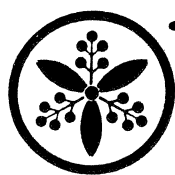


羅府合氣道学院古屋道場



AIKIDO CENTER OF LOS ANGELES NEWSLETTER

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Affiliations: The Aikido World Headquarters - Aikido So-Hombu Dojo Aikikai, Tokyo, Japan
The All Japan Swordsmanship Federation, Tokyo, Japan.
The United States Aikido Federation - Eastern Region, New York, New York
The Los Angeles Sword and Swordsmanship Society - Kenshinkai. Los Angeles, Ca.

May 1, 1994

Volume XII. Volume 5.



Six members of the Suganuma Sensei's Shohei Juku Dojo in Fukuoka, Japan, visited our Dojo on April 11th & 14th. Group members were Mr. Toshiro Nishida, Mr. Sumio Herakawa, Mr. Kazuo Hara. Ms. Yoko Nozue, Ms. Masako Oishi & Ms. Makiko Nakamura. Mr. Nishida, 2nd Dan, was the group leader.



Nishida Sensei presents scroll from Suganuma Sensei. Scroll was written by Umeta Shinryu Zenji, head of Sojiji Temple, one of the main temples of the Soto Zen Sect.



Nishida Sensei gives pointers to David Ito during practice.

SHOHEI JUKU MEMBERS VISIT DOJO

Six members from Suganuma Morito Sensei's Dojo, Shohei Juku, visited our dojo and practiced on April 11th and 14th. The tour was lead by Toshiro Nishida Sensei who taught class on the evening of the 14th. Sensei and Assistant Instructor Mr. Ken Watanabe took them around Los Angeles, Hollywood and Beverly Hills all day and dined with them in the Grill of the very elegant Ritz Carlton Hotel in Pasadena before their return to Japan.

Member Profile:



Dr. JAMES DOI, 2nd dan.

Born in the city of Fallbrook in Northern San Diego County, James is a chemist for the Aerospace Corporation in El Segundo. He started Aikido with Sensei at the USC Aikido Club in 1969 and later joined Sensei's dojo again in 1988. He is one of the senior instructors of our dojo. James is married and lives in Torrance with his lovely wife. James is one

of the Sensei's most senior students and has been his good personal friend for many, many years since the USC days.



Dr. James Doi, 2nd dan, demonstrating shiho-nage technique with Andy Kissel, 1st dan, at the Japanese Village Plaza during a recent demonstration.

Ongoing Monthly Events

1st Friday of the Month. Japanese Sword Study Class - Rafu Token Kai from 7:30pm.

2nd Friday of the Month. Budo - Japanese Martial Arts Study Class from 7:30pm. Current Topic: Miyamoto Musashi's The Book of Five Rings.

3rd Saturday of the Month. Intensive Iaido Seminar from 6:30am-8:30am.

4th Saturday of the Month. Intensive Black Belt Seminar from 6:30am-8:30am. For all Yudansha Kai members and senior students.

IMPORTANT DATES for MAY

April 29th thru May 4th. Twenty members of the Omiya Dojo of Saitama, Japan, visiting our dojo for a Special Joint Practice Gasshuku. Chief Instructor, Isamu Ichizuma, 6th dan, heads the group.

April 30th. Black Belt Intensive cancelled this month due to special Gasshuku.

April 30th & May 1st. Japanese Village Plaza Children's Self-Defense Festival. From 12:30pm.

April 30th & May 1st. JACCC Children's Day Festival at the JACCC Plaza.

May 6th. Sword Study Class from 7:30pm

May 8th. Ladies Day Luncheon. Everyone invited. Ladies will be treated. St. Honore in Alhambra.

May 13th. Budo Study Class from 7:30pm. Starting with Sun Tz's "The Art of War."

May 21st. Iaido Intensive Seminar from 6:30am-8:30am. Monthly Breakfast Meeting follows.

May 28th. Black Belt Intensive Seminar from 6:30pm-8:30pm. Important meeting follows.

May 30th. Memorial Day. Special Morning Class from 9:30am-11:00am. No evening classes.

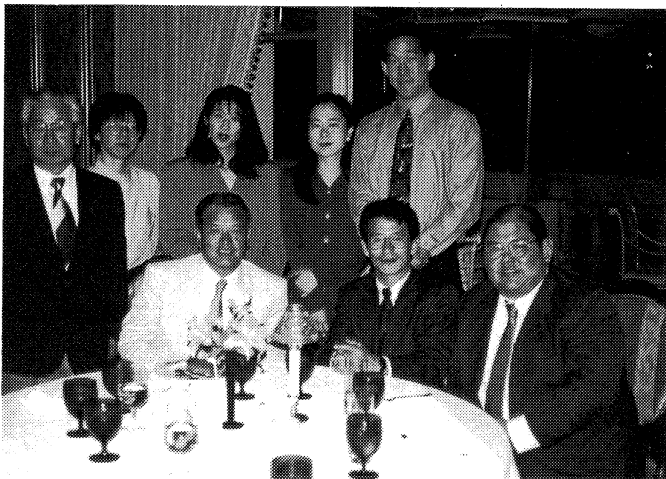
SIX GUESTS FROM SUGANUMA SENSEI'S DOJO, KYUSHU, JAPAN VISIT APRIL 11TH-14TH.



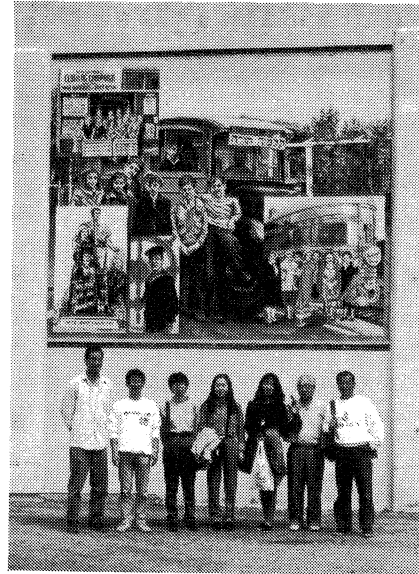
During first practice on April 11th.



Welcome Dinner at the ABC Restaurant in Chinatown.

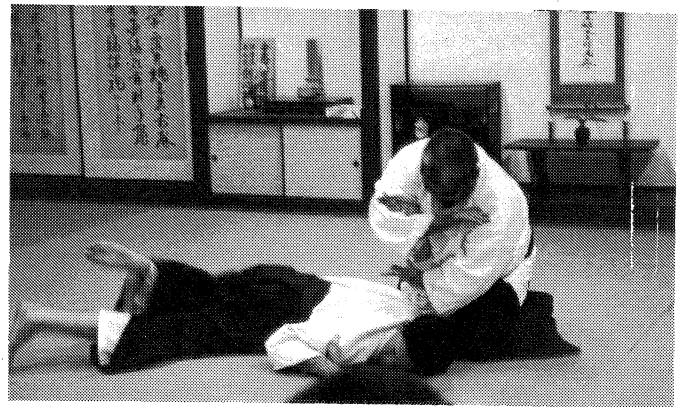


Farewell Dinner at the Ritz Carlton Hotel in Pasadena.
Mr. Hara's (white coat) birthday was also celebrated, his 1st
American birthday party.



Our guests from Kyushu, Japan, get their first 100% American breakfast at Cantor's in Hollywood. Our guests visited Hollywood, Mann's Chinese Theater, the Beverly Center mall, Beverly Hills' Rodeo Drive, Old Town in Pasadena. They visited Disneyland and Universal Studios on their own.

Scroll presented to Sensei from Suganuma Sensei. The scroll is written by Umeta Shinryu Zenji, the head of the Sojiji Temple, one of the main temples of the Soto Zen Sect in Japan. Suganuma Sensei and Furuya Sensei practice the same school of Zen meditation. The scroll reads "Shikan Taza" one of the famous words of Dogen Zenji, who founded the Soto Sect in Japan in the 13th century.



Sensei during practice.

Ancient Ways

Cultivating Inner Strength

I live in Los Angeles, and I was one of many victims of the "Great Los Angeles Earthquake" on January 17, 1994. Don't misunderstand me, though. This column is not about how to bravely face earthquakes that register 6.8 on the Richter Scale. Before I move on, however, let me say a few things about the quake. First, the earthquake certainly was a frightening experience, which is not so hard to admit. Earthquakes make you realize how little human beings can do against nature and make you realize how valuable (and fragile) human life is. Luckily, my *dojo* (martial arts school) sustained very little damage, although I was pounded by three large bookcases and about 1,000 books. Compared to many, many less fortunate victims, I am very fortunate indeed.

One of the mysteries of this earthquake is why some buildings escaped unscathed while others were destroyed. My building, for example, lost only a few bricks. The building next door, only a few yards away, was condemned. Apparently, experts examining the condemned buildings, such as my neighbors', found problems with the inner construction of the walls, which may have caused them to fall apart during the shaking. Yet, from all outward appearances, the walls seem to be the same as any that withstood the shock, which leads me to the topic of this column.

Human beings are constructed in much the same way, I suppose. We may look strong and healthy from the outside, but unless we cultivate our inner strength, we may break down quite easily under the slightest pressure.

Similarly, to the untrained eye, the metal, shape, curvature and construction of Japanese swords appear much the same from one to the next. Yet, there are many, many differences. By examining the metal and

forging, an expert can pinpoint where the sword was made, its age within 50 years and even who constructed it. In a few cases, an expert can even tell if the sword was made early or later in the swordsmith's career. One of the things we see in the metal are indications of its innate strength, which ultimately determine its quality and value. The expert trains to see what the normal eye can't. He trains to see inside the metal.

How do you cultivate inner strength? I am sure we can come up with all kinds of mysterious formulas, recipes and secret teachings in the martial arts. Yet, I think we should look at this interesting question much more carefully and honestly.

I have seen strong people break down quickly under pressure, and I have also seen seemingly weak and helpless people endure all types of hardship and suffering and come out on top. I think everyone has seen this at one time or another.

That reminds me of an incident a friend of mine, a talented martial artist, experienced many years ago. He confessed to me that a man confronted him with a knife. When my friend tried to make a move, he said his legs wouldn't respond. He felt paralyzed and helpless. "I was so scared that all I could do was get the hell out of there," he said. When he told me that, I praised him. "You are a very clever person to save yourself like that."

Everyone has heard of the story of the elderly lady who rescued a child by lifting a car off the youngster. Later, a reporter asked her to do it again.

"You must be crazy," she replied. "That's impossible."

A few of the strongest people I know are not martial artists. (I am not trying to put anyone down, so please do not misunderstand me).

But, it just so happens that many of the strongest people—the wisest, most vital and most energetic—are average, normal, everyday people.

They are not particularly strong or skilled, they don't have particular talents, they are not rich or famous, they don't carry guns, they don't get their strength from drugs and they are not crazy. If you ask them about their strength, they will only laugh at you and say, "I am just a weak person. Why do you think I am so strong? You are a martial artist; you have nothing to worry about!"

What does it take to develop inner strength? Men of faith have it, old ladies in danger have it, hungry, tiny babies have it. Who has it and who doesn't? Of course, we all have it. The question is, how do we realize it?

If I had this so-called inner strength, would I stand up during an earthquake while the building is shaking, the lights are going out and everything is crashing down around me and say, "Look here earthquake, I am not afraid of you!" I doubt it very much. Yet, I heard of an incident in which an elderly lady was pinned under a mountain of rubble in another earthquake and survived several days without food, water or medical help.

Definitely, the cultivation of our inner strength should be an important, vital part of our training, but is it? When you train, are you thinking about your spirit, your mental state or your inner strength? Do you think about life? Are you cultivating the wisdom that leads to this strength? To complete our martial arts training, we must challenge ourselves in many different ways—much more than most of us are doing now.

As much as we seek realism in our techniques, we often inadvertently divorce ourselves from the reality of

our own lives, from our true selves. You may train to handle an opponent armed with a knife, but can you defend yourself against the cowardly, slanderous remarks of that coworker who will do anything to get your job? Can you fight the economic system that seems to continually block your chance for success? Sickness? The death of a loved one? A sudden car accident? The failure of your business? An earthquake or another act of God?

We have an arsenal of techniques we could use against an armed attacker, multiple opponents or a kick

expecting more than we truly deserve, including fame and money, we can finally find some peace of mind, which is our inner strength.

I have great respect for the founder of aikido and other great martial artists who sacrificed their lives, trained hard and endured many hardships to perfect their art. We all know and respect these people. At the same time, there are many unknown people, not famous, not rich, not successful, not strong and not even smart, who are equally as great. We cannot judge them by outer superficial appearances. You

his 35th anniversary, and I was honored to be invited to the celebration. At the ceremony, Fumio spoke of the hard times he endured, including the time when he wanted to quit. Nevertheless, he persevered. And look at the fine organization he has today. In his speech, he spoke of the way of karate or karate-do as the most important aspect of training. How many of us have forgotten the "do" of our art? How many of us have forgotten our training as a way of life?

Through our training, we receive something very special that you cannot find in other sports. But this something does not make us very special people. It does not make us better than others. It does, however, give us the profound and deep realization that we are truly everyday, normal people, like everyone else who struggles to make a good life for himself, as best he can, despite all the obstacles, opponents and tragedies. This is true inner strength, and this is what makes the true martial artist. I am afraid this might be difficult for many of us to understand.

Please keep in mind that inner strength is not a matter of skill or strength. It has nothing to do with fame or riches. Inner strength is someone trying hard to make a good life for himself as best as he can and for those all around him. Or it is someone who is always trying to do good for others, with humility and respect. In my mind, this is a person of great inner strength. 卍卍

Reverend Kensho Furuya is an ordained Zen priest, resident chief instructor of the Aikido Center of Los Angeles and shihan of the Los Angeles Branch of the All-Japan Swordsmanship Federation. He also teaches aikido, iaido and swordsmanship. He welcomes all inquiries and suggestions to his column.

Earthquakes make you realize how little human beings can do against nature and make you realize how valuable (and fragile) human life is.

or a punch. But do these techniques work equally well against our personal failures and tragedies?

Yes, they do. If you ask how, then you are far from the point. The answer is right there in front of you—right under your nose. The answer is in your daily, continuous, faithful and unswerving loyalty to your art and to your devoted, hard training. If, however, you expect to find a paradise, heaven, the immortality of the Gods, or a golden key to fame and fortune, you are far from the point.

There is a saying in Zen that I like very much. It is, "To do Zen, chop off your head, put it by your side and then just sit." I often give my aikido students this advice. When you enter the mat area, cut your head off, put it by the side and then throw yourself into your training.

The moment we stop trying to avoid our responsibilities or stop

have to look to their inner strength.

I know many readers have similar stories in their own lives. My grandparents immigrated to this country at the turn of the century. Think of all the hardships they endured. With all of my training and expertise in the martial arts, I wish I could be as brave and courageous.

Your inner strength will not come from a secret formula or superior technique or even the "winning edge." It comes from the virtue of our practice as we apply it in our daily lives. You may do well in the training hall, but if you waste your personal life and never practice humility and respect for others, as we learn in our training, you have quite clearly not comprehended what the martial arts is about. A friend of mine is a shining example of what the martial arts is all about.

This year Fumio Demura of the Japan Karate Federation celebrated



Sensei during practice with guests from Kyushu, Japan.

MANY THANKS

Many thanks to students who have paid extra months dues to help us along during these hard financial times. They include Mr. Bruce Ino, Dr. James Doi, Mr. Richard Eloriagga, Mr. William Gillespie and Dr. Cheryl Lew.

Also, many thanks to Tom McIntyre, 1st dan, who has been sending in his dues on a regular basis while on leave of absence. Tom is a sports magazine editor and world famous wild game hunter. He has also written several books on his exciting experiences.

Many thanks to Mr. Steve Tarango who has been doing volunteer handyman work around the dojo since the earthquake. Also, Steve and his father, Raul, donated a set of emergency lights to the dojo.

Thanks to Tozai Times for covering Sensei in their March 1994 issue. You can subscribe to this interesting publication by writing to Tozai Times, 5810 E. Olympic Blvd., Los Angeles, CA 90022, or calling (213) 723-6245.

Thanks to Mitsuko Yoshimoto for covering our JVP demonstration in the Japan US News.

We would also like to welcome back Master Jun Chong to the dojo. Master Chong is one of the foremost masters of the art of Taekwondo in the world.

Many thanks to Mr. Ted Takeuchi for donating his time helping the dojo with all the income tax forms. Ted is Sensei's student from the 1980's. Ted's ancestors were Jujitsu masters of the Takenouchi (Takeuchi) Ryu.

Welcome

We welcome 20 members of the Omiya Aikido Dojo in Omiya City, Saitama Pref., Japan, visiting us for training from April 29th through May 4th.

Congratulations

To Yamada Yoshimitsu Sensei and the New York Aikikai on their 30th Anniversary.

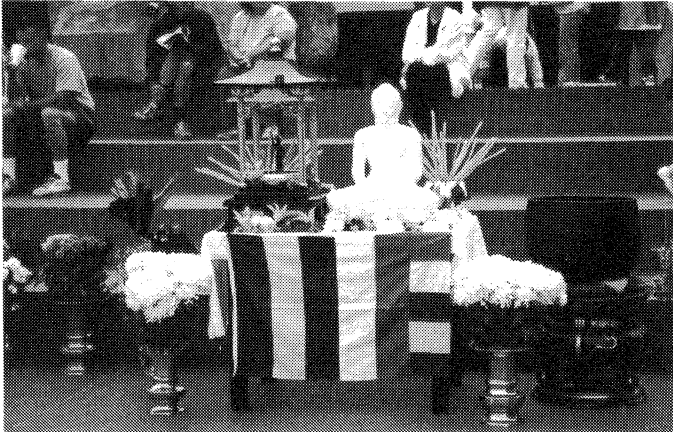
SENSEI VIDEO TAPES SIX HOURS OF AIKIDO TECHNIQUES

Sensei recorded over ten hours of video tape on Aikido techniques which will be edited down to a six volume, six hour instructional series entitled, "AIKIDO." The Series will be available in the summer of 1994.

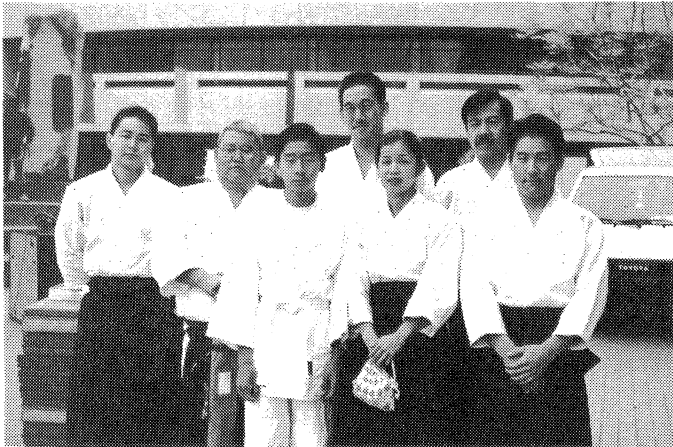


Sensei with Mark Komuro and Scott Hilton, producers of video series on "Aikido," during video taping in the dojo.

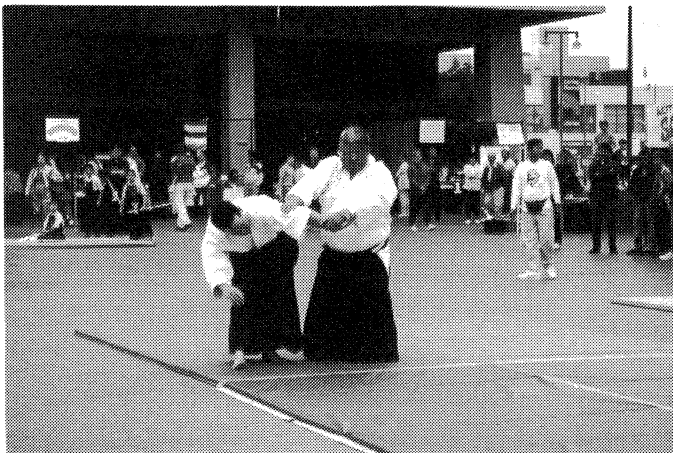
HAMAMATSURI FESTIVAL DEMO ON APRIL 3rd AT THE JACCC PLAZA.



Hanamatsuri celebrates the birth of Sakyamuni Buddha. The demo took place in the JACCC Plaza during the festival.



Participating members L to R: Ken Furuya, Sensei, Mark Ty, Ken Watanabe, Mitsuko Yoshimoto, Yasushi Matsuki and David Ito.



Sensei the fundamental techniques of Aikido outside the JACCC. Our Dojo participates in this demonstration every year for the Little Tokyo community.



Yasushi Matsuki, 2nd dan.



Mitsuko Yoshimoto, 2nd dan.



Ken Watanabe, 2nd dan.



Kenny Furuya, 1st dan.



David Ito, 1st dan.

ACLA TRAINING SCHEDULE 1994

Aikido

BEGINNING OPEN CLASSES

Tuesday & Friday
7:00am-8:00am

Mondays thru Fridays
6:15pm-7:15pm

Mondays & Thursdays
7:30pm-8:30pm

Saturday Mornings
10:15am-11:15am

Sunday Mornings
9:45am-10:45am

ADVANCED & INSTRUCTOR'S CLASSES

2nd Kyu & Up. Bokken, Jo, & Tanto

Tuesdays
7:30pm-8:30pm

Saturday Mornings
11:30am-12:30pm

Every 4th Saturday
**MONTHLY BLACK BELT
INTENSIVE SEMINAR**
6:30am-8:30am
Monthly Yudansha Kai Meeting follows.

CHILDREN'S CLASSES

Sunday Mornings
8:30am-9:30am

SPECIAL MONTHLY STUDY CLASSES

JAPANESE SWORD STUDY CLASS
RAFU TOKEN KAI
1st Friday of the Month
7:30pm-9:00pm

Sword appraisals, appreciation, lecture/discussion.

BUDO STUDY CLASS
2nd Friday of the Month
7:30pm-8:30pm
Current Topic: The Book of Five Rings.

Lecture-discussion on the roots of martial arts.

KENSHINKAI

Los Angeles Branch
All Japan Swordsmanship Federation

Muso Shinden Ryu Iaido

Wednesdays Evenings
7:30pm-8:30pm

Saturday Mornings
9:00am-10:00am

Sunday Mornings
7:30am-8:30am

Every 3rd Saturday of the Month
IAIDO INTENSIVE SEMINAR
6:30am-8:30am
Monthly Meeting follows.

All active Aikidoists are welcome to our dojo for training.
New & beginning students interested in Aikido and Iaido
are welcome join our dojo.