



Yoshitoshi, Tsukioka (1839 - 1892)

Yamabushi Series

Events Schedule

October 26	Iai Demo (Enbu) U of A's Museum of Art
January	Iai Demo Tucson Children's Museum
January 8	Senbon Suburi Grant Road Dojo
January 13	Kagami Biraki Magee Dojo
March	Orlando Tai Kai
September	West Coast Tai Kai

Tucson Tai Kai

The *Mizu Hi Kobukai* held the annual *Tai Kai* last month at the Tucson Hilton East. There were competitors from almost all of the *Mizu Hi dojo* in the United States. The competition was preceded by a day of seminars with representatives of many styles.

The Tucson *Dojo* were well represented by both experienced and novice students. This year, the competition was tighter than ever. Many matches had to resort to additional targets or kata to resolve a

tie. The officials pointed out that "This year was the most difficult *Tai Kai* they had ever judged". Loren Kierstead did particularly well by placing in many events. He is, as the *Tai Kai Yusho* (Overall Champion), now the proud owner of a Howard Clark L6 *Katana*. Dave Wallis also pleased the crowd in the *Tameshigiri* finals by breaking a tie for first by performing *Mizu Gaeshi* to win.

If this year's event had a theme it would be "etiquette counts". Our sword community has become proficient enough that etiquette can make the difference in a match. Good etiquette also reflects the attention to detail that characterizes a well trained *Kenshi*.



Kyudo at Magee

Due to popular demand and pestering by a few others, Dr. Gettings has created a *Kyudo* shooting lane on the mountainside at the Magee *Dojo*. A few students have already taken the opportunity to cast some arrows at the target and experience the beauty of *Kyudo*.

Wearing of Swords

It is well documented that the wearing of *daisho* in feudal Japan was a privilege of the warrior and ruling class. And in general the wearing of a single long sword was also a privilege. However, it was common practice that short swords could be worn by almost anyone who could afford them. Likewise, the wearing of fans and other small accessories, with the exception of the *jutte*, was also quite acceptable.

It is from this context that many of the current traditions in the *lai dojo* originate. Among many *ryu* the wearing of two swords in the *obi* at the same time is reserved for high ranking *Kenshi*. In the *Sekiguchi* tradition this is reserved for practitioners who are *Chuden* or higher. This does not preclude a student of lower rank from owning and using a short sword by itself. But it should not be worn at the same time as the long sword.

One further concern with the wearing of accessories, is the added distraction of "obi clutter". It will be more difficult to place the hand on the *tsuka* properly and perform *nukistuke* with obstacles around your waist.

Last year the question of wearing *tessen* in the *obi* was raised on the *Mizu Hi* forum. Our *Kaicho*, Mr. McClafferty, indicated that he had no objection to this practice except for the concerns already mentioned.

A last point about swords concerns the color of the *saya*. In many circles a red* *saya* is reserved for high ranking individuals. However, because *Sekiguchi Ryu Iai* is a style of swordsmanship with ties to the Emperor of Japan, red* is the official color for all *Sekiguchi* students. Black is also acceptable. In the past this served as a badge of honor that permitted the bodyguards to carry swords where others were not permitted.

*In Japan, there are actually many shades of "red" that are standard colors. This "red" is "persimmon".

Enbu at U of A

The *Yamakawa Dojo* has been invited to perform a Japanese sword *enbu* at the University of Arizona's Museum of Art. This is part of the events surrounding their "Art of Japan" series that has been going on this year. The new exhibit, which will run from October through January 7th is "The Faithful *Samurai*, *Kuniyoshi* woodblock prints". Our short *enbu* is planned for **Thursday, October 26th at 5:00 PM**. *Shihan* Gettings wants



students to be prepared to perform *kata*, *kumitachi* and some *tameshigiri*.

U of A Museum of Art
1031 North Olive Road
(Near Speedway and Park)

**Museum admission is always free
(closed Mondays).**

Tucson Dojo

Dan Keupp has built his own *dojo* just off Stone Avenue in Tucson. The **Ryu Shin Kan Dojo** ("Heart of the Dragon") was dedicated on Thursday, August 24th. *Sensei* Ken Winton performed the opening prayer and several honored guests performed *kata* to expel any bad spirits. Mr. Keupp expressed his sincere gratitude to all the people that made the new *dojo* possible. This was immediately followed by some *Sake* tasting and snacks. This opening increases the *Mizu Hi / Sekiguchi Ryu* presence in the Tucson area to three *dojo* and four training areas. (Magee, Grant Rd., Chuck's and Dan's). Please congratulate and encourage Mr. Keupp in his endeavor.

Montana Seminar

The budding Montana branch of the martial arts community recently hosted seminars in Japanese swordsmanship and open hand arts. The event was held on the 26th and 27th of August in beautiful Kalispell Montana and attended by several of our local members.

Organized by Dudley and Laurie Marburger, who until recently, were longtime Tucson residents, this gathering had ten participants this year (some had to leave during various parts of the day). All did 1.5 hours of *Shotokan Karate* taught by *Sensei* Tina Malkuch and *Sensei* Kirby Campbell-Rierson of the Kalispell host *dojo*, followed by two hours of *jujitsu* taught by *Sensei*

Irene Swanson. After a short break, *Shihan* Gettings presented two hours of sword training to round out the day.

On Sunday the remaining students practiced their *tameshigiri* skills at the Marburger residence. Although turnout this year was small, several students indicated that they are interested in further training.

Next summer's event is already in the planning stage.

The New Year

Please keep some time open for our new year's festivities. The beginning of a new year can be a fresh start towards everything you do. We like to celebrate in traditional Japanese style by putting everything in order and polishing our techniques.

Senbon Suburi (1000 cuts) practice and the annual *dojo* cleaning are planned for the first week of January. We also expect that the Children's Museum will request us again for their New Year's Festival but they have not set a date. *Kagami Biraki* is scheduled for January 13th and should be a great party. Please plan on helping to consume some *Zoni* soup, *Mochi* and other traditional rice products.

