

**Christina Gutz**

**Keiko Shokon – study the past to understand the present**

**Wado training course with Bob Nash (USA), 7. Dan JKF Wadokai and Toby Threadgill (USA), Menkyo Kaiden, Takamura-Ha Shindo Yoshin Ryu Jujutsu from February 27<sup>nd</sup> – March 1<sup>th</sup> 2010 in Berlin**

More than 170 participants, including numerous guests from Hungary, Finland, the Netherlands, Israel, Portugal, Spain, Sweden and Serbia, trained together for two days in Berlin under the direction of Toby Threadgill and Bob Nash. In addition, 40 blackbelts attended the Trainer training with Bob Nash on Monday evening.

**Toby Threadgill** leads one of the branches of the Takamura-Ha Shindo Yoshin Ryu Jujutsu that are legitimate worldwide today. Shindo Yoshin Ryu is a development of Yoshin Ryu which was founded by Yoshitoki Akiyama in the middle of the 16<sup>th</sup> century. The tradition of the Shindo Yoshin Ryu Jujutsu traces back to Matsuoka Katsunosuke (1836 - 1898) during the late Edo period.

**Bob Nash** is the founder of the Wado Guseikai USA, which stands within the tradition of Hironori Otsuka (1892 – 1982) and is connected with Wadokai Japan (Japan Karate-Do Federation).

Wado Ryu was founded by Hironori Otsuka and its roots are in Karate and in Shindo Yoshin Ryu. Today the origins of Shindo Yoshin Ryu are retrievable in the traditional Kihon Kumite 1 – 10 of Wado for example. One of the main goals of this training course was to recover the heritage of Wado and to make the participants aware of it.

### **The Training**

Each of the training units began with a collective warming up and a concrete example to demonstrate the connection between the Shindo Yoshin Ryu and Wado. Afterwards the participants were divided into two groups: one trained under the direction of Bob Nash and the other under the direction of Toby Threadgill. It is especially worthy to note the high levels of concentration of the participants and the good atmosphere during the whole training course.

### **Kuzushi: Antei Ho and Fuantei Ho**

Toby Threadgill demonstrated with the first move of the Kata Pinan Nidan as an example that its roots lie in the swordplay and that the principles of the sword were transferred to Wado by Hironori Otsuka.

One of the principles is about Antei Ho (strong, balanced direction) and Fuantei Ho (weak, unstable direction). During the first block movement of Pinan Nidan the defender keeps his balance (Antei Ho) and breaks the balance of the offender (Fuantei Ho). Toby Threadgill emphasized that it is particularly important to always work from a relaxed state and to take up a good stance. In that way it is possible to absorb the energy of the offender and to give it back to him in a counterattack. Basically, you create a connection to the whole body of your partner with every touch. Use this connection to control the partner and unbalance him (Kuzushi). Bob Nash demonstrated, using comparative exercises, that Hironori Otsuka had incorporated the principle of the Kuzushi in the Kata Pinan Nidan.

### **Maai and Tai sabaki**

On the second day of the training course Bob Nash showed the special meaning of the correct Maai (distance from the partner) and Tai sabaki (evasive movement) in Wado using the example of Kihon Kumite 1. As before Toby Threadgill demonstrated that Maai and Tai sabaki have their origins in the Shindo Yoshin Ryu.

Shindo Yoshin Ryu and Wado have correct evasive movements as small as possible in common. Bob Nash pointed out that the footwork of Wado mainly originated from swordplay.

### **The scrolls**

On Sunday the participants had the extraordinary opportunity to have a look at some of the original scrolls of the Takamura-Ha Shindo Yoshin Ryu. These scrolls originate from the 17<sup>th</sup> century and contain the heritage of the Shindo Yoshin Ryu, chronicled by the highest representatives, handed to their successors. Toby Threadgill is in possession of 70 of these scrolls and presented eight of them to the participants of the training course.

### **Keiko Shokon**

At the end of the training course Toby Threadgill and Bob Nash emphasized that it is important for them to preserve the heritage of the Shindo Yoshin Ryu and the Wado Ryu and to impart the knowledge that Hironori Otsuka preserved essential elements of the Shindo Yoshin Ryu by transferring them to the Wado Ryu. The participants were in agreement that Toby Threadgill and Bob Nash successfully realized their ambitions: The training course imparted the historical connection between Wado Ryu and Shindo Yoshin Ryu and enabled an in-depth understanding of Wado and Hironori Otsukas intentions.

### **Reunion 2011**

On 26<sup>th</sup> and 27<sup>th</sup> February 2011 Toby Threadgill and Bob Nash will be back in Berlin.

We invite karateka of all styles to attend this training course.