

# News from Honbu



**ISF/AB/KTRR**



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## Sensei's Corner

By Toshishiro Obata

The coming year of 2004 will mark the 24<sup>th</sup> year since I came to Los Angeles. Shinkendo started in 1990, so the following year of 2005 will be Shinkendo's 15<sup>th</sup> anniversary.

In 1998, around the time of my 50<sup>th</sup> birthday, 13 instructors and I visited Japan. This included sightseeing and a mini training session. I have done many seminars in the past but the New Years seminar (the Keiko Hajime) will be the first seminar to be hosted by the Honbu dojo, with participants expected from different branches. Lately it has become common for students of different branches to attend the seminars. The New Years seminar will be a great chance for some students to train for the first time at the Honbu. It is an excellent opportunity for students to come together, train together, and start the year 2004 with better communication and relations between students, instructors, and dojos.

Kristofer Lanay, a Budokan dojo student from Georgia, came in the middle of October and trained at the Honbu Dojo for a month. Thank you for coming out to train, Kristofer!

On a side note, the pictures on Shinkendo L newsgroup are great, and I encourage students to upload pictures from their training and demonstrations. If you have any stories, please write an article for our internet newsletter. We also expect the second Shinkendo book to be published.

With the new year comes a new Shinkendo Good Luck Card! The card will display the Kuyo Junikun and Hachido, the underlying philosophies of Shinkendo. The card's front is designed by Nicholas Lauridsen from the Honbu Dojo. We will begin to distribute the cards on December 20<sup>th</sup> so we would like each dojo to tell us how many they would need.



## INSIDE THIS ISSUE

- 1** OBATA SENSEI IN NUNSPEET, HOLLAND
- 2** SWITZERLAND SEMINAR
- 4** ORCHID FESTIVAL

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# Obata Sensei in Nunspeet, the Netherlands

By Walter Vendel, Itten Dojo Nunspeet, Netherlands

The Itten Dojo hosted Obata's Kaisei's fourth visit to Holland. Brent Hire Sensei, who is our direct Shinkendo instructor, had already organised and hosted Obata Kaisei's previous three visits to Holland. This time it was Alec's and my turn. We have been students of Brent Hire for almost three years now and ever since have visited Obata Kaisei's seminars in Europe whenever we can. By the way, we would definitely recommend the seminars in Budapest, Hungary - they are always great. Alec and I have taught Shinkendo in the Itten Dojo for about one year now. It is a small dojo currently with twelve Shinkendo students. Just after the seminar with Obata Sensei, two of our students have moved back to the UK and are determined to set up Shinkendo there.

I just read in the November Shinkendo newsletter how Obata Sensei mentioned his visit to Holland and Switzerland, including the visit to the ship Batavia in Holland. This 400 year old ship once upon a time undertook a hazardous journey to the Far East and perished on the reefs of... Australia!



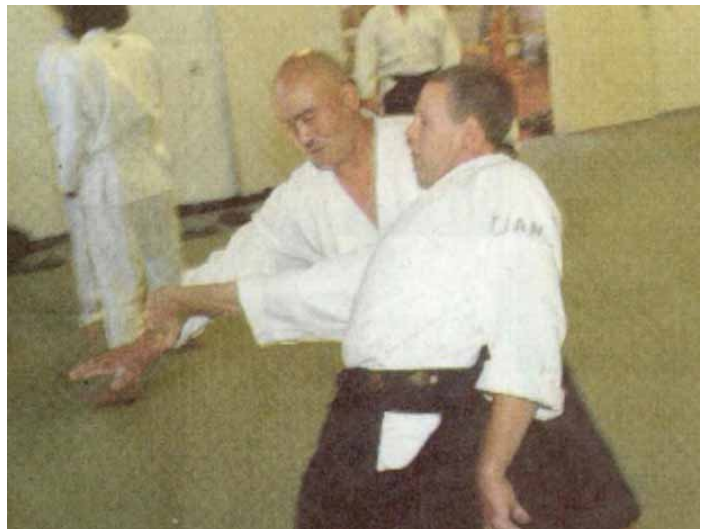
The seminar was held from Friday evening through Monday and attracted three news reporters. I hope the included pictures come out ok. We had nice articles with pictures in three newspapers, so that's good PR! We obviously hope that our dojo grows as a result of this.

Obata Sensei was extremely willing to talk to the journalists and to position himself in good stances for pictures. That was very helpful and was very much appreciated.

The training was, in one word, great. It's never the same with Obata Sensei, always creative and challenging for everyone present. The training spirit was good. Our students are very motivated to continue and deepen their Shinkendo practise. There were a few students from Germany and 1 from Belgium, so Shinkendo is slowly spreading throughout Europe.

Included in the program were 2 Aikibuken sessions and 1 Bo session. For people who had never seen Obata Sensei, this provided a tremendous, broad introduction to the martial arts that Obata Sensei has mastered and is so willing to teach and spread.

We appreciate Obata Sensei's flexibility to adapt to the circumstances like the various meals we had in the restaurants. Obata Sensei even tried our recommendation of mustard soup, but that looked like a one timer. The various talks in which Obata Sensei expanded on his vision of Shinkendo in the future were inspiring and gave us a taste of things to come. The concept of "DAI" and "SHO" were explained in a number of different ways by Obata Sensei. It is essential to discern the Greater from the Smaller or the principle from the detail in all aspects of life.



*Photo clipped from newspaper article*

# Switzerland Seminar Okt. 2003

By Peter Felber, Shibucho Shinkendo-Club Katana  
Christian Woerl, Fuku-Shibucho

This year the Swiss Shinkendo Federation (SSF) organized its' autumn-seminar from October 3<sup>rd</sup> through 5<sup>th</sup>. The sports-complex was just large enough for the 40 participants. With 10 Shinkendoka, the Shinkendo-Club Katana was the best represented single-club at the seminar. The rest of the participants came from other German clubs as well as from France, the Netherlands and, of course, Switzerland.

Josef Sturm, Head of the Swiss Shinkendo Federation, invited Obata Kaiso. Once again, as usual, Obata Kaiso amazed us with his outstanding technique and knowledge and we really enjoyed practicing under his supervision! Europe's highest-ranked Shinkendoka, Brent Hire Sensei, was once again at Kaiso's side. Our German Chief Instructor, Hans-Joachim Deuser Sensei, unfortunately was only able to attend the seminar on Saturday.

On Saturday a Kata-Championship was held and about half of the present Shinkendoka participated. The members of the Shinkendo-Club Katana won two trophies. Stephan Neumann Sensei was the winner of the instructor group. In the general group, Jo Kandlbinder made the third place. Margareta Kofler almost won a trophy with the fourth place in the women's group. Margareta, ranked Jiho, showed a lot of Budo spirit by participating at the championships with little chance of winning. This takes a lot of courage and dedication.



We once again would like to thank Josef Sensei for the excellent seminar. Everybody was in a very good and relaxed mood, and we all felt what "Jinsei Shinkendo" feels like. It is good to see that our ring of friendship is getting closer. Josef Sensei with his calm, kind and self-confident nature, had positive influence on the participants. Josef is a lot more experienced in life and Shinkendo, but he always treats junior students with friendly respect and attention.

Everybody in the Shinkendo Club Katana is looking forward to joining the next Swiss-seminar in 2005. And we would like to invite all Shinkendoka to come to Munich in autumn 2004 for what will surely be another great seminar with Obata Kaiso. Sensei will surely visit his 41<sup>st</sup> castle, with a cup of hot wine of course. Here in South-Germany we are direct neighbours of the Swiss, and are glad to have such kind neighbours !

# Orchid Festival Enbu

By Nicholas Lauridsen  
Photographs by Mike Krukowski



Nothing like Tachi-Uchi under a space shuttle



Impressive Aikido Techniques



Matthew Lynch-sensei (Mashuu Dojo). Everyone performed splendidly in both the Aikido and Shinkendo demonstrations, and the crowd was clearly impressed.

The site was hot, and the stage was set amid embankments of multi-colored orchids overflowing from the shade under the awnings. Orchid-growers from all over California gathered to display and sell their wide varieties of flowers and bulbs adorning their booths in decorative pots or rooted in shingles of actual tree bark, all creating a breathtaking, otherworldly backdrop for the demonstration.

Obata-sensei and the Honbu students were joined by the shibucho of four other area dojos, Nathan Scott-sensei (Tsuki Kage Dojo), Masaji Saito-sensei (Orange County Dojo), Sammy Briggs-sensei (Hokuzan Dojo), and

Obata-sensei's *take* (bamboo) *tameshigiri* with Marimo Obata assisting in particular received enormous applause. Marimo also performed some very difficult *furiwakegiri* on two stalks of bamboo. The skill-level and sincere efforts of everyone involved made this demonstration especially memorable.



*Bamboo slaughter*

Holding *enbu* (demonstrations) can be an important part of a dojo's participation in the community. Demonstrating not only promotes awareness of Shinkendo, but also confirms the dojo's role in the community. Furthermore, it encourages students to keep their technique in top shape, since *enbu* are, and will always be, a venue for representing our art.



*Sammy's expert one handed cut*





Tanrenkata with a shinken!



Again, special thanks to Mike Krukowski for his photography expertise