

## BAB National Course Saturday 8th October 2011

**T**his years National Course will again be held at Brunel University, Uxbridge Middx, from 9.30-4.30 and is an opportunity for the wider aikido community to train together and experience different styles under the instruction of senior Aikidoka.

The Dojo, which is light and airy, will provide a training area of approx 300 mats, plus space for spectators. Drinking water will be available adjacent to the dojo, and there is a cafeteria/bar on the first floor offering snacks and light lunches.

The Course is open to all Aikidoka aged 18 years and over.

This year our Instructors are:

- Sensei Terry Ezra 7th Dan (Komyokan Aikido Association)
- Sensei Paul Barker 7th Dan (Aikido Circle)
- Sensei Chris Mooney 6th Dan (British Birinkai)
- Sensei Frank Burlingham 5th Dan (Institute of Aikido)
- Sensei Paul Bonnett 5th Dan ( Shodokan Aikido UK )

Full details, including directions, are on the BAB website but just a reminder that if you pre-book your place it is only £20, compared to £25 on the day.

Keith Holland  
(Vice Chairman)

### The Sport and Recreation Alliance survey

The Sport and Recreation Alliance is surveying sports clubs to assess their financial health. The data collected will allow the Alliance to campaign on our behalf on a number of important issues. The more clubs that complete the survey, the louder our voice will be.

Please help us by taking part in the survey now. For more information about the survey and how to complete it please see the BAB website homepage: <http://www.bab.org.uk/>



Garry Masters 6th Dan, Ken Shin Kai, BAB National Course 2010

## British Aikido Board National Young Persons Course 2011

**Sunday 15th May 2011**

The Campus, Highlands Lane, Weston super Mare. BS24 7DX  
11:00 to 16:30  
12 to 19 year old Aikidoka welcome.

The BAB National Young Persons Course is held to provide an opportunity for the younger Aikido family to meet together and to train in a variety of styles under some of this country's leading instructors.

Places are limited to 60 students on the day.

For full details see the BAB website:  
[http://www.bab.org.uk/NationalCourse/National\\_Course\\_YP\\_2011.asp](http://www.bab.org.uk/NationalCourse/National_Course_YP_2011.asp)

### Useful links and email addresses:

BAB website: <http://www.bab.org.uk/>  
Facebook: <http://www.facebook.com/BritishAikidoBoard>  
Twitter: <http://twitter.com/BritishAikidoBd>

# Seriously though... why do you practice Aikido?

inevitably the answer to this question will produce a variety of responses, but unlike most martial arts, you will get a good number of people who practice Aikido for the deep philosophical reasons, rather than for the power of its martial technique. I make no bones of declaring that I very much fall into the first camp.

For me, you do not need to look much further than the name itself 'Aikido'. Obviously, it is a Japanese word and it can no doubt be translated in a number of ways, but it has three component parts and its hard to argue with the essential meaning of each:

Ai – Harmony

Ki – Nature or the life force

Do – The way

Put them together and you have 'the way of harmony with nature' No other martial art that I know of, translates to anything like this. It is impossible, (for me at least), to take this translation and conclude that Aikido is about how to destroy another human being, which is why martial arts originally developed. So unless you think the founder was mad, you have to come to the conclusion that it is about something other than technique.

It may be sacrilegious to say so, but I don't think that Morihei Ueshiba invented most of our basic techniques. The ways in which a human body can be broken and controlled are nothing new. No, O'Sensei's gift to the world was not a brand new martial art, but a philosophy of peace and love, with the difference being that you learn how to express these ideas, even when presented with the most difficult of circumstances in which to do so, i.e. someone attacking you physically. It's easy to be nice, when someone is holding your hand and smiling at you, but it is not so easy to do so when someone is trying to take you out with a knife.

O'Sensei believed that if you could learn to do so under such circumstances, then dealing with the stresses and strains of everyday life would simply be a breeze and that's why he thought it could transform the world. This is the foundation stone for everything I do on the mat and, I hope, off it as well. On the mat, I strive to develop my technique, so that firstly it works and keeps me safe. Secondly I want to do so in a way that does not damage my attacker, (in my mind, I have to see them as a partner not an opponent as there is no harmony in opposites). Ultimately I aim to do so without pain to leave both parties enriched through the experience. I try to take these ideas off the mat and to use them to make my life and those around me more positive. Imagine if

we all worked this way, which brings me to the reason why I am writing this article in the first place.

Aiki Extensions is a movement that brings together all that think this way, no matter what their style or affiliation. We want to make O'Sensei's dream a reality and to make a positive difference in the world at large. I am not going to go on about the wonderful causes it has supported and the valuable work that it does, you can find that out for yourselves on their website, ([www.aiki-extensions.org](http://www.aiki-extensions.org)). I will say though that it has allowed me to meet some wonderful people and to develop contacts throughout the world.

In the UK, AE gets pathetic support at present, but maybe the following can persuade you to join up.

Aiki Extensions last year came up with a wonderful initiative, which was International Aiki Peace Week, (IAPW), a simple extension of the United Nations idea of an International Peace Day. This is to be an annual event, which encourages dojos from around the world to sign up, (at no cost), and during IAPW commit to promoting Aikido as the art of peace. That could be by just emphasising that message in normal classes or by running a special event. It's a chance for clubs to promote what they do in their local communities and get some new members and some good publicity. To help, there are draft press releases and lesson plans that people can tap into if they want to. My club felt proud to be working with dojos from around the world and to see that we were not alone. In the end AE signed up 340- dojos from across 43 countries and this year we are aiming to get the support of at least 1000 dojos. To find out more visit the website, (<http://www.aikipeaceweek.org>).

I hope that you will join in and to start the week, there will be a course open to all on September 17. Details will shortly be available on the BAB website, but suffice to say that it will be a course with a difference, which I am absolutely sure you will find to be an enriching experience.

Finally, what's in it for Aiki Extensions. Well firstly we hope that some of you will join us, either individually or as a club, and secondly even if you don't, that you will be willing to use IAPW as a means of raising funds to allow AE to support some particularly worthy projects and to move a step closer to making a positive difference in the world we all share.

Author Quentin Cooke

[www.burwell-aikido.co.uk](http://www.burwell-aikido.co.uk)



## Useful links:

**Read more on BAB website:** [http://www.bab.org.uk/Misc/Charity/AikiExtensions/bab\\_charity\\_aiki\\_extensions.asp](http://www.bab.org.uk/Misc/Charity/AikiExtensions/bab_charity_aiki_extensions.asp)

**Aiki Extensions website:** <http://www.aiki-extensions.org/index.asp>

**International Aiki Peace Week website:** <http://www.aikipeaceweek.org>



*“The Art of Peace begins with you. Work on yourself and your appointed task in the Art of Peace. Everyone has a spirit that can be refined, a body that can be trained in some manner, a suitable path to follow. You are here for no other purpose than to realize your inner divinity and manifest your innate enlightenment. Foster peace in your own life and then apply the Art to all that you encounter.”*

- Morihei Ueshiba

# Not an egg in sight

It's 6:00am. I'm struggling to work out why my alarm should be going off at this unearthly hour on a Saturday. Can't I get just another 5 minutes sleep?

No! It all becomes clear to me as my mind clears from the wonderful dream it was prematurely ripped from. It's time to hit the road. We've got a good 3 hour road trip from our home base in Bristol to the sunnier climes of Norfolk Ees Laahdahn for a weekend British Aikido Board coaching course. My fellow instructors, Karl and Richard, are already up and about, and thankfully pass me a fresh cup of tea. Just enough time to down that, check we've got all our gear packed, and steam off up the M4 to reach the venue by 9:00.

I've got to say, I don't think any of us were looking forward to the course all that much. Sure it's a weekend road trip away to meet some other aikidoka, but two days of intense instructional PowerPoints and learning how to teach... something the three of us have been doing for a number of years already. Teaching is an important part of our dojo ethos, and we each run classes throughout the week. It all strikes us of a little bit of a weekend egg sucking trip, which isn't a bad prospect as I've not had any breakfast yet. No, we've all decided to go into this with an open mind and try to hold our heads, and our club reputation, up high. Besides, the BAB CL1 is a basic requirement to be able to teach alone.

We're made to feel welcome the minute we walk in the door. The classroom session is a mix of good advice, legal imperatives, and open discussion. It helps that there is a wide breadth of

experience from the 20 or so fellow students in the room, and that they're all willing to listen and offer their own experiences - if we can get a word in edgeways over Richard who is well into his comfort zone by 11:30. I'm sure I'm not out of place in saying everyone in that room learned a great deal from each other.

Saturday evening, it's time for one of the critical parts of any Aikido class: socialising. We go out for a meal and the ubiquitous martial arts drinks, where we learn more about each other's clubs, styles and places in the aiki world. Aikido, to us at least, isn't about the martial art alone; it extends further into our personal and professional lives and hopefully reflects as much in an evening with total strangers as it does cranking on a kote gaeshi on the mat. After a good few hours, it's back to our exclusive and extravagant hotel (!) to grab a few hours interrupted sleep (they snore big time, no matter what you hear from anyone else) ready for the second, practical day.

Sunday: we meet in the gym early, ready to perform a risk assessment on the venue, and even more ready to see some of the other Aikido styles practiced around the country. We are each given 15 minutes to teach a subject of our choosing, and we are reminded that we're not being judged on our Aikido skills or styles but our teaching capabilities. Many of us have had extensive teaching experience already, but we're kept on our toes with a few "surprise scenarios" thrown our way during our sessions. I can't complain about my fake diabetic collapse, it was one of the more straightforward challenges.



Saturday morning's classroom group. That's Rich at the very back on the right – about to put his hand up to make a comment.

At the end we're given feedback and recommendations for what we could have done better from Steve and Ann Billett the course Tutors as well as our peers on the course. The advice is always positive and well-received – showing we've all entered into the spirit of the day and are here to help each other in whatever ways we can.

The weekend ends up being immensely enjoyable. The Sunday alone would have made the trip worthwhile, even if it wasn't for

the evaluations. We've had the opportunity to train with many Aikidoka of different abilities and styles, and make some new friends on the way. Oh, and pick up a teaching certification as well – an added bonus!

Author: Nigel Davies, 2nd Dan, Templegate Dojo, Bristol, National Aikido Federation



The beginnings of my practical session



Class of '11

All photos: Aikido Development Society

## Events calendar

### 2011

**23 April to 24 April**

KAA 11th Annual Easter Course

[http://www.bab.org.uk/courses/sub\\_course.asp?ID=%20226](http://www.bab.org.uk/courses/sub_course.asp?ID=%20226)

**29 April to 01 May**

Woodland Aikido

[http://www.bab.org.uk/courses/sub\\_course.asp?ID=%20232](http://www.bab.org.uk/courses/sub_course.asp?ID=%20232)

**7 May to 9 May**

Shinkendo / Aikibuken Seminar with Toshishiro Obata Kaiso, Milton Keynes

[http://www.bab.org.uk/courses/sub\\_course.asp?ID=%20187](http://www.bab.org.uk/courses/sub_course.asp?ID=%20187)

**14 May**

BAB Annual General Meeting

**15 May**

BAB National Course for Young People, Weston Super Mare

**28 May to 29 May**

4 Seasons Woodland Aikido - Spring

[http://www.bab.org.uk/courses/sub\\_course.asp?ID=%20235](http://www.bab.org.uk/courses/sub_course.asp?ID=%20235)

**5 June**

Aikido Course

[http://www.bab.org.uk/courses/sub\\_course.asp?ID=%20212](http://www.bab.org.uk/courses/sub_course.asp?ID=%20212)

**17 June to 19 June**

Three Day Aikido Seminar

[http://www.bab.org.uk/courses/sub\\_course.asp?ID=%20224](http://www.bab.org.uk/courses/sub_course.asp?ID=%20224)

**18 June to 19 June**

Traditional Aikido – Aikido weekend in Snowdonia

[http://www.bab.org.uk/courses/sub\\_course.asp?ID=%20207](http://www.bab.org.uk/courses/sub_course.asp?ID=%20207)

**2 July to 3 July**

Tomiki Summer School 2011

[http://www.bab.org.uk/courses/sub\\_course.asp?ID=%20210](http://www.bab.org.uk/courses/sub_course.asp?ID=%20210)

**28 July to 31 July**

Shudokan Institute of Aikido Summer School, Nottingham

**30 July to 6 August**

International Aikido event and Katana competition

[http://www.bab.org.uk/courses/sub\\_course.asp?ID=%20201](http://www.bab.org.uk/courses/sub_course.asp?ID=%20201)

**11 to 14 August**

9th International Aikido Tournament & Festival

<http://www.aikido-baa.org.uk/Tournament>

**3 September to 4 September**

Kai Shin Kai Traditional Aikido, Aylesbury

[http://www.bab.org.uk/courses/sub\\_course.asp?ID=%20197](http://www.bab.org.uk/courses/sub_course.asp?ID=%20197)

**8 October**

BAB National Course, Brunel University

**5 November to 6 November**

Kai Shin Kai Traditional Aikido, Aylesbury

[http://www.bab.org.uk/courses/sub\\_course.asp?ID=%20198](http://www.bab.org.uk/courses/sub_course.asp?ID=%20198)

## If you wish to contribute...

Any text for newsletter articles should be sent in one of the following formats: Word, .doc, .rtf, or plain text.

Any images need to be sent as either a JPEG file at as high a resolution as possible or as a high resolution PDF. But please bear in mind that most email system have a limit of 10mb file size.

Please send your newsletter text and images to:  
[mediaofficer@bab.org.uk](mailto:mediaofficer@bab.org.uk)

## BAB Webmaster

Stephen Billett,

Chairman Aikido Development Society

Tomiki 4th Dan, Judo 4th Dan, 1st Dan Ju Jitsu



I suppose my martial arts career started one day at canoeing, my school friend Chris and I were trying to smash the ice with our paddles and decided that we wanted to do something warmer. So back at school we asked what we could do, rugby, football or judo at the Girls School, we started the next week. I was very lucky to be taught

by Lesley Agess a British and European Judo Champion. I was 16 at the time and learnt very quickly, my first contest was within weeks of starting and fought against a team from a school for the blind in the British Schools Judo Open. From that day onwards I learned never to underestimate an opponent, I was lucky to win these contests.

During the mid to late 1970's my Judo lead me onward to become the 'IBF European Champion' several times at both 63 & 65 Kilos. Around this time I was introduced to Don Bishop 7th Dan ADS (Tomiki Aikido) and began to practice Aikido, mainly for fun, but with Don's help, also to improve my contest Judo by using some of the allowable Aikido techniques.

I am the one on the top of the podium, in those days I had bright ginger hair, which attributed to my ability to fight. The picture was taken at the IBF European Championships held in Frankfurt, West Germany. Also if you look closely you can see my right is ankle strapped as in the semi-finals a German player jumped on my ankle and tried to break it. You can see who won though!



I started teaching Judo from the age of 18 to both adults and children, achieving some success, bringing pupils through to international level. One of the most enjoyable times I had was running teams for the 'London Youth Games' where we had 60 – 70 local children training together to join in a team of only 8 boys and 6 girls. What surprised me was at the actual Games at Crystal Palace we had all 70 turn up to support the team. For me this is what martial arts are all about. Comradeship! (The local borough was not too happy as we filled up 2 coaches).

My Aikido career ran in parallel with Judo, both in teaching and contest. My first Aikido dan grade was awarded by the 'Belgian Tomiki Aikido Association' in 1976 (upon the recommendation of Bill Woods of the 'The Hut') when I competed in a 'Open Weight Tanto Randori' competition that was run during the break of the 'Belgian Judo Open'. I entered for fun and due to Don's superior coaching won the event (I subsequently carried on to win the Judo event as well). Fifteen years later I was graded to 1st Dan by my own Sensei Don Bishop (He was a hard man to please in those days).

I was lucky enough to work for a Japanese Corporate which allowed me to visit and train in Japan. While I was there I met very many senior people and these introductions illustrated that there is more to martial arts than just competition and it was this that motivated me to begin teaching Aikido. Aikido overtook my Judo as my first martial art with its requirements for skill rather than strength, being more appropriate these days.