



No. 195 November 2011

AIKIDO YOSHINKAN BRISBANE DOJO

Dojo: <http://yoshinkan.info>

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October Report

New members 2

Total number of adults training 55

Total number of teens & children training 48

Results of Getsurei Shinsa on 21st & 22nd October

4 th Kyu	Lisa Milne	9 th Kyu	Neil Mackenzie	4Y2 step	Lee Stemm
6 th Kyu	Jamie Pavis		London Foreman	2Y10 step	Joseph Stuart
8 th Kyu	John Rolfe		Darssan Balasingam	S1 step	Justin Charell
	Joshua Rolfe		Luca Fiori		

Events in November

1. Self-defence Class & Demonstration

- **Self-defence class; Saturday, 26th November 1:00pm~2:30pm**
- The class is not for public but only for the members.
- Everyone who wishes to participate in the self-defence class needs to register at the counter with **\$15** participation fee. (will be used for BBQ party and drinks)
- BBQ Party will be held after the demonstration and everyone including your family and friends are welcome to join us.
- **Demonstration; 2:45pm~**
- All of the black belts and Mori Sensei will display their demonstrations after the class. You can invite your family and friends for the demonstration.

2. Getsurei Shinsa

- Training starts, Friday 11th 7:15pm~
- Steps, Friday 18th 7:15pm~
- Shinsa, Saturday 19th 1:00pm~

3. Children and Teens demonstration, new colour belts awarding ceremony and X'mas Party

- **Saturday 19th 10.00am~**
- A small demonstration by all the children and teens will start at 10am.
- Awarding ceremony, some games and X'mas party are planned after the demo.
- Dojo will provide some soft drinks and a small gift for each child.
- Please bring a plate with you.

4. This Month's Holiday

- **Dojo's Holiday** 21st Monday

Sharing the feeling of Black Belts

Shodan

I guess my Shodan story begins just before I started Aikido back in 2008. I was feeling stuck and frustrated with my life at the time, having graduated from my undergraduate degree at university, and not being able to find full time employment in my area of study. A person I spoke to at the time suggested taking up martial arts, or joining a sports team to help with motivation and to get me out of the house. Lacking motivation at the time I avoided taking up either of their suggestions for several months, and continued to drift along on the same path. I was about to abandon the idea of taking up martial arts when my mother gave me some information on Aikido Yoshinkan Brisbane Dojo, and showed me the demonstration videos of sensei on the Aikido Yoshinkan Brisbane Dojo website. My mother was aware that I had contemplated taking up martial arts or a team sport, so she went about trying to convince me to join the Brisbane Dojo. I was reluctant at first but decided to give it a go.

Aikido was not quite what I had expected. I was quite confused and frustrated with the technical nature of Aikido at first. Simple things like doing Nikajo stretches during Taisho warm ups confused me and even sitting in seiza before and after class was quite uncomfortable for the first week or two. During the first month of training I was frustrated with not being able to do the techniques and contemplated quitting. I had done a bit running and cycling in the past, both of which I was good at, so not being good at Aikido frustrated me. Luckily



I elected to give Aikido a few months before deciding if I would continue or not. As I became more involved with Aikido and the Dojo I started to enjoy it more. Sitting in seiza was no longer uncomfortable and the warm up exercises became far easier to do. The supportive nature of everyone at the Dojo helped me overcome my initial frustration, and I started to accept that I would have to work hard to improve my Aikido. It was not something that could be achieved overnight.

Skip forward a few years to September 2010. This was the first opportunity I had to grade for Shodan after completing my Jun Shodan in June 2010. At the time I didn't feel confident enough to grade and decided to wait for the next grading. Unfortunately when the next grading arrived in December I was doing volunteer work in Ecuador, and yet again could not grade. March of 2011 came around; I felt that it was finally time to grade. I was busy studying a Masters at university at the time and got the training dates wrong. I turned up to grading training during the second week of training rather than the first! As I had been busy with university and had not attended many classes up until March I felt my Aikido had become rusty, and one week was not enough time to get up to scratch. Yet again I had to postpone grading. Then September 2011 came. I was finally ready to grade!

As I sat in seiza ready to grade on that late September afternoon I was more calm than normal. I believe this was for two reasons. Firstly I had decided to take it one technique at a time, to do my best and not worry about making mistakes, and secondly I think after so much delay and repeated grading training I felt well and truly ready to grade, and almost relieved to do so. Despite my calm manner when the time came to do the shitei-waza techniques I struggled to remember a few techniques as they were called. Surprisingly however, my body remembered what to do even though my mind struggled to fully picture the techniques. For me this experience backed up the martial arts principle of repetition, repetition, repetition. By doing each technique over and over again my body was able to remember the technique before I could picture them in my mind. Although I know that I might not always be able to think of the correct technique in my mind when I need to use it, I know that by doing each technique over and over in training my body should react accordingly to the situation.

For the people who have recently started Aikido and find it confusing and hard to remember techniques, all I can say is stick with it, practice makes perfect. As a black belt I still find Aikido confusing at times, and I am sure I am not alone. I still have the occasional mind blank where I can't remember the technique, which makes it interesting when teaching junior belts! Now that I have my black belt I feel that the journey has only just begun. Before concluding this article I would like to thank all the students who have helped me at the Dojo, there are far too many to mention here. The black belts have helped me improve my technique by giving me advice and support, while the white and Brown belts have helped me to learn as I have had to think of how to demonstrate the technique to them, in turn helping improve my own techniques. Last but not least I would like to thank both Sensei and Shuko-san who have helped me both on and off the mats during my time at the Dojo.

Osu!

Matthew Ryan

Nidan

Something that may seem painful and disappointing at first, can open doors to endless possibilities. I guess how successful your life becomes depends on how well you set your goals.

I remembered Mori Sensei wrote long time ago there are various kinds of people in the Dojo. Some are easy to get along with some are a bit difficult to get along with, If you always train only with a partner who is easy to deal with, you would not be able to improve either your technique or mental growth. The partner who is hard to train with can hone your spirit and technique its one of Sensei's word of wisdom, I always remember.

I received my Shodan almost two and a half years ago. And the grading test is still fresh in my memory. Shortly after the grading, the responsibility of helping the beginners and junior students to improve and work



on their techniques becomes one of my tasks. Which is good training for myself too, like a mirror image training.

The Yudan steps syllabus helped me practice and learned more techniques. Every step grading is exciting and frustrating, two, three or more techniques that I haven't learnt or done before and to re-learn the techniques I already knew.

Before the Sogo Shinsa, I hesitated a little bit to take my Nidan grading because of few reasons, injury, stamina(to go through the whole grading) and my wife was pregnant, almost due at the time. Shuko San reminded me that I will be busier for the next Sogo Shinsa because of the baby (Thank you Shuko San). I decided to take the grading.

During the Nidan grading test, I was very nervous (same as every other gradings) and worried about my injury and my stamina. Every time I feel like this, I always try to remember an old proverb 'clear your mind of all thoughts and you will find even fire cool'. I am glad that I did the grading and looking forward to the next step and challenges.

Now as a Nidan, I know that there is more frustration, excitement, challenges and many more to mention to overcome. All of this is essential for the development and growth of my techniques and good well being.

Thank you to all the students of Brisbane Yoshinkan for training with me to improve my techniques. Good luck to all of you especially to all newly arrive students. We are blessed and privilege to have a great Sensei here in Brisbane. Mori Sensei is strong, hard and strict but at the same time he is warm and kind.

Thank you Shuko San for your comforting nature and thank you Mori Sensei for your guidance and patience.

Osu,

Dennies Delos Santos.