



Kiyomasa finds his monkey with a brush

A.K.A. "Naughty Monkey"

Yoshitoshi Tsukioka (1839 - 1892)

Events Schedule

August 31 *West Coast Tai Kai*
Costa Mesa, CA, Hilton Hotel

October 12-14 *Montana Seminar*
Kalispell, Montana

Water Please

Please plan ahead when you are going to train this summer. Living in the desert means that you can become dehydrated without feeling thirsty or sweaty. It is important to keep water or other drinks handy, and to force yourself to put the liquid in your body. Another factor that has been pointed out recently is that frequent water drinking can deplete your body of important minerals. Bananas are a good source of potassium and can fend off muscle cramps. Leafy green veg. is a source of iron and folic acid. Eating a healthy balanced diet is even more important when you are subjecting your body to regular "work outs"

Tucson Dojo

Dan Keupp's Dojo on Stone Avenue is proving to be a comfortable training space for all the martial arts groups that used to train on Grant Road. The high ceilings and expertly installed floor are proving to be well worth the extra few minutes of driving. The powerful air conditioning is also a welcome feature of the new location this summer.

The crack team of Dojo Floor Floaters has another project under their belts. Loren Kierstead, Dan Keupp and "Doc" Schim put down a Dojo extension at the Campbell Road Karate Dojo that had to overcome a heaved subfloor. The Dojo took out a dividing wall to give the main training hall more room. The group had to level the floor around a crack that looked a bit like Mt. Suribachi and connect the new section to the old one without an obvious hump or ridge. Dr. Gettings had put down the original floor many years ago with the now indispensable rubber feet. Nice work!



Monkey Mind

Excerpted from Thomas Kapper

"Monkey mind is a metaphor that has been used in Hindu and Buddhist writings for eons. It describes a mind that jumps, grasps and howls. The mind is a monkey and the world is bananaland. Meditation (Read as Iai training) is an often frenetic tour of bananaland led by our own personal guide monkeys. Consequently, for some, much effort in meditation is directed toward just staying in the room. The monkey mind sees wonderful beckoning bananas everywhere. This could be fine; there is nothing inherently wrong with bananas. But monkeys like to grab and hold."

A monkey trap consists of a jar with a paw-sized mouth and a banana in the bottom. The monkey reaches in and grips the banana. A monkey paw with a banana in its grip will not fit through the jar mouth, but the monkey will not let go. He (or she) is trapped. After practicing for a time, you get to see that your monkey grabs at the same bananas over and over. Then there is only compassion because the monkey will always, always want those bananas. And your heart melts because when monkeys reach for bananas, it's because that is what monkeys do. Grasping at bananas; grasping at straws. You end up empty handed, just as you have always been."

Perhaps the greatest obstacle to effective training beyond missing actual training sessions, is "too much monkey chatter". Once a session begins there should be a focused effort to work on your weakest skills. It takes personal honesty to identify your own weaknesses. It then requires a determined effort to eliminate them. In a traditional setting, a moment of meditation is used to "shift gears" from the world of various concerns to the focused activity of training. Likewise, the challenge is to remain focused until you decide to conclude the session. The rituals of bowing to the Kamiza, your teacher and your sword should define the beginning and end of your valuable training time.

Montana Dojo

Montana is host once again to a seminar weekend. Dudley Marburger will coordinate a schedule of activities in the cool setting of Kalispell Montana. So far there are plans to spend some time doing Shotokan Karate, Sekiguchi Iai and some Tameshigiri. There is also the possibility of learning some self defense techniques from a South African military man who lives in Kalispell. Several members are planning on going up early to do some hiking and fishing as well. Contact Dr. Gettings or Irene Swanson for more details.



ZNKR Seitei Iai



The Yamakawa Dojo was treated to a seminar in ZNKR *Seitei Iai* and some exercises in the foundations of *Iai* in April. *Sensei* George Zammiller of Minnesota paid us a visit and helped us develop some new training exercises. Mr. Zammiller is from the *Mutoh Kai*, *Muso Shinden Ryu* of Minnesota (*Shimomura Ha*). Both he and his teacher, Dr. Dale Schwertfeger have been spreading *Budo* teachings in the Midwest for decades. We were honored and fortunate to have his help over the weekend.

Lingua Francae

Lingua Francae is a historical term used to describe spoken communication between people of the Mediterranean region. It was a mixture of Italian with Provençal, French, Spanish, Arabic, Greek and Turkish that was used by seafarers and coastal inhabitants to conduct business and express themselves. The word *Franca* or *Francae* is a reference to the Franks and their language. They controlled an empire in Europe around 500 AD that included present day France, Belgium, the Netherlands and parts of Rhineland Germany.

Some people have a visceral reaction against this kind of blending and borrowing. It might seem like a “mongrel” way to speak. Perhaps. Or perhaps the important part is the communication and not how it was achieved.

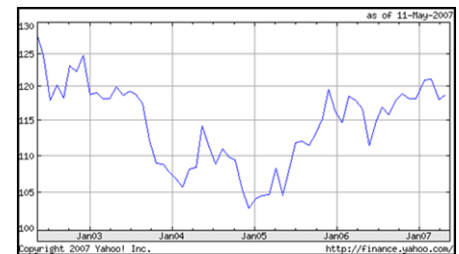
In the sword community we have some common aspects to our training. We share a limited agreement on terminology and descriptive language

with other traditions. We have a shared respect for the early achievements of Japanese martial culture and technology. But beyond this we tend to find plenty of reasons to underscore our differences.

This is where the value of a shared set of techniques becomes apparent. The *Seitei* sets of *Iai Kata* from the *Kendo* Federation and the *Iai* Federation are the *Lingua Francae* for our community. They share in the language of common techniques. Further, mastery of a “neutral” style gives credibility to a practitioner of a tradition that may not be widely recognized. There is a similar situation in the world of fine art. The radical artistic styles that were pioneered by Pablo Picasso or Jackson Pollock were at first dismissed as infantile or without technique. The fact that both men were classically trained in representational art and could produce that kind of work helped their later works become recognized as fine art. They did not paint or sculpt in their new style because they were unable to do anything else. They chose to express themselves from a full array of options.

Exchange Rate

There have been some pleasant surprises lately for people buying items from Japan.



The current exchange is 120 yen to the dollar. This is nearly 13% better than two years ago. Of course this is all a pale comparison with the 1970's when one dollar could buy 360 yen. Prices and wages in both countries have changed in the mean time and that must be kept in mind.

