

April 2004

## 1<sup>st</sup> Austrian Spring Course with Tony Cassells Sensei

I have been Tony Cassells Sensei's student for about a year now. Wolfgang Petter and myself set up a Dojo in Dornbirn Austria in April 2003, which follows Sensei's teaching. The dojo is called Aikikai Dornbirn and is a satellite dojo of Ei Oh Kan Birmingham. We now hold three main courses in the year, two week-end course in Spring and Autumn and a one week course in July.

After holding our first summer camp last year, we organised a week-end Spring Course last April. The well-known Tony Cassells Sensei 6<sup>th</sup> Dan and Shidoi assisted by Mark Pickering Sensei 4<sup>th</sup> Dan Shidoi were the two teachers of this seminar. The teachers were accompanied by two of their students, Caroline Smith and Andrew Mc Colglough.

Overall the week-end was placed under a very positive and open-minded spirit. Although most of the local Aikidokas currently are at the beginning of their path, everybody worked very hard and gave his best. Sensei Cassells opened the seminar with a brilliant Body art class followed by an excellent Kiriotoshi class. Mark Pickering Sensei took over and made us sweat even more in Suwariwasa. His class was then followed by the teaching of the 8 Basic Bokken Suburis by Tony Cassells Sensei. Mark Pickering Sensei qualified those as "the best 8 Suburi he had ever seen Tony Cassells Sensei teach", which is an interesting comment for myself.

Each Austrian student enjoyed the course and was very impressed by the two teachers. One of them, Michael - a sport teacher himself - thought that both Tony Cassells Sensei and Mark Pickering Sensei were first class teachers and qualified their teaching methods as excellent. Another student's impression was that Tony Cassells Sensei's precision in both weapon work and body art was just amazing.

The Aikikai Dornbirn's first Spring Course was a success and the organisers would like to seize this opportunity to thank Tony Cassells Sensei and Mark Pickering Sensei for their time and commitment and everyone else for helping out, participating and working so hard!

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