



Jitsu Canada Newsletter

May 2008



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Upcoming Events

Spring Boot Camp – 10th Anniversary of the Boot Camp

23rd to 25th May, Kinmount ON.



This weekend course provides an opportunity for students of different arts and styles to train and socialize together in a co-operative and non-competitive manner. Training is mostly in two styles of *jiu jitsu* (*Chokushin* and *Shorinji-kan*) although a variety of other martial arts will be taught, including *yoga*, *iaido*, *kenjutsu* and *tai-chi*. Training outdoors, often on uneven ground, adds a valuable new perspective to training. There are also a number of other activities - rock & tree climbing, knife throwing, and of course, swimming in the lake for those who are brave enough.

Participants are welcome to show up on the Friday evening to set up camp. After breakfast at a local restaurant, training starts at 10am on Saturday. Lunch, evening meal, and breakfast and lunch on Sunday are provided. BYOB, if wished, for the Saturday evening camp-fire.

Summer Grading

21st June, Peterborough ON.

There will be an evening BBQ following the grading, open to all, and accommodation is available in Peterborough.

Summer Course

22nd June, Peterborough ON.

Open to everyone, a day of training from 11am to 4pm. If you are not grading, still feel free to come to Peterborough the night before & enjoy the BBQ.

Timetable and event details can be found on the [Jitsu Canada website](#).

Special Event - 15th Year Anniversary Course and Ball



Saturday 20th September 2008, Kingston ON.

The first *Shorinji Kan Jiu Jitsu* session held in Canada was on Monday September 20th 1993. Exactly 15 years later to the day we will be holding a celebratory course, followed by a ball in the evening. The event will be held in Kingston, ON. The course will be taking place at either Cloverdale Hall or the Kingston Military Community Sports Centre. The ball will be held at The Harbour (see their website) – <http://www.theharbour.on.ca/>

The course will be open to all members (from novice to black belt) and should feature some exciting training as we anticipate most (hopefully all!) of our instructors will be present. The ball will be a semi-formal dinner and dance overlooking the Kingston Harbour.

This event will be an excellent opportunity for members of Jitsu Canada (and guests) to get together and celebrate 15 years of growth and success. 2008 is the 15th year anniversary of the Trent and Carleton University clubs, and the 10th anniversary of the Peterborough YMCA club. In addition to the dinner and dance, there will be a number of activities planned to commemorate the years, including speeches, slideshows and more!

Ticket prices and event details *

Dinner & Course - \$85.00
Dinner only - \$60.00

** Actual ticket prices may vary from club to club as each club or community will be responsible for subsidizing ticket costs through fundraising. Speak to your club instructor about specific ticket prices in your community.*

Course: 12:00 noon – 5:00pm
Cocktails: 7:00pm
Dinner: 8:00pm

Specific questions about the event should be directed to the following individuals:

Tickets and travel arrangements	-	your Club Instructor
Accommodation suggestions	-	Mark Yourkevich (markusjared@gmail.com)
General questions	-	Thumper (pchrisbrooks@gmail.com)

Please note there is no non-dining option for the ball – admission is by ticket only.

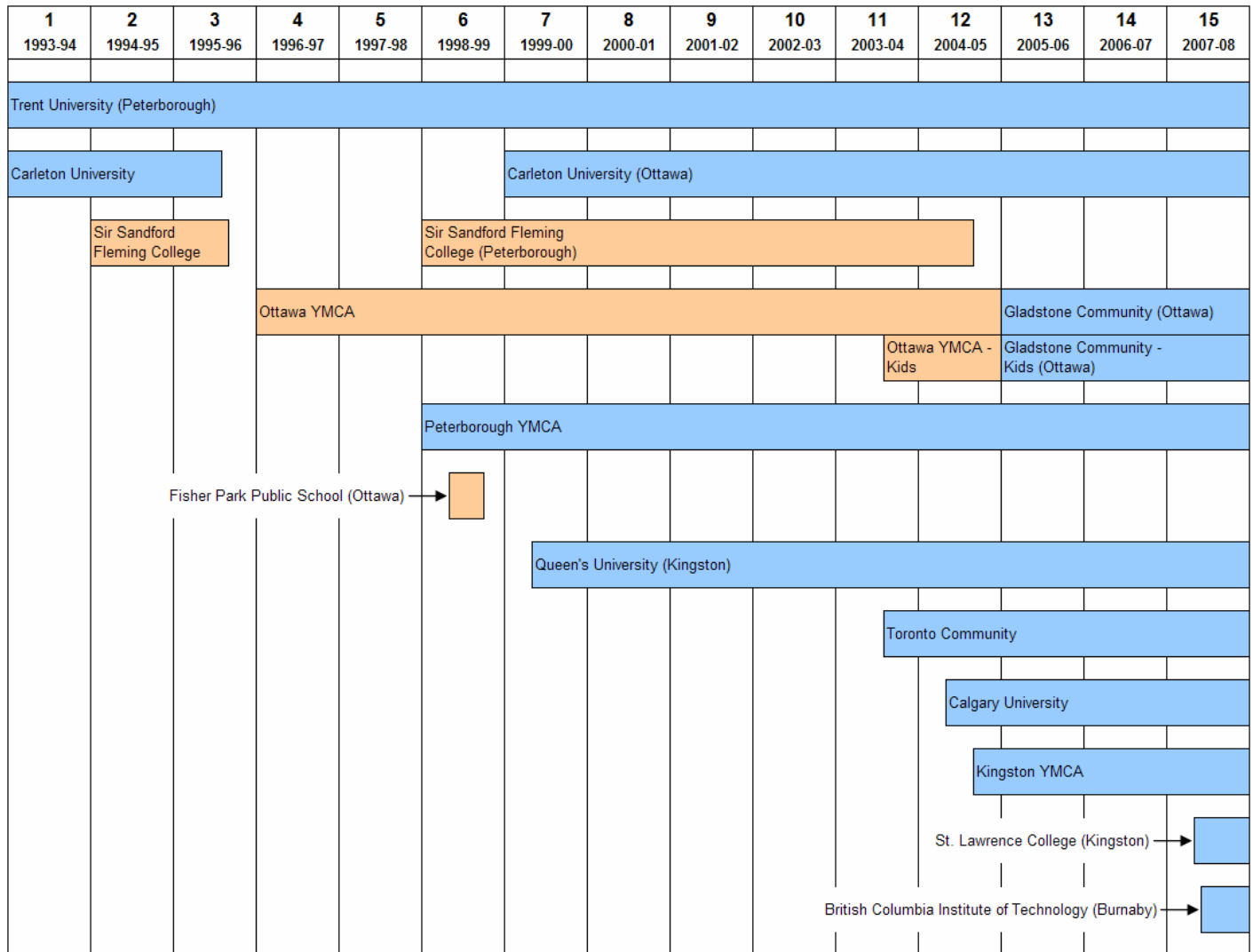
Tracing the Roots of Shorinji Kan Jiu Jitsu in North America – Chapter II

Chris Brooks, Sensei and Jon Jamnik, Sensei

Here is the second instalment of the ongoing history of Jitsu Canada. Jon and I agreed that, with Jitsu Canada’s 15th year anniversary fast approaching, it would be nice to have a snapshot of how far our organization has come since 1993. Drawing on information that Jon has been accumulating for the last year and a half, we have put together a time chart and a list of club chronologies to illustrate the history of our clubs and to highlight the club instructors who have been responsible for their development.

It’s promising to note that in the last 5 years we’ve had as many new clubs open up as we had in our first 10 years. It is exciting to imagine where Jitsu Canada will be in 5 years time!

Jitsu Canada Time Chart



Club Chronologies

Trent University	Fall 1993	-	Spring 1998	Andy Dobie Sensei (founder)
	Fall 1998	-	Spring 1999	Chris Brooks Sensei
	Fall 1999	-	Winter 2003	Andy Dobie Sensei
	Winter 2003	-	Present	Kenn Gibb Sensei
Carleton University	Fall 1993	-	Spring 1994	Andy Dobie Sensei (founder)
	Fall 1994	-	Spring 1996	John Molyneux Sensei
	Fall 1999	-	Spring 2000	John Molyneux Sensei
	Fall 2000	-	Winter 2003	Kieran Parsons Sensei
	Winter 2003	-	Spring 2004	Amelia Croll Sensei
	Fall 2004	-	Spring 2005	Amelia Croll & Chris Luzine Sensei
Fall 2005	-	Present	Jon Jamnik & Brent Stamplicoski Sensei	
Sir Sandford Fleming College	Fall 1994	-	Spring 1996	Andy Dobie Sensei (founder)
	Fall 1998	-	Spring 2005	Andy Dobie Sensei
Ottawa YMCA	Fall 1996	-	Spring 1999	John Molyneux Sensei (founder)
	Summer 1999	-	Winter 2003	Colin Welburn Sensei
	Winter 2003	-	Spring 2004	Jon Jamnik Sensei
	Summer 2004	-	Fall 2004	Brent Stamplicoski Sensei
	Fall 2004	-	Fall 2005	Jon Jamnik & Brent Stamplicoski Sensei
Ottawa YMCA - Kids	Spring 2004	-	Fall 2005	Jeremy Waller Sensei (founder)
Gladstone Community	Fall 2005	-	Fall 2007	Kieran Parsons Sensei (founder)
	Fall 2007	-	Present	Chris Whynot Sensei
Gladstone Community - Kids	Fall 2005	-	Present	Yoshie Martinez Sensei
Peterborough YMCA	Fall 1998	-	Present	Andy Dobie Sensei (founder)
Fisher Park Public School	Winter 1999	-	Spring 1999	Colin Welburn Sensei (founder)
Queen's University	Winter 2000	-	Present	Chris Brooks Sensei (founder)
Toronto Community	Spring 2004	-	Present	Alex Fairweather Sensei (founder)
Calgary University	Winter 2005	-	Present	Ben de Witt Sensei (founder)
Kingston YMCA	Spring 2005	-	Present	Mark Yourkevich Sensei (founder)
St. Lawrence College	Winter 2008	-	Present	Stu Cooke Sensei (founder)
British Columbia Institute of Technology	Winter 2008	-	Present	Kevin Eugene Sensei (founder)

Featured Technique – Kosoto-gake

Mark Yourkevich, Sensei

“This is Kosoto-gake; It is my very favorite throw....”

-the opinions expressed in the following article may or may not reflect those of my fellow instructors....tough ;-)

Editor's note: one of the opinions expressed did not reflect the opinion of the editor, so it was changed... tough!

I titled this article as such because...well...it is my very favorite throw. From the day I first learned it, it's been my absolute, unequivocal favorite. It is extremely versatile and can be achieved from a multitude of different attacks, and it proves extremely effective in V's, in that it most often deposits your uke in the path of oncoming attackers. Just like the throw irime-nage (entering throw) is often cited in Aikido as a solid representative example of the art as a whole, kosoto-gake (minor outer hook) could, in my opinion anyway, be viewed an appropriate representation of Shorinji-Kan Jiu Jitsu. When performed successfully it is quick, effective and potentially devastating. Interestingly, the means we often teach to break the balance appropriately for kosoto-gake, especially if performed from an outside block, is almost like a mini irime-nage, but we'll get to that later. Later, as in 'dan-throws' later.

To begin kosoto-gake, as you block the punch you want to ensure that you are advancing slightly in order to close some distance with your uke. Your own balance should be relatively centered and your knees slightly bent as you do so. For the purpose of this article, I'll walk you through the throw from an outside block. However, you should note that with a subtle change in the emphasis and extremity of how you manipulate uke's kuzushi, the throw works brilliantly from both inside blocks and hook punches as well. As you block, uke's weight will come down on their lead foot some. This is a good thing because if there is no weight on the foot, the hook (or prop) becomes extraneous to the throw and it can be more easily countered. In terms of space between you and your uke, this greatly depends on your comparative size and the length of your legs. Suffice it to say, you should endeavour to get "stuck in" (feet about shoulder width apart) close enough that by raising the leg closest to their lead leg, you can place your foot against the knee of uke's lead leg without compromising your own balance. See illustrations.



Like any proper throw, you need a bit of kuzushi (balance breaking) to get things rolling...or in this case, falling. Control of uke's balance is gained by letting the blocked punch travel past you as uke advances with the momentum of his punch. Post-block, and as you are getting into position to deliver the inevitable hook, you need to take control of the punching arm with the hand closest to their own hand and draw uke's balance a little more heavily onto their lead leg by seizing control of the arm/forearm (or gi sleeve). Your other hand should then move into position against the rear of uke's head, land-marking by aiming to make contact on the side of the face along the jaw line.

At no point should you be reaching up and compromising your own balance to take control of uke's head. Instead you should endeavour to block and move such that they are drawn into you and it becomes easy to place your hand in the appropriate position as they travel behind the momentum of their offensive. The placement of the head-oriented hand also affords an excellent opportunity to deliver a weakening strike in this vicinity.

By now, you've got uke's balance to the forward corner along the trajectory of their punch. Now, before they can regain their composure or balance, you must bring the hand not already making contact with their head up, "sandwiching" their head, if you will.



As you can see in the illustration to left, by doing so the kuzushi is altered such that uke's balance is now taken to the rear corner. Your stance should remain comfortable and knees remain slightly bent. At this point, if you've captured the moment (and the kuzushi) it should be possible to throw uke to the mats with no hook, simply by turning your hips slightly away from uke, thereby creating some space for uke to fall into.

It's important to note that the transition of uke's balance coincides precisely with your own turning of your hips, and as uke's balance begins to break, only then do you insert the hook. As the name suggests you are propping or hooking the knee in order to complete the throw (adding "injury to insult" as I like to put it). When training in the dojo, care must always be taken to avoid hooking the knee side-on (against the natural motion of the joint). In training, always hook the leg as illustrated in the photo to the right; pushing the knee in it's natural range of motion in order to collapse uke.



Finally, be sure, as they are falling, to extricate your foot from their knee-pit and realign your self in a wide comfortable stance such that you are on balance and (if uke is relatively new to jiu jitsu) also capable of softening uke's descent somewhat.



Yielding Thoughts

Stu Cooke, Sensei

I believe it's important to constantly ask the question; why train? There are so many reasons. Some do so for self-defence purposes and others because they like the exercise. Others enjoy the aesthetic aspects of our art and others may think the violent content is just awesome. Any motivation can be argued as valid and have both positive and negative components. The question that really interests me is whether there is an underlying, intrinsic and important idea behind Jiu Jitsu that not only affects how we train on the mats, but how we live our lives as practitioners. This is one of the reasons I train; to find the answer to this question.

Aikido, an art with its roots in Jiu Jitsu, means "way of spiritual harmony" and this refers not to the fact that Aikidoists are peaceful human beings, but because in utilizing Aikido, one uses their spirit (or energy) to harmonize with the attack and defuse it. This is a fantastic

way to describe what happens in our art. Far from being the "gentle art" that is the literal translation; Jiu Jitsu yields to, accepts and transforms the attacks that are forced upon it. If there is to be an underlying philosophy, then it would revolve around this concept.

But then, why do we choose to defend ourselves in this way? The reason, I believe, is to maintain our natural state, as much as is possible. Our natural state, at least, as martial artists, should be relaxed, quiet and contemplative. The more we can preserve this state, the better able we are to make good decisions, remain balanced and lead happy and comfortable lives. We expend no unnecessary energy, even in the most dire of circumstances and regardless of the brutality that may be necessary. Now, with that thought in mind, we can begin to see a philosophy behind our actions.

One might describe a "perfect" Jiu Jitsu technique as that which takes the entirety of an aggressive action and completely turns it upon the attacker, while the defender remains calm, and in what I previously described as a "natural state." In this ideal move, no energy is wasted. Our philosophy, which you may have heard of before, becomes "maximum effect, minimum effort." And this is something that most definitely can be taken off the mats to everyday life. We must accept the pressures of daily living and pay them as little mind as possible, fully allowing ourselves to make the correct decisions and concentrate on more important things. They can affect all things, no matter how violent they may be.

Remember always that the words "effect" and "effort" can be taken to mean many things. An "effect" is merely a term used to describe the result of some different action. That could be to dissuade someone from attacking you; it could be to achieve a passing grade on a test; or it could even be to save your life. Likewise, "effort" is a subjective term. This could refer to your physical, mental or emotional self. It can be with muscles or with mind. The point becomes to achieve the best result you can, using as little as is required to do it.

One should not make the mistake of believing that "minimum effort" is passive or non-violent. The minimum required to defend oneself in extreme circumstances will be just as extreme. This is why we train in the manner that we do. We train hard, enticing conflict into the dojo because that is what may be necessary, and that prepares you for anything you may encounter, no matter how harmless it might be. Encounter a brutal situation and respond without effort, successfully, and you have achieved what Jiu Jitsu sets out to accomplish. Remember always that although Jiu Jitsu is often referred to as a "lazy martial art," nothing could be further from the truth. We merely strive to use as little effort as possible in all things. This is not lazy. This is the preservation of energy.

As many reasons as there are for training, there are philosophies to be espoused. Your own interpretation of what happens in the dojo may be quite different to what I've talked about here. I encourage you not to keep it to yourself. Any lesson learned from training is a valid one and I would like very much to hear about the experiences that everyone has.

Contributions needed!

Grateful thanks to the contributors to this and previous issues. The next issue will be September 2008; deadline for submission is 30th August 2008. Contributions are welcome and encouraged from all members. These can be about anything relevant to the martial arts. Contributions can be sent electronically to [Jitsu Canada administration](#).

1st Kyu to Shodan and the Spaces Between

Part Three

Mark Yourkevich, Sensei

At the conclusion of part two, I left off at reconciling injuries, committing to valuable use of your time outside the dojo, and taking initiative in approaching all your time on the mats as in some way preparing you for an impending Dan grading. The meta-point behind this series, obviously, is that taking on a responsible and dedicated, holistic approach and carrying it with you outside the dojo can benefit anyone, irrespective of grade. Had I had 20/20 foresight, I'm sure I'd have taken this to heart a lot earlier and no doubt would have hit significantly fewer speed-bumps on the way too. At the very least, all jiu-jitsuka owe it to themselves alone to make sure they're prepared mentally and physically to go the distance and...in the spirit of every grading I've ever experienced...probably a little farther.

It's been well past a year now since I walked into that small dojo on Armour Road to grade to Shodan. My first Jitsu Canada grading was in Peterborough and it felt absolutely right that I should return "home" as it were. Now would of course be the part where I recount some of the more graphic and memorable moments of the Dan grading and regale you with tales of my hard fought victory over a throng of steely-eyed, well-armed and ill-intentioned uke clad in hakama. Except that would not be in keeping with the spirit intended behind this series. In fact, it would defy it. I went into that dojo on Armour Road as a 1st Kyu and emerged a first Dan. Simple really. No sooner had I concluded one journey, I was at the beginning of another, longer one.

As anti-climactic as it may seem after all this foreplay, if you were to ask me what I thought my greatest achievement as a jiu-jitsuka was to date I wouldn't say the Dan grading or the belt I received at the end of it. I'd honestly say to you that every step along the way, from starting my own club, through rehabilitation and finally re-conceiving my approach to teaching / training each represented, at their respective times, an achievement that out-measured the last. What I hope to have made apparent in taking you through my own trials and triumphs from Brown to Dan is that as you advance in Shorinji-Kan, you think less about measuring success in terms of the belts or the bruises. More and more the yardstick for progress becomes intrinsically, esoterically connected to your commitment. And I don't mean commitment to Jitsu Canada as an organization of which you're a member, or idolatry, reverence or imitation of those individuals who you call Sensei or Sempai. I mean the personal commitment to keep motivated and moving forward; a willful commitment to resolving clear goals for yourself and to honing the self-discipline needed to see them through and ultimately advance.

The way I see it, it's the spaces between our gradings where we're focusing our mental and physical efforts in preparation for an intangible situation with an indeterminate outcome, that we achieve our greatest victories. As long as you're doing jiu jitsu there will always be another grading to come, something difficult to prepare for, a new challenge to surmount. Appropriately, as the challenges grow in scope and difficulty the spaces between will only ever get longer. Use the spaces between wisely to reflect, resolve and evolve.

Jitsu East meets Jitsu West

Chris Brooks, Sensei

Each year I've looked forward to the opportunity to head out west for a little "jiu jitsu in the mountains" with Ben de Witt Sensei and his students at the Calgary club. This year though marked a special occasion as a second club was added to the Jitsu Canada West tour. In February, Kevin Eugene Sensei established the first BC club at the British Columbia Institute of Technology in Burnaby. A few instructors from Ontario participated in this Jitsu West "odyssey".

First stop, Calgary...

Andy Dobie Sensei and I flew to Calgary on April 11th to conduct courses and a grading over a period of a few days. Saturday April 12th featured Calgary's first ever Instructor course and to commemorate the occasion, Andy decided that it would be a great idea to put Ben on the spot and have him teach the course...great job Ben! ;) The course went extremely well with some great presentations from the participants. With Ben running the course, Andy and I had the chance to join in the training and participants appeared to take great joy in telling us what to do for a change. The only casualty of the day was Andy who suffered a slight muscle tear in his ribs (with a little help from Lee! ;)



The grading took place on Sunday. It was a long and challenging grading, but all six candidates managed to tough it out. Congratulations to the successful candidates:

Paul Fink
Bashir Kazemipur
Lee Romanko
Natalia Zoldak
Tony Southwell
Heather Huston



Special acknowledgement also to Matt Der Sempai for all of his hard work in getting the candidates ready for this grading. Ben had decided to take some time off this past semester and so handed the majority of the teaching responsibilities over to Matt. Great job Sempai!!!

Monday involved a short trip out to the mountains and despite some wet weather we managed a nice tour of Banff. Tuesday included sushi, a visit to downtown Calgary and then a small course in the evening. Some nice seoi-nage throws developed out of this course, including a beautiful and scary version of Ippon-seoi-nage from a kick!



Next stop, BC...

On the Wednesday, Andy and I flew in to Vancouver and were joined by Mark Yourkevich Sensei and Stu Cooke Sensei. We made ourselves quite at home at Kevin's (aka T-bone's) place and began a four day trend of gluttonous feasting, immoderate drinking, games of poker and Settlers, visits to sword shops, passing gas and quoting cheesy Top Gun lines (note the team shirts in the photo). Does this surprise any of you? ;)



On Thursday, we toured downtown Vancouver, which included a visit to Chinatown and the classical Chinese Gardens (see their website: <http://www.vancouverchinesegarden.com/>).

The gardens are located in the heart of downtown and the lush and tranquil setting they create is a stark contrast to the busy streets and sky scrapers that surround them. It was a treat for a handful of martial arts enthusiasts to have the chance to spend a little time in an environment like this.

After some more touring and a delicious meal at a local Malaysian food restaurant, we headed to BCIT for a club course. There were six students on the mat (all shocked no doubt to be joined by nearly as many instructors) and one who came to watch and take photos. It was a brief course, but the energy was high as Stu, Mark and I each took a turn to teach hip throws. At the social afterwards, tales were told about some of the other visits the BCIT club has had from guest instructors, including Chris Olson Sempai who has made a couple of appearances on the mats and of course the one and only Alex Fairweather Sensei who managed to break away from the ski slopes of Whistler for one evening to come out and teach at the club. Fairweather Sensei certainly left a lasting impression on the students! ;) T-bone expressed that he was quite honoured that guest instructors had made the effort to come all that way to see his club.

Friday involved a trek to Stanley Park and a tour around the sea wall. Stanley Park is a wooded peninsula that extends north off of downtown Vancouver. Around the outer edge of Stanley Park is a foot & bike path that runs right along the edge of the harbour and outer bay. The landscape around the park is gorgeous, complete with huge cliffs and a panoramic view of the mountains. The entire walk was about nine kilometres and the weather was cool but clear and bright. It was certainly another highlight of our tour of Vancouver.



After our trek we decided to take in an "all-you-can-eat" sushi lunch and had quite possibly the finest sushi any of us have ever tasted. Honourable mention to T-bone who, despite a severe allergy to all things "fish", sat patiently and watched while the rest of us slowly savoured this Japanese delicacy.

That evening after a full day (and some full bellies) we retired to T-bone's living room where we watched hours and hours of jiu jitsu footage from over the years and became hopelessly nostalgic! It felt particularly fitting to have both Stu and T-bone present for this as Stu was also in the process of celebrating a successful first semester of his new club at St. Lawrence College in Kingston.



Saturday April 19th – grading day! We rose earlier than normal this morning as Stu had made arrangements prior to the trip for a special visit to an aikido dojo in Burnaby. This particular dojo belonged to Robert Mustard Sensei, 7th dan and that name should ring a bell for anyone who has read the book [Angry White Pyjamas](#).

We showed up to the dojo not really knowing what to expect and when Mustard Sensei arrived we found ourselves being treated as honoured guests. It was a small but comfortable dojo and the students were extremely warm and friendly. Mustard Sensei taught the lesson and even though it lasted only an hour we gained a tremendous amount of insight into aikido and the martial arts in general. We moved through a few of the basic aikido stances and had the chance to practice a couple of circular movements leading into some locking restraints. Mustard Sensei gave a few demonstrations of aikido mechanics as well as a few practical applications of aikido. Very dynamic and beautiful to watch! We couldn't help but feel that this session was being specially tailored to our visit and it was truly an honour to have the opportunity to train with such a high ranking and well-respected martial artist. (For more information on Aikido Yoshinkai Burnaby and Robert Mustard Sensei, visit their website [by clicking this link](#).)



Following our aikido class we returned to BCIT to conduct the club's first ever grading. It was another tough grading but all candidates were successful. Congratulations go out to the following individuals:

- Daniel Ricapa
- Jasvir Dhillion
- Jeremy Lim
- Robert Macrae
- Patrick Sandi





After the grading Andy taught a course for a couple of hours. Despite being completely knackered, T-bone's freshly graded yellow belts soldiered on through the course as Andy covered a variety of topics including locking and throwing in resistive situations; balance breaking application; and a look at how to deal with opponents when the technique fails and tori gets dragged to the ground. Towards the end of the course, the yellow belts had the chance to sit down and watch as the instructors trained for a few minutes.

The exercise began with each instructor having a turn to perform any techniques he wanted on the other three. The exercise ended with the "5 push-ups then throw" drill introduced by John Hamer Sensei a year ago. Needless to say, by the end of the course, everybody had earned their drinks for that night!



Later that evening all of the instructors and three of the candidates gathered at a fantastic restaurant downtown for the after-grading social. After a satisfying meal we set off in search of a pub to begin the after meal festivities. We located an Irish pub a few blocks away and proceeded to introduce our new yellow belts to the joys of Tabasco sauce! Many draughts, laughs and photographs later it was time to call it a night. I think this photo captures just how special an occasion this was for Kevin and his students.

Huge thanks to Ben de Witt Sensei and Kevin Eugene Sensei and their club members for the hospitality and good times!!! Until the next trip when we'll do it all again!