



# United Kingdom Aikikai

## UKA Scribe - February 2008

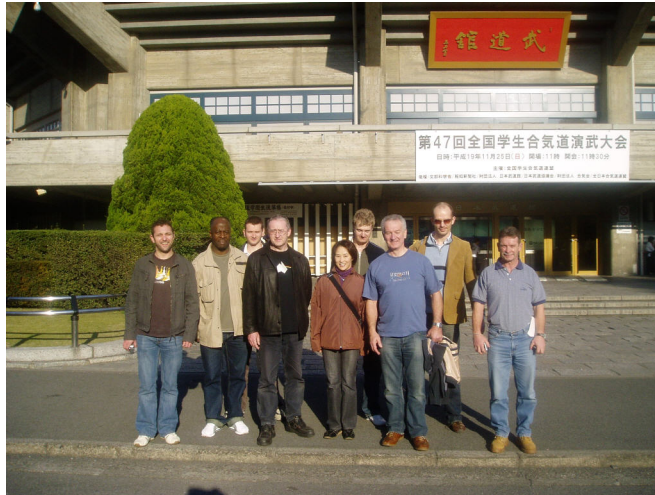


### Gordon Jones Shihan in Japan

My return trip to Hombu dojo started out so well,,,,,, within weeks of fixing the date I had 7 first class students signed up to accompany me, Zach Fairbanks, Martin Penrose, Eddie McCalla, Peter Brown, Darren Prosser, Neal Mould and Sean Taylor and one wild card from Australia, Andrew. I was delighted that I was to be accompanied by such a talented group but also felt very humbled that these guys were prepared to commit the time and considerable expense to such a trip.

Unfortunately, 3 days before we left I had a reoccurrence of the health problem that incapacitated me at 2005 Summer School so I set out resigned to spending the duration of the visit to Hombu sat on the side of the mat.

The journey went well, arriving in Tokyo on the Sunday at 10 am in time to check in and make our way to the Budokan for the All Japan student demonstration where we watched Doshu perform a faultless and inspiring demonstration. Sekisan was kind enough to meet and guide us there. Zach also dragged along a bag belonging to a new friend he met on the plane!!



The Travellers

With 4 hours sleep in 36 hours and with some trepidation all the guys were on the mat at 6.15 am for Doshu's morning class where the regulars waited to test the standard of UKA aikido. I myself found a soft patch of wooden floor that was to be my spot for the next few days.



The team practiced every day on Doshu's class and others later in the day. I sat and watched it all with a mixture of pride and envy!

On Thursday we received a faxed invitation from Doshu to join him for lunch at the local Italian restaurant. Unfortunately this coincided

with me being laid out by a case of food poisoning which saw me rush back to my 'small room' as the first course was served. By all accounts it was a memorable lunch and with Doshu and his son. The 4 courses of what was to have been my lunch where swiftly devoured by my students. I was then confined to my room for the next 2 and a half days ending up in a Tokyo hospital!

By the end of the week the team had been accepted by many of the Hombu students who seemed to appreciate the commitment of the week's training and the sincerity of their practice.

Impressions of a spectator? The amazing throughput of members: 50/60 on Doshu's class; then another different 50 on Kobayashi Sensei's

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### Contents

Pages 1 to 2

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class; then another different 50 on Miyamoto Sensei's class. The Sunday morning class with Doshu had 75 students none of whom I had seen before! Members who have practiced on every morning class 6 days a week for 32 years. A Shodan who trains 3 classes a day 6 days a week for 5 years. 15 full time Shihan and countless Shido-in gives a depth of experience and talent that is mind blowing.

The mature, sophisticated non judgemental way of training. No strength, pulling, struggling or confrontation yet practiced with such intensity that an hour long session exhausted even the fittest of our team.

Can't wait to go back!!

**Gordon Jones**



Lunch with some familiar faces

