



## Report of November

New members 4      Total number of adults training 63      Total number of children training 65

### Results of Getsurei Shinsa on 22<sup>nd</sup> November

Jun-3 <sup>rd</sup> Kyu	Akiko Nicholls	8 <sup>th</sup> Kyu	Daniel Treanor	2Y8 step	Aaron Stewart
5 <sup>th</sup> Kyu	Wayne Harris	9 <sup>th</sup> Kyu	Murray Booth	2Y6 step	Alastair Wilkinson
	Matthew Ryan		Dane Dunlop	S2 step	Adam Sawyer
7 <sup>th</sup> Kyu	Jiro Sumitomo		Leonardo Maldonado	S1 step	Dennies Delos Santos
	Oliver Bradshaw		Michael Bannah		

### Results of Children's Shinsa on 22<sup>nd</sup> November

ShoDan	Julian Ladd Marek Coleman	5 <sup>th</sup> Kyu	Selina Lim Tor Brookes	7 <sup>th</sup> Kyu	Monica Margarit Thomas Oldham	
3 <sup>rd</sup> Kyu	Beth-Leeander Coleman	6 <sup>th</sup> Kyu	Parangana Narula	8 <sup>th</sup> Kyu	Sebastian Kelly	
	Ben MacMahon		Elliana Kelly		Joshua Colaiacomo	
	Elisabeth Owens		Nicolas Margarit		Benjamin Oldham	
	Alex Sargent		Dane Stokes		Pagan Blight	
	Anita Lim		Bradley Cornell		Ally Harman	
	Brandon Cheng		Saya Barnes	9 <sup>th</sup> Kyu	Reuben Fullerton	
4 <sup>th</sup> Kyu	Anthony Gillespie		Benjamin Dreyer		Django Stegman	
5 <sup>th</sup> Kyu	Nathaniel Kelly		Yanni Michellis		Ambrose Boylan	
	Medhavi Praphakorn	7 <sup>th</sup> Kyu	Martin Vu		Izaiah Fergusson	
	Sage Springett			Bailey Evans-Huf		Ashlee Walsh
	Jade Stokes			Adam Gillespie		Elke Dean
	Luqman Nul Hakim		Nicolas Michellis			
	Gwen Gillespie		Anika Brookes			

### Events in December

#### 1. Sogo Shinsa

- ◆ Saturday, 20<sup>th</sup> 1:00pm-
- ◆ Shinsa training starts from 6<sup>th</sup> Saturday.

#### 2. Kids Class Holiday through X'mas and New Year's Day

- ◆ No kids' class will be held during school holidays. The last day of this year's children's class is the 11<sup>th</sup> December Thursday. The first class in the new year is on 28<sup>th</sup> January Wednesday.

#### 3. This Month's Holiday of Adults' class

- ◆ The dojo is closed from 25<sup>th</sup> to 28<sup>th</sup>, and is open on 29<sup>th</sup> & 30<sup>th</sup>, and is closed again between 31<sup>st</sup> - 4<sup>th</sup> of January.

#### ◆ DECEMBER & JANUARY

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30	31	1	2	3
4	5	6	7	8	9	10

## A bit of knowledge for Aikido

### The title of 'Shihan'

The very last month of 2008 has arrived. When I look back through the year, I recognise that the year 2008 ended as a landmark year for my Aikido life, receiving the title of 'Shihan' at last.

Twenty-four years ago, I was driving my father's car heading to Tokyo to begin a new life as an uchi-deshi of an Aikido Headquarters at the age of eighteen straight after I graduated from high school. On the continued highway it turned up suddenly filling the front glass of the car. Mt Fuji, the highest mountain in Japan, appeared right in front of me for the first time in my life and since the grandeur of it was so enormous it even impressed my twisted heart so deeply. It made my heart immediately promise to become the greatest Aikido-ka in Japan.

My favourite Samurai, Ryoma Sakamoto whose picture is up on the dojo's wall, saw Mt Fuji on the way going to Tokyo (Edo at that time) to learn Kenjutsu (the art of sword) from his hometown who was also at the age of eighteen. He was also deeply moved by the grandeur of the mountain and he resolved to become the greatest swordsman in Japan. While he was training severely, aiming for his ambition he kept singing a verse to himself. "Once a man sets a resolution and leaves home, he never returns even if he has died before reaching his goal."

Even though the times were different I felt a similar sense in this verse as a man who left home to achieve mastering a martial art and this verse reminds me of my young, green age. I was so excited about my unknown future whether I was able to climb up the big mountain called Aikido Yoshinkan to the top keeping my resolution. However, there was a question of how to judge

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the level of the mountain as Aikido did not have competitions and it was hard to decide where the top was. Ryoma Sakamoto came through to the front among many students in the famous Chiba dojo and won the dojo tournaments in Edo (Tokyo) a few years later after he began training, and he was recognised as the top of the swords art officially.

While I was still not sure how to achieve the top of Aikido Yoshinkan, I received Kancho (Gozo Shioda) Sensei's order to challenge 5<sup>th</sup> Dan Shinsa after only two years and six month of receiving my 4<sup>th</sup> Dan rank. By receiving the rank of 5<sup>th</sup> Dan at the youngest age in the shortest training time in Japan, in June 1993 I felt like I sort of reached the top of the mountain in my circumstances, and I left Japan to open a dojo overseas which was the first case of an uchi-deshi over 5<sup>th</sup> Dan rank to do so. (Achieving 5<sup>th</sup> Dan is very difficult even in Japan and it was even more difficult for uchi-deshis, as our case was nothing to do with the period of training but we had to wait until Kancho Sensei mentioned to do so. Besides, the 5<sup>th</sup> Dan certificate was the first certificate written by Kancho Sensei directly and I believed it was the testimony of being rated as a first-class Aikido-ka. I was the last uchi-deshi to receive the very last certificate from Gozo Shioda Kancho Sensei.)

Well, I felt as if I climbed up to the top of the mountain by attaining the testimony of being the first-class Aikido-ka from my Master but there was one more thing on my mind to conquer the summit of my mountain. 'Shihan' was the supreme title every martial arts instructor dreamed to attain, and that was the title I thought I should not dream about as it was not possible to obtain after I quit the Headquarters. You may not understand what it really means to be a *Shihan*. The closest feeling you can guess is attaining the black belt as a martial art's student. Numbers of people start learning martial arts and only the people who went through all the hard training can be instructors, and only one or two out of thousands of instructors can achieve the title of *Shihan*. It is a common sense for Japanese people that only the Senseis who are called *Shihan* are the top instructors. Whenever I had general visitors from Japan and I introduced myself as an Aikido instructor, they always asked me if I was a *Shihan*. When they found out I was not a *Shihan* then all of them judged me as a second-class instructor which depressed me each time.

Attaining the supreme title was something very honourable and delightful as being a man feeling a sense of great accomplishment. To my wife being a woman, *Shihan* did not mean much as she was not interested in honour or glory thinking it was not giving any merits to the dojo or it's students anyway. Or, it was even a demerit for her as she had to pay nearly \$2,000 from the fund. I wouldn't mind paying even more for the supreme title that I longed for, for the last twenty-four years since I began training Aikido aiming for the summit. I held my *Shihan* certificate in my hand having a glass of wine in the other hand and smiled to myself with a great self-satisfaction (while Shuko was taking a shower as I did not wish her to see me smirking to myself). This moment was in the prime of my Aikido life, I felt, by reaching the summit of Aikido Yoshinkan as I promised to the grand Mt. Fuji that day.

One day, around this time when I fancied myself as a great master of Aikido I had to experience a painful accident. On the day there were five or six students waiting for the third class after the advanced class. I threw the first two powerfully, getting a bit tired for the next two, and it got harder to breathe for the fifth uke but I hid my panting breath quite well acting as if I was totally cool. I kept going with the last uke, 'A' Shodan, throwing him for the first ten or so techniques without difficulties and I performed a *sudori* (duck under uke's body) against his Shomen-zuki towards the end of my Jiyu-waza session. There, although the technique of a *Shihan* could not be unskilled I received a direct hit of his right knee which carried all of his strength to do a good Shomen-zuki into my left ribcage. He weighed about 25-30 kg more than me and the impact on my thin body was more than I could hide. The moment I tried to stand up from the *sudori* position I collapsed down to the mats from my left knee and I had to support my bent body with my right fist and a groan leaked. I could not move for a few seconds from the pain but I stood up eventually and kept throwing him for another twenty techniques by sheer force of will. I somehow managed to finish the third class though feeling very embarrassed. It was like a Seventh Dan got a knock out from a Shodan.

What was the summit of the mountain I thought I had reached? A man, a martial artist, should not be smug. I, of course, had to reflect on my mind status as well as my techniques by experiencing this accident. It was good timing the next day, as Chris, a radiologist, came to the dojo. I consulted him on my injury explaining how it happened. He simply said my rib(s) were either broken or cracked. The price of my smugness was very high and I had to suffer from it for more than three weeks while I kept taking daily classes. Well, my devotion in improving Aikido both physically and mentally will go on endlessly, for very sure. I appreciate 'A' Shodan thoroughly for letting me recognise my smugness.

Since I opened the dojo in Brisbane I have experienced thirteen annual demonstrations and received 6<sup>th</sup> Dan, 7<sup>th</sup> Dan and the title of *Shihan*. All the credits of my achievements go to my past and current students who trained me to the present state and I express my deep gratitude to each member. I shall keep climbing up the limitless expanse of Mt. Aikido with my present and future students, step by step with a humble mind.

OSU!

*Michiharu Mori*