



No. 189 May 2011

AIKIDO YOSHINKAN BRISBANE DOJO

Dojo: <http://yoshinkan.info>

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April Report					
New members 3		Total number of adults training 65		Total number of teens & children training 37	
Results of Getsurei Shinsa on 15th & 16th April					
6th Kyu	Steven Slaveski	9th Kyu	Michael Barns	3Y4 step	Lawrence Monforte
	Matt Hede		Ben Greenup	3Y3 step	Francis Hollingworth
8th Kyu	Comila Roebuck		Gareth Badcock	2Y9 step	Kaido Mori
	Duong Thai		Blake Carney	2Y2 step	Murray Booth
	Lisa Milne		5Y1 step	Brent Weston	S5 step
			4Y2 step	Sam Gray	
Events in May					
1. Getsurei Shinsa			2. This Month's Holiday of Adults' class		
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Training starts, Friday 20th 7:15pm~• Steps, Friday 27th 7:15pm~• Shinsa, Saturday 28th 1:00pm~			<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Labour Day –Monday 2nd• Dojo's Holiday – Monday 28th		

Sharing the feeling of Black Belts

Godan (5th dan)

As I sit here in front of a blinking screen contemplating what I would like to say regarding my recent 5th Dan grading, I am for once lost for words.

I will do my best to relay my feelings:

What a humbling interesting journey it has been, my Aikido life, Sensei has taught me much more than techniques, he has taught me the meaning of humility, honour and perseverance. When I began my training 15 years ago, I had little intention of grading to any great level. I simply watched Sensei and Shuko, teaching my son and was so taken by the tradition and authenticity of a graceful Japanese art that I decided (with a little prompting from Sensei and Shuko) to start training. The Dojo was young then and Sensei was scarier then, than even now he had a stare that could melt concrete and a voice that although rarely used, could shatter the hardest Martial Artist. He was truly a Japanese Instructor, no prisoners, no apologies and no excuses.

I know it's hard to believe now right?

Well understand Sensei came from hard Headquarters training, under one of the greatest teachers. He was mat hardened, and mind hardened. He had little time for anyone not committed or serious about his true love..Aikido. To be honest that is the exact quality I liked the most, I like hard, I like challenging and I enjoy the pain. This was a new country, with different people and different expectations of part time martial arts. Shuko spent a lot of time in those days explaining to people what the true Sensei was about, a great deal of that time to me, thank you Shuko.



I recall a prime example of the Sensei of old, I am happy to share with you. I was a 3rd Kyu and Sensei had asked me to be one of his ukes for a demonstration at a Karate Tournament that was being held at the Convention Centre. We had been training hard in class and in 3rd class, when 1 day a meeting was called of the ukes with Sensei and Shuko translating. The conversation went something like this..." Understand that the demonstration must not be interrupted in any way, if for some reason you are knocked unconscious or injured, the next person will run on and take over while the other ukes will drag off the injured uke".

So imagine how we (all the ukes felt) Terrified on one hand and challenged on the other to last the demonstration out and not be the person being dragged off. Let me be very clear, Sensei, meant every word of it, this was not designed as a scare tactic, it was simply Sensei telling us exactly what he expected from his ukes. However in all the time I have trained with Sensei, regardless of how breathtaking he is as an Aikidoka, he is also one of the most humble, this should be a lesson for all, greatness is not a ticket to arrogance. Perseverance is a quality required to become a true Aikido practitioner, for without it you are lost. If you come from other martial arts training like I did, you have to fight the instinct to revert to what you feel is comfortable. This is where perseverance is key and reminds me of this Japanese saying, *Keizoku wa chikara nari* roughly translated: Perseverance is strength.

So thank you Sensei and indeed Shuko for your perseverance with me, the counselling and encouragement you have shown me personally has been the key to my Aikido success and in some way my personal success. I will do my best to live up to your example in the Dojo and in life.

To all the students, as a relic of the old Dojo, let me say the level in our Dojo of now is breathtaking and I am proud to still be part of it, Sensei has built this as you would a house with the best foundation and we are all very fortunate because of this. I know I am seen as the scary Black belt in the Dojo, I have things to say sometimes that people don't like to hear. Please be aware that I do and say these things to maintain some of the Dojos original character, and always for the right reasons, the integrity and discipline of our Dojo.

To my Ukes, thank you, I am humbled for the help with training and your willingness to allow me to practice with you. Lawrence, you have the true spirit of Dojo in you, I cannot thank you enough for you help and your unwavering support. I will attempt to repay you with hard training and any knowledge I can pass to you.

To my family, thank you to my wife Dee, for being supportive and allowing me the time to train even though sometimes I have not been home for long. To my bro Jason always supportive and always a pleasure to train with you, would be nice to see you a little more on the mats, the Dojo needs you.

Osu

Emmanuel Economidis