

SHINZEN SHIMBUN

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Haiku

pond surface mirrors
a falling leaf -
then shatters...

(c) Cathy Drinkwater Better of Sykesville, Md.

What's New in Shorinjiryu?

Congratulations are in order

Happy 54th Birthday Kyoshi Myron M. Lubitsch and 31 years of practice.

Happy 40th Birthday Kyoshi Michel Laurin

Happy 10th Anniversary of Shihan Tom

Carmelengo's Richmond County Martial Arts

Happy 18th Anniversary of Kyoshi Michel Laurin's the St. Jerome Dojo,

Quebec, 4th Anniversary of the Santa Clarita Dojo, Ca. and the 2nd

Anniversary of the Hollywood, Ca.- Anthony Calvino.

Promotions of Marie-Claude Marcotte 2nd Dan

and Alain Courville 2nd Dan

New Dojo Prevost, Quebec- Larry Foisy

Summer Camp July 2-4 and 9-10

Enjoy the 5am run?

Renshi Tom Bellazzi reports that Melissa and

Mike have been promoted to Shodan.

Shihan Tom announced that Thomas Ross and Sonia Smith have been recommended for 1st Dan.

Renshi Troy announced that Tiffany Rivera

and Rubin Layana have been recommended for Kohai.

Kudos for the great time we had at **The 3rd Annual International Competition**. Great organization, great friendship great job
Renshi Giles LaBelle

A Word of Advice

- Renshi Manny Hawthorne

I would only like to wish everyone a happy and safe summer. And, if I could suggest to my fellow practitioners, find a quiet area, where the landscape is serene and well manicured (yes, perhaps a garden). practice your Kata in whatever manner You wish, hard, soft, slow fast, breathing deep or shallow, do it for yourself, feel good and you will add years to your life. No secret for as I see it, this is the premise for all Martial Arts and especially embodied in the Spirit of Shorinjiryu.

The Shinzen Shiai

- Shihan John A. Mirrione, Sr.

We are in preparations for the upcoming 13th International Shorinjiryu Shinzen Shiai and

know that it will be bigger and better than ever.

There are several reasons why this event hosts some 250 to 300 competitors and is watched by more than 500 spectators. It starts on time and ends seven hours later utilizing eight rings with contestants competing in 3 different categories (Kata, Shiai, Weapons). The most important reason why it has been so successful year after year is that the rules are enforced and followed by all in attendance. Judges, participants, spectators, timekeepers, score keepers, and organizers all do their best to see that it works, so everyone returns the following year.

The Web Site

Our Web Site has undergone some updates recently and its format is second to none, thanks to Nidan Jose Tigani. We will be soon calling on our ever-expanding membership in the Shinzen to help support this site.

Brown/Black Belt Clinic

The recent Brown/Black Belt Clinic went off very well. The participants were taken back to school, paper and pencil, charts, hands on holistic experiences, to refresh their knowledge of the philosophy and practical application of the rules and regulations of judging.

Standardization of Kata

The kata know as *Ananku* (Light (peace) form the South) has been designated an advanced form of the Shinzen. This kata was originally developed by Chotoku Kyan, an instructor of the founder of Shorinjiryu Karatedo Shinan Kori Hisataka. The kata was not generally used for a long period of time until Shihan Laurie Vanikerk (now retired) of Australia, reintroduced it in the '80's after years of practicing with Shinan and studying the book written by the Shinan. By unanimous agreement of all the School heads present at the Clinic no changes will be accepted or permitted. Those interested in obtaining a tape of the kata please contact us.

The Trivia Section

-Shihan John A. Mirrione, Sr.

Did you know that the old type of Bogu (chest protector) was made of a much thicker fiberglass than the Kendo armor of today? In those days the victor of a match often looked like the looser. However, broken toes and fingers were worn as badges of courage.

Upcoming Event

The 13th International Shorinjiryu Shinzen Shiai will take place on Sunday, October 10, 1999 at John Adams H.S. in Queens, NY, USA. A diner dance will follow. Please pre-register to save time and money. All Shinzen members in good standing as of October 5th will be eligible to receive a discount. **There will be no discounts on the day of registration. We hope to see you there.**

Some Observations from the Shiai

- Peter M. Hiltz

October's Annual Shiai was my second Shiai, and, as at my first one, I was very impressed by everyone's fellowship, good sportsmanship, variety, and talent. I had the privilege of judging as well as competing, and gained much from both. My discussions with Kyoshi Lubitsch and others were informative and delightful. Yet I also still see the Shiai with relatively 'new eyes' and so feel I can offer, for this year at least, an educated outsider's perspective on the event. There is much we can be proud of, and a few places where we might be able to improve.

We can be proud of the talent and dedication of the participants and organizers. Organizing an event as large as the Shiai is not for the faint of heart, and it was a challenge that Kyoshi Lubitsch, and all those who helped, accepted and met. The event, while appearing as organized pandemonium, was exceptionally well run. Over two hundred competitors were judged in six hours. It took only an hour to clear the facility, allowing those attending dinner ample time to change and get to the restaurant.

The physical talent of the competitors, whether junior or adult, is tremendous and the Grand-champion level kata exhibition clearly showed what championship talent and training, combined with a championship martial art, can produce. In an activity that focuses more on the young, I was delighted and impressed by very competitive and spirited kata performed by a more senior citizen/student. His performance and willingness to compete against younger competitors exemplifies the true spirit of karatedo: open-minded striving for self-improvement. I hope I am as willing to try new things when I reach his age.

Another observation that delighted me was the realization that some competitors had adapted non-shorinjiryu kata to the shorinjiryu style, and were willing to demonstrate their work in competition. While I believe that we should keep the core material at the center of the style, this group's willingness to

accept new things while adhering to the fundamental principals of the style is a powerful tool for keeping the style alive and growing. While other styles have a fixed curriculum, the dynamic nature of what we practice keeps it new and young

Amid all the good things I saw, I also noted a few that offer the opportunity to improve. The first opportunity to improve is in the techniques of the younger participants. While I was judging free-sparring, I noticed that the majority of the younger competitors could not execute kicks safely. Kicks repeatedly struck legs, hips, sides, and groins. Misplaced kicks offer a physical danger to the participants and a legal danger to the school/sponsor. No one wishes to see a child hurt, and increasing the safety of the event would have the added benefit of increasing the participant's skill. As teachers, we have both our student's safety and skill as primary concerns. I would therefore suggest to those of us involved in teaching youngsters that we work to improve our students kicking skills.

The second opportunity to improve also involves safety: sparring. In the majority of matches I observed, strikes to the back were commonplace. They typically were blended into a flurry of strikes where the hitter would strike the bogu with a hand technique, then their opponent's back with the other hand. In most cases, it appeared as though the strike to the back was helping the retraction of the technique to the bogu; but this was not the case in all instances. Indeed, some of the strikes to the back were surprisingly powerful techniques. Back strikes were present in matches of all ranks and ages, and present a serious safety concern. Furthermore, none of the back strikes I saw were called by the referees as fouls. I would therefore suggest that we work to reduce the incidence of back strikes, and that as judges, that we become more aware of them and begin issuing fouls when they occur.

The third opportunity to improve lies in our manners. Though generally very good, I saw a few instances where we fell short of our obligation to display proper etiquette. This is disrespectful of the competitors and spectators. Two specific examples come to mind. The first was at the beginning of the Black Belt competition and Grand Championships. The dojo was very noisy, with few people paying attention to the demonstration. I was personally embarrassed for all of us when Kyoshi Lubitsch had to call us to order. By the time this portion was underway, most of the youngsters had left, leaving the more seasoned practitioners in the dojo. I believe we should have shown more respect than we did for the demonstrators.

The second example was my observation of a person in street clothes, on the mat, doing techniques with someone in a gi. This immediately reduced the room from a dojo where correct etiquette is required to a gym floor. It lessened the spirit of what we were doing and was very disrespectful to the Kyokai. We all should recognize that if we are not participating, i.e. in uniform as registered attendees, we should not be on the mat. This is a matter of respect for ourselves, for our partners in the style, and for the Kyokai. The dojo is a special place, not a place for play but for serious practice of karatedo. Disrespect reflects upon us and our style, and lowers us in the eyes of observers.

Therefore, our third opportunity to improve is to show to ourselves the same respect and formality we show to the leaders of our dojos and of the Kyokai.

The Shiai is a showcase of the best the style and Kyokai have to offer, and there were countless examples of talent and spirit that clearly define Shorinjiryu Karatedo as one of the premiere styles in the world. But, it is also an opportunity to improve our talent and manners. I challenge everyone to continue to improve the safety and respect we share, for both ourselves and the style.

(We thank Tashi Peter Hiltz for his fine article. Regarding the refereeing question - that was addressed at the referee's clinic and will be again prior to the shinzen. Regarding the individual who entered the shiaido with street clothes on, he was ejected from the site and subsequently put on semi-permanent suspension for any and all Shorinjiryu activities. -Ed.)

The submission of articles, newsworthy events and letters is encouraged. address all correspondence to:

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