



No.172 December 2009

AIKIDO YOSHINKAN BRISBANE DOJO

## November Report

New members 7

Total number of adults training 59

Total number of children training 55

### Results of Getsurei Shinsa on 21<sup>st</sup>

4 <sup>th</sup> Kyu	Jocelyn Fergusson	9 <sup>th</sup> Kyu	Daniel Gort	4Y5 step	Lee Stemm
6 <sup>th</sup> Kyu	Emma Benson		Tony Starkie	2Y5 step	Mark Coleman
7 <sup>th</sup> Kyu	Steve McKewin		Robert North		Lawrence Monforte
8 <sup>th</sup> Kyu	Justin Scott				Francis Hollingworth
	Rebekah Webb	5Y8 step	Richard Diehm	S4 step	Julian Ladd
		5Y5 step	Emmanuel Economidis	S2 step	Matthew Ryan

### Results of Children's Shinsa on 21<sup>st</sup>

1 <sup>st</sup> Kyu	Ben MacMahon Elisabeth Owens	4 <sup>th</sup> Kyu	Nicolas Margarit Benjamin Dreyer Bailey Evans-Huf	8 <sup>th</sup> Kyu	Marish Reid Halle Evans Oska Brookes Helena Chapman Caitlin Buckley Mackenzie Lange Alison Goepfert Lynn Setiadi
2 <sup>nd</sup> Kyu	Nathaniel Kelly Ashleigh McGregor Brandon Cheng	5 <sup>th</sup> Kyu	Bradley Cornell		
3 <sup>rd</sup> Kyu	Zhian Johnston Coby Stegman	6 <sup>th</sup> Kyu	Adam Gillespie Monica Margarit Sebastian Kelly Nicole McGregor William Austin Nana Hayashi Chanice Evans-Huf Ryuta Hayashi	9 <sup>th</sup> Kyu	Ryan Padget Ginger Conquest Emilee Pennisi Bridget Felstein
4 <sup>th</sup> Kyu	Sage Springett Louis Hanley Luqman Nul Hakim Tor Brookes Parangana Narula Elliana Kelly	7 <sup>th</sup> Kyu	Izaiah Fergusson Jacob Evans		

## Events in December

### 1. Sogo Shinsa

- Training starts, Friday 4<sup>th</sup> 7:15pm~
- Steps, Friday 18<sup>th</sup> 7:15pm~
- Shinsa, Saturday 19<sup>th</sup> 1:00pm~

### 2. Teens Class Holiday through X'mas and New Year's Day

- No Teens' class will be held during school holidays. The last day of this year's Teens' class is the 10th December Thursday. The first class in the New Year is on 27th January Wednesday.

### 3. This Month's Holiday of Adults' class

♦The dojo is closed from 25<sup>th</sup> to 28<sup>th</sup>, and is open on 29<sup>th</sup> & 30<sup>th</sup>, and is closed again between 31<sup>st</sup> – 3<sup>rd</sup> of January.

### ♦DECEMBER & JANUARY

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28	29	30	31	1	2
3	4	5	6	7	8	9

## A bit of knowledge for Aikido

### Aikido against kicks

There was a rumour (or folklore) at the Headquarters that I had heard from a general student when I had just joined Yoshinkan.

One day, a karate-ka visited the Headquarters questioning how aikido-ka would defend against karate kicks. In short, it was a challenge from Karate towards Aikido. At that time, there were only two *Shihan's* working at the Headquarters; one was Razor 'T' Shihan whose technique was exceptionally



sharp and the other was Hatchet 'C' Shihan whose technique was extremely heavy, both techniques had devastating impact. They were the instructors for the Yoshinkan Headquarters that all students were proud of.

Firstly, 'C' Shihan faced up to the karate-ka. The character of 'C' Shihan was a defensive type and he observed the movements of the karate-ka carefully and whenever the karate-ka closed in the kicking distance 'C' Shihan moved backwards and whenever the karate-ka stepped backwards then 'C' Shihan moved forward to keep a steady distance. In the end the karate-ka was never given a chance to try a kick to 'C' Shihan. Then, the karate-ka faced up to 'T' Shihan whose character was absolutely aggressive. One's character is definitely shown in one's technique. As soon as they faced up to each other 'T' Shihan closed the distance instantly without any other motions at all and when the karate-ka kicked hastily, 'T' Shihan was already beside him giving him an Irimi-nage. The karate-ka was knocked out very badly like in a movie shoot with Steven Seagal.

I have no idea if this folklore within the Headquarters was true or not. But because I had never heard this story from the people at our drinks in my long time as an uchi-deshi, I doubt the credibility of the story. However, I somewhat understand why this kind of story was created within the general students. All the aikido-ka commonly have fear against kicks (more or less) as the routine of Aikido training does not directly involve techniques against kicks. From the anxiety and fear of not knowing how to deal with kicks, the folklore was born to convince the students of the power of Aikido, I think.

Interestingly, people who train the type of attacking martial arts (karate, taekwondo, kung fu as examples) have fear against being grabbed or being taken down to the ground by a strong-muscled opponent, not knowing what to do after that. In fact when I was training boxing during high school I had the same fear. I started taking boxing training at a boxing gym near my home at the age of fifteen and within a year I was ranked 1<sup>st</sup> as an under eighteen lightweight in my region. By the second year I had no one to fight with in my region. Though it sounds that I was tough and strong, the ranking was only in my weight division, of course. As I won more matches I was able to see my weakness more. In the world of boxing the weight division has huge meaning and even one division up, the difference in the body size and the power of the punch was absolute. My boxing skill would not have given much impact to a boxer whose division was up by even one. I deeply doubted about my strength and also boxing, knowing I had strong fear of someone who was simply a lot bigger/heavier than me or a big judo-ka who could have grabbed me easily and thrown me down. Once a man recognises one's own weak area he holds fear. A person who does not hold any fear is the same as simply not knowing oneself and the world, I think. So, maybe judo-ka has fear of knuckles that they never practice against.

The point is that people are scared of something because they do not know it well, like being scared of ghosts even though they have never seen them. For that reason, to overcome Aikido-ka's fear against facing punches and kicks, I made the new grading syllabus for the Brisbane Dojo. This is to enable our students to practice aikido techniques against face punches (jodan-zuki) and kicks (shomen-geri and yokomen-geri) on top of commonly trained techniques against Shomen-uchi, Yokomen-uchi, Katate-mochi, Ryote-mochi, Kata-mochi, Hiji-mochi, Ushiro-waza, and Shomen-zuki. Besides, I made a routine of practicing attacks including front and side kicks that are very rare in an Aikido dojo, but I believe that without knowing proper strong attacks in various forms we cannot manage to apply aikido techniques against them.

One other benefit of practicing the attacking skills is that you can understand the weak area in the attacks as well – a punch is only a fist width and to give a strong blow to a moving opponent is not easy; though kicking looks strong and spectacular it is difficult to inflict harsh damage by one kick without losing one's own balance, and also by closing the distance between oneself and the kicker the kick becomes totally powerless.

There are various ways to block and defend from punches and kicks in other martial arts, and in our dojo we block them using aikido movements and principles. The characteristics of aikido movements are basically Irimi (entering body) and harmonising.



Against Jodan-zuki (face punch), the punch aims at the centre of shite's face and aikido understands the attack as a line not as a contact point. So, we enter the body as soon as we see a line is coming and entangle the punching arm by a strong circular movement leading the force direction backwards instead of just blocking sideways. The role of the blocking hand is not to beat the attacker's arm but to misguide the attacker as if the punch had reached the opponent without being stopped, and to redirect the punch line to break down the attacker's balance. Leading the air shot of the attacker is the key point to get them off balance and then we can apply any aikido technique immediately.

Against Shomen-geri (front kick), we use the entering skill of aikido. Feeling like your left shoulder is going forward, you enter your left side body with your right hand redirecting the kick backwards in a half-moon motion under the kick. The point is the same as against jodan-zuki, not to hit the attacker's leg hard to beat it but to give an illusion as if the attacker's leg kicked something and to redirect his body balance off in their forward direction. Once the attacker's balance is off, it is easy to perform an aikido technique. This theory is the same as when you push a door hard believing it needs lots of force to open but it opens without any resistance and then you lose your balance nearly falling.

The movement against Yokomen-geri (side kick) is the same as the movement we use in Yokomen-uchi shiho-nage (1). If we stay at the same spot we get the full strength of the hardest tip of the kick to our body of course, but by moving right-forward closer to the kicker and turning our body by 45 degrees it reduces the impact of the kick. And also, we use our hands from the little finger's side like in the stance of Shumatsu-dosa (1)'s first movement to flick the leg back – right hand on the kicker's inside-thigh and left hand on the shin. Again, the purpose is not to give the kicker an impact block but to take them off balance. So, if the kicker feels the pain from the block it means the correct aikido block is not applied. The timing is the key for this movement.

Well, it might be too complicated to comprehend the principle regardless of how many times you read about it, but it will come naturally by simply practicing hundreds and hundreds of times. Now, aikido-ka from yoshinkan brisbane dojo will never suffer from the nightmare of being kicked, not knowing what to do, but you should develop more confidence and pride in aikido.

In the end, I would like to mention our new lounge suite in the students' lounge room that arrived on the 7<sup>th</sup> of November. We were able to purchase it from the students' fund collecting money through demo raffle tickets, T-shirts and the DVD. So, we'd like to deeply thank all the students and especially those ladies and gentlemen in pink shirts, the parents from children's class. The new lounge would not be here without their energetic appeal of asking the audience to buy more raffle tickets. Thank you for your sincere devotion for the dojo!

OSU!

*Michiharu Mori*