

Shohei Juku Aikido Canada

Monthly Newsletter
August, 2005. Number 8

Wishing you all the best during these last days of summer

The end of summer is finally approaching. The weather has been warm everyday this month and various events are being held around town. We, the Shohei Juku, also had a great summer filled with wonderful experiences. In July we went camping in Gibsons and held a demonstration at the Powell Street Japanese Festival. Events will continue on in August as we have the Summer Intensive Training, BBQ Party etc. This summer the number of participants for the summer intensive training has increased and I am glad to see that this is becoming the norm.

Remembering the summer twenty years ago, sometimes I was the only one there. I felt a little sad and I remember wondering "With such short summers here in Canada, do many people prefer enjoying the outdoors?". But now that is a memorable time to me.

I always get encouraged by seeing members who come to the dojo to train hard despite the hot weather. I am certain that my best willpower and strong physical strength come from seeing that.

Suganuma Sensei once said...

"If you don't make use of Aikido in your daily life, it is not real Aikido. Let us devote ourselves by seeking Aikido that we can apply not only in the dojo but also in our daily lives."

Aikido that we can apply to our daily lives? I feel it may be a good idea for us to once again review and study our own Aikido.

Right now my garden is filled with lettuce and more lettuce. The joy of being able to enjoy what you get from your garden everyday...I feel happiness has to do with being able to notice that. Maybe happiness has to do with appreciating the small things in life.

Tamami Nakashimada



Letters from members:

Hello Tama Sensei,

Thank you so much for inviting us to train with you. We had a wonderful time!

Saturday evening we went to watch the fireworks and Sunday we had lunch at the Kaiten Sushi/All you can eat restaurant in Burnaby. They loved it. It took us 2 hours to cross border, but we are home and safe.

Erica and Ridge were very happy about what you told them. Ridge is very seriously considering training in Japan after college.

Our dojo will be very lonely without them. They have so much potential. Kai also. Sensei Mary is leaving for Japan Thursday.

Nancy and I hope to see you again soon. Thank you for sharing your keiko spirit with us.

Paul



Dear Sensei!

How are you doing in Vancouver?
I am doing very well in Tokyo.

Today was my final day of training, and from next week I will be working as a secretary for 2 executives! I am very excited and nervous about my official job position.

I have been going to Aikido class regularly, every Saturdays. Last Saturday, some of the members of Higashimurayama Aikido took their tests at the Hombu Dojo and I went with them to watch the testing. The building was smaller than I had imagined but the tatami place that the test was held was quite large.

The Hombu Dojo has 2 or 3 different tatami places where classes are held. Members from several different dojos were there to take their tests. Overall, the tests were conducted the same way as Shoheijuku. However, the main difference was the use of weapons. Weapons are a big part of Kobayashi dojo. This is evident in their testing criteria.

Testing with weapons make up over 30% of each test. There are many official techniques using the jo at Kobayashi dojo, and the members practicing them regularly.

There are also several katas. The one that I am trying to learn right now is 22. Each test is quite long in length. The longest test was for fourth dan. It was over 20 minutes long. Actually, all of the dan tests were very long. The second dan test appeared to be quite challenging, but I would like to take it in the near future.

For now, my keiko continues.

I hope that everyone at Trout Lake dojo is doing well. I will write again.

Maki Honda



Thoughts from members on the Powell Street Festival Demonstration:

Powell Street Festival Saturday July 30, 2005

I rode down to the festival with friends who were going downtown. Powell Street was crowded but the tall trees that line the park were visible several blocks away. The trees tower above the two or three story buildings. We had to double park as I got my bag and boken from the trunk of the car.

I could see white gis on the far side of the park so I headed in that direction. Our dojo members were there getting ready. Ron had managed to get a parking spot close and he graciously allowed us to use it as our locker.

The sun was out and we waited in the shade. Various friends arrived and said hello. A pile of boken and jos were on the ground and a child probably about 4 or 5 years old tried one out until his father put it back. One of the volunteer security people came by and said he needed a weapon because he did not look mean enough. I noticed that there were Vancouver city police and felt they would be the real enforcers if there were any problems.

We were on after the Taiko drummers. I enjoyed their music and was going to buy one of their CDs but forgot. I will have to borrow Jason's as he did purchase one. Finally it was our turn and we moved from the shade close to the stage. The performance area was marked by a white line and people had to be cleared out before we could start.

We lined up and began our demonstration.

The ground was hard.

It was hot.

I found it hard to roll in a straight line. No mats to use as guidelines.

The ground was hard.

I experienced a feeling of spaciousness practicing in the sun.

Grass stains on my knees courtesy of Richard.

The ground was hard.

Time for our foursome to start.

A little nervous.

Totally focused on slow deliberate technique with Thomas.

I could hear Ron's commentary.

Done. And the timing was almost perfect as we finished within seconds of Asuka and Adrielle.

Back in the line we watched Tama throwing people. Shinobu and Dietrich.

Dietrich flies through a Tobi.

The ground was hard.

We finished and left the demonstration area. It was a good performance. The heat was unexpected and although it was a short practice I was sweating a lot. I just wanted to change and get something to drink. Off we went to one of the stores on the north side of the park. The store was a temporary changing room for the festival. We ran into another group of martial artists who were carrying swords.

Didier stood in line waiting to get a drink from one of the many food stalls, this one on the east side of the park. While standing there I overheard someone telling about the history of the houses behind the food stalls. Apparently early in Vancouver's history these houses belonged to Japanese families.

I caught up with the group and found out that the plan was to go to Avanti's for lunch and beer. People from Seattle had shown up and I recognized them from past seminars. I hitched a ride with Tama to Avantis.

After a good lunch and lots of beer I was quite content to relax for the rest of the day and the BC day long weekend. A great way to enjoy life in Lotus land.

From Wayne

Hello, Tama-sensei.

This was the first time I participated in the Powell Street Festival. When I was demonstrating I was so nervous but I was glad that my demonstration and Wayne-san's demonstration were finished at the same time. I think our demonstration was pretty good! The members were so cool. I enjoyed the demonstration very much so if I had the chance, I would love to participate it again. It was a good experience for me.

From Asuka

Hi Tama-Sensei,

It was a hot and beautiful day and the Aikido "gang" was ready to show their stuff in front of the gathered crowd. The Aikidoka people had been trained for weeks and were ready to demonstrate for this special day. Our skills, perfected by our ever-carrying Sensei, were 100%. We all wanted to make her proud. Once it neared our time to go on stage we were all focused.

Thoughts from members on the Powell Street Festival Demonstration (cont'd):

We did our warm up and even had to do some rolling over one of our members back. This was a bit tough because our "horse" was placing himself quite high so landing on the grass was not well received by my back and I felt it later in the day. We demonstrated our Jo and I remembered all the moves.

When it was my turn to do the Tanken attack with Dietrich I went at him with all I got so it looked real for the folks looking at us. Sweat was pouring in my eyes but I managed to do my attacks. Dietrich was supreme, as always, and deflected all of the strikes. All the other members did their techniques equally well. Ron was the announcer and it sounded to me that he was explaining things very clearly.

Time went by quickly and once it was done I felt that I truly enjoyed it. I looked at my Gi and told Adrielle that our Gis are green in the dojo and that now again they are green because of the grass. I guess Tama-Sensei likes green.

Oh and thanks to Masako who later placed my Gi in the laundry machine.

Thank you Tama-Sensei.

From Didier

Pictures from the Powell Street Festival Demonstration:



Notice:

1. Please pay the monthly fee in the first week of the month at the front desk of the Trout Lake Centre. If you are going to drop-in, please show your receipt to the instructor each time you drop-in before the class begins.
2. If you arrive late to the class, please do the stretching exercises before starting keiko. Please make sure to do this especially during cold weather days.
3. If you are planning to miss classes for a long period of time due to the sickness, trip, moving, transfer etc., please let us know in advance.
4. We are always looking for various articles. The topics can be anything including Aikido, friends, work, and hobby. Our dojo newsletter welcomes everyone's input.

Contact Information:

E-mail: aikitamachan@excite.com
Phone: 604-299-0058

Upcoming Events:

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| Aug 13 | Dojo summer BBQ party |
| Aug 15-19 | Summer Intensive Training |
| Aug 23 - Sep 1 | Morning Keiko
Tue, Wed, and Thu
10:30am to 11:30am |
| August | Practice at Gibsons dojo on a future weekend to be announced |
| Sep 6 | Regular Dojo schedule starts |
| Sep 17 | Saturday Kids Class starts |
| October 28 – 30 | Uchideshi Seminar at Nikkei Center (Mr. Katsuhiko Suganuma)
Testing |

Annual Membership Fee:

We have started collecting this year's yearly membership fees in January, 2005. For those who still haven't paid, please do so asap. \$50/yr (To Mike Boyle or myself) Thank you.

Dojo Summer Schedule:

Aug 22 to Sept 5 Morning class
 10:30am-11:30am
 Tue, Wed and Thurs
(No evening classes during this period)

Holidays Sept 5 (Mon)

Regular classes will resume on Sept 6th (Tue)

