



June Report

New members 2

Total number of adults training 63

Total teens & children training 43

Results of Sogo Shinsa on 29th & 30th June

Shodan	Justin Charell Cameron Blake	3rd Kyu	Lisa Milne	9th Kyu	Justin Roopalu Simon Nordon Antoine Bellande
1st Kyu	Matt Hede Steven Bannah	4th Kyu	Vladimir Roudakov Janna Molikova	3Y9 step	Francis Hollingworth
2nd Kyu	Dominic Hogan	5th Kyu	Bradley Cornell Lu Jiang	3Y1 step	Kaido Mori
3rd Kyu	Simon Horn Simon Foley Darssan Balasingam	6th Kyu	Shay O'Farrell	2Y11 step	Michael Bannah
		7th Kyu	Peter Ternouth	S5 step	Mai Bui
				S4 step	Joel Delaney

Events in July

1. Getsurei Shinsa

- Training starts, Friday 20th 7:15pm~
- Steps, Friday 27th 7:15pm~
- Shinsa, Saturday 28th 1:00pm~

2. This Month's Holiday of Adults' class

- Dojo's Holiday – Monday 30th July

A little more knowledge for your Aikido

The course of technique in Yoshinkan

This article is something I wished to write about to leave it as a record of the background on where the technique of Yoshinkan Brisbane Dojo, taught by me, has come from and the reason why it is different to the current Yoshinkan Headquarters' technique.

Two to three years ago, a graduate of international Senshusei course at Headquarters visited us to train. Ryote-mochi Tenchi-nage (1) was on the menu on the day. It was just too obvious, not from my biased eyes but from the matter of the fact that his technique did not work at all to his training partners and our students' technique was doing the job a lot more effectively. Why was that? It was not about him, he was a very honest, humble and nice man, I felt. He simply performed the technique devotedly in the way he was taught. I had no surprise at the fact but I was disappointed and felt regretful.

What I have been teaching here at my dojo is all based on what I learned and studied at Headquarters as I was one of their instructors. Yet, now it is obvious what I teach and what they teach at the Headquarters are quite different in many aspects though not totally. I wish to explain, only from my limited perspective, the background of the reason and the course of technique in Yoshinkan so that you will have more understanding of the whole picture and



will not get confused when you visit the Headquarters. It is natural that you would like to see the root of Brisbane Dojo where you are training now and I encourage any students to visit Headquarters or other dojos to gain more experiences and to expand your knowledge for developing your skills further.

I joined the Yoshinkan Headquarters in early 1985 and Master Gozo Shioda passed away in 1994. What I learned at the Headquarters was of course the technique in the 80's and 90's. It was a few years later I became an uchi-deshi I was told to watch the movie "Aikido" featuring my Master that was published in 1962. I was pretty surprised to see the way Master was performing since his technique was very different to his 80's style that I was learning – his shoulders were raised high pushing all his muscular force into a Nikajo-lock; his movement was not smooth but rough with physical arm strength in each technique. His Hiriki-no-yosei (1) (2) did not flow fluently but the motion of arms was separate from the lower parts of the body using physical arm strength without integrated force, but he was demonstrating them confidently. His techniques were very good samples of bad techniques from the 80's common standard - and he was the master of Yoshinkan. If I had performed this kind of technique in the 80's I would have been yelled at badly by Master and other senior uchi-deshis and corrected immediately.

What I learned from the movie was that Yoshinkan technique had got evolved so much in the twenty years after the movie was published. When we think about it, it is just natural. Say, you have started learning a Japanese sword-fighting art. You wield a sword wholeheartedly spending all the physical force you have but cannot cut through a thing as your force is neither unified nor concentrated. As you study the mechanism of the art deeper and train harder and longer, your sword will be able to cut through even an iron substance though wielding lightly. The same can be said for the development of Yoshinkan technique. Technique was accomplished by physical force in the early phase of Yoshinkan but it got sophisticated through twenty years developing the style that it did not require much force any more but with more integration and concentration of force effectively.

It was not just Master who advanced the Yoshinkan technique but it got progressed through consistent observations, discussions, studies and practice between Master and his uchi-deshis of the time. Although Master was always the one who supervised and made a decision in the end he needed his uchi-deshis for both when he performed techniques on them and when he observed them doing techniques, especially when they made various wrong movements that confirmed him clearly in what was right at each stage of development. I believe that Master took all the classes at the early stage of Yoshinkan until his uchi-deshis grew good enough to look after the class. But it did not mean he left the class to his uchi-deshis, he was always there in the class observing and giving comments and words to his uchi-deshis.

Whenever an uchi-deshi demonstrated a technique with explanation in the centre (just like I do in our class) in front of all the general students Master sat at the side and observed it with attention. The uchi-deshi had to turn around to Master to ask if it was ok after his technique and explanation. Only when he said "Fine!" then the uchi-deshi was able to say, "Please everyone, practice now," but more often Master had some words to correct his technique or explanation. Then, the uchi-deshi had to modify or correct the mistake being pointed out immediately either by changing the explanation or demonstrating a modified



technique. It was a very scary moment for all the uchi-deshis and we were all very nervous when we had to turn around to face Master. We, of course, tried to perform the best technique of the time, with the best possible theory you could think of, each time we demonstrated in front of Master. If what we understood or how we interpreted a technique was different to Master's thought, it got severely corrected right at the time. Master did not give us many words but we had to assume and read his core point quickly and precisely before we demonstrated the modified version. Otherwise, we had to keep repeating the same technique in front of other students until Master was happy enough. Can you feel how frightening this is?! All other uchi-deshis who participated in the class observed techniques and listened to explanations desperately to avoid the same mistake for ones our own sake for the future opportunity. Uchi-deshis who could not read Master's words and signs well enough then his chance of taking class got cut down and were not picked to take uke for Master. It meant his uchi-deshi life had come to an end.

This severe circumstance supported the evolution of Yoshinkan technique and to keep the quality that any uchi-deshis were able to perform the similar level technique with the same understanding in the theory while Master was healthy enough to supervise and regulate at the Headquarters. Things began to change after Master became seriously sick in 1993 and no longer appeared at the dojo. Instead, he allocated different tasks to his uchi-deshis and appointed two uchi-deshis in charge of supervising the standard of technique. The top uchi-deshi then was sent to a different region out of Headquarters as a result of politics.

These two uchi-deshis came up with the idea of changing the technique style following the Yoshinkan textbook published in 1970's that they found in a storage room. The reason was that Master was demonstrating all the techniques in every photo of the book. They believed and alleged that the style in the book should rule the Yoshinkan as the correct stream of Master Gozo Shioda. I was the only uchi-deshi who was against their idea because my understanding was that Master established Yoshinkan in 1955 and he was the one responsible who developed and supervised Yoshinkan technique all the way through without failure until 1992. I claimed that we should keep the present style to inherit the style of Gozo Shioda. Other uchi-deshis had no interest in this issue as long as they had a place in the Headquarters, not being fired. Well, I could not win the battle of course as these two were my seniors and they implemented their idea. I could not follow them and I resigned. Now, here I am, teaching my students the style of Yoshinkan in 80's and early 90's in Brisbane as I believe this style represents the most matured stage of Yoshinkan in both basic and advanced levels.

It has been seventeen years since I left the Headquarters and the stream of style has not modified since they changed it in 1993. What I saw in the graduate of international Senshusei course that I mentioned at the beginning was the correct posture and technique taught in the 1970's manner, I thought it was very interesting seeing the history of how technique was transferred. In addition, the second Kancho Sensei (the head of Yoshinkan style) changed the way of kamae (basic stance) procedure too in the late 1990's. We in Brisbane dojo need to know which side of kamae we have to take before the technique starts and comes back in the same side after we finish each technique. He, however, changed it to the kamae system in 1960's when he was training hard under Master Gozo Shioda before he left the Headquarters to teach the police department. The kamae always started in right side only and then stepped forward in left side when needed. I heard the



news from Japan and we, in overseas Yoshinkan dojos, were asked to follow the way of the Headquarters but I did not change the procedure as I could not find any reasonable meaning in it. Well, it is natural that the current Headquarters' students would think how old our training style is from their limited knowledge and understanding.

What I teach here at Brisbane dojo is the style of Master's Yoshinkan in 1980's and I added more applied Aikido technique against various attacks that was requested by Australian students. Although I believe in what I am teaching with confidence we cannot deny the fact that our style is viewed as heretical when every other dojo obediently follows the current requirements of Headquarters. Well, I truly love and respect Master Gozo Shioda's Yoshinkan Aikido and I sincerely wish to leave the genuine Aikido that I learned from him here in Brisbane for future generation of Aikido.

Osu!

Michiharu Mori