

NEWSLETTER

No.101 January 2004



AIKIDO YOSHINKAN BRISBANE DOJO

◎ Report of December

New members 3 Total number of adults training 59 Total number of children training 41

◎ Results of Sogo Shinsa on 20th

<u>Shodan</u>	David Allan	<u>Jun-3rd kyu</u>	Tadashi Oyaizu	<u>9th kyu</u>	Joshua McCormick
	Paul te Braak		Chris Zanelli		Chris Davis
	Greg Dickenson	<u>4th kyu</u>	Satomi Abe		Brendan Stuart
<u>Jun-shodan</u>	Sam Gray	<u>5th kyu</u>	Paul Neale	<u>4Y6 step</u>	Richard Diehm
	Julie Walsh	<u>6th kyu</u>	Yi-Chieh Chu	<u>4Y2 step</u>	Miki Yoshida
	Rosie Bannah		Matt Carpenter	<u>3Y7 step</u>	Lee Stemm
<u>1st kyu</u>	Eagle Kao	<u>7th kyu</u>	John Poulter	<u>3Y2 step</u>	Brent Weston
<u>2nd kyu</u>	Craig Sargent	<u>9th kyu</u>	Mishelle Shorthouse		Daniel McDonald
<u>3rd kyu</u>	Greg Beerling		Jasmine Burge	<u>2Y step</u>	Douglas Buchanan
	Matthew Fernyhough		Michael Lozinski	<u>2Y4 step</u>	Albert Lu
	Tyrone Whelan		Paul Vlaar	<u>S3 step</u>	Michael Bannah
<u>Jun-3rd kyu</u>	Murray Davis		Mark Frost		

◎ Events in January

1. Getsurei Shinsa

- ♦Saturday, 31st 1:00pm~
- ♦Shinsa training starts from Saturday 24th.

2. This Month's Holiday

- ♦26th Monday Australian Day

2004 YEAR PLAN

JANUARY	31st	Saturday	Getsurei Shinsa
FEBRUARY	28th	Saturday	Getsurei Shinsa
MARCH	27th	Saturday	Sogo Shinsa
APRIL	9th ~ 12th	Fri — Mon	Easter Holiday
	24th	Saturday	Getsurei Shinsa
MAY	29th	Saturday	Getsurei Shinsa
JUNE	26th	Saturday	Sogo Shinsa
JULY	3rd	Saturday	Getsurei Shinsa
AUGUST	22nd	Sunday	9th Annual Demonstration
	28th	Saturday	Getsurei Shinsa
SEPTEMBER	25th	Saturday	Sogo Shinsa
OCTOBER	2nd	Saturday	Senshusei (Hajime) Class
	30th	Saturday	Getsurei Shinsa
NOVEMBER	20th	Saturday	Getsurei Shinsa
	27th	Saturday	Special Class & Demonstration
DECEMBER	18th	Saturday	Sogo Shinsa

Coffee Break

Yoshinkan Aikido has been instructing both Tokyo Metropolitan and Riot police for about forty years. Since the Headquarters of Yoshinkan is located in Tokyo the main area Yoshinkan was covering was limited to Tokyo. All the policemen of Tokyo Riot Police know how practical, effective and painful Aikido techniques are from their own experiences.

When I was still teaching at the Headquarters in Tokyo, Saitama and Chiba (the environs of Tokyo) Riot Police decided to put Aikido in the curriculum of their training course hearing how great Aikido was from the Tokyo Riot Police. They asked the Headquarters to send out an uchi-deshi to hold a seminar to teach

their riot policemen. As you can guess, I was picked to go. This was back in 1993 when I was 27 years old. Although I was qualified high enough holding a rank of 5th dan and a title of Kyoshi to instruct Aikido on my own outside of the Headquarters, the age of 27 was still quite young in the martial arts field. And what's more, young men were recognised as underlings in Japanese police.

Two policemen, one was a senior class policeman and the other was just a driver but obviously older than me, who came to the Headquarters to pick me up to take me to the seminar premises couldn't hide their surprise looking at my face. When I entered their dojo a buzz occurred with expressions of contempt and surprise simply because I looked weak and young. The riot policemen there were all black belts of either Kendo or Judo and had a great confidence in their strength. Whenever I visited Tokyo Riot Police they were all waiting for me with respect and the fear of pain because they knew about the power of Yoshinkan Aikido. This time, however, was different in Saitama Riot Police. They lost their tension and the atmosphere of the dojo went loose looking at my face. I was concerned that this seminar was going to fail if they lost the humble attitude to learn from me or listen to me.

Think of a fight. If you can give a first forceful blow against your opponent you can have the initial control over the fight. I had to start my seminar by displaying a technique with a great impact on a noticeably strong man to force everyone to understand that this young weak looking man could be very dangerous. The technique I choose was Shiho-nage. I looked around the policemen and picked a powerful looking, leader-type policeman. Have you ever imagined how Shiho-nage works on people who do not know ukemi to protect themselves? I was very careful to not break his arm but still did the powerful Shiho-nage. The man smashed his head and back extremely badly giving everyone else a great shock. My plot worked very well and everyone obeyed my instructions tamely. After this my job seemed quite easy, just helping any of the pairs who were having trouble doing the technique by making a pair scream with my technique. It is really amazing to see how Aikido techniques actually work on general people who do not know Aikido. It is a good opportunity of learning to experience their natural movements and realistic falls against our techniques that we can't learn at our own Aikido dojo.

The seminar went on smoothly and it came time to teach Hiji-osae. I believed that they acknowledged my ability of Aikido and followed my instructions without question. It didn't, however, go that easily. There was a group who wanted to try out my real ability. They came in a very polite manner saying, "Could you please show us if the technique would work on him too?" with a smile, but it was obviously a challenge. 'He' was the representative of Saitama Riot Police for the all Japan Policemen's Judo competition. He was pretty big for a Japanese man with the size of 185cm tall and 100 kg weight (comparing to me, 180cm, 63kg then). They even gave me some conditions for this challenge that were; don't cause him any injuries as the competition is coming soon, don't set his pattern of attacks but leave it to him as free style, don't do any other techniques but do this Hiji-osae. What great conditions for him! Even the technique was limited to only one but no other options. I was disgusted by their attitudes but I couldn't say no to it, of course. They seemed very keen to get their prides back at any price through beating me up through the Judo expert.

There was no person to stop their behaviour and all the other policemen came around us to watch. Naturally I came face to face with the big man. He paused with his hands wide open which was the typical Judo stance and came closer in a motion to grab my gi. The distance between your opponents is really important in a fight. We keep two mats distance between our partner when we practice Aikido that is because the two mats distance is just right for all types of attacks (punches, kicks, grabbing's) to not quite reach. When you are in an inferior situation or if you would like to observe what your opponent is like you should simply keep this distance. It is essential to be always ready to do either attacks or defences by keeping the distance; if your opponent makes one step forward you make one step backwards, if he makes one step backwards you make one step forward.

I observed him carefully keeping the distance and I was so surprised to see him unguarded in many points. He was bigger than me as I explained. It seemed that he was trying to grab my collar to make an advantage over performing a Judo technique using his body size. Because of that, he was closing the distance with opening both his arms wide to wrap (hug) me. As he moved more to make an advantage for him, he was creating an advantage for me since the centre line of the body was totally unguarded, from my point of view. I was positioning myself with my right foot forward, both hands down and my body in an oblique stance, and then I took a big step forward with my right foot towards his centre and gave him an *uraken* (back hand punch) slowly at an angle so he could see it easily, all deliberately.

Usually there are two purposes in *uraken*. The first one is to do a technique more easily by causing a momentary flinch to your opponent, a small physical shock like making your opponent's eyes closed, with

an *uraken*. The second one is to prevent your opponent's attack by leading his defence with an *uraken* and also you can use the arm he used to block himself to lock a technique on. We never think to knock him out with just *urakens*, because minor damage or pain caused by *urakens* aren't good enough to tie down your opponent. Giving pain cannot be a goal in a fight but restraining your opponent thoroughly is. Specifically, it is almost impossible to knock your opponent out with just punches in a situation when your opponent is a lot bigger and heavier than yourself. —

Anyway, I threw my slow *uraken* with my right hand thinking he was going to block this punch with either his right or left hand rather than actually hitting his face. He naturally reacted to my sudden punch whisking my arm off to block it. At this moment, I knew I had won; the feeling of a hunter successfully trapping an animal. After this, it was easy; pushing my right hand against his left arm to hold it while my left hand grabbed his wrist and pulled it straight down as my right hand positioning on his elbow, as I rotated my right hand very sharply in a small circular motion I dropped all my weight on his elbow (similar to Jodanzuki Ikkajo Osae but dropping on the elbow instead of rotating the shoulder). The big man collapsed down hard beautifully with a huge impact as he screamed loud. Honestly talking, I didn't know the technique could be so powerful and I was very fascinated about the Aikido technique at that moment.

If it was a part of normal training it was done. But because it was a challenge, I didn't want him getting up and attacking me for another chance. I made sure he was finished by restraining his neck with my left knee, my right knee pressed hard on his back and locked his left arm in L-shape so that he had no chance to get up. If he tried to do so, I simply could give more pressure on his neck or lock his left arm harder.

Well, I managed to restrain the big man with my skill. But there was one more thing I had to manage. That was to convince the rest of other riot policemen of my ability, otherwise they would come one after another to challenge me. If I sat on the back of the restrained man excitedly to express my power or victory the rest of thirty policemen would obstinately come to beat me. I had to divert their begrudging feeling. For this, it can never be strength against the strength but treating others kindly with respect and a smile. While I was restraining the big man, I explained with a kind smile that I didn't win because I was strong but because of the great effectiveness of the Aikido technique, trying to not hurt his pride nor make it a big deal. If I could convince him of the effectiveness of the Aikido technique he would be amazed and impressed deeply even though he had actually lost the challenge. This is based on the teaching, "Harmonise it, when you are confronted." Enjoyably, pleasantly, happily with any matters...

Hurting someone's pride by winning never makes anyone happy. The Aikido of my Master Gozo Shioda never made his ukes miserable but satisfied and pleasant while they were groaning with pain. In fact, I saw that the big policeman was simply amazed at the fact he couldn't get up and he was smiling bitterly at himself. There was no hostility any more. True Aikido techniques are just enjoyable. When shite is purely enjoying the art of Aikido without vicious intentions to beat up one's uke, the uke feels the pure enjoyment of shite and uke enjoys it too. Uke, however, feels unpleasant and hostile to shite when shite has the intention of beating up his uke. The status of shite's mind is so important. Well, I experienced various troubles in this seminar, but everyone in the class enjoyed the Aikido techniques at the end and the seminar was closed successfully.

The very next day, the Judo instructor of the Saitama Riot Police visited the Headquarters. He told us about a greenhorn who easily held down the best Judo-ka in the Saitama Riot Police. This news had been spread all over. I was quite satisfied with his words being a professional Aikido instructor, even though I didn't like the word 'greenhorn'. When you train with others in the dojo it is hard to recognise your ability or improvement as the rest of your training partners are progressing too. Like us, uchi-deshis, who can have experiences of teaching other martial arts practitioners or policemen often get fresh surprises to find out their own power (obviously Aikido power). For those who have been having doubt about their progress or ability, and you don't really have opportunity to try it out outside the dojo, please take my episode as your own. The fact is that you are getting stronger without you being conscious.

Michiharu Mori