



Chudokai Aikido Federation
INTERNATIONAL

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CHUDOKAI *express*

HAPPY HOLIDAYS!

Entering the Dojo: What Price are You Willing to Pay?

By Dave Lowry

道場

DOJO—Training Hall

What does it mean to join a dojo (training hall) today in the traditional sense, and what was it like to enter the dojo of a ryu (system) during the feudal era? The similarities and differences of these ways are an accurate reflection of the similarities and differences between the classical bujutsu (military arts) and their successors, the budo (military way) of our century.

...Understand first that the idea of the dojo or ryu as a business began very recently. The ryu was anciently seen as a combination of an extended family, an intense and lengthy apprenticeship program, and often as a semi-religious order.

There were exceptions, but the average ryu was relatively small. Whether it was supported by a feudal lord or maintained privately, money was rarely a consideration for the top instructors of the style. A select group of faithful students or a benefactor were all that was necessary.

QUOTE:

“Twenty years from now you will be more disappointed by the things you didn't do than by the ones you did do. So throw off the bowlines. Sail away from the safe harbor. Catch the trade winds in your sails.

Explore. Dream.
Discover.”

-Mark Twain

Remember...

O Soji

December 18

ON GUARD

Handcuffing Course

January 26

Aiki Buki Test

January 26

Instructor's Class

February 4

Kyu Test

February 5

Dan Test

February 7

EVENTS

O SOJI—Big Clean Up

The dojo's last class of the year will be held on Thursday December 18
ALL members are invited to attend this annual tradition.

ON GUARD Handcuffing Course:

Uxbridge, ON
Monday January 26 (1:30am—5:30pm)
Visit www.onguardtraining.com

AIKI BUKI TEST

Monday January 26 @ 7:30pm
All students who are eligible are encouraged to test

Instructor's Class

Wednesday February 4 @ 7:00pm
3rd Kyu and above are encouraged to attend

KYU TEST

Thursday February 5 @ 11:00am & 7:00pm
All students who are eligible are encouraged to test

DAN TEST

Saturday February 7—12:00pm
All students who are eligible and prepared are encouraged to test

TEST RESULTS

CHUDOKAN DOJO, Windsor, Ontario, Canada

Youth

Angad Ghag	9 th Kyu
Nicholas LeBlanc	8 th Kyu
Maryam Shudaifat	8 th Kyu
Adam Thai	8 th Kyu
Tristan M. Jodoin	7 th Kyu
Elvis Duong	5 th Kyu
Brandon Moorcroft	5 th Kyu

Adult

Ranbirpinder Ghag	9 th Kyu
Levi Steele III	9 th Kyu
Andrea Vollenwyder	8 th Kyu
Donavan Esho	8 th Kyu
Mike Reboulis	7 th Kyu
Vincent Martin Donaghey	3 rd Kyu
Joeseeph Maadi	1 st Kyu

Aiki Buki

James Otis Paxton	Yonkyu
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OKAMIKAN DOJO, Uxbridge, Ontario, Canada

Gary Hill	9 th Kyu
Scott Campsall	2 nd Kyu

YUKIKAN DOJO, Oka, Quebec, Canada

Marc-André Guidon	9 th Kyu
Dany Lizotte	6 th Kyu

TRUE BALANCE AIKIDO DOJO, Sterling Heights, Michigan, USA

Cary K. Kaiser	7 th Kyu
Jeffery Salmeto	7 th Kyu
Aleksander Szygowski	Shodan

SHINSUIKAN DOJO, Genoa, Ohio, USA

John Paxton	7 th Kyu
Ryan Moeller	7 th Kyu
Lucas Longanbach	7 th Kyu
Anthony Longanbach	7 th Kyu
Olga Creeger	7 th Kyu
Michael Collins Sr.	7 th Kyu
Mary E. Stricker	7 th Kyu
John Paxton	6 th Kyu
Lucas Longanbach	6 th Kyu
Anthony Longanbach	6 th Kyu
Jeffrey William Creeger	5 th Kyu
Michael F. Collins Jr.	4 th Kyu
Jeffrey William Creeger	4 th Kyu
Michael F. Collins Jr.	3 rd Kyu
Matthew Daugherty	3 rd Kyu
Katherine Reynolds	2 nd Kyu

Wesley Wallace	2 nd Kyu
Daniel K. Nowak	1 st Kyu
Rolf Eric Granlund	1 st Kyu

Steven Welshans	6 th Kyu
Bowen Girardeau	5 th Kyu
Linda House	4 th Kyu
Brent Pendergrass	4 th Kyu
Kurt Peper	2 nd Kyu

WADOKAN DOJO, Bowling Green, Ohio, USA

Mark J. Shively	4 th Kyu
D. Michael Ahl	4 th Kyu

SHINGANKAN DOJO, Sandusky, Ohio, USA

Chip Ilg	7 th Kyu
Seth Czech	4 th Kyu
Dave Gibson	2 nd Kyu
Robert Hayward	2 nd Kyu

SHOSHINKAN DOJO, St. Albans, West Virginia, USA

Conner Meikle	6 th Kyu
Sybil Meikle	6 th Kyu
Mason Tucker	6 th Kyu
Josh Cannon	4 th Kyu
Scott Miller	3 rd Kyu

RETSUSHINKAN DOJO, Birmingham, Alabama, USA

Ashleigh Lambiotte	7 th Kyu
Will Palmisano	7 th Kyu
Michael Palmer	7 th Kyu
David Rice	6 th Kyu
Robert Yeager	6 th Kyu
John Johnson	4 th Kyu
Jeff Mann	4 th Kyu
John Hyde	4 th Kyu
Ronda H. Lacey	4 th Kyu
Zachary Daniel	2 nd Kyu

TEISHINKAN DOJO, Pelham, Alabama, USA

Wesley Hart	7 th Kyu
Rush Girardeau	7 th Kyu
Todd Talbot	6 th Kyu
Tiffany Talbot	6 th Kyu
Chris Swicord	6 th Kyu
Minda Swicord	6 th Kyu

SOKUKAN DOJO, Alpharetta, Georgia, USA

Josh Lynch	7 th Kyu
Edward S. Riley	7 th Kyu

MEISHINKAN DOJO, Lehigh, Florida, USA

Sarah Clewell	7 th Kyu
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INSTRUCTOR PROMOTIONS

Aleksander Szygowski	Sensei
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ON GUARD CONTROL AND DEFENSIVE TACTICS

Non Physical Crisis Intervention Graduate

Nancy Cervi
 Melissa Hayward
 Keith Deslippe
 Charly Badaoui
 Chris Campbell
 Boris Glavas
 Sarah Ruseff
 Neal Ruseff

Control/Defensive Tactics—Basic Course Graduate

Herbert Heide
 Michael Locke
 James MacDonald
 Mark Peters
 Eddie R. Stanford

QUOTE:

“The only way out, is in.”

- Anonymous

The Chudokan Dojo will be closed for the holidays from
December 19 to January 2.

The dojo will re-open on Saturday January 3, 2009.

THANK YOU FOR ANOTHER GREAT YEAR!!

From the Chudokan Dojo to you and your family, have a
Wonderful Holiday and a Healthy New Year!!

OSU!

"Entering the dojo..." cont'd

When the head instructor was retained by his lord, a stipend supported him, the same way all the lord's other samurai were kept. Otherwise, the headmaster depended on gifts and offerings from his disciples. Either way, few instructors relied upon their teaching for their livelihood.

Early ryu had little use for large numbers of students, expensive fees for training, or for professional instructors. How, then, did the prospective disciple enter the ryu's dojo? Mainly by persistence. Initially, the applicant had to approach the dojo with letters of introduction and recommendation from someone known and respected by the masters of the ryu. This was generally followed by a check into the applicant's background.

Records were plentiful in old Japan and background checks weren't very difficult. During the long Tokugawa regime, a thorough and far-reaching

network of intelligence agents was maintained by the government, and laws made sure no one traveled outside his native province without identification papers.

Furthermore, for those of the warrior class, last name and home fief established a lot about character and personal history. One reason for this check was to insure that the applicant was of good character, but another equally important consideration was to protect against the possibility



KEPPAN—Blood Oath

of a rival ryu member from slipping into an "enemy" school to steal their secret techniques.

Once his background was ascertained, the applicant took the keppan (blood oath), which was a written loyalty oath, signed or sealed with the applicant's blood. The average classical warrior often had a

small scar on one of his fingers, or inside his arm, from his encounter with the keppan. Practically unnoticeable, it reminded him of the great honor it was to be a part of his ryu.

Even after he became an official member of the ryu, the aspiring warrior's application was still not complete. He was eligible only for a trial period, usually referred to as te hodoki (unleashing of hands). It was a probation that could be severe, one where the beginner was ordered to perform all sorts of domestic chores—chopping wood, preparing meals, washing uniforms; the kind of scenario that's popular in martial arts movies to establish the tenacity of the film's future hero. It was a test to see how much he'd tolerate. It ascertained how badly he wanted to learn. If the beginner performed his assigned tasks with patience and dignity he was soon accepted into the beginning ranks of the ryu. He became a monjin (a person at the gate)

of the ryu's teachings.

Ancient students felt like they belonged, a feeling that carries over into present-day Japan, where the individual is judged (and often judges himself) according to the groups to which he belongs

The members of the ryu very much have the feeling of nakama (within the interior space) with others of their school or style. They have shared similar training, totally unique to those outside it.

They have a common understanding of the ryu. It's much like a family.

It's obvious, then, that joining a ryu meant more than just attending lessons and learning skills. Even today, when a Japanese craftsman wishes to convey the scope of his training, he sometimes uses the expression, "I shared the mat with So-and-So Sensei." To share the mat or sit on the mat with a high-ranked sensei has a particular significance. It

means the secrets and skills of his art have been passed directly down to the speaker. He is the inheritor of the master's particular way of doing the craft.

A lot of the budo customs have changed over the years, but they haven't really been lost. True, there are no longer any keppan (blood) oaths, and only a few schools practice anything like the period of probation. But serious budoka respect the same bonds of belonging that their ancestors did. Today's budoka feels (or should feel) that he's part of a very special group, that he springs from a distinct and honorable lineage.

Students of a traditional karate organization, such as JKA, for example, train in front of a portrait of Gichin Funakoshi, and they should derive deep satisfaction knowing their teacher, or their teacher's teacher, actually practiced karate under this great man.

Students of another karate

style who visit a JKA dojo are lucky. And students from the JKA who train in another system are equally fortunate. But should they claim they are actually a part of the dojo they visit? If they are willing to put on a white belt, forget their allegiance to their original sensei and accept their adoptive style wholeheartedly, the answer is yes. Otherwise, the visiting student who attempts to present himself as a real member diminishes both himself and his teachers.

The entrance the modern-day budoka makes to his ryu or dojo may be simpler than it was in the old days, but it has just as much meaning and commitment. And if it is taken lightly or abused, if the student fails to understand the implications of his passage to the door of the dojo, he can never expect to proceed successfully beyond it.—

QUOTE:

"Know what's weird? Day by day, nothing seems to change, but pretty soon... everything's different."

- Calvin from Calvin and Hobbes