

# NEWSLETTER

No.302 October 2020

AIKIDO YOSHINKAN BRISBANE DOJO

Dojo: <http://yoshinkan.info> Facebook: <http://bit.ly/dojofb>

<b>September Report</b>					
New members 1		Total number of adults training 41		Total number of children training 35	
<b>Results of Sogo Shinsa on 25<sup>th</sup> &amp; 26<sup>th</sup> September</b>					
<b>2<sup>nd</sup> Kyu</b>	Martin Fernandez	<b>6<sup>th</sup> Kyu</b>	Gregory Zavialov	<b>4Y4 step</b>	Cameron Blake
	Michael Mader		Gillis Carruthers	<b>2Y9 step</b>	Louis Chatfield
	Danielle Gravalin	<b>7<sup>th</sup> Kyu</b>	Perry Mader	<b>2Y8 step</b>	Duong Thai
<b>4<sup>th</sup> Kyu</b>	Hermaan Chen			<b>2Y1 step</b>	Simon Nordon
<b>5<sup>th</sup> Kyu</b>	Bernadith Woolley	<b>4Y5 step</b>	Murray Booth	<b>S4 step</b>	Tfer Newsome
<b>Events in October</b>			<b>2. Mini-Hajime classes</b>		
<b>1. Getsurei Shinsa</b>			• Saturday 17 <sup>th</sup> 1pm~2pm & 2.15pm~3pm		
• Training starts, Friday 23 <sup>rd</sup> 7:15pm~			• You can attend one class only or both.		
• Steps, Friday 30 <sup>th</sup> 7:15pm~			<b>3. This Month's Holiday</b>		
• Shinsa, Saturday 31 <sup>st</sup> 1:00pm~			• <b>Queen's Birthday:</b> Monday 5 <sup>th</sup> October		
			• <b>Dojo's Holiday:</b> Monday 2 <sup>nd</sup> November		

## A little more knowledge for your Aikido training

### Aikido is dead?!

As you know, we have uploaded many Aikido videos on YouTube since 2005 when one of our dojo students voluntarily started the channel for the dojo's benefit. There we see many people leave their comments, some are good and some are not. Simply, I am happy reading nice comments and try to ignore unpleasant ones. Or, I sometimes read certain comments believing to be nice but only finding out they are actually cynical. Well, my poor English serves me good, if I do not need to see the evil side of people. I remember when I met a family of one of the dojo student's wife. I had heard that all the family members trained in Taekwondo and they were highly critical of Aikido and condemned it completely. Yet, when we met each other they were very polite and shook my hand with full of smiles. Having this experience, I thought that those people who appeared to be enemies of Aikido could be nice and friendly.

However, one day, I saw a comment in Japanese over my 2012 demonstration, "Is this damn thing seriously saying a high-rank? Too slow to lock and nothing is like Aikido movement. The recent Aikido-ka who uploads videos on YouTube are scums only." Really harsh... I usually ignored this type of commentary, but I became curious to know what kind of people leave comments like this and what kind of purpose they have. I know myself that I never write any critical or negative comments on other instructors' videos out of respect. So, I humbly requested him as a general Aikido practitioner to let me watch his performance, wishing to find out if he practised Aikido too. He replied that he trained MMA and I should visit his club with an Aikido high-rank.

Here is his thought over Aikido,

"Aikido is extremely weak from the eyes of MMA and the demonstration was non-realistic but more the world of cartoon. Having no matches/fights, it cannot be called a martial art. After all, martial arts should kill or hurt or conquer an opponent. Aikido was dead when it disvalued winning or losing."

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Wow, his comment was beyond my expectation. Anyway, he was just a general member of the club but not an instructor. That made sense to me as professional people in any fields respect other professionals. Since I did not wish to argue with him, knowing it would go on for ever, I did not write any further. You know, I supposed to be quite mature by this age and not to react emotionally. But as I had things to say too, I wish to write my thoughts over his comment in this article.

First of all, he does not realise that our purpose of training is not the same and he believes that Aikido is in the same field as where he stands. "After all, martial arts should kill or hurt or conquer an opponent," is a perspective that belongs in the past when we lived in era of civil war, or it is only right for people whose purpose of training is simply winning a combative sports match. Disvaluing winning or losing does not mean our training is nonsense. In the aspect of skills, as you know and I have written many times, Aikido techniques are used by police officers and security officers in Japan and in the world in real life. Although it does not mean we win the fight against criminals. But rather, Aikido serves and contributes to society, which is the spirit of the samurai and Budo. Furthermore, the mental aspect is also very important; the purpose of training Budo is about disciplining and cultivating one's mind.

About 400 years ago when Edo feudal government was opened, the new government wishing to control the country in peace thought out a way to rule their samurais who then no longer had a reason for combat. They decided to use swordsmanship to cultivate the samurai's spirit rather than for simply killing. The government picked Yagyu-Shinkage-Ryu as its official style of swordsmanship since it placed importance on the spiritual development combining Zen philosophy into their art while their sword skills were recognised as one of the best.

Yagyu-Shinkage-Ryu has similarities with Aikido. Firstly, their training method has no matches but is *kata-geiko* (form training) based. Secondly, it uses the theory of 'Go no sen', that a combatant takes the initiative in a fight after the opponent has already started an attack; which means that it teaches a practitioner to read an opponent's movement and to counter-attack in accordance with the opponent's momentum. This theoretical technique, *Go no sen*, was absolutely effective but it was not easy to master since practitioners needed to train one's body to move against one's instinct, just like Aikido. Disciplining oneself to go through hard training day after day to master technique was possible only by mastering self and overcoming one's weakness. In this sense, conquering oneself instead of defeating others is the beauty of training Budo, I think. Earning mental strength through hard training helps us live a life in the way we want to live. This is the essential perspective of training. I believe that Aikido is vividly alive in this modern world, not just in the world of spiritualism.

Honestly talking, I was quite annoyed at the MMA guy's comment. Of course I was, as he called me scum and said Aikido was dead! Yet, instead of arguing back with anger, which I really wanted to do, I thought of sharing my thinking with you. I thank all of you for dedicating your time to read my thoughts. My wish is that Aikido training serves your life for the better.

OSU!

*Michiharu Mori*