



No. 120 August 2005

AIKIDO YOSHINKAN BRISBANE DOJO

## Report of July

New members 2

Total number of adults training 76

Total number of children training 65

### Results of Getsurei Shinsa on 23<sup>rd</sup> July

Jun-3 <sup>rd</sup> Kyu	Christopher Swinton	8 <sup>th</sup> Kyu	Mark Davies	2Y8 step	Shelly Hope
5 <sup>th</sup> Kyu	Sharon Lam		Adrian Stuart	2Y2 step	Eagle Kao
6 <sup>th</sup> Kyu	Jamie Baker		Amy Hughes	S5 step	Yukari Watson
	Aaron Stewart		Peter Chant	S3 step	Myles Frost
	Matthew Pethig	9 <sup>th</sup> Kyu	Greg Smith	S1 step	Matt Carpenter
	Taj Deniederhausen		Danika Royle		Brett Hampson
	Nathan Harding	3Y1 step	Matthew Watson		Lloyd Gainey
7 <sup>th</sup> Kyu	Sean Collins	2Y12 step	Albert Lu		

## Events in August

### 1. 10<sup>th</sup> Annual Demonstration on 21st August

- ◆ 9:00am Start packing up at the dojo
- ◆ 11:00am Adults' Rehearsal
- ◆ 12:00pm Children's Rehearsal
- ◆ 12:30pm Doors open and warming up
- ◆ 1:00 ~ 3:30pm The Demonstration
- ◆ 3:30pm Awarding ceremony and taking a photo
- ◆ 4:00pm Remove all the mats and clear the venue.
- ◆ 5:30pm Dinner Party at the evening

### 2. Adults' Rehearsal for the demonstration

- ◆ 20th August, Saturday 1:00pm~
- ◆ Everyone is expected to attend the rehearsal.

### 3. Children's Rehearsal for the demonstration

- ◆ 20th August, Saturday 10:00pm~

### 4. Getsurei Shinsa

- ◆ 27<sup>th</sup> August, Saturday 1:00pm~
- ◆ Shinsa training starts on 22<sup>nd</sup> Monday.

### 5. This Month's Holiday

- ◆ Dojo's Holiday 29<sup>th</sup> Monday & 30th Tuesday August

## Sharing the feeling of Black Belts

The power of the mind – it can empower us or destroy us - Choose

***“Sow a thought and you reap an act;  
Sow an act and you reap a habit;  
Sow a habit and you reap a Character;  
Sow a Character and you reap a destiny.”***

One of the most insightful moments that happened to me leading up to my 3<sup>rd</sup> Dan grading was the Wednesday night before my grading. It was my responsibility to take the bow out at the completion of the class. I remember having two lines of students in seiza and when Sensei turned to face the shinzen for the bow out, my mind went completely blank. At that moment my body was filled with anxiety and a feeling of not being worthy to be the highest ranked student at that moment. It seemed an eternity and yes, the words did finally come to me. “*shinzen ni rei*”, *Sensei ni rei*.”

What was going on, I had taken the bow out many times during the day time classes, what was the meaning to this, what was the lesson for me to learn. Maybe it was preparing me for my next level. That night I didn't sleep, I had a really restless night and laid awake most of it. I had been putting so much pressure on myself that I had become my own enemy. My thoughts were – “you can't teach, you can't do the techniques and you are supposed to go for 3<sup>rd</sup> Dan in three days time – get real.”

I got the lesson. It was to surrender to myself and to accept me as who I am, and to know that I had trained hard and committed to my aikido leading up to my grading. I started to treat myself with respect and kindness, and through this my mind had completely changed the very next day. I began to feel more confident when teaching the junior grades, my training was focused and I again started to enjoy my aikido. I started to believe in myself again. The power of the mind – It can destroy us or empower us and we do have the power of choice as to which we want to use.



During this period of transition I had a lot of encouragement from many students and teachers within the dojo. The group of 9<sup>th</sup> kyu students became my teacher by being patient with my awkwardness with my teaching skills. I thank the two students who came up to me at the end of training and thanked me for my patience and kindness towards them. At that moment it meant such a lot to me – so by saying something at the right time can have such a powerful impact upon a person. I thank Evan, Douglas, Julie, Shuko and Sensei for encouraging me and just having the time to understand me, ensuring that I use my own power to make my own choices and take that responsibility of that decision. I also thank Jason E. for the chats I have had with him throughout the year that have made a difference to me, as many a time I have thought about leaving the dojo.

On grading day again I was nervous and had plenty of time to think about what was going on as I was the last to grade on that day. I was able to calm myself clear my mind, become completely focused and present and the techniques came. You see it wasn't just about during the technique it was the lead up to the grading that was the most valuable to me. I demonstrated my skill of aikido on the day and was pleased that I had committed 100% at the time. My spirit was strong, my mind as clear and I was able to focus on my uke and to the voice of Sensei as he called out the techniques.

I started to ask myself what was the attitude (the mind set) of a 3<sup>rd</sup> Dan Aikido Student. How was I going to approach my aikido? What kind of student do I want to become? I have strong role models in my life and I thought "what kind of characters and values does Sensei display". He shows humility, patience, kindness, firmness, understanding, commitment, intuitiveness, light heartedness, giving, fun, discipline, sense of purpose and of course great technique and an understanding of the art. I think that some of these values would be a start for me to implement into my training and life.

I have never imagined myself having a 3<sup>rd</sup> Dan ranking in any art –I look forward to growing into my rank and to embrace commitment and peace.

***"Whatever you can do  
Or dream you can do .... Begin it.  
For boldness has genius, power  
And magic in it."***

Lee Stemm

Receiving Nidan in Aikido is one of my many dreams that are in the process of coming to reality. My interests towards Aikido were started long before my training started, which was triggered by various factors. Some of the many factors include, as an Asian, I always wanted to learn one form of "our own" Asian art to come face to face with myself, appreciating the culture and what I would consider "precious gifts" passed down from the older generations. Secondly, I grew up during my abusive school years opposed to the value of conformity have led to many rather unpleasant consequences, which made me realise it is vital to be able to protect yourself or your beloved ones when situations arises. Then comes to the question why Aikido? Well, mainly is a personal tastes that I found Aikido as it is a more sophisticated and artistic/beautiful type of martial arts; not just merely throwing rough punches and kicks.

When I think back now, it is funny that I used to think myself as a "pretty alright" fighter, however when my training began and through contemplating sensei's teachings, it had changed my perspectives in everyway. Training was a bit afflictive in the beginning because mainly as a student and music player; I have never done many things previously that are physically demanding. However, with practice, persistence, and passion make perfect, and mistakes also often lead to constructive revelations. In the end, not only I learnt Aikido as martial arts, it brought benefits to my personal life like, variety in lifestyle; mind broadening experiences; developing tolerance, empathy and open mindedness.



Lastly, I am a person with not much in words but I would like to take this opportunity to thank and show my appreciation to sensei, music used to be my only escape but you opened my eyes to and nurtured me with this new form of art. And it also has been fun training with you these past years, thank you very much for putting a smile on my face. Shuko, for being there and being kind when I needed to purge my feelings from time to time. And all the students who have trained with me, some of you guys may be tough on me but I always learnt something in the end.

Osu!

**Eric Kwok**

I would like to take this opportunity to say thank you to all junior and senior students for your patience and support during my journey to Nidan. Thank you Douglas for the advice you were always willing to give me as I followed you towards Nidan. To my three training partners Douglas, Lee and Eric thanks for your commitment to training during Sogo Shinsa. I would also like to say thank you to Richard for being my uke on grading day and Albert for being such a great training partner, uke and shite on so many occasions.

**Matthew Watson**

I'm sitting in room 614 of the Mater Mother's Hospital barely able to stay awake after two nights of little sleep. Beside me is our three day old daughter Sophie who thankfully is sleeping well.

I'm still coming to terms with the events of the last few days and the new responsibilities of being a father and what effect it will have on our life. As I think about these things there's one other thought in the back of my mind and that is the need to write something for the Dojo newsletter.

The fact I'm even thinking of Aikido at a time when all my thoughts and feelings are focused around one small child says a lot about how much Aikido means to me. It's been the one constant where no matter what else is going on in my life, I can always rely on the beauty and simplicity of Aikido to focus and inspire me.

Seeing my daughter come into this world has been a good reminder of what things are important in life. Aikido plays a big part in this because it teaches me about harmony with those around us and how important it is to have a balance in everything we do.

It's been a great pleasure to have reached the grade of Nidan and it's an honour to achieve this under the instruction of such a highly respected and admired teacher. I feel the best way I can thank Sensei and all those who have helped along the way is to continue my commitment to better understanding myself and Aikido.

Osu!

**Douglas Buchanan**