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Exciting Yudansha Seminar with Endo Sensei in Sakudojo / Japan

After my first time in Sakudojo earlier this year in August I was already looking for the next chance to come to this unique place. So last weekend the time had come for the Yudansha Seminar there with Endo Sensei.



Arriving early morning at 6AM in Narita and taking the next train I was quite early in Sakudaira. So I had time for a walk around the town and through the fields. It was a beautiful

day with blue sky, some clouds and colorful autumn leaves and I enjoyed the scenery. Later on I joined some other students for works in the dojo's garden.

The first Keiko was in the afternoon from 3 to 5 and Endo Sensei focused on teaching us to relax our arms and shoulders while maintaining centered with our mind calm. So the "techniques" became less important for the benefit of improved link and relation between Tori and Uke.

In the evening after the joint dinner then we had a meeting with Endo Sensei for Q&A. Some people had sent in advance their questions, so that Endo Sensei was well prepared. To some extent I regret that besides the very simple Aikido language I did not learn Japanese, since the teaching was in this language. So it was a good lesson in patience for me. Fortunately when my question was addressed "How can we protect our knees from being hurt through Aikido?" the discussion changed into English. A spontaneous but non-representative poll showed also among the seminar participants that about 30% suffer from troubles with their knees. Endo Sensei also speaking from his own experience demonstrated for example how to strengthen the leg muscles in order to protect the joint and therewith avoid excessive strain.

After this session we changed to the leisure part of the evening but with some exiting highlight: original calligraphies from O'Sensei, Endo Sensei and even former Prime Minister Nakasone came to sale. I was lucky to get a nice one as souvenir for my Aikido treasury. The competition became fierce when a fan with original calligraphy from O'Sensei was auctioned.

In the next day's Keiko then Endo Sensei concentrated on the flexibility in doing ryote dori. And the final highlight was the impressive 4th Dan grading of Kana San, a close student of Endo Sensei.

After that about 70 happy Aikidoka bid their farewell from Sakudojo, while Endo Sensei was already busy with garden works in dogi and rubber boots waving his hand for farewell.



Ulrich Mierswa