

NYHETSREVY februari 2005

PÅSK!

Helger ställer till det. Ingen träning förstås på superröda Långfredag. Skärtorsdag är lite tveksam, klart rosa till färgen. Men det är flera som visat intresse för träning. Och självklart kan det så bli. Dagen är ju allmänt klassificerad som en arbetsdag och karaten kör som vanligt - samtidigt som dagen får karaktären av att vara en lördag. Det blir alltså en jour träning. Jag tittar ner vid vanlig tid. Sedan får det bli som det blir. Alltid hittar vi på något trevligt. Vad sägs om att bära en liten gulkyckling bakom örat? Välkommen!

Zeth

PS Envädjan om hjälp! Lisa, min dotter fyller 10 och har kalas lördagen den 10:e. Lovade trolleri och gyckel eller något liknande. Hade en amatörrollkarl på kroken, men han slet sig. Vår egen Per kom till bistånd och öppnade för en ny kontakt, som dock kände sig lite osäker. Har du någon amatörrollkarl eller gycklare i bekantskapskretsen som eventuellt mot ett överkomligt arvode kan ställa upp en stund på eftermiddagen för ett 20-tal tioåringar? Det räcker med amatörnivå, det är jippot som sådant som gäller, inte konkurrensen med Labero. Tack!

Nishio avled i april, föddes 1927. Jag har aldrig haft förmånen att se honom live, men vad jag lärt om hon via video och skrivna ord så har jag ytterligt stor respekt för hans integritet och förhållningssätt som samtidigt är seriöst och distanserat. Saxade nedanstående artikel ur Aiki-News:

Shoji Nishio (1984),

The following is a two-part interview of Shoji Nishio Sensei!, a well-known 8th dan sensei instructing in the Tokyo area. The interview was held on May 22, 1983 in Tokyo.

We understand that you first practiced Judo and Karate. What made you begin to train in Aikido?

When I first came to Tokyo, I was rather frail. I didn't do anything. In 1942, after the war broke out, I used to go to the city Judo dojo. I was working for a public office then. In 1944, after the air raids, I started working the night shift so I was unable to continue my training. The war ended on August 15, 1945 and I went to the Kodokan on the 1st of September of the same year. There wasn't anybody. There wasn't even any glass in the windows. It must have been melted by the heat during the air raids. There was only half the number of tatami. The only person there was the old caretaker. There were no application forms. I just used plain paper and left it there. Then, I was contacted

by the Kodokan and received a certificate of approval to begin training.

How old were you then?

I was eighteen. I was the first person to enter the Kodokan after the war. (Laughter) Anyway, there wasn't anybody. There were no lights so it was not possible to train in the evening when it became dark. There was a time when I went there and practiced ukemi by myself and then went home. That's how it was. About that time, the demobilization started. A lot of people appeared at the Kodokan. The following year it became very active. I was promoted to 3rd dan and 4th dan. I began to notice that there were restrictions in techniques because of competition. Because of that problem, I felt the limitations of Judo and started Karate. My teacher was Konishi Sensei of Shizen-ryu who had practiced Karate longer than anyone else at that time. I was practicing Karate with Konishi Sensei but I also felt the limitation of Karate. I thought there must be something else. At that time, a former Karate sensei of the Budokai named Sodeyama who was running Konishi Sensei's dojo and also teaching there came up to me and said: "I met someone who is like a 'phantom'. I couldn't strike him even once." I was amazed that there was someone that even Sodeyama Sensei couldn't strike. It was O-Sensei. Sodeyama Sensei came back to Japan after the war. Since he did not have anywhere to go he came to Konishi Sensei. Then he was told to come to Hombu. Sodeyama Sensei laughed to himself thinking that this Aikido was being performed by such an old man. O-Sensei felt that the Karate sensei was making light of him and said: "You are thinking that you can strike me, aren't you?" Sodeyama answered: "Yes". O-Sensei then responded: "I see. I see. Strike me. I'll just walk around. If you can, strike me." Then he started to walk around he dojo. Sodeyama Sensei felt vexed as though he was being made a fool of. If they were confronting each other face to face it would have been all right, but O-Sensei turned his back and started walking around inviting him to strike. (Laughter) Sodeyama Sensei thought to himself: "What the hell kind of old man is this!", and suddenly got up and tried to strike O-Sensei. But O-Sensei turned around and said: "What's the matter?"^ Sodeyama Sensei froze in the act of striking with his hand poised in mid-air. In the twinkling of an eye, there was a distance between them. Saying, "Damn it!" to himself he tried to strike him again. Then O-Sensei repeated, "What's the matter?" (Laughter) He couldn't strike him at all. Then Sodeyama Sensei realized he had encountered a great sensei. He had to give full credit to O-Sensei saying, "I give up!" It was Sodeyama Sensei who told Mr. Nakajima and me to go to see O-Sensei and so we went. It was around 1951. Anyway, I went to see Aikido and immediately joined the dojo. I was told to go and see but I never went back. (Laughter)

Mr. Nakajima didn't join up, however, saying he wanted to do a little more Karate. After one year, he came to practice Aikido. He practiced Karate and became a 6th dan. He continued Aikido until receiving his 2nd dan. He told me that his viewpoint on Karate as a budo had changed. I thought that if I used this kokyu I might be able to go back to Judo, however.

Mr. Tohei went to Hawaii in 1953. On his return, he brought back a leather coat which was impossible to obtain at that time in Japan. It had fringes like the ones you see in western movies. He had a leather

coat when it was impossible even to obtain leather shoes... I really thought it was amazing. Then, that coat was skillfully stolen. That was what had happened when I turned up for training. I saw that all of the uchideshi had been made to sit in seiza and Mr. Tohei was shouting something. Then I heard that Tohei Sensei's coat had been stolen. At that time Mr. Noguchi, Mr. Genta Okumura and Mr. Sunadomari were some of the uchideshi. Then O-Sensei appeared asking, "What's up?" When Mr. Sunadomari explained what had happened O-Sensei responded: "Oh, it was stolen, was it?" (Laughter) Then he came into the dojo. Tohei Sensei also sat in seiza because O-Sensei entered. O-Sensei started to walk around them. We were really wondering what he was going to say. What he said was: "You're the one to blame, Tohei." Then, he disappeared. Tohei sat silently for a while. Then he, too, disappeared. Everybody was relieved and started training. (Laughter) After practice, I was leaving for home and ran into O-Sensei who was on his way to the bathroom. I went up to him and said, "O-Sensei!". He said, "Ooh!" I asked, "A few minutes ago when Tohei Sensei had his coat stolen, you said he was the one at fault. Why did you say that?" He answered, "Don't you understand why? Those who practice budo shouldn't have that kind of spirit (kokoro). One shouldn't show off things which people desire to have. You can show off things you can give, but otherwise you shouldn't. Poor man, he took the coat because he wanted it. However, by taking it, he became a thief. It's all right to have the coat stolen, but he was made a thief. Stealing is a bad thing, but the man whose coat was stolen committed the original sin. He created the occasion for an opening (suki) in the man. As a budoka (martial artist), that's bad." I was really amazed and I learned the depth of Aikido. To tell the truth, when I was practicing Judo, Mifune Sensei's house was robbed twice in his absence. Those incidents were written up in a monthly magazine entitled "Judo" published by the Kodokan. Mifune Sensei was quoted as saying, "The next time he robs my house in my presence, I will catch him no matter what happens, even if I am killed!" An old man, nearly seventy was saying he would catch him even if he was killed... I was really impressed by Mifune Sensei's reaction at that time. However, there was a big difference between O-Sensei's and Mifune Sensei's words. One was saying he would catch him even if he was killed and take him to the police. The other was saying that the thief took it because he wanted it and that he should be let to have it, that it was the person who was robbed that was at fault. There was a world of difference between the two spirits. I thought that even though one practiced Judo all of his life, he could only reach this stage. On the other hand, I thought that the depth of Aikido as budo was great. It was that incident which caused me to stop my Judo training. O-Sensei's way of thinking appeared in practice itself. He said, "It's wrong to use the words 'winning and losing'.

You shouldn't think in those terms." His words were great. As we continue to live I think it's important to digest all of his words.

They say that O-Sensei practiced the sword and staff, but he did so in the process of giving birth to modern Aikido. Even though we imitate him we will not be able to go beyond what he did. O-Sensei used to tell us, "This old man reached this stage, you should surpass me building on what I have left." However, we tend to imitate what he did and end up going backward. Ten years from now, we may be practicing the level of Aikido of O-Sensei as it was a number of years ago. After fifteen years, we may end up going back to the forms he practiced at an even

earlier date. This is not right, he told us over and over again to go beyond what he did. People like us didn't understand what he meant. But after several years, when we ran into some obstacle, we would think to ourselves, "Oh, that's what he used to talk about." Our activities depend on O-Sensei's words.

When you began practicing Aikido was O-Sensei living in Tokyo?

No. He rarely came down from Iwama. It was half a year after I joined the dojo that I saw his face for the first time. Until then, I only knew about him by hearsay. There weren't any pictures of him like we have now. You know Mr. Otake who lives in Iwate Prefecture now, he used to be the captain of the Kendo Club at Waseda University. He participated in the National Kendo Championship several times and became famous as a representative of Tohoku Prefecture. It was he who told me, "This is it! He looked exactly like this", while pointing at a drawing of a dragon with glaring eyes hanging in the tokonoma (alcove). I used to think "Gee, does he really look like this!" (Laughter) When he smiled, his eyes disappeared. But when you just caught a glance of him, the impression was really strong. When he looked at something for a second, his face disappeared into his eyes. (Laughter) O-Sensei used to tell us a story. We were really cheeky. For the most part, people did not approach O-Sensei... Whenever I had a question I went up to O-Sensei and asked, "O-Sensei, there was something I didn't understand of what you said a little while ago." Sensei would say, "Oh, good you noticed that." O-Sensei often had me draw a circle, triangle and a square and would say, "Keep it with you and bring it to me when I need it." One day, when a guest came it happened that he explained the drawing and I was told to give it to him. But when I looked at the present Doshu he made a negative gesture. I think it was because once O-Sensei began talking about the drawing the conversation would be long and would be an imposition on the guest since he wouldn't understand it. I was in hot water. One of them told me to bring it and the other, the opposite... Also, I myself had drawn it. O-Sensei asked, "What's the matter?" So, there was nothing for me to do but give it to him. If that drawing was put somewhere, it would always disappear I (Laughter) Then, he would say, "Oh! It's gone!" and have someone redraw it.

One week before O-Sensei entered the hospital, we posed for pictures with him. I said to him, "Sensei, let's take a picture." He told me to bring him his "montsuki" (kimono bearing family crest). He said, "My photo will remain. What I'm wearing is not appropriate." I went to the present Doshu's wife and asked for the montsuki explaining that we were going to take a picture of O-Sensei. Well, she sure complained a lot. (Laughter). It was very troublesome to have to dress him up in his montsuki. Anyway, we finally got him dressed. There was a sign which read "Aikido School" and I think he wanted a picture to be taken in front of the sign. He stroked the sign affectionately. We took the pictures there. That was in February 1969. One week after that he entered the hospital. That was the last picture. O-Sensei passed away on the 26th of April. I had a call in the morning and I drove fast to his bedside. I was the first one to arrive. Then Mr. Okumura, Mr. Yamaguchi and Mr. Tada came. His face was really beautiful like a Noh mask of an old man. If one dies of cancer, there is usually a lot of suffering and the pain remains on the face. But, that wasn't the case with O-Sensei. He had a divinely beautiful face.

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