



No.201 May 2012

AIKIDO YOSHINKAN BRISBANE DOJO

Dojo: <http://yoshinkan.info>

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April Report

New members 1 Total number of adults training 60 Total teens & children training 40

Results of Getsurei Shinsa on 27th & 28th April

Jun-Shodan	Justin Charell	9th Kyu	Andreas Antonion	3Y8 step	Francis Hollingworth
Jun-3rd Kyu	Darssan Balasingam			2Y6 step	Peter Hills
5th Kyu	Andrea Troncoso Salas	3Y10 step	Ryan Slavin	S4 step	Mai Bui
8th Kyu	Jessica Medwedew		Lawrence Monforte		

Events in May

1. Getsurei Shinsa

- Training starts, Friday 18th 7:15pm~
- Steps, Friday 25th 7:15pm~
- Shinsa, Saturday 26th 1:00pm~

2. This Month's Holiday of Adults' class

- Labour Day – Monday 7th
- Dojo's Holiday – Monday 28th

A little more knowledge for your Aikido

“Believe Aikido!”

When our dojo was still at Fish Lane about twelve years ago, I held a class for a troop of Queensland Special Forces/Police to teach them practical Aikido techniques. This came about through a reference from a student of the dojo who was a Karate black belt policeman. I was pretty surprised when I saw their minibus arrived at the dojo that was painted in navy blue with all the windows covered by metal bars. When I taught Japanese Riot Policemen I visited their home, a building where they lived and trained, and they wore either sportswear or dogi in a casual atmosphere. But here in Brisbane, about a dozen policemen trotted out of the minibus in full gear and lined up in order outside the dojo. They wore a navy blue overall, a specially-treated helmet, a mask underneath hiding their faces, a bulletproof vest and boots. It was pretty formal. A commander asked me to allow them to train in this gear as they were what they had to wear in their actual work environment. While I was looking at them in amazement the neighbours (shop owners and workers) began making noise, “What happened, what’s going on?” It was natural that they thought something serious or a major crime happened. So, poor Shuko, she had to visit the shops around explaining that we were having a class to comfort their concerns in a peaceful manner with a smile.

I, of course, had to ask them to take their boots off for protecting the dojo’s mats and I think they took their helmets off too but kept their masks on (no wonder Shuko said she could not remember their faces when we had a chat about this class to write this article.) Well, they came on the mats but they did not know me and I was sure they had a doubt in me and my ability. The first technique in this kind of seminar is always set in my teaching method, Shiho-nage, and making sure to pick someone who looks the toughest in the group. Shiho-nage is the most suitable technique to make them instantly alert giving the impression of how dangerous and severe Aikido techniques can be. I picked a man that suited my rule and asked him to attack me in any form. As I blocked his attack I locked him in Shiho-nage, not the basic version but the self-defence version in one motion. The technique worked very pleasantly (or very painfully and shockingly to the other side) as it always did in my experiences. Being able to convince the strongest man of the effectiveness of my technique and showing the astonishment on his face to the rest of the members that promised the success of the class already at the beginning.

After the first technique they showed me a high respect and the class went on very smoothly. They trained how to restrain the opponents at a stroke using Ikkajo, Nikajo, Sankajo, Ude-garami and Kote-gaeshi in applied style, all the techniques that are familiar to us. Well, after receiving these hard joint locks over an hour you could hear their inner screams having had enough pain through wrists, elbows, shoulders and all over their bodies. As it looked enough I asked if the leader had any special requests to be taught in particular before the class finished. What he said was they did not use empty hand skills



usually as they had weapons but they were in trouble if the weapon was held by the criminal. So, he got a submachine gun out and pointed at me in a close distance (I'm sure the bullets were not in it). I, by my Aikido instinct, moved my body forward in *irimi* angle along the gun and threw him in Sokumen Irimi-nage taking his gun into my hand. He was flat on the floor in shock not knowing what happened. He said he never felt and experienced that kind of sensation. I taught them not to focus on their guns as they tended to fight over guns pulling to each other but focusing on knocking over the opponent leaving the gun where it was. They practiced with bokken and jo instead of machineguns and broke two of dojo's important weapons!, too much muscular power... Shuko had some chats with members after the class and she was very pleased to hear that they all mentioned how amazed they were at Aikido techniques and my (the Sensei's) skills that they described as the most effective techniques they were ever taught among all other styles.

Whenever I taught these kinds of riot policemen or special troops I was convinced of how appropriate Aikido was for them. It is just a common sense that a violent man or a rioter gets even wilder if he is kicked or punched as he does not want to yield to the authority. But applying a joint lock to restrain him is the easiest and fastest solution no matter how aggressive he is as he cannot move anymore or if he tries to move, more pain prevents him from moving. Groundwork techniques are effective only in one-on-one situation and being restricted by rules. You can imagine that lying down yourself on the ground is a fatal behaviour when there are tens or hundreds of rioters or terrorists around. I often heard from Tokyo Riot Policemen who trained all sorts of different fighting arts that Aikido techniques suited most in their realistic situations.

We who train Aikido in these modern days sometimes wonder what kind of techniques our masters used in the old days. Reading various literature gives us impressions of how powerful they were and how miraculous the techniques were that they performed. I do not know about Sokaku Takeda or Ueshiba Morihei well as I never met them but I know Gozo Shioda who was the direct descendent of this orthodox Aikido line. Though I learned techniques from him directly I idolised him out of deep respect and believed that the techniques he applied in the books were something special and legendary. I, however, have begun to change my perspective from studying and training Aikido longer and longer. The other day when I was reading one of my Master's old books there was an episode around the time when the Yoshinkan style was just established. Aikido was not known by public at all then and therefore he visited different places to demonstrate Aikido. As he did not have uchi-deshis yet he had to pick someone from the participants of his seminar who were usually pretty challenging having the background of either Judo or Karate. The first technique he chose seemed to be Shiho-nage in a violent version (the type of technique we practice at the dojo's self-defence seminar in November) making sure to damage the challenger's shoulder and elbow, you know it was in the old days when a rough manner was accepted in this kind of field. When I read this book years and years ago I felt the technique was something very special that only the genius of the art was able to perform. But what he showed was using all the standard Aikido techniques, I realise now.

What our Aikido masters performed was not some sort of extraordinary techniques but very common and basic techniques that we train in everyday class, though the depths of level were very different from ours of course. Or some of our techniques might be even more practical and powerful becoming improved by eliminating unnecessary motions and strength. Master Gozo Shioda who had lots of real fighting experiences always said to us, his uchi-deshis, "Believe Aikido!" He knew that we did not have enough experiences in the real life other than on the mats to convince ourselves of the unfailing strength of Aikido. I think you, dear my dojo's students, feel in the same way. Trust me, even my limited experiences but through teaching these special forces and police tell me Aikido is powerful in the reality. You know, I am thin and powerless in comparison with most of you and I can still make Aikido work on a bigger muscular man. It's not because of me but it is because that's what Aikido can do.

You may not realise but you have ability to deal with a fight in the realistic situation by training in these everyday classes, especially those who have reached black belts should be confident of your skills. Remember the words from our Master, "Believe Aikido!" Well, we shall train diligently to master this amazing art.

Osu!

Michiharu Mori



Sharing the feeling of Black Belts

Nidan

I have never thought I'd reach Nidan this quick, before graduating high school. The reason, I think, that I was able to achieve Nidan was because of my parents. Although they always said my grading was good at each grading I went through, at the same time my mum especially always said my grading was crappy. She always used harsh words about my grading, so I was determined to correct all those mistakes and no-good areas she pointed out before I took my Nidan grading.

I would like to thank Emmanuel, Richard, Jason E, Brent, Jason W who have spent their time during grading training for my Nidan preparation and laughed their heads off because of my bad/non-effective techniques. I would like to thank all the people from the dojo who have helped me out for my grading. I want to thank Richard especially for always teaching me at every grading training, and I owe him so much since he looked after me through all my important gradings – my kid's Shodan and my adult's Shodan. And of course I cannot forget the person who always encouraged me (punched/kicked/pushed me around,) Lawrence, I would like to thank you for being a great Uke for me. ^_^

Currently while still at high school, I'm doing a cert III for Fitness. So every Wednesday, I go to a gym all day to learn about fitness and gym workouts. There, at the same time, I am very lucky to be able to train boxing and a bit of kung-fu too. It is a good opportunity for me to learn different martial arts especially in the styles that focus on more attacks since I get to learn how to use Aikido on them. Sensei always mentioned that I needed to learn other martial arts other than Aikido to enhance my knowledge and understanding in fighting arts if I wanted to become an Aikido instructor. He said I could enrich my Aikido techniques by learning different moves, timing and attacks from other martial arts that now I have started to experience.

Some people at the gym know that I have a black belt in Aikido, so people come up and try me out. As one came to punch me I applied Hiji-kime (elbow lock) that worked perfectly well. Then I tried Shiho-nage Kuzushi (shoulder lock throw) on another person but this failed. When I put the Shiho-nage lock I did not lock strong enough that ended up giving no impact on him. I was pretty embarrassed but then I realised my mistake. So, in the following week I tried the same technique on the same person when he punched me and I made sure to put more lock in the better timing, then I managed to flip the person over. I was very pleased and reported about the experience to Sensei as I always do after I come home from the gym – what techniques I used and what worked and what didn't.

Sensei said, "You are having great experiences already that you have the place to try out your Aikido techniques finding out the effectiveness of Aikido and your weakness at that young age, you should feel very privileged. When you are going to have your own dojo one day and if you ever fail to lock a student properly when you demonstrate in front of all the students, you will not just embarrass yourself but no one will come back after the incident. Therefore you have to gain lots of experiences." After I heard those words, I realised how privileged I was to have this kind of opportunity thanks to the gym and people there.

On the next day of my grading during breakfast, my father gave me a comment over my grading that it was the best out of all my gradings so far. He went on saying that it did not mean I should be satisfied now but I should always aim for overtaking my current level, in that way my Aikido will keep improving. I will remember my father's advice and will keep working hard to get my Aikido better so that one day I may surpass my father and build a dojo which is similar to Brisbane Dojo, with warm hearted people.

Osu

Kaido Mori