Mori! Take the Nidan shinsa." It had been only three months after my Shodan grading. It couldn't possibly happen usually. Besides, there was only ten days left until the Shinsa. How would it be possible? Whatever my concern was, I had no option but to reply "OSU!" when my master said to do it. The moment when I said "OSU!" was the moment of the start of my journey to India.

The actual situation was that the Headquarters received a request to dispatch an instructor to India as a part of cultural exchange activities conducted by 'Japan-India Association'. It was an honourable job teaching Aikido to Indian army/police that should be taken by higher ranked senior uchi-deshis who had more experience. I did not feel right that I was chosen to do the important job as I was only a second year uchi-deshi and being the level of only a new Shodan. The fact was that all the other senior uchi-deshis did not want to go to a Third World country and the ball landed in my court in the end. But because I held only Shodan which was too low a level to teach the Indian army while representing the Headquarters, I was commanded to take Nidan shinsa in haste. It was definitely not because of my Aikido ability.

Looking back the incident now I feel it was very lucky, but at that time I struggled to satisfy the order of my master and left for India in the beautiful season of May in Japan, with concerns as to whether I was really capable enough. It was my first time in an airplane and my first time going out of Japan. I bought a guide book of India at the airport and in there read a warning to not visit Calcutta in May as it is too hot and humid



for Japanese. Well, I wondered in my narrow seat, with lots of expectations and anxiety, what kind of life was going to be in my first overseas country, thinking anywhere must be better than the uchi-deshi life at the Headquarters.

I fell in sleep for a few hours and realised the night city of Calcutta was down there already. Looking at it closely I saw all the naked bulbs and lots of night stalls spread around all over. I saw the same view in a movie showing Japan fifty years ago after World War II. In contrast of the meagre night town scene there was a most gorgeous moon up in the Indian sky, I still remember clearly.

I stood on Indian land after my airplane arrived and the air of highly humid heat with the sour smell of people's sweat and Indian curry was pressed into my nose as if a humidifier was pushed to my face. I hear that foreign people who come to Japan for the first time can smell of *miso* soup the first step into Tokyo airport. In my case, it was an Indian curry and sour sweat smell in my first foreign country. Whenever I smell Indian spices even now, the picture of unsorted, unarranged town and crowd appears in my mind.

Enough of my first impression of India, now something to do with Aikido. The size of their dojo was about twenty *tatami* mats area that was about forty jigsaw mats in our dojo. The dojo was not just for Aikido but Judo and Karate were using them in turns. One class each in the morning and afternoon was allocated in turns except Sunday. We were allowed to use them whenever it was free.

I went straight to my voluntary training wearing a dogi. It was much hotter and more humid than outside in the dojo, like a sauna having only a small window on one side and the thermometer was pointing to forty degrees. I finished my ukemi practice sweating madly and started Kihon-dosa, Tai-no-henko (1) first; still being a beginner Aikido-ka, I was reconfirming the points to myself, more weight on my forward leg, lower, lower. Tai-no-henko (2) next; the key point of this movement was fixing the centre line rigidly and turn with a strong spinning for 95 degrees. I followed my own instruction and found my left toe that was trained to build up a thick skin was burnt off in a flash with my concentrated spin. I screamed in the dojo on my own with a pain of fire, not knowing what happened for a while. My thick skin on my toe was melted in a second from the extremely hot mats in India. I could not expose my ungraceful appearance -screaming with agony over a tiny piece of skin from a basic movement but not even from a technique -in front of my Brisbane students now. What an astonishing condition it was in India! I was knocked out by just a turning motion!

The reason I came to India was, of course, to teach Aikido for the Indian army. I was told that the course was going to start a week after I arrived. I seriously worried if my two years Aikido and being only twenty years old was enough to teach a national army. But I convinced myself that I should be great as I was directly taught by Kancho Sensei who was definitely one of the top martial artists in the world.

When I was planning how I was going to hold a class for a coming week in the office, a man came in. He said he was an Indian soldier who was going to take my class and asked what Aikido was as he had never heard of it before, expecting more like Karate type. I told him Aikido techniques were mainly joints-locks and throws. He then asked me if it was more like Judo, I said "No," of course and he requested to do a technique on him. So, I did a Nikajo-lock just enough for him to feel. He understood and left. An hour later another one came in. Exactly the same questions and I ended up doing another lock. Soldiers kept coming in turns for a week and gave me the same questions everyday.

There were two types of people when I put some basic locks (Nikajo, Sankajo, Yonkajo) on them; some understood the effectiveness of Aikido and were satisfied, and others got defiant and wanted to try out more of my Aikido ability. The latter people questioned me how I was going to deal with various attacks



and different situations. This kind of trouble never happened in Headquarters as students were all obedient believing instructors' ability. But here in India the situation was completely different. From Indian soldiers' eyes, this young fellow didn't look experienced but he was saying he came all the way from Japan to teach a not-well-known Japanese martial art to professional Indian army. No wonder they wanted to try me out instead of learning under me.

This, neither official nor arranged style class, didn't finish in one week, but kept going for three months. Yes, the course never started. It was very much the Third World problem I guess, so uncertain about the concept of time and money. I spent my time handling these Indian soldiers everyday being told that the course was going to start the next week. It sounds as if I wasted my time, but no, these three months gave me a whole lot of experiences in applying Aikido techniques against any sorts of attacks (kicks, variety of strikes and punches, grabs, and strong resistance against each technique) and situations on people who didn't do *uke* at all, and that became my foundation to teach Japanese riot-policemen, Australian Commands, Victorian and Queensland Police in the future. The journey to India became my errantry for acquiring the ability of practical Aikido that was extremely precious for my Aikido life. I appreciated my senior uchi-deshis who refused this offer at the first place and thanked Indian men so much who trained the young fellow very well through their challenges.

Lastly, I would like to share one of my many culture shocks I saw in India. The gap between poor and rich is so wide in India, as you know. The houses of servants are spread around a rich family's house. The servant's house was only 4m<sup>2</sup> size and 6-7 people lived in there. They slept on the table, under the table. Only the other furniture they had was a charcoal brazier and a picture of Indian Gods.

I met a boy servant who did not have parents or brothers or a house of course. He slept in the garage of his master hanging up a hammock next to the master's car. He showed me his possessions proudly and they were a small charcoal brazier and a small aluminium bag to go to school. I was totally in a shock coming from the developed country and I truly appreciated the environment I was brought up in for the first time.

Another boy age of around five who lived in the 4m<sup>2</sup> house came out one morning (Indian children all had big, shiny eyes and they were so endearing). He eventually pulled his pants down and started the natural event in the morning. Soon, there lied a steamy excretory substance like a typical one in cartoons. Yes as you can guess, they didn't have toilets in their house. That meant every servant was doing the same activity everyday out side of their houses and they were around the rich peoples house. You think the outside must be awfully yucky, but there was an ecological system. Whenever someone was sitting for discharging his big one, stray dogs came and lied down on the ground behind him. As soon as he left, then the dogs ate them up beautifully. There was no need for water, toilets or sewages. How interesting their ecological coexistence was in India. However, it was twenty years ago and now India is one of the most advanced computer countries. What I saw and experienced must have become an old days' story.

I owe India and Indian people for my Aikido life and I would like to go back to the country one day to return my favour by demonstrating or teaching Aikido.

OSU

Michiharu Mori