



Report of September

New members 3

Total number of adults training 58

Total number of children training 72

Results of Sogo Shinsa on 22nd September

<u>Sandan</u>	Albert Lu	<u>6th Kyu</u>	Gerry Kassman	<u>3Y5 step</u>	Eagle Kao
<u>Shodan</u>	Ryan Slavin		Kaido Mori	<u>3Y4 step</u>	Sam Gray
<u>1st Kyu</u>	Jamie Baker	<u>7th Kyu</u>	Adam Sawyer	<u>3Y2 step</u>	Daniel McDonald
<u>2nd Kyu</u>	Lawrence Monforte	<u>9th Kyu</u>	Eric Chen	<u>2Y1 step</u>	Christopher Swinton
	Francis Hollingworth		Brendan Winkle	<u>S3 step</u>	Aarjaun Burch
	Adrian Stuart		Calum Rae	<u>S2 step</u>	Tom Bannah
<u>3rd Kyu</u>	Urs Battig		William Marks		Mark Davies
	David Shepley			<u>S1 step</u>	Amy Hughes
<u>4th Kyu</u>	Megan Erikson	<u>4Y10 step</u>	Lee Stemm		Mark Coleman
<u>6th Kyu</u>	Akiko Nicholls	<u>3Y6 step</u>	Jason Williams		

Events in October

1. Getsurei Shinsa

- ◆ Saturday, 20th 1:00pm~
- ◆ Shinsa training starts from 13th Saturday.

2. Hajime Class

- ◆ 27th Saturday, 1:00pm~
- ◆ Please note that we will have no regular classes on this day.

3. This Month's Holiday

- ◆ Dojo's Holiday 29th Monday

Coffee Break

Metabolic Syndrome!?

Since my work is related to heavily using my body I am always curious about the lifespan of professional sportspeople or how they weaken. Unfortunately, I was not above weakening and I experienced the changes of my body strength every five year cycle after I hit twenty years old. The changes in my body through 25, 30, 35 and 40 years old forced me to start different types of reinforcing exercises at each cycle. As the most of necessary muscular strength for applying Aikido techniques is maintained by daily classes I take, the exercises I need to keep up aikido-ka's body are very basic; push-ups, sit-ups and a bit of weights training with dumbbells. These exercises worked very well to maintain my body level up to the end of thirties. I never saw any other Yoshinkan uchi-deshis controlled their body as strictly as I was and I believed, though naive, that my method was right and it would take me through to the age of seventy in this way.

However, life was not that easy. I have to swallow my pride to write this naked fact, but I shall write about this topic because I believe sharing my experiences will help my students and other aikido-ka for their future aikido life. Just before turning to forty at the age of thirty-nine, I realised the dreadful change of my body shape, around the belly; a major symptom of the metabolic syndrome to measure visceral fat, the thick fat around the abdomen.

I was not a man who got lazier with aging and did nothing, but rather I was training hard everyday or even harder every year as I aged. The volume of training was quite a lot, 5 classes in a day sometimes including kids and private lessons, the third class throws, extra reinforcing exercises and the dojo cleaning. It was impossible to gain fat, I thought. But the fact was lying in front of my eyes and my abdomen was definitely collecting something ugly.

At the beginning of this problem it was obvious, I thought I was going to lose the fat easily through Brisbane's hot summer, sweating heaps through many classes. No..., it got even worse after summer. No...it could not be true as this kind of problem was never mine in my life. I increased the numbers of sit-ups to lose the belly volume. But, I gained more muscle underneath the fat without losing it and it ended up having an even bigger, uglier abdomen. Now, the problem got too obvious to hide and being a married man, my wife started to mention it too. She said, though being careful not to hurt my pride, "You have gained an imposing figure as a middle-aged man," looking at me from back. As I was able to read her

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caring advice, the words caught my attention even stronger. I reached the stage where I could not fudge the fact any longer.

I usually wear shorts and naked from the waist up, when I mop all over the dojo in summer time. One day, I was running down staircase in this outfit and I saw a wave of fat was bouncing up and down over the shorts. ...pure shock...true shock... I just could not forgive myself as it was against my bushi-do (the way of Japanese warriors.) Bushi-do valued beauty most, not just beauty of spirit, but also the beauty of formalities and the beauty of one's own body. You may think that the beauty of appearance in budo does not fit well. Here, I need to explain a bit about this point. Failing in maintaining one's body shape proves one's self-indulgent status. Because it means one is not disciplining his life hard enough but indulging himself in laziness or consuming too many sweets and/or fat - more than necessary. This is the self-indulgent status. The mind of self-indulgence is never counted as beauty in budo. So, maintaining one's body shape is an important issue in bushi-do.

Around this time when I started to be seriously concerned about my body shape, I was reading at the dojo counter a book about 50 years of Yoshinkan history. I found a photo of Kancho Sensei (Master Gozo Shioda) in his forties with upper body naked patting his dog. His body was beautiful without any ugly body fat. Why and how could he maintain his body, I wondered looking at his photo. I observed his Aikido directly between his 69 - 78 years old while I was uchi-deshi and he was performing great, speedy tasu-dori (free-style throws against multiple attackers) yet very casually without heavy breaths or wobbly steps. People described him as a genius martial artist or called his skill a godlike technique, beyond human faculties. But I always believed that he put the efforts behind the scenes that no one really knew, as he was absolutely a human-being too. Then, I had realised a caption next to his photo, "Kancho Sensei who loved animals very much, especially dogs, always took his dog for a walk as his daily routine for his lifetime. " It was just an ordinary caption. I saw the dog next to Kancho Sensei and it was medium-sized Japanese dog. This type of dog was used for hunting in the old days and had a habit of running well. The dog lover, Kancho Sensei, must have run a lot with his dog every morning for the whole of his life. That was his secret training, I realised. Therefore, he never lost his breath during tasu-dori even in his old age.

Well, I had to compare myself with him. I never liked jogging in my life as I felt that just running without any purpose, like chasing after balls was more than boring and a waste of time, as I am an impatient person. One day, Shuko was talking to me, probably concerning my middle-aged abdomen, "Running feels so refreshing. It is a great all over body exercise for us." I snapped at her reflexively saying it was a waste of time and I was rude enough to dismiss her offer immediately. But, it was only three days later that I found the photo of Kancho Sensei with his dog. So, I changed my mind and started running every morning. No need to mention that I received an ironical comment from my wife later on. Yep, I should tell to all the husbands that you'd better listen to your wife.

As a result of my running, my weight dropped dramatically. I weighed 72.5kg in December 2006 which was the heaviest in my life and got back to my best weight of 68kg, the average weight of Australian women, in April this year since I started running in February and my abdominal area got slimmed-down at the same time. At the beginning of this year I decided to try five men tasu-dori for this year's demonstration aiming towards the way Kancho Sensei performed, everything in total control without losing breath or balance. I knew that not many aikido instructors were trying hard to perform tasu-dori in the world, as it required not only skills of aikido but also speed, spring, awareness and fitness that meant the instructors who were not training themselves enough could not perform it well. I wanted to keep challenging in this area and for that reason I needed to run. The effect was as you saw on the demonstration day. I did watch my demo on the Youtube website as Richard submitted the video clip, and I think it made all my time and work worthwhile.

Of course as I never get younger no matter how hard I train, the important elements to keep performing dynamic aikido are the strength of legs and lungs that both can be developed through running. Thanks to my ugly fat belly, I gained a valuable asset for my future aikido life. I will maintain my efforts and I am aiming to challenge six-men tasu-dori for the next years demo, looking at Kancho Sensei in his seventies. I've written my shameful middle-aged report all because I thought it would serve as useful reference for everyone's aikido life.

OSU!

Michiharu Mori