



Editor's Note

By Chris Earl

Thanks to Phil Lantz, Catherine Beaton, and Chris Wilson for submissions this month!

Deadline for the August issue is August 20th 2001. Submissions can be handwritten, on diskette as Microsoft Word or text file or you can email me at cearl@odyssey.on.ca

Next Test Dates

Carling Heights

Adults: Thursday September 27th, 2001



Welcome To Our Dojo:

Excerpt from the book - THE WAY OF AIKIDO, Life Lesson from An American Sensei

By George Leonard

(submitted with minor variations by Phil Lantz)

Come visit our aikido school, our Dojo. Open the door and walk in; visitors are always welcome. Don't be at all surprised if at first your senses are stunned by what you behold. A large, rectangular open space: Walls of soft white and a large black and white photograph of a venerable Japanese martial artist with a white beard. But the peaceful setting is not what overwhelms your senses, but the grand melee that is taking place there. This is especially true if you should enter during a period of Jiyu-Waza (freestyle), where almost anything goes.

Just relax and watch. Let your eyes adjust to the swirling motion, the spectacle of some twenty or thirty men and women of various ages dressed in white jackets and pants attacking their partners and being thrown to the mat. Let your ears adjust to the swish of bare feet on the green vinyl mats and the percussive sound of hands slapping the mat to help break falls. Let your mind accept the fact that there is some order in this seemingly random motion and that somehow there will be no collisions among the rushing, swarming women and men before you.

Now pick out a twosome, perhaps the one practicing closest to you, a muscular, balding man and a slim woman with dark hair. The man rushes at her with the real intent to bring a strong blow directly down on her head. The woman moves toward her attacker, then, at the last moment, shifts to one side so that the strike misses her by perhaps two inches. As his hand passes, she deftly brings it down even faster with one of her hands, at the same time turning her hips so as to lift his other elbow with her hand. The man flips in mid air, his momentum carrying him another six or seven feet before he crashes to the mat with an explosive slap of his hand. Surely, after such a fall, the man must be seriously injured. But no, he leaps to his feet and comes at her again, wearing the broadest of grins on his face.

Let your gaze sweep the whole mat. Yes, almost everyone is smiling. And except for the slap of hands, the crash of bodies onto the mat, and an occasional ki-ai shout, the pre-dominant sound is an occasional laugh of delight. That's what's most disorienting. All these men and women, all these grown-ups wearing Japanese garb and exuberantly attacking one another, are dead serious in their concentration and, at the same time, having as much fun as children at play.

"You should always practice in the spirit of joy." - O Sensei



Reflections on a Road Trip

by Catherine Beaton

The London Aiki Budo women went to Indianapolis a few weekends ago. We did not go to see the Speedway or the Famous Indiana State Fair but to explore our selves as Aikido practitioners. We were

made welcome by Sensei Teddy Linder and Sensei Leslie Mills at their Tiger Lily dojo. They and members of their club treated us to a fine welcome. Our Sensei's led us through Aikido classes, Tai Chi and some self defense techniques adapted from Aikido. The blend was marvelous and the energy among us helped us build community and friendships.

It is a universal truth that long road trips can be a good thing when shared with others. Even flat tires, missing gas caps and losing your way can be faced when faced together. So it was for us, as we played cat and mouse on the Interstate. We learned that in God and CAA we trust! Billboards at regular intervals reminded us of the Almighty with phrases such as:

"What part of 'thou shalt not' did you not understand?"
"Do I question your existence"?

Another universal truth is that our fortitude and personal skills define us, not the events (be they good or bad) that occur in our lives. So it is with Aikido. It matters not so much what uke does, but rather how much we are able to go to our center and use the energy of uke. This defines and refines our technique.

What did I learn?

Specific techniques, for which I unfortunately don't know the Japanese names. Pivot from the hips; break fall; go to your center, practice. Have straight kamai arms. Pain and strength are not elements of good technique. Meet the energy and blend and use it! I learn kinesthetically not with words or demonstration. Use every opportunity, when sitting in Seiza to stretch your hips and upper legs. Practice random acts of kindness and senseless beauty (maybe I already knew this one). Look after your feet and hips. You only have two of each! Parker Sensei's teaching and techniques are consistent among his students. The Aikido we studied in Indianapolis was the same as at home!

I solidified friendships with Aki Budo women and I practiced technique and break falls. I experienced wonderful hospitality from the members of Tiger Lily Dojo and Sensei's Leslie and Teddy.

Thank you to all for a wonderful experience. Let's make it an annual event!



Remember our motto: "use his weight against him".

Ukemiwaza: The Art of Attacking in Aikido

By Kim Taylor, M.Sc.

Submitted by Chris Wilson

"To be a good uke, one must realize that the attacking part of aikido practice is just as important as [shite's] part. The success of a technique and how much a defender learns depends to a large extent on the attacker's skill. The attacker must learn to strike or grab with effectiveness and control, but without guiding the defender through the techniques. As they advance in skill, aikido students come to welcome a hard, honest attack for the opportunity it affords to explore the aspects of blending with the force presented. For this reason the uke should devote considerable time to an analysis of what constitutes a good attack."



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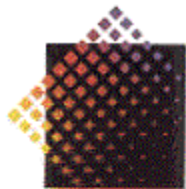
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Class Schedule

Tuesday

6:15 to 7:00 Children Only

7:00 to 7:50 Beginners & 9th Kyu

7:55 to 9:00 8th, 7th and 6th Kyu

9:00 – 10:00 5th Kyu and above

Thursday

7:00 to 7:50 Beginners, 9th & 8th Kyu

7:55 to 9:00 8th – 5th Kyu

9:00 to 10:00 5th Kyu and above

Saturday

9:15 am to 9:55 am Children Only

10:00 am to 11:00 am Open Class

11:00 am to 12:00 noon Weapons Class

Carling Heights Community Optimist Centre

(entrance off McMahan St.) and

Earl Nicholls Recreation Centre

Homeview (White Oaks Road) and Southdale.