

Aikido Center of Los Angeles

The Aiki Dojo

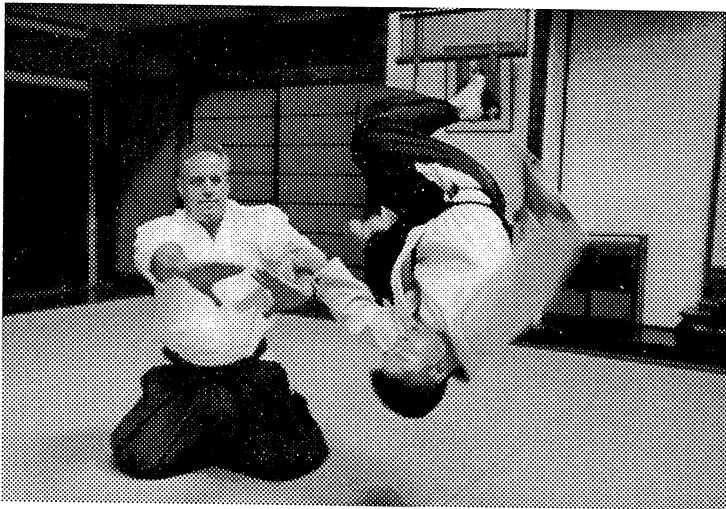
Affiliation: The Aikido World Headquarters, 17-18 Wakamatsu-cho, Shinjuku-ku, Tokyo, Japan
Los Angeles Sword & Swordsmanship Society Kenshinkai Headquarters
Office of the President: Nanka Yamanashi Kenjin Kai Southern California Yamanashi Prefectural Assoc.
Member Los Angeles Police Department Martial Artist Advisory Panel

\$2.95
Donation

August 1, 2000

Volume XVIII. Number 8.

350 At Successful Studios Tour Open House. June 24.



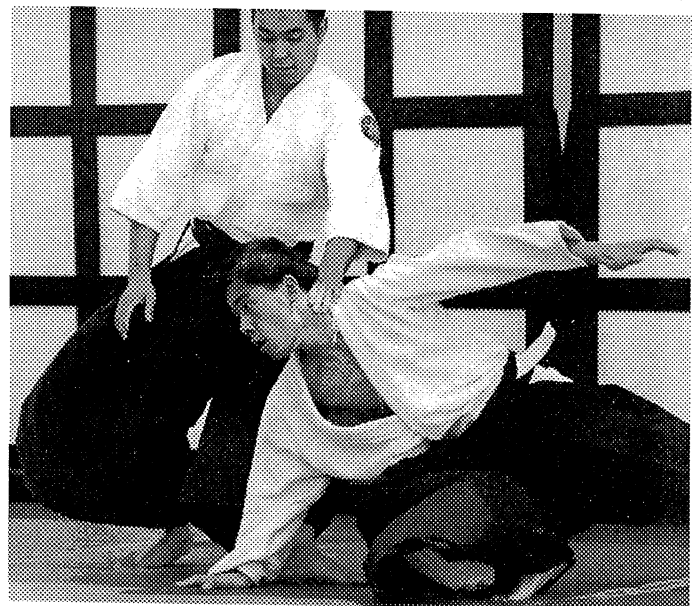
Tom Williams demonstrating hanmi-handachi at Open House.

The revived Los Angeles Downtown Artists District (LADAD) sponsored its first Open Studios Tour with about 75 artists and lofts participating, including our Dojo, in the Los Angeles Downtown area on June 24. It was a tremendous success with a terrific response from the general public. Our dojo had about 350 guests throughout the one-day event. We presented a demonstration of Aikido and Iaido with a tour of the Dojo. Mike Van Ruth sold some of his ceramic ware. Some of the members sponsored a buffet luncheon of submarine sandwiches and appetizers and soft drinks and everyone enjoyed the day and had great fun. The morning hours were quiet but loads of people came during the afternoon hours until about 5:30pm.

Right: Kenny Furuya demonstrating irimi-nage at the Lotus Festival.

Lotus Festival. July 9

We once again presented our demonstration at the annual Lotus Festival in Echo Park in Hollywood. This is our 20th demonstration in their 20-year history. We are one of the oldest organizations still supporting this event which now includes all Asian Pacific Rim cultures and heritages and hosts about 100,000 people every year. It has become one of the largest Asian Pacific Festivals in this country. In the first years, mostly Japanese and Chinese organizations were represented and some years were cancelled because there was no budget from the Park and Recreation Dept. It has grown tremendously over the years and now many cultures participate.

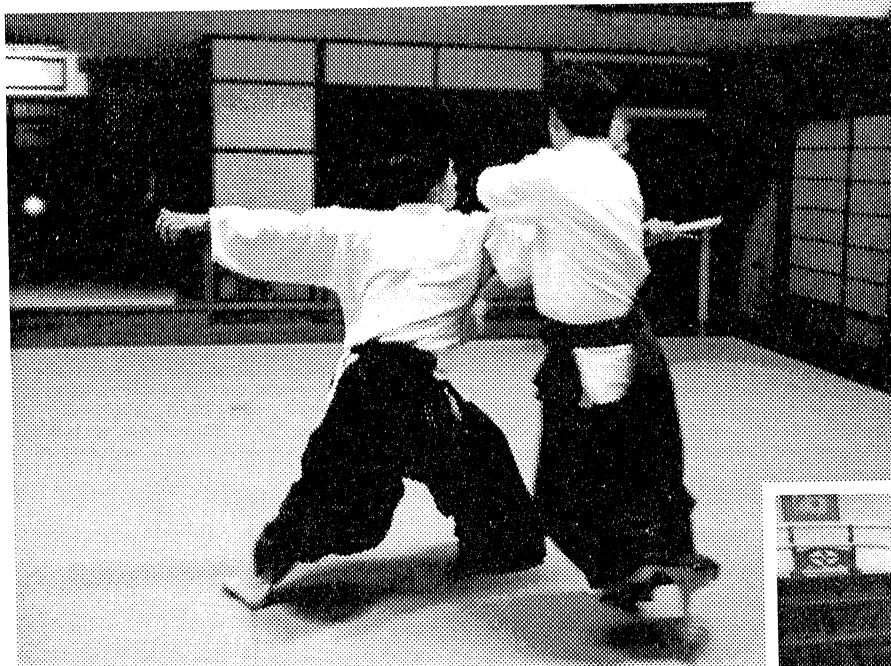


60th Annual Nisei Week Festival Schedule:

August 6th. *Nisei Week Aikido & Iaido Exhibition. 1:00pm-2:00pm.*

August 20th. *Nisei Week Sword Lecture: Secrets of the Yagyu Sword. Annual Open House. KODO Book Signing. Japanese Antique Sale-Yoshino Japanese Antiques. Ceramics Sale-Mike Van Ruth. 1:00pm-3:30pm. Everyone welcome!*

Studio Tours Open House



Ken Watanabe demonstrating *tanto-tori*, knife defense techniques.



Joe Akins admiring ceramic vase by Mike Van Ruth, far right. Mike made enough from the sales to finally get his *lai-to* sword from Japan during very successful, well attended Studio Tours.

Our New Dojo E-Mail Express:

If you wish to be on our Dojo E-Mail Express to hear the latest Dojo news, events, last minute schedule changes, submit your e-mail address to Chery, and you will always be up-to-date with everything that goes on in Our Dojo. Sensei has created three categories: Dojo Members, Kenshinkai Iaido, and Black Belts. Hurry and sign-up now!

ABC Channel 7 News

Will announce our Nisei Week Aikido & Iaido Demonstration throughout the week of July 24th on their news broadcasts with David Ono. Watch for our announcement, this is the third year they done this courtesy for us.

PBS Documentary

A PBS documentary on Sensei will begin shooting in August including taping of some segments of our Nisei Week demonstrations. Some students may be interviewed for the program as well. Please participate if possible.



Kenny Furuya and Mark Ty demonstrating *tenchi-nage*.

NEW Open Classes:

Tuesdays 5:15-6:15pm

Thursdays 12:00noon-1:00pm

New Open Weapons Class:
(Introduction to Sword & Jo)

Saturdays 9:30-10:00am

Weekday Iaido Classes:
1st, 3rd & 4th Wednesdays
7:45-9:00pm.

Dojo General Meeting:
2nd Wednesdays 7:45pm

August Events Program Nisei Week Schedule

August 6, 1:00pm

Aikido & Iaido Demonstration

Open House

August 8, 6:30pm

SPECIAL!

Master Hsu Seminar

Internal Kung-fu &

Chen Style Taiji

August 20th, 1:00pm

"Secrets of the Yagyu Sword"

Lecture & Book Signing

by Furuya Sensei

Antiques Display & Sale

by Yoshino Japanese Antiques

Ceramic Art by

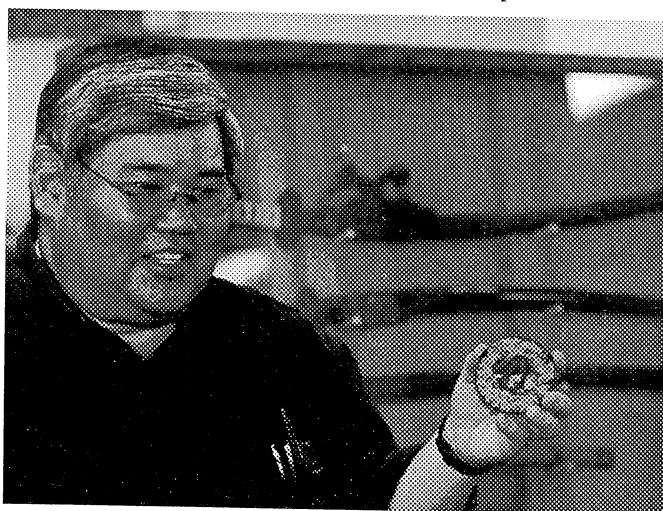
Mike Van Ruth

Everyone welcome!

Master Hsu: Nei-gung & Chen Style Taiji Seminar



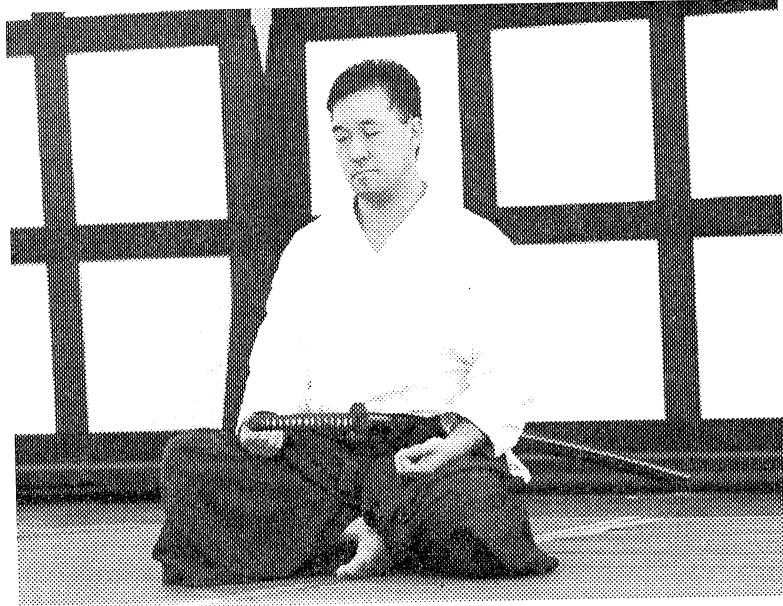
Master Adam Hsu will present his 8th Seminar in the Dojo on August 8th, Tuesday evening from 6:30-8:00pm. Limited space.



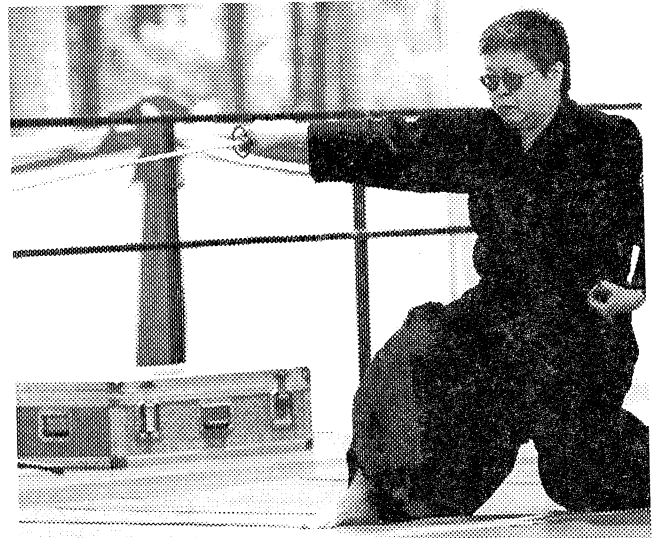
Nisei Week Sword Lecture August 20th.

Sensei will be presenting a rare lecture on Yagyu swords guards and their relationship to Japanese swordsmanship. Everyone is welcome on August 20. Gary Myers of Kenshinkai Iaido will also present a display and sale of Japanese antiques from Yoshino Japanese Antiques and Mike Van Ruth will do his ceramic art sale outside. Sensei will also sign his book. Many events going on in our Dojo during Nisei Week. Let's celebrate together! Bring your friends.

Lotus Festival. July 9. Kenshinkai Iaido Demo



Ken Watanabe in *tate-hiza kamae*, Hasegawa Eishin Ryu.



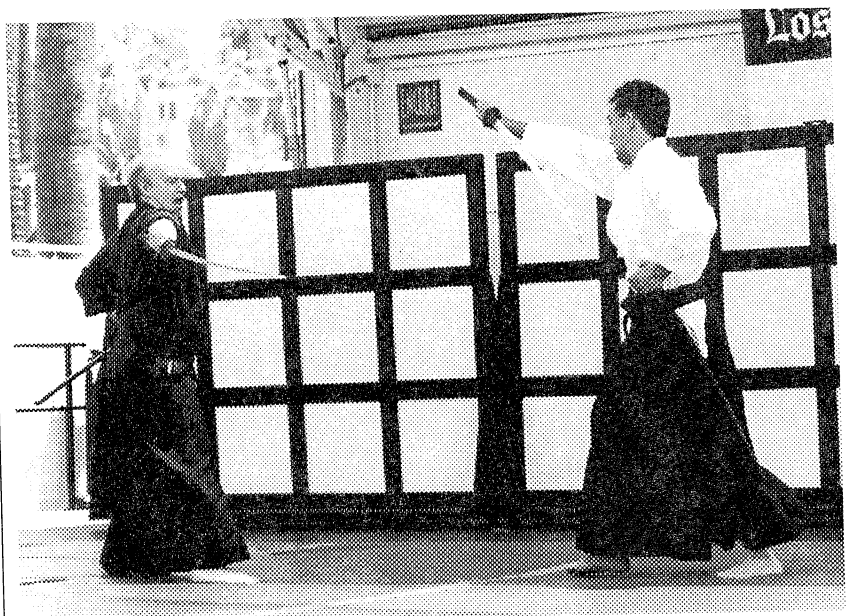
Cheryl Lew demonstrating *sho-hatto*, Muso Shinden Ryu.



Peter Lichtman demonstrating *gyakuto*.



James Doi demonstrating *noto*.



Gary Myers & Ken Watanabe demonstrating Toyama Ryu *kumi-tachi*.

Kenshinkai Iaido:

Saturdays: 8:00-9:15am

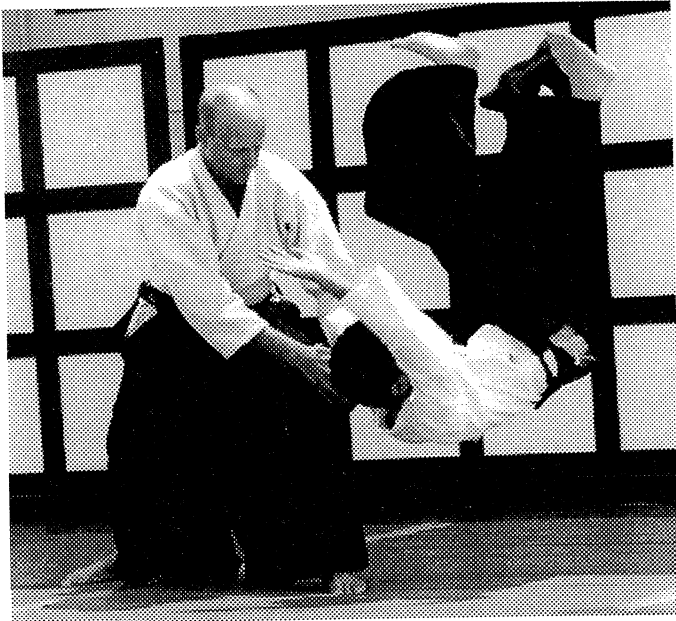
Sundays: 7:45-8:50am

Wednesdays 7:45pm. (No Class 2nd Wed.)

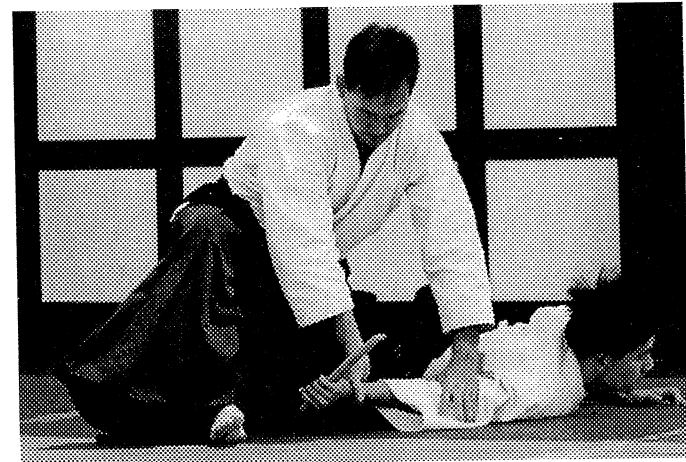
Monthly Intensive 2nd Saturdays: 6:30am

Sensei's prior approval, proper sword, sword cleaning equipment and uniform is required. Membership & participation depends on availability of training space.

Lotus Festival Aikido Demonstration



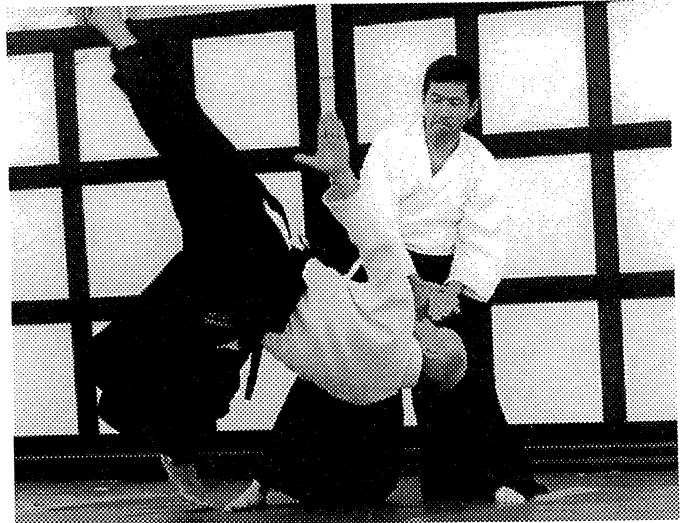
Jim MacDonald. *Kokyu-nage*.



Ken Watanabe. *Tanto-tori Gokyo*.



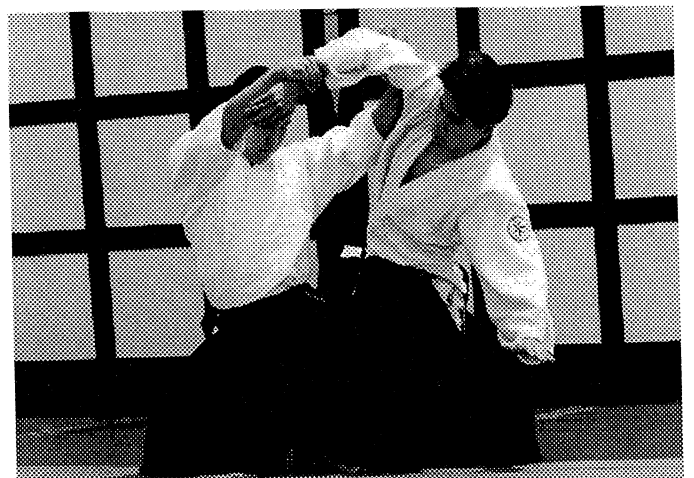
Kenny Furuya. *Suwari-waza nikyo tenkan*.



James Doi. *Kote-gaeshi*.

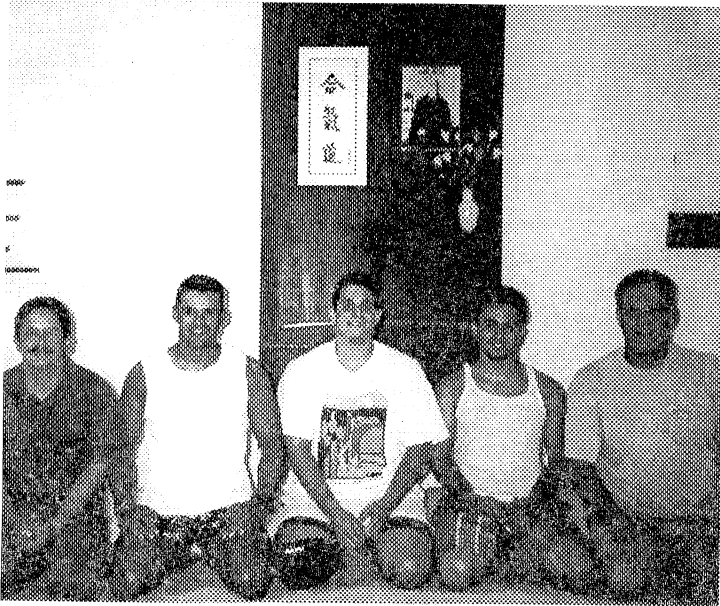


Tom Williams demonstrating *Koshi-nage*.



Kenny Furuya & Mark Ty. *Suwari-waza Shomenuchi-ikkyo*.

Tom Williams In Puerto Rico:



Tom Williams joins the San Juan Aikikai for training in Puerto Rico.

Sun, Sea, But No Surf!

At the eastern end of the Greater Antilles, Puerto Rico, the island of enchantment, lies between the Caribbean Sea and the Atlantic Ocean. Its Spanish tradition dates back to 1493 when Columbus landed on his second voyage, much to the dismay of the indigenous Taino people. In 1508, Juan Ponce De Leon established a settlement that eventually became old San Juan. His remains as a Catholic Cathedral which began as a Catholic shrine in the early 1520's.

For three centuries, the French, Dutch and English periodically laid siege, unsuccessfully trying to wrest the island from Spain. The thick walls of the fortress, El Morro, which guards the harbor proved to be insurmountable. As a result of the Spanish-American War, Spain ultimately ceded the island to the United States. In 1952, Puerto Rico became a semi-autonomous commonwealth territory of the U. S.

Historic San Juan has all the trappings of any American City. Malls, fast food, traffic complete with cell phone toting SUV's seem to have made for significant Americanization of a country with a rich cross-cultural heritage.

Outside of the city, life slows down and begins to resemble other developing tropical countries. Poverty and crime are plentiful. And like many other third-world nations, the front yard makes a convenient personal landfill.

There is world class surfing on the west side around Rincon in the winter when towering swells march down from the North Atlantic to find points and reefs similar to Hawaii's north

shore. Unfortunately, it was totally flat for the duration of my stay. (I am a surfer if you haven't guessed already.) Diving around the offshore islands was pretty good, though the reefs attract a nice variety of colorful sea life, I particularly enjoyed watching a convoy of squid glide eerily by, seemingly unaffected by a big bruiser of a barracuda nearby.

Meanwhile, back on land, sharks of another species are plentiful in the many casinos thoughtfully provided by the local hotels. Quarters were greedily swallowed by schools of slot machines like so many bait fish.

After a few days of struggling, I was able to hook up with San Juan Aikikai for an evening of training. It's a steamy, second floor dojo. Although the level of training was kind of weak, the people were very friendly and the practice was very spirited.

Puerto Rican cuisine is really good. It's a blend of Spanish, African and native Indian dishes. Strong, local coffee and fine, aged rum topped off more than one evening's fare.

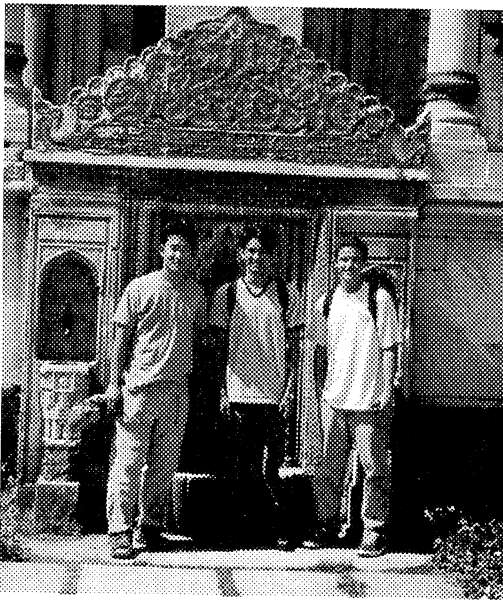
On our final day, we were relaxing back at the condo overlooking the beach in Isla Verde, when the first strains of some live blue music wafted in on the trade winds. We quickly homed in on the source: a small, thatched-covered cantina on the beach was celebrating the 4th of July weekend. So we spent the afternoon sipping pina colodas and listening to the blues under rustling palm tree. All in all, not a bad way to ease into the rest of summer vacation. Tom Williams.

James Takata's European Adventure:

Shortly after my twenty-third birthday, I left Los Angeles in a cramped and crowded German jumbo jet with two of my closest friends. 16 hours and 3 unsavory meals later, we arrived in Istanbul. We would try to fit 2,000 years of history into 5 days. Those days would turn out to be, for me, the highlight of an eventful 3-week trip through Turkey, Greece, Italy and Spain. Although 2 of us got sick from some bad yogurt on our last day, (we called it "Ataturk's revenge"), I did enjoy Turkish food. Breakfast was simple and delicious: fresh OJ, sliced tomato, sliced cucumber, a hard-boiled egg, bread, cheese, honey, and thick, potent Turkish coffee. Lunch and dinner was usually kebab (any meat but pork), and seemed more Middle Eastern than European. Baklava was the desert of choice.

We went directly to sleep after checking in. In the morning we heard our first Moslem call to prayer. 5 times a day, a man inside each mosque sings a call to prayer through loudspeakers positioned on the minarets. We followed the call to the magnificent Blue Mosque. No shoes are worn inside since people touch their heads to the carpet during prayer. We wandered around in awe.

Aikido Center of Los Angeles
NEWSLETTER

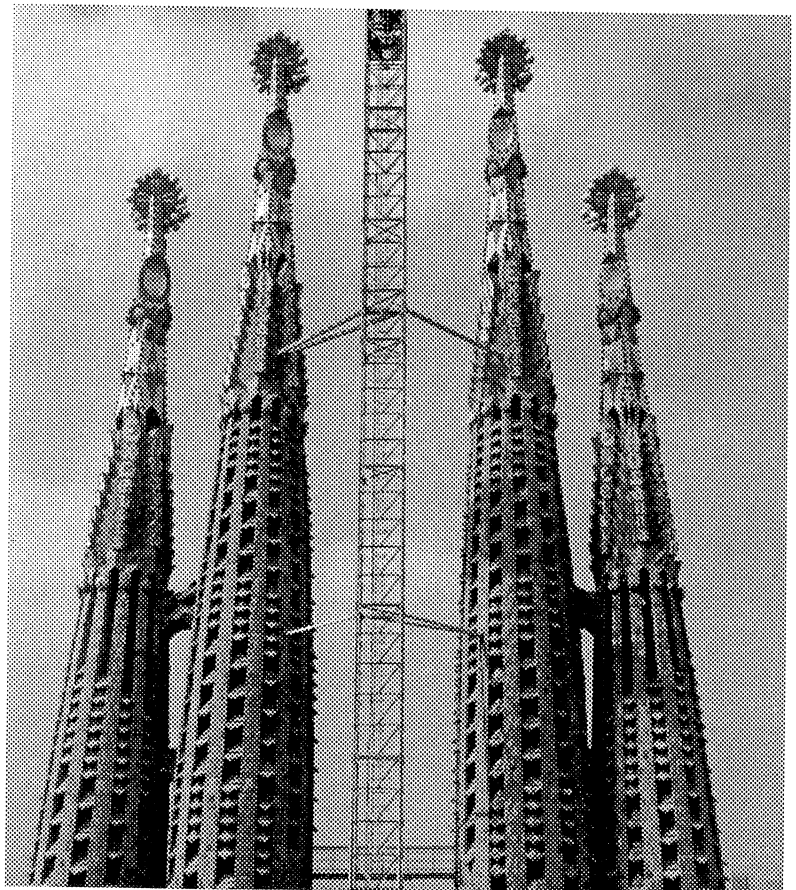


James Takata's Midnight Express:

Outside the mosque we were approached by some Turkish college students who wanted to practice their English. A list of questions became conversation at a cafe. Laughs over coffee became lunch with their class; and suddenly we had 6 Turkish tour guides. We spent our remaining days in Turkey with our new friends: Guisha, Arzu, Ozge, Tolga, Oznur, and Yavuz (4 girls and 2 guys). It took us a while to get their names right. They took us to local restaurants, mosques, a palace, parks and on a ferry up the Bosphorous Strait. It was a great exchange of culture, language, and friendship.

It's difficult to convey what we experienced in those 3 weeks. We traveled by plane, ferry, bus, taxi, gondola (sky car), subway, and something called a funicular in Spain. We visited holy places; saw incredible art and architecture; and discovered new flavors. We saw 7 bulls die by the sword; evaded a pickpocket; and stayed at a hostel where they broke plates over your head (not my head) for fun. We saw a hunchback (in Spain, not France); ate frankfurters in Frankfurt; and saw a Blockbuster Video Store in half the countries we visited. But the best part for me was meeting so many friendly and interesting people along the way (even the French).

Thanks for sticking with me to the end. It's great to be back home, and if I can offer some advice: "Don't eat the yogurt" to the list of don't's in turkey; right below "don't drink the water" and "don't deal in illegal drugs."



Sensei's Message:

I can tell I am getting old and senile because nowadays I don't understand anything. I get so confused about everything. I was reading the news about genome and how now we can read DNA. I don't understand all the technical stuff but this discovery was compared to the invention of the wheel and the discovery of fire. At the same time, and on the same page of the newspaper, I also read about the revealing of the prophecy of Lourdes by the Vatican, speaking of people dressed in white, dripping blood on dying people and I thought in my confused mind, "Oh! the prophecy of the three secrets of Fatima over 80 years ago has predicted the mapping of the human genome!" I am all mixed up!

Last evening on the news, I was listening to people discuss this new discovery and some experts seem to agree that we can now "understand the text of God." "How terrifying!" I thought. I wonder how we can understand God, when we don't understand the tiniest bit of our own minds and souls. Of course, all of these new discoveries are a good thing. I wouldn't be surprised if these new discoveries might save my own life one day when I get sick. I am grateful. At the same time, with such new discoveries, along with the visitation of the Dalai Lama in Los Angeles; I wonder with so many great and truly wonderful things happening, why have we so engulfed ourselves in all of this violence and destruction? On one hand, we have come so far; on the other hand, we haven't moved one inch.

Many years ago, I was with Doshu cleaning the Aiki Shrine. It was the first time I visited there. O'Sensei's house had not been used for a long time after his passing, no one was practicing in the Dojo for a long time, and although it pretty much looked abandoned, O'Sensei's presence was still very strong and all pervading. To me, it was a strange and mysterious place. The first time I have been to any town with no street lights or roads at the time. At night, it was pitch black and one couldn't see anything in front of one's nose. When we were cleaning around the Aiki Shrine, I asked Doshu if I could see what was inside. Doshu replied, "God is in there. It is so terrifying that if you take one peek or even get near it, you will die a horrible death!" I am so stupid, so many years later, I still believe it!

Tom Willimas in Puerto Rico:

E-mail of June 29, 2000

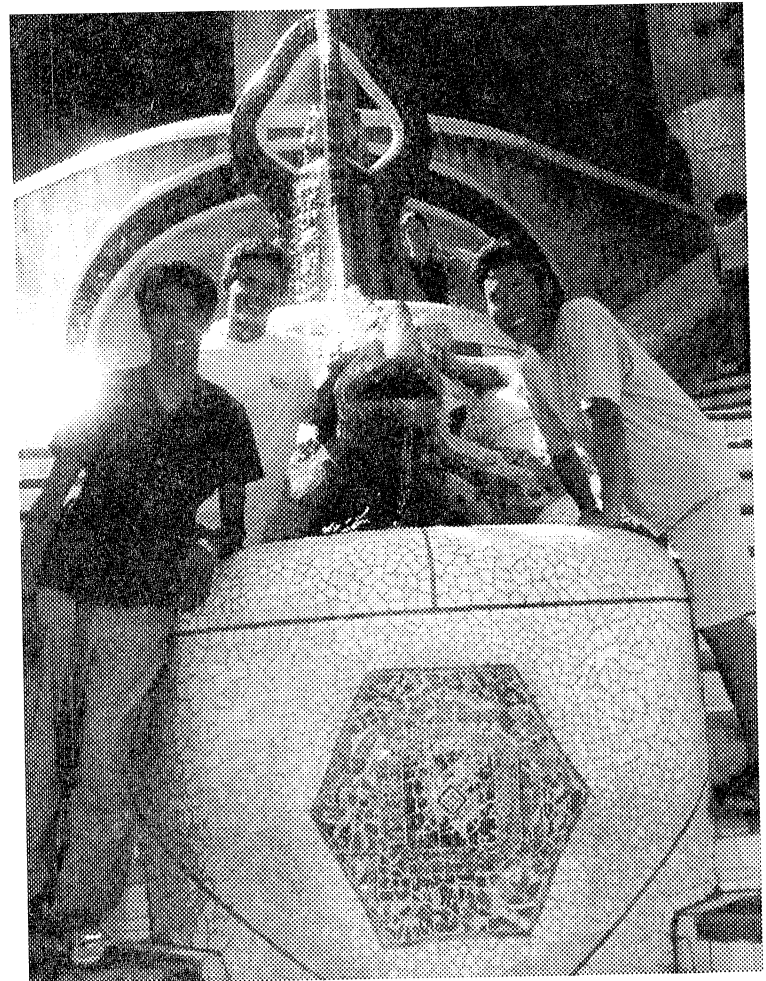
Sensei:

Well, after a fair bit of persistence, I was finally able to get some Aikido training in the other night. I contacted a student at San Juan Aikikai by e-mail through their website and he actually responded! Class was supposed to begin at 7:30-pm, so I arrived early enough to introduce myself and get situated. I guess in this culture, times are just more like suggested or possible starting points. I waited in front of the dojo on a filthy sidewalk (empty beer bottles and trash lining the entrance to the dojo) until someone came at about 7:40 to open the door.

There were no yudansha attending class. The highest rank was 1st kyu, and although he offered for me to teach, I politely declined. I wanted to see what they did. About a dozen beginners who had great spirit and attitudes practiced in the 90% humidity for an hour and a half.

The training lacked fundamentals and I wondered why the instructor hadn't bothered to show up or at least have a senior student there to cover class. I had this one kid that kept sitting next to me during the demonstration of the next technique and asking questions about S. Seagal and other stuff. I had to finally tell him to be quiet and pay attention. Near the end of class, I showed them one basic technique (which, they couldn't really follow). After class, I had one of the "better" students throw me around a little, so I could at least get a little work out.

There were very friendly though. And it was kind of fun. I enjoy getting to see how things are in different cultures. I may try to go back over the weekend for another class. I'll have to see how it goes. . . . I miss training. I like to practice regularly and feel funny without a session each day. . . . Well, that's it for now. I hope you are well and everything is OK at the Dojo. See you soon, Tom Williams.



Three friends and three weeks in Europe equals a terrific vacation!

Letters & E-Mails

Response to Author Recognition Luncheon:

06-23-00

Hello there. My name is Cameron B. I was present during your talk at the Library fundraiser on June 17th at the church. I am sure you don't remember me, but I am a short guy and I had a black jacket on. you might have also seen me after the fundraiser lingering around your dojo, looking around. I would like very much to be your student of Aikido. I have been looking for a dojo to study at for quite a while now, and your words about the capitalism of martial arts struck home. Also the environment and people in the environment are most important, and I received nothing but kindness and encouragement from both your students and others in the community at the Library fundraiser. It felt very liberating, and I would love to be a part of the learning that I felt there. I am going to the Czech Republic for a month or so, so I cannot start immediately, but as soon as I get back I would like to begin training, actually, as you say in your book, I am "training right now to train and learning how to learn." I am a full time student at Cal Arts. Quick questions. Do I just show up for the first time? . . . Also, my girlfriend is very interested in being your student as well, after I introduced her to the materials. This is a silly question, but women are also allowed to train under you, right? Is there any problem there? Again, I am very thankful to have "randomly" discovered your dojo, and I would like very much to be your student. I understand if you don't have time to respond, and if I don't hear from you. I will just get in touch when I get back from Europe. Sincerely, Cameron B.

Editor's Note: You are very welcome as well as your girlfriend. Just come when you are ready to begin practice. Have a safe and pleasant trip and we will see you on your return. Many thanks. Of course, women may practice in the Dojo, all serious and sincere students are cordially welcome.

Visiting From The Mid-West:

June 26, 2000

We want to thank you for allowing us to visit your beautiful Dojo; it is most impressive. Our only regret is that we could not spend more time with you and your students. Thank you for your kindness and generosity. Your work in the martial arts community is refreshing and inspirational. Thank you for your incredible contribution. Sincerely, Students of Sifu Brown, School of Chinese Martial Arts, Minnesota.

Message From Old Student In Bangkok, Peo Lopansri:

06-24-00

I just wanted to say hi and let you know how I am doing. I was in Tokyo for 4 months after which I have been living here in Bangkok for 2 years now. I am working in Bangkok doing analytics and managing a mortgage portfolio for Lehman Brothers. I have been doing what I always wanted to do (Experiencing the world and Working for a big company).

Concerning Aikido, when I was in Japan I practiced for 3 months. After that, I have not been able to practice any. I really miss being able to train in the Martial arts. I especially miss training under your techniques. Your web page looks good. Please give everybody my regards and I hope everything is going well for you. Peo (Lopransri)

Editor's Note: Best wishes and hope you see you again someday. Peo attended the Dojo while at USC getting his degree in business. He reached the rank of 1st Kyu.

From Toronto, Canada:

06-28-00

Dear Sensei,

I am from Toronto, Canada. I have been practicing Aikido for less than a year, since last September. However, I attempt to be at practice at every class. I just wanted to express my thanks and appreciation of your writing, in your book, and recently, through your website daily messages. I find your writing clear and thoughtful. I am 33 years old, married and practice ophthalmology by profession. I wonder how you came to decide on the path of Zen priesthood, after your earlier studies?

Thank you again,

Arigato-gozaimeashita,

John Shin

From Puerto Rico:

Hello. My name is Giuliano De Portu, I practice Aikido in Puerto Rico, our dojo is part of USAF and Yamada Sensei in NY. We recently had the visit of one of your students, Tom Williams, he was visiting the island. He got a hold of us through our web-site. I'm very happy that our web is helping other Aikidoists to find our school in Puerto Rico. Next time I'm in LA I'll try to find time to visit your school, from what I saw on the web, you have a beautiful dojo. Have a great day, and remember you have friends in Puerto Rico!
Guiliano De Portu, San Juan Aikikai, Puerto Rico

From El Salvador, Central America

June 30, 2000

My name is Heraldo Yuvini Pablo, I am from Santa Ana, El Salvador, C.A. I can't speak English and I hope that you understand me. I saw you T.V. (program). I practice Tae Kwon Do since 8 years ago. hace unos meses me di cuenta del Aikido quisiera conocer los pasos basicos pero en mi pais nadie conoce Aikido espero entienda mi falta de conocimiento del Ingles y al mismo tiempo me disculpo por iniciar con ingles y terminar en espanol. con todo respeto me despido (Translation: it has been a few months since I heard about Aikido (through your TV show) I would like to know some basics, but in my country there is no one who knows Aikido. I hope you can understand me with my lack of knowledge of English and at the same time excuse my starting the letter in English and ending it in Spanish. Respectfully yours,)
Heraldo Yuvini Pablo.

Dojo Donors List Life Members

Katsumi Kunitsugu, Madam S. Kansuma, Shrfu Adam Hsu, Mark Ty \$1,300.00, Hon. Peter Lichtman \$1,000.00, James Doi, PhD. \$1,000.00, Dr. Cheryl Lew \$1,000.00, William D'Angelo \$500.00, Larry Armstrong, Rev. Fetsuo Unno, Dr. Taitetsu Unno, Norman Lew, Teru Ikeda

Honored Members & Friends

Dr. George Nakashima, Jim MacDonald, David Ito, Peter Kirsch-Korff, Ken Watanabe, Tom McIntyre, Mari Masumori, Paulina Kawasaki, Tom Williams, Lisa Ito

Visit Our Website Often!

Be sure to visit our website often for the latest Dojo news and upcoming events. Also see Sensei's Forum for letters and correspondence from all over the world to our Dojo. Also, a special feature is Sensei's Message. Tell your family and friends!

www.aikidocenterla.com

New Dues Policy

Monthly dues are due at the first of the month. If you cannot be in the Dojo by the 1st, please mail in your dues directly to the Dojo.

Monthly Dues: 1st of the Month.

Late Fees:

If not paid by the 5th: \$20.00

If one month dues are missed:

First & Last Month's Dues required to rejoin Dojo.

Leave of Absence:

Leave of Absence notice is required for absences more than one week. This is strictly required for Black Belts. For Black Belts: Months counted as late will NOT be counted as attendance towards their Dan promotion. No exceptions. Attendance at monthly seminars, meetings, events and Budo Study Classes will also be counted towards your promotion. Please communicate your concerns, so they can be resolved.

Shito Ryu Karate Students from Redlands:

July 17, 2000

Reverend Furuya,

Scott and I very much enjoyed our visit to your dojo this past Saturday. Thank you kindly for your offer to come and watch. My sole experience in the martial arts has been in Karate, and I was entranced by the gross and subtle differences between Shito-Ryu and Aikido and swordsmanship styles. My sense of awe of the martial arts expanded with yet another glimmer of the sheer breadth of what one may learn. Aikido approaches the use of dynamic principles very differently than Karate. I have a friend who has been training in Wu Shu for 18 years; and while I anticipated that this and Aikido would be more similar, they are in fact quite different again. My late Sensei tried to emphasize to his students the importance of depth and breadth in your personal martial arts training. Exposure and experience across disciplines illuminates many of the principles at work. At the same time, selecting a single discipline and training diligently in that discipline is the only way to master these principles.

Two of your senior students, Mike and James, made a point to approach us and offer to answer any questions that we may have. They were very helpful. We were impressed with their dedication and how they helped their kohai. Scott was very impressed with the Iaido and Bokken classes, and kept turning the topic of conversation to them hours after we left your dojo. He really appreciated being able to watch an authentic training. His experience was entirely one-on-one with our late Sensei, who was not a master of Iaido and would only show Scott some rudimentary techniques. If there is any way you can imagine that we may return the favour to you and your students, please let us know. We hope to come again and watch one of your demonstrations this August. Respectfully,
Richard & Scott

Editor's Note: They requested permission to observe our Aikido and Iaido classes through the e-mail. They study Shito Ryu Karate in Redlands, California.

Affiliated Branch Dojos

Kodokai Salamanca Branch Dojo

Salamanca, Spain

Santiago Garcia Almaraz, 2nd Dan

Hacienda La Puente Aikikai

La Puente, California

Tom Williams, 3rd Dan

Wyoming Aikikai

Sheridan, Wyoming

Tom McIntyre, 2nd Dan

Aikido Center of Los Angeles
NEWSLETTER

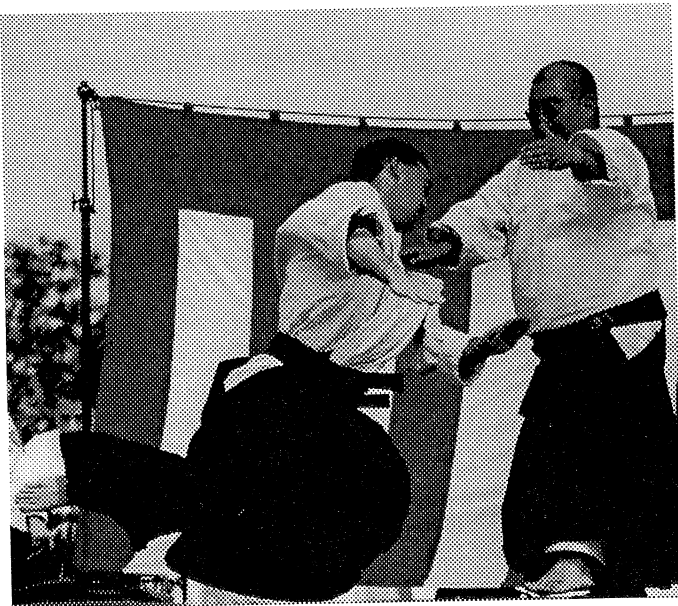
Welcome To The Aikido Center of Los Angeles



Aikido Center of Los Angeles

**This Year Is
Our Dojo's
25th Year
Anniversary
1974-1999.**

**Our Website:
www.aikido-centerla.com.
Come see us!**



Reverend Kensho Furuya, 6th Dan

Dojo Supplies

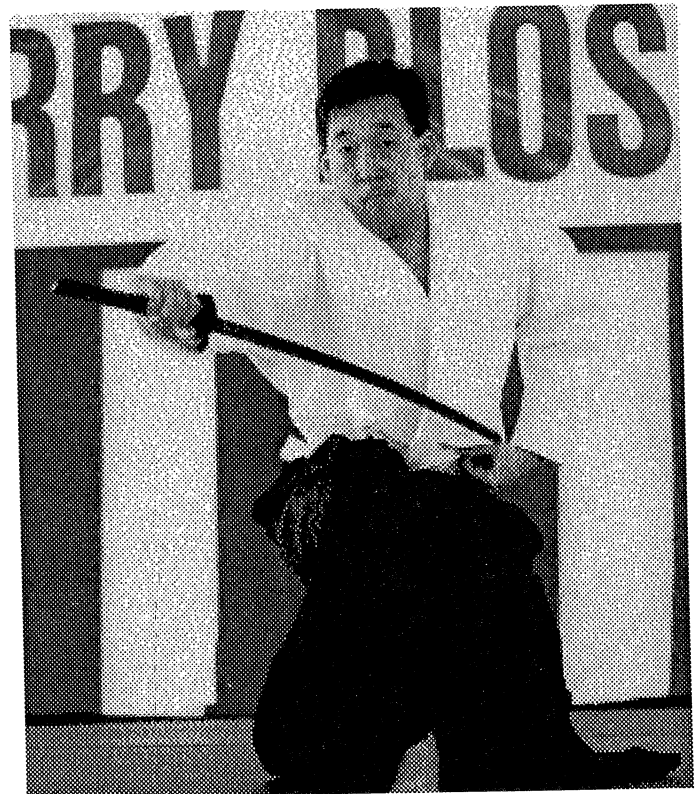
Official Dojo Jackets

Now available on a custom order basis. Designed by Land's End, nylon in bright yellow with the embroidered Dojo logo. They are very comfortable and great to wear for demonstrations. \$55.00 each.
Official Dojo T-Shirts, ACLA Patches & Dojo Mugs

Japanese Swords: Purchase, Appraisal & Restoration

Expert appraisal on Japanese swords. Complete services for restoration of Japanese art swords and custom-ordered Iaito training sword. Services include polish, handle wrapping, scabbard lacquer work, special orders. By appointment only.

JAPANESE SWORDS & BOUGHT & SOLD
By appointment only.



Japanese Swordsmanship Muso Shinden Ryu Iaido

We offer instruction in the traditional art of Iaido, the art of the Sword. Serious students are always welcome. Iaido demands a strong commitment of time, honor, perseverance and integrity. It is a spiritual art with a history and tradition of over one thousand years. It is an art which is rapidly disappearing in our modern world today. We welcome all interested students to join our training.

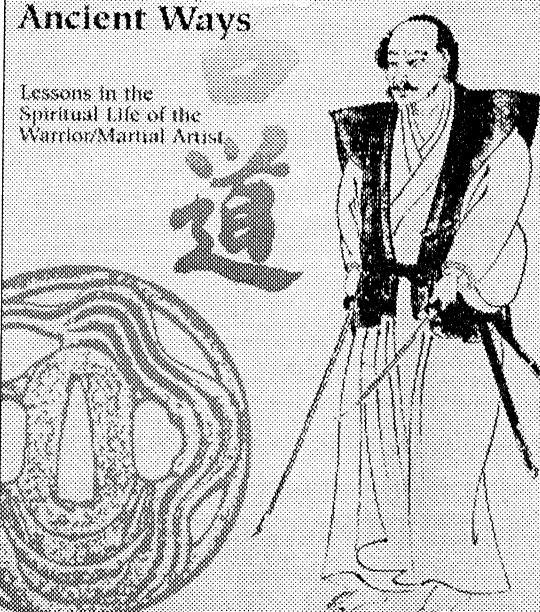
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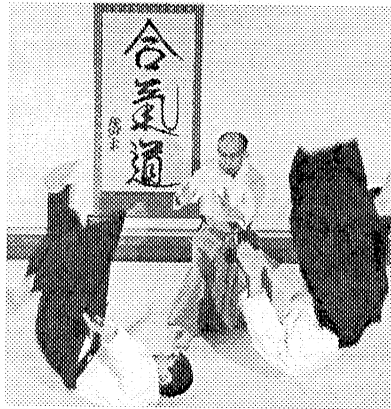
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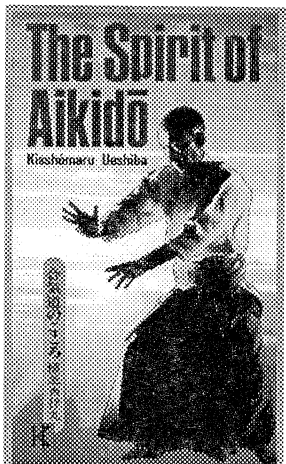
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