

NEWSLETTER



No.236 April 2015

AIKIDO YOSHINKAN BRISBANE DOJO

Dojo: <http://yoshinkan.info>

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March Report

New members 0 Total number of adults training 56 Total number of children training 44

Results of Sogo Shinsa on 27th & 28th March

Jun-Yondan Sam Gray	5th Kyu Ross Macpherson Sushankar Khandabhattu	9th Kyu Ken Livingston David Herron Dimitrios Vagenas Makrina Totsika
Jun-Nidan Murray Booth		
1st Kyu Wikrom Tang Roland Thompson Kent Windress	6th Kyu Bastian Hartmann Neale Windress	
2nd Kyu Kerry Nicholson	7th Kyu Vaughan Gray Tobias Gordon	4Y10 step Ryan Slavin
3rd Kyu Andrew Crampton Viktor Ovcharenko	8th Kyu John Lam Simon Grant Joseph Byrne Jim Gordon	4Y12 step Lawrence Monforte
4th Kyu Charles Delaporte Peter Ternouth		4Y6 step Kaido Mori
		2Y3 step Dominic Hogan
		2Y1 step Lu Jiang

Events in April

1. Getsurei Shinsa

- Training starts, Thursday 16th 6:00pm~
- Steps, Friday 24th 6:00pm~
- Shinsa, Friday 24th 6:00pm~

2. This Month's Holiday

- Easter Holiday – Friday 3rd ~ Monday 6th
- Anzac Day – Saturday 25th

Coffee Break

An experiment of training one's reflexes

Around the age when I was going to kindergarten, the best present I had from my parents was a Japanese toy sword. It was, not made of plastic, but had a steel blade. Even children's toys were more realistic in the old days though it could have been pretty dangerous for kids to play with. I loved its shiny blade and carried it on my back as I rode on a bike, thinking I was so cool like a ninja I watched a show on TV called "Akakage (red shadow)" who was a popular cartoon hero, riding on a horse having his sword on his back, beating the bad guys. I carried the sword everywhere I went and treasured it so much. Even when I used it in a play swordfight with my little brother, we made sure to not strike too hard and to move slowly, to avoid chipping the blade and discussed how we were to brandish it beforehand.

As I loved swords from when I was so little, I naturally developed a habit of looking for good sticks on the way to and from primary school to swing them around instead of a sword. When I found two nice ones I would force my younger brother to play a swordfight with me. Yes I know, I was such a bothering brother to him. As I practiced the fights repeatedly I began to realise how difficult it was to avoid the stick scratching every part of my body, and I questioned myself how badly I would have been injured even in one fight if we were using the real samurai sword, which was like a large razor. I seriously began to wonder whether would survive the real fight if I were born in the civil war period. I do not know why I was so obsessed with the imagination of being in war scenes but I could not help myself, fantasising a lot about going through real swordfights, around that young age. One thing I know is that if my wife were there to find out about my daydreams, she would have snorted with derision at my man's adventurous spirit and say coolly; "Just do your homework." I am glad that she did not know me then.

The question of whether I was able to survive through the real samurai battles led me to create a method for training my reflexes as I became a teenager. I hung a fish line, with the lead weight on its end and adjusted to my face height, from the ceiling at home. I wrapped the weight round and round with vinyl tape to make it to a size of one third of the fist, and also fixed a similar one in the middle of the fish line. Punch the weight on the end and it swung very irregularly because of the other weight. As you can imagine now, you punch the end and dodge it as narrowly as possible, as it returns to your face forming irregular lines. Though you dodge it from the front it comes back from the back, then you dodge or punch again, repeating endlessly. Well, it was just a boy's silly playing but it did work very well to train my reflexes as a result.

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It was proved when I joined in a boxing gym when I became a high school student. There are quite some ways to defend punches in boxing and one of them is dodging the punch by moving one's head only either sideways or backward which needs an ability to read the line of the punches in time. Therefore it is an advanced technique. My coach was surprised to find me doing it naturally, just as I started to learn boxing. He thought I was a born boxer and got excited. But I knew it was all from my tedious training with the fish line over the previous three years, not natural at all, though I did not tell him the truth not wishing him to be discouraged. Admittedly, I felt an ecstasy of delight as I was called a man of "genius" in defence, and since I was never admired that highly in my life, I rather wanted to leave it in that way.

My trained reflexes gave me a trouble during the first year at the Yoshinkan Headquarters. It happened just before the graduation of Senshusei Course (riot policemen and uchi-deshi course) I was in, during a practically applied Aikido class by T Shihan. He asked me to kick him and as I did, his right arm swung fast at my face intending to perform Irimi-nage but my reflexes reacted, bobbing my face sideways, leaving him to strike thin air. I was surprised but he was more surprised as he meant to hit my face damagingly, knocking me out, from his years of experience. Well, it was not a good or right deed and I got in a massive trouble being scolded heavily afterwards... But this problem was difficult to fix. I was favoured by many senior uchi-deshis to be uke for them as I owned a rather large body for Japanese people, which was an advantage to make shite's techniques look more powerful. My biggest trouble was that my well-trained-reflexes from the fish line kept me dodging my face away just in time to avoid many Irimi-zuki during their demonstrations, even though my brain knew perfectly well that I was meant to receive them. Well, despite being in trouble for these impudent actions, at least I learnt a better way to make Irimi-zuki work. You know, I kept dodging shite's hands as they were visible, like the same line of straight boxing punch which taught me to slide the shite's hand upwards from uke's chest height to reach his chin. In this way, uke cannot see shite's hand coming towards his face so as to avoid the technique.

The fish line training as a result of my man's spirit when I was a boy turned out to be a quite effective method to sharpen up one's reflexes to become a Budo-ka. I intended to pass on this knowledge to my son when he was born but I could not be bothered to look for the materials I needed, as I did not know much about Brisbane nor had tools to set the device, so I decided to train him in a different way –making myself work as the fish line. I simply needed to attack him unexpectedly whenever I had a chance from any angle or at any time in everyday life. It could be in the mid of daily chatting, while cleaning, walking to bathroom and whenever he was unguarded I kicked or punched him. If he was too slow to defend then he had a bit of pain, of course it was not that strong as I was not abusing him, honestly. I quite often lurked in the dark and if he passed me without realising then I made sure to kick his butt. As he grew older he got very used to me hiding somewhere and his ability to sense dangers, or just to be cautious around the clock was getting well trained. He also learned naturally about the distance/space between his opponent (me!) so that he was alarmed at my presence whenever I stepped in the range of attacking distance, expecting punches or kicks to get him any moment.

Well, my son still loves me and appreciates deeply how he was treated (bullied?) during his childhood and he became pretty confident in his reflexes. That was proved when a game of carrying out a surprise attack was brought in for a while at his high school. He managed to block every kind of attack from all of his friends, for which he was admired as a psychic. The reflexes-training is still ongoing at home and because he now appreciates it so much he is sure to keep it as a family tradition for his future son.

Everyone, if you would like to protect your dear children from any sort of danger, I certainly believe training their reflexes can help them in many cases, even avoiding car accidents as such. You are welcome to create any method of training your own children, of course, but if you are to choose mine which will surely give you a positive outcome, just be careful not be accused of child abuse by your neighbours...

Osu,

Michiharu Mori