

羅府合氣道学院古屋道場



AIKIDO CENTER OF LOS ANGELES NEWSLETTER

940 E. Second Street #7
Los Angeles, California
90012
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July 1, 1992

Volume VIII. Number 7.

JULY & AUGUST DEMONSTRATION SCHEDULE

Please mark your calendars for the following demonstrations. Everyone is welcome to attend and support the dojo.

July 11th - Saturday
West Covina Community Center
5:00pm

July 12th - Sunday
Lotus Festival in Echo Park
4:00pm

Same day
Pasadena Buddhist Church
6:00pm - 7:00pm

July 18th - Saturday
Zenshuji Soto Mission
4:00pm

July 19th - Sunday
Zenshuji Soto Mission
4:15pm

July 25th & 26th - Saturday & Sunday
Higashi Hongwanji
3:30pm

August 8th - Saturday
Japanese Village Plaza
Annual Nisei Week Aikido &
Iaido Demonstration
3:00pm

Promotions Effective as of July 4, 1992

4th Kyu

Ray Yagami
Larry Moncado

5th Kyu

Seiji Ishii
Oliver Brown

6th Kyu

Richard Kim
Carlos Gan
Randall Nimura
Troy Adlawan
George Bufford
Bach Le
Thinh Nguyen
Tom Nguyen
Dayn Kirkey
Eric Videgain
Steve Schmidler

Women's Anti-crime and Self-defense Class Begins on July 7, 1992

Tuesday & Thursday 4:00pm-7:00pm
Sundays 2:00pm-4:00pm

\$45.00/month

Please tell your friends.

SUMMER TRAINING SCHEDULE 1992

Open Beginning Classes

Monday - Friday
7:00am - 8:00am
8:00am - 9:00am
6:15pm - 7:15pm

Monday-Wednesday-Thursday
7:30pm - 8:30pm

Advanced Classes

Tuesday
7:30pm - 8:30pm

Saturday
11:30am - 12:30pm

Muso Shinden Ryu Iaido
Los Angeles Battodo

Saturday & Sunday
9:00am - 10:00am

Children's Class

Sunday
8:00am - 9:00am

Women's Anti-Crime Self-Defense Class

Tuesday & Thursday
4:00pm - 5:00pm

Sundays
2:00pm - 4:00pm

DOJO NEWS:

Congratulations on all the recent promotions in the dojo.

Ms. Mitsuko Yoshimoto recently returned to work at her old company.

Mr. Ken Watanabe graduated from college in June.

Mr. Ken Furuya will be teaching a Women's Anti-crime and Self-Defense Class in the dojo.

The dojo was recently visited by Jeffrey Meek, star of the Raven series on Channel 2 at 9:00pm on Wednesdays.

Many thanks to Master Hsu on a very successful and worthwhile seminar. 20 students participated with one guest, Mr. Naoji Karita, master sword polisher, from Japan. Mr. Karita is also an instructor in Yang Style Tai Chi Chuan.

Sensei had breakfast with the Grandmaster of the Edo Senke School of the Tea Ceremony, Master Kawakami from Tokyo, Japan, on June 19th.

Congratulations!

Sensei's column, "Ancient Ways" in Martial Training Magazine was voted one of the "most popular" columns of the magazine in a recent national survey.

Ohara Publications & Black Belt Magazine will go into production on Sensei's books on Aikido and the Japanese sword. Hopefully, they will be out next year.

T-Shirts

The new dojo T-shirts will be on sale this month. Buy your T-shirt early. \$13.00 each. XL, L and M sizes only. All have O-Sensei's calligraphy on the back.

Notices

Everyone please note that we now have morning classes, Mondays thru Fridays from 7:00am to 8:00am and at 8:00am to 9:00am. These are very good practices and everyone is welcome to join us.

The next Black Belt Examination will be conducted on August 30, 1992, Sunday, from 1:00pm. Black Belt Candidates should begin preparing themselves for the examination.

Prices on uniforms are sky-rocketing so regrettably the dojo may raise its prices. Please be aware of this. In addition, uniforms must be ordered and may take up to several months to come so please order early.

Mr. Shawn Pak has submitted his second article in this month's issue. We hope everyone will find it of interest. Shawn's office was destroyed in the recent riots in Los Angeles.

We Need Volunteers

July and August is a busy month for the dojo and we need many volunteers. First, we need volunteers at all the demonstrations to pass out dojo flyers, take photos or just help watch the equipment.

Secondly, at the Zenshuji Obon Carnival on July 18th and 19th, we need volunteers to watch the Samurai Sword Exhibit and also help in the Zen Gakko Ice Cream Booth which Sensei is in charge of. The carnival hours are generally from 12:00 noon to about 6:00pm. Everyone should work in shifts.

Please help if you can.

American Dream

We know that everyone is having financial problems in our economy today. Everyone should try their best to keep up with the monthly dues because this is the only way to keep the dojo running. However, if you are having problems, please talk with one of the instructors. Everyone should keep practicing hard.

MA TRAINING ON THE STANDS

The latest issue of MA Training is on the stands. This month, Sensei's "Ancient Ways" column is entitled: "The Troubles with Training." The next column is "Enlightenment Without Practice is Not True Enlightenment." Please get your copy now.

Conversation With the Master:

It was nice to see Master Hsu again and I hope everyone enjoyed his seminar. He is really a great teacher. We had time to talk a little while he was here and indeed we both agree that the face of martial arts is changing rapidly in this country. Not just this country but everywhere including China and Japan.

Nowadays, people don't seem to have the same patience and endurance to really practice martial arts. Everybody wants it immediately. But martial arts is not like serving hamburgers in a fast food stand.

In Japan and, as I understand from Master Hsu, in China as well, martial arts is leaning more towards a performing art rather than a martial art. In fact, the martial arts application or meaning of the techniques is gradually being forgotten.

We are kind of an old fashioned dojo. Maybe we are behind the times because we don't use enough catch phrases and pass along popular ideas. I see many new ideas in martial arts but not many good ones.

I think people should also keep in mind that Aikido is a way of life. It is an attitude and a special outlook on life. I think we forget this and just look upon Aikido as a form of "play" or recreation. Nowadays, everyone talks about the spiritual aspect of Aikido yet I seldom see very many spiritual people. Just doing what one feels like doing shouting "freedom!, freedom!" at the expense of others is not the spiritual way of Aikido. This is only a form of self-indulgence and self-deception.

In the martial arts classic, *Budo Shoshinshu*, it states: "You don't need anything in martial arts training except for one thing. First make your heart correct and follow it by true actions and words." This is what we should all keep in mind at all times when we are practicing.



Ken Watanabe at his graduation ceremony.
June, 1992



Dojo entrance has a new look which gives the dojo a greater sense of privacy and serenity.



Members after the Aikido Demonstration at the
JACCC in Little Tokyo.
Children's Day Festival - June, 1992



Mitsuko Yoshimoto admiring Jim Doi's beautiful
new sunglasses.

"Katsu"

"Katsu" means victory in Japanese and of course this is an important term in martial arts. Most people will say that the major focus or ultimate goal of martial arts is to win or to be victorious.

O-Sensei often used the term: "Masa-katsu, a-gatsu, katsu-hayabi." which loosely translated means: "The true victory is victory over one's self like the sun." "Katsu-hayabi" is an ancient Shinto term found in the Kojiki, a book written in 700AD and is difficult to translate into English. Literally, it can be translated as: "Victory-fast-sun."

However, there is another way to read "Katsu." We can also read this as "Sugureru" which means to "excel." The real meaning behind "victory" has nothing to do with winning or losing. It means that we should do our best or "excel" in everything we do. Our new dojo T-shirts bear the characters in O-Sensei's own hand: "Agatsu" or "victory over one's self. Wear them proudly.

ACLA Newsletter

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Supporting members: \$25.00 annual subscription.

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Message from Sensei:**"Smaller is Better"**

Nowadays, we think Japan is so rich and powerful and we ourselves are struggling in a bad economic state so we wonder what Japanese are thinking about Americans. Oddly enough, if you ask a Japanese person about America, he will always say: "I want to go to America." Or, "America is just like heaven." Young Japanese say, "I want to be like an American." Very recently however, this attitude is changing. With riots and earthquakes and unprecedented crime, Japanese are becoming more and more afraid to come to this country but still the Japanese admiration for America is very strong. Recently, I heard that Japanese politicians have criticized America. That is a bad habit of Japanese. They never criticize diplomatically or rationally; they always criticize someone like they are little babies.

If you have ever gone to visit Japan, it is easily understandable why Japanese think America is so great. Everything in Japan is so small. In a recent book about Japan, the author said that Japanese roads are so narrow that from the road he could see inside someone's house and what was playing on the TV. One immediately appreciates this when they eat. The Macdonald's hamburger in Japan, I think, is only about one-third the size in America. But, that is normal for Japanese.

When Japanese come to America, they are immediately impressed with the size of the roads. One time, we took someone on a tour of Los Angeles and, because it was hot, we ordered sodas. I handed our guest the first soda. When I turned around again, he had put three straws into his own soda. It was so big for him that he thought all three of us were going to share the same soda. In general, our small size soda is equal to a large size in Japan. That is how much difference there is. I took another guest to a restaurant and she ordered a salad. For us, a normal size salad came but she was surprised saying: "I can feed my whole family on just this one salad. In this manner we can't appreciate the difference.

When we first built the dojo seven years ago, I had many big plans. I struggled to get many students to come and join our practice. Nowadays, my thinking has changed. Why my thinking has changed, I don't really know. I think there are many reasons. It is difficult to handle many people in a single

organization. There is always going to be someone unhappy or feels unfairly treated. Somehow, (and this is just a feeling), more people seem to bring more people problems. Maybe, I am getting old and feeling my age.

One important consideration is that I am very happy with the group of students I have at present. If I could keep all my students I have now, I don't feel the need for more. Nowadays, I don't feel the need to travel or go to other dojos. As I look around, Aikido instructors are becoming very aggressive in campaigning for students. We are becoming more politically oriented. I think we have done a lot to abolish the old politics in Aikido that everyone was unhappy with. But, we have only replaced it with another political which I believe will bring the same unhappiness to everyone in the future. What a vicious circle!

My younger students are practicing hard, my older students are getting good experience teaching and developing themselves. During practice, I only hear the sound of ukemi, After practice I hear the sound of laughter from the students. There is nothing which makes me more happy than this.

Smaller is better. Our small group is much better.

As a smaller group, it is important to consider dojo harmony. How do we do this? We always put the other person first. This is the hardest part of Aikido practice because we are raised with the idea: "Me first, me first!" The Chinese classic says: "The gentleman allows others to go first." We immediately think that this will inhibit or detract from our rights or freedom as individual. It does not.

Freedom without discipline is not true freedom. We always declare: "Freedom, freedom." But we are not really free. We are bound by all of our fears and disappointments. Follow the rules and strict discipline of Aikido and true freedom will be found. When we eat food, the body naturally transforms it into energy. We don't really have to think about it at all. When we absorb the strict rules and discipline of Aikido, this is naturally transformed into freedom and wisdom. There is really to do outside of correct practice.

In the hot summer months, I hope everyone will encourage each other in their training.

Kensho Furuya

CHIROPRACTIC HEALTH

by Sungmin Pak, D.C.

Ouch! I sprained my shoulder!!

An uke is thrown across the mat after a beautiful kokyu nage executed by an experienced nage. The uke tries to take a correct ukemi, but his body and brain seem to work separately. He comes down to earth and crumples to the mat, clutching his shoulder.

We frequently use the term 'sprain' in our conversation. But what exactly is a sprain?

A sprain is a trauma to a joint that causes pain and disability depending upon degree of injury to ligaments. In severe sprain, ligaments may be completely torn. The ankle joint is the most often sprained. The signs of a sprain are rapid swelling, heat, and disability; often discoloration and limitation of function.

Treatment: During the first 24 to 48 hours, use cold compresses, bandage, and elevate the joint. After initial treatment with cold, apply heat.

See your chiropractor as immediately as possible for correct diagnosis, because many have been fooled by a sprain that turned out to be a fracture.

Auto Accident Injuries

All auto insurance policies provide for freedom of choice for treatment for disabilities

sustained in collisions or otherwise in an automobile.

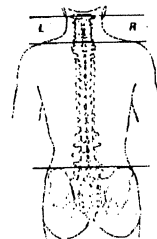
Chiropractic is particularly effective in the treatment of "whip-lash" and other back and neck injuries which are often the result of an auto accident. Be sure to receive a complete examination after auto accident.

Why warm-up?

Here in the Aikido Center of Los Angeles, we consider the warm-up an integral part of our practice. It is something that helps get our bodies and minds ready for the practice. We feel that it not only helps our performance, but it also helps prevent injuries.

Most research seems to agree with these subjective impressions. It appears that an increase in the temperature within the muscles is necessary for the attainment of optimal performance, though an elevation of the core temperature is also considered an important criterion.

Your body tends to work more efficiently, more safely, and at a higher level when "warmed up." From the psychological standpoint the warm-up helps you to focus on the forthcoming action.



SUNGMIN PAK, D.C.

974 S. WESTERN AVE. LOS ANGELES, CA 90006 (213) 733-0707

* All Insurance plan welcome. * Accupuncturist available. * CALL NOW!

Training Schedule

Beginning Open Classes

Mondays thru Fridays

7:00am - 8:00am

8:00am - 9:00am

6:15pm - 7:15pm

7:30pm - 8:30pm

Saturdays & Sundays

10:00am - 11:30am

Advanced Classes 2nd Kyu and Above

Tuesdays

7:30pm - 8:30pm

Saturdays

11:30am - 12:30pm

Children's Classes

Sundays

8:00am - 9:00am

Women's Self-Defense & Workouts

Tuesdays & Thursdays

4:00pm - 5:00pm

Saturdays

2:00pm - 4:00pm

Women's Self Defense & Low Impact Workouts

Tuesdays & Thursdays

4:00pm - 5:00pm

Saturdays

2:00pm - 4:00pm

Special Introductory Rate

\$45.00/month

Instructor: Mr. Kenny Furuya

Muso Shinden Ryu Iaido Zen Nippon Battodo Iaido Renmei, LA Branch

Saturdays & Sundays

9:00am - 10:00am

We welcome Ms. Mitsuko Yoshimoto,
Aikido 1st Dan, as the newest member
to our Iaido group.

Official Dojo T-Shirts

\$14.00 each. Large and X-large
sizes only. Limited quantities in
three different colors of green,
blue, and purple.

Get your dojo T-shirt now!

a commercial society now where everything is calculated in money. It is not the warrior society in which martial arts developed. There, the human spirit came first.

If we are truly happy in our training, money and fame are meaningless. If we are only using our art to gain money, we are headed for disappointment and disaster. If we are only grasping at money and fame because we have become disappointed with our training, it only means that we have forgotten what training and practice really mean. I have seen many people who have come across the true path, but I have seen only a very few who have ever continued on it for years and years.

The trouble with training is that we are always in danger of subverting it towards our own destruction. It is hard to know or keep on the true path. It is not always a matter of success. There are many teachers who are not well-known, are not financially successful or who have only a few students, but are wonderful teachers. On the other hand, many rich and successful teachers have let fame and fortune go to their heads. Keeping the balance is an almost impossible challenge. Many times, it is simply a matter of one's personal faith and commitment to his own training.

It is hard for teachers to get along together, and it is hard for students to get along together. This makes martial arts like any other activity in the world. When we realize that we have a problem, it is too late.

How do we get people to work together peacefully? If I knew the answer, perhaps I would already be the president of a country, or the head of my own religion. No one has the answer, I believe. Sawaki Kodo often said, "Over half of what people do in their lives is meaningless and wasteful." It is not a welcome thought, but if we think about it seriously, we know that it is very true. The kind of "if...then" thinking of "if I practice hard, then I will be good" doesn't always work. Generally it leads to disappointment and frustration.

For getting along with others, this bit of Zen wisdom works well when all else fails: "Nothing goes as we think it should." In other words, we think about what is convenient for ourselves, and never see the

whole picture. Oftentimes we think that everything is going against us when actually it is not. This happens often in martial arts. Sometimes we plateau, and nothing seems to go right for us. "Not to go as we think it should" is normal. That is one more trouble with training.

There is a famous saying: "Nothing needs to be added; nothing needs to be taken away. It is free and easy without being clogged or obstructed."

In most cases, we haven't reached a plateau, and we haven't come up against any obstacles. There is no plateau at all in our training. It is just that we are awkwardly butting our heads against a wall without realizing that we have only ourselves to blame. To understand that the way of martial arts we tread is without obstacle is to know great freedom and independence. Yet just "knowing" doesn't work. We can still butt our heads against the wall, even though some may mistakenly call this a kind of freedom.

We practice hard, yet we get our feelings hurt. We clean up and perform all kinds of chores which don't seem to be a part of training, yet they are demanded of us. Continually we ask, "Why? Why?" It is hard to always keep up this kind of discipline. We always have people problems, and this always puts a clog in our training. All these things happen to us. Yet we make it happen. We are blocked, yet many of these problems are of our own doing.

Yet we can never escape these problems. They are part of the training itself. Somehow, in our years of training, we realize that we can turn these problems into solutions. Or, more truthfully, these problems naturally turn themselves into the truths we finally come to understand. But turning the problem into the solution is only the final effect of proper training and discipline. Don't make the mistake of thinking that this happens in just a couple of years. Indeed, it is a lifetime investment. And even to the end, many wonder if it was really worth it. Only a dedicated martial artist who has devoted his life to the art can understand it.

As much as we try not to butt our heads up against the wall and live freely, it seems an impossible task. There is always that

wall. Much of the time we are butting our heads against the wall without even realizing it.

There is a story of a very wealthy and powerful merchant who came to visit a priest, to ask his advice about the many problems he was having with his business and his personal life. The merchant sat there and complained for hours while the priest sat quietly and listened. After a while, the merchant noticed that a horsefly trying to escape through a window had caught the attention of the priest, who no longer seemed interested in his problems. Sarcasically, the merchant commented that the tiny horsefly seemed more important than himself, a rich and mighty merchant. The priest looked up and replied: "How interesting! This horsefly has managed to fly into my temple and now he cannot escape. All he can do is keep trying to fly through the thin rice paper window, but even the paper is too strong and holds him back. If the horsefly continues to fight against the paper, it will eventually die. What is sad is that there are plenty of openings in my poor temple, and the horsefly can escape through any number of holes, yet he continues at just this one spot, which is impossible for him. How sad!" When the merchant heard this, he stopped complaining.

The trouble with our training is that we continue to come up against many problems that block us, hold us back, and screw us up. To think that we are unlucky, and to feel sorry for ourselves, is only self-defeat. Welcome any problem—on the mat or in life—knowing that eventually some truth or great understanding will come out of it. Through dedicated training, the barriers will reveal themselves as teachings. This does not mean that one simply gives in or gives up when things appear blocked. Again, it is not simply finding the easy way out. We are a little more complex than horseflies. It is to find the most natural, correct manner of action, from the context of our practice. As my Zen teacher always says: "Do the most natural thing in the most natural way." But to find the most natural way and then execute it in the most natural manner can again become one of our troubles with training. ★