

Meeting Minutes
for the
Halifax Aikido Association
Annual General Meeting – 2005-06
(2006 Fiscal Year)



The Halifax Aikikai Association is a member of the Canadian Aikido Federation (CAF)
and the Nova Scotia Aikido Federation (NSAF)

Halifax Aikikai Association
Annual General Meeting – FY 2006
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This document contains the Minutes for the Halifax Aikikai Association (HAA) Annual General Meeting (AGM) for the 2006 fiscal year (01 Oct 2005 to 30 Sep 2006), held on 06 October 2006.

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1.0 OPEN MEETING

The current Chairman, Tom Hackmann, called the meeting to order at approximately 7:30 pm, 06 October 2006. He turned the meeting over to the Secretary, Patrick Sanford. The Annual General Meeting (AGM) of the Halifax Aikikai Association (HAA) was held on the mats at the Halifax Aikikai dojo – the Abby Lane Gym.

Patrick Sanford supplied copies of the current membership list to the members present. Members were to review their contact information and supply corrections on the additional page provided, and/or to circle scratch their names to indicate their presence at the AGM

Patrick Sanford noted that as soon as the meeting had commenced, previous directors all retired from office, and new directors would take office following the close of the meeting.

1.1 Attendees

The following is a list of attendees for the 2004 AGM:

| | | |
|------------------|------------------|--------------------|
| Blenkhorn, Sarah | Hackmann, Tom | Peters, Michael |
| Celikkanat, Ali | Hughes, Gregory | Sanford, Geoff |
| Cho, Michelle | MacLean, Garrett | Sanford, Patrick |
| Fraser, Graham | McAuley, Peter | Stepanczak, Mike |
| Friis, Bruce | Michaud, Marc | Tokarczyk, Ryszard |
| Gesser, Margo | Milley, Court | |

2.0 ORDINARY BUSINESS

Ordinary Business encompasses those activities described in the Society's By-laws. This statement was explained to the members present.

2.1 Summarise Previous Minutes

Using a copy of the previous AGM minutes and minutes from the Directors' Meeting, Patrick Sanford briefly glossed over the Ordinary Business elements of the previous minutes, then provided details concerning Special Business elements of the previous AGM and Directors' Meeting.

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2.2 Summarise Annual Report

There was no previous annual report; all relevant information for the annual report can be summarised from the material submitted to the Registry of Joint Stock Companies (RJSC) and the previous minutes, which include a copy of the financial statement for the club. This fact was explained to the members present, as well as directing them to the binder in the Aikido locker which contains copies of the by-laws, minutes and other society-related material.

2.3 Summarise Finances

The financial statement for the 2005-2006 fiscal year was presented. It was noted that the club operated at a deficit of approximately \$1,500. This was due mostly to the purchase of mats (\$2,700) and money provided to the NSAF for last year's seminar (\$1,150). If either of these two events had not occurred, the HAA would have operated in, or nearly in, the black.

Tom Hackmann explained that seminars normally cost more than the fees that they generate, and that Halifax Aikikai, as the largest club in the province, usually makes up any shortfall.

No issues requiring discussion arose from the presentation of finances. A copy of the financial statement presented at the AGM is attached to these minutes as Annex A.

2.4 Elect Directors

Patrick Sanford provided a brief overview of directors from the point of view of the Societies act and our By-laws, noting that Directors can be held financially liable for the club's finances (i.e.: going bankrupt and still owing money or being sued) and that the HAA does not carry Director's Liability insurance. He also noted that the HAA directors are somewhat protected against lawsuits by our waiver and the CAF insurance, and that while there is a legal possibility that a Director can be sued, it has never happened in NS and it is a **very** remote possibility.

Members were reminded that after the AGM commences, all directors have retired from office, and that our by-laws require a minimum of three and maximum of 15 directors.

Volunteers were requested for Directors. Those volunteering were Tom Hackmann, Marc Michaud, Patrick Sanford, Peter McAuley, Michelle Cho and Gregory Hughes.. The members were asked if they wished to vote the volunteers to become directors of the HAA; all members responded affirmatively.

The members present voted unanimously for the following persons as directors of the HAA:

Tom Hackmann,
Marc Michaud,
Patrick Sanford,
Peter McAuley,
Michelle Cho, and
Gregory Hughes.

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2.5 Elect Officers

It was explained that there are four possible positions that must be filled: Chairman, Vice-Chairman, Secretary and Treasurer. He also noted that usually the Secretary and Treasurer positions are combined because they are so inter-related. It was also explained that Officers did not need to be Directors; it was just more usual for Officers to be elected from the ranks of Directors, and that electing a Director to an Officer's position reduced some RJSC paperwork.

Patrick Sanford nominated Tom Hackmann for the position of Chairman. The members were asked if anyone wished to run for the office of Chairman; all members declined. The members were asked to vote if they wished Tom Hackmann to be elected to the Office of Chairman. The vote was unanimous in favour.

Members were asked to volunteer for the office of Vice-Chairman. When no members volunteered, Patrick Sanford nominated Peter McAuley, who accepted the nomination. The members were asked to vote if they wished Peter McAuley to be elected to the office of Vice-Chairman. The vote was unanimous in favour.

Tom Hackmann nominated Patrick Sanford for the office of Secretary/Treasurer and then asked for other volunteers for the position; there were none. The members were asked to vote if they wished Patrick Sanford to be elected to the office of Secretary/Treasurer. The vote was unanimous in favour.

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| <p>The members present voted unanimously for the following officers: Tom Hackmann – Chairman Peter McAuley – Vice-Chairman Patrick Sanford – Secretary/Treasurer</p> |
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2.6 Appoint Auditor

Patrick Sanford noted that the HAA did not have, nor has ever had, an auditor nor a need for one. He mentioned that should one be necessary (an audit requested by the RJSC), Robin Sanford could probably find a Chartered Accountant (CA) from among her contacts who would be willing to do the task for free or minimal charge.

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3.0 SPECIAL BUSINESS

Special Business includes anything not included in Ordinary Business, and any/all issues discussed at an Extraordinary Meeting (not the AGM). This statement was explained to the members present.

3.1 Dues

Patrick Sanford noted his attempts to bring the dues up to date by chasing those who have outstanding balances. He noted that most people were fairly up-to-date with their dues, there were still some people who had dues outstanding as far back as last fall.

Patrick Sanford noted that there had been some complaints over the previous year to the Treasurer about the amount of dues and/or requesting to not pay the full amount of dues. The most common reason was that the person(s) did not attend regularly and felt that they shouldn't have to pay full price. Patrick provided the comparison to a gym that you join up to but don't attend regularly; the gym would not give a discount because of poor attendance. The members echoed agreement to this sentiment and some spoke in direct support of the current policies of the club.

It was also noted that a drop-in fee had been discussed and rejected at the past two AGMs. This sentiment was echoed in this meeting; no drop-in fees.

Patrick then presented a proposed dues policy for the club, which would be posted on the club website and could be referenced if ever a person had complaints about the dues. The different elements of the proposed dues policy were discussed in detail, resulting in changes to the wording. The completed version of the dues policy is attached to these minutes as Annex B.

Geoff Sanford noted that all new students should be provided with a copy of this policy, so that they understand up-front what their obligations are.

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| <p>It was agreed that the dues policy, as discussed and revised at the AGM, should be adopted by the club and posted to the HAA website.</p> |
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3.2 Waivers

Patrick Sanford noted that everyone at one time or another has filled out a waiver in order to practice Aikido. However, many of those waivers for long-time member are no longer present and he requested that everyone complete a new waiver, and that this be done on a more regular basis (once every two/three years). No date for completion of updating waivers was provided.

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3.3 Records Upkeep

Patrick Sanford discussed the continuous efforts to keep members' records up-to-date. He asked if everyone had had the opportunity to modify the attendance sheets with current members' information. He mentioned the importance of filling out the attendance sheet, how it could be used for calculating the number of hours practiced that are used to as a benchmark for testing, and how it could be useful for observing changes in class sizes.

3.4 NSAF – Dojo Membership

Although this item was presented on the agenda prior to the CAF Dojo Membership, it was discussed after the CAF matter. It was noted that the NSAF is the provincial body that was mandated be created so that the CAF had a central provincial body through which to communicate. It was also noted that NSAF membership fees had increased to \$10 per member, and there is no dojo fee.

Patrick Sanford had proposed that NSAF dues be updated monthly, like CAF membership dues, but this was rejected in favour of once per year, because there was no insurance reason as there was for CAF dues to be updated frequently.

3.5 CAF – Dojo Membership

Patrick Sanford quoted the CAF fees and \$25 for the dojo and \$15 per member of the dojo. Patrick noted that CAF member fees needed to be updated monthly now, because the CAF insurance only applied to members of the CAF and only people who have paid their CAF dues have membership in the CAF.

It was noted that currently the club pays for all members' fees. Patrick suggested that the club continue to pay the CAF fee for regular members on an annual basis, and that new members who are joining the dojo throughout the year should be requested to pay the CAF dues when they pay their first month's dues.

This matter was debated and then agreed-to by all members present. It was also suggested that this information be included in the dues policy, which was agreed-to by all members.

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| <p>It was agreed that new students will pay the CAF membership fee when they pay for their first full month, and that this requirement will be recorded in the club's official dues policy.</p> |
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3.6 Upcoming Events

Patrick Sanford indicated the following upcoming events:

Seminar with Kawahara Sensei, St. John's, Nfld, 14/15 October 2006.

Patrick Sanford indicated that there would be more discussion on this topic following presentation of the other upcoming events.

Seminar with Kawahara Sensei, Halifax, 28/29 October 2006.

Patrick Sanford indicated that there would be more discussion on this topic following presentation of the other upcoming events.

Potential event: Seminar with Izumi Sensei, Halifax, Late January

Patrick Sanford mentioned the idea of potentially getting Izumi Sensei (“Rocky”) to Halifax in late January. Mike Peters requested identification of “Rocky”, which Patrick provided. Tom Hackmann mentioned that this seminar ideas was unlikely due to Rocky’s travel plans and the fact that Kawahara tends to spend much of winter with Rocky in Barbados.

Patrick Sanford then discussed the upcoming seminar. He described the status of mats, billets, the pot-luck and the requirement for volunteers. Patrick also reiterated information that Tom Hackmann had mentioned in previous classes: Attendees at the seminar should not expect to leave when the seminar ends because they will be required to stay and assist cleaning up the area and loading/unloading mats at different locations.

3.7 Member Retention

Patrick Sanford read a summary of the information gathered from the survey from November 2005. A copy of the summary information is included in these minutes as Annex C. Some discussion ensued, with the bulk of the discussion concerning feedback.

Patrick also asked everyone present who had been at the previous AGM if anyone remembered an incident in which a female member volunteered for an activity or position, but was turned-down. Patrick mentioned that one respondent had mentioned they had heard of such an incident and included in their survey answers. No one present remembered such an incident from the previous AGM.

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3.8 Member Development

The survey results were further discussed in this section, with emphasis on feedback and member development.

Tom Hackmann noted that there is a record of what is taught in the book/log. He also noted that first class is usually aimed at 5th kyu techniques and that the classes need more senior students. Beginners can't move to more advanced techniques prior to learning the basics, especially rolling and learning to take care of themselves during practice. Tom also noted that the syllabus is provided by the CAF.

Tom went on to describe the development in Aikido as a slow process, and that a small membership means slower development (in general). Tom noted that keen students still will develop faster than otherwise.

In response to the desire for more feedback (from the survey), Tom noted that there was little use in feedback each week for newer members, as there will be very slow development at first. The process is gradual and is on more than a physical level, and is hard to quantify.

3.9 Mat Repair

Patrick Sanford noted that the process of mat repair is fairly successful overall, but is not a permanent solution. He went on to note that the time will come when a mat cannot be repaired any longer and should be removed from use. He noted that there were less frequent mat repair sessions than the previous year, and the program should be resumed every two or three months.

Pat noted that the previous AGM had authorised the purchase of eight (8) new mats, but the Directors' meeting of 09 November 2005 authorised a purchase of more, depending on savings. The result was the purchase of 14 new mats.

He also noted that lessons learned have included using Goop and not silicone as an adhesive.

3.10 Weapons

Patrick Sanford noted that there were no new weapons purchased this year for the club, and that members should be encouraged to purchase their own weapons. Patrick also noted that weapons upkeep should also be resumed, which consists mostly of oiling jos and bokkens.

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3.11 Website

Patrick Sanford introduced Court Milley (for those who were not familiar with him) as the web master for the Halifax Aikikai website. Patrick encouraged people to use the website to keep abreast of information. Patrick also reported that the domain name had been successfully transferred to the Halifax Aikikai club, from the previous member who had originally registered it.

Tom Hackmann suggested the addition of a link to the San Francisco Aikido website where there were further links to a large number of Aikido video links. Patrick noted that it would be added.Halifax Aikikai Alumni Club

Patrick Sanford had presented the idea at last AGM, but nothing has been developed for the website. Patrick still keeps in contact with many alumni by emails. Patrick still plan on implementing something for the website, but it will not happen in the near future.

3.13 Request ideas for training/social events members would like to hold/attend

Patrick Sanford noted that this was the part of the meeting in which people put forward ideas for training or social events they would like to see happen. He requested ideas from the members present.

Ryszard Tokarczyk suggested that at least once every month or two weeks, the club should get together following class.

Margo Gesser suggested another sushi party.

3.14 Senior Students as Regular Instructors

Katharina Kieser had brought to Patrick Sanford the idea that the beginners classes could be taught by the more senior students on scheduled or ad-hoc basis. Patrick then presented the pros and cons of that idea.

The benefits of this idea are:

1. Yudansha can actually participate in the class. This may alleviate some perceived boredom on the part of the Yudansha when they are required to always teach. It also allows the Yudansha to pass their knowledge to others through direct practice with them.
2. Variety can keep things interesting for newer students, long-time students and the senior students.
3. Following a class, Yudansha would be able to critique the senior students in the areas of instruction, etiquette and technique.
4. If two hours in an evening is difficult for some Yudansha, this would allow them to arrive for only the second class if they so chose.

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Drawbacks of this idea are:

- a. Senior students that would teach regularly would be required to obtain Police Certificates, as per CAF insurance requirements.
- b. Beginning students may feel they are being provided with a lower quality of Aikido by not being instructed by the most senior person available.
- c. Some senior students may not be up to the challenge of teaching, or may be inadequate to the task, or may not wish to participate.
- d. Some senior, or close to senior, students may feel slighted or left-out if they are not asked to instruct, or are asked less frequently than other senior students.

Patrick also gave a brief synopsis of Katharina's comments, which were provided in writing prior to the AGM, and are included here:

Katharina's comments:

I think that the emphasis from the jr instructors should be very basic but that provided the participants also to feel the movement from the black belts, something I think is lacking currently. Being offered to teach should be an honour & people should decline if they wish. I also think that this along with slightly more 5th kyu testing would make the aikido seem a more attainable long term activity for those wishing to stay in the practice. I think that one reason we loose many of those with potential is that they see only the very few teach and rarely people rank or receive positive feedback.

Patrick then opened the floor for discussion.

The first question was "What is senior"? The answer that was agreed-to was second kyu & above.

Graham Fraser noted that he had previously discussed this issue with Katharina. Graham then provide what he described as an opposite view, that too many black belts just teach, and that more black belts should show up to classes more often. He also felt that instruction should be concentrated more with the highest rank available, to get the best quality of instruction. He suggested that a more consistent instructor schedule would also be beneficial. Graham noted that more black belt students should be practicing. The last point he made was that senior students and black belt students need to be coming to the advanced classes, or else the club would continue to pump out 4th kyu students and none higher.

Tom Hackmann noted that there was a large gap in knowledge between the Yudansha and the next highest students and would rather see black belts teach. While some senior students may know techniques, they are not as crisp and proper as the Yudansha.

Margo Gesser asked if there was anything specific that should be taught when/if a senior student finds themselves in the position of teaching a class. She also noted that she feels unworthy to teach.

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Tom replied that in the situation where a senior student must teach, they should stick to the basics.

Ryszard Tokarczyk agreed with Tom and Graham, and stated that beginners should be given the best instructors possible. It was noted that if errors are taught to beginners, the errors are much harder to remove later than if the technique was taught properly in the first place.

Graham again noted that senior students should stay for the second class. Margo noted that she was guilty of not attending second class, and requested that there be a single 1.5 hour class.

Tom noted that he had already adjusted teaching schedules and content to try to address some requested changes, such as adding, then removing, then adding weapons classes. He also established Friday evenings for higher kyu testing preparation for specific individuals who never really made use of that opportunity.

Graham reiterated that more senior students for the second class means a better class, which eventually results in more senior students, and so on. Tom also noted that the second class should not have beginners, mostly because then the teaching must come down to their level to prevent injury and because the techniques may be too advanced for beginners.

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| The end result of this discussion was that there will be no senior students assigned to teach classes. |
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4.0 NEW BUSINESS

New Business contains discussion of topics that were not recorded on the Agenda more than two weeks prior to the AGM. The following four sections contain four topics that were discussed.

4.1 Massage Therapy

The topic of massage therapy was brought up. Northumberland College offers special rates for sports clubs. For groups of six (6) to eight (8) people, two hours would cost about \$80. It was suggested that the information could be sent to the club membership in an email to determine interest.

4.2 Question

Mike Stepanczak brought up a question at this point, which was answered and therefore required no discussion. Unfortunately, the topic of the question and the answer provided were not adequately recorded and cannot be reproduced in these minutes.

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4.3 Marketing

Tom Hackmann noted that he had been approached more than once by The Coast (magazine) about advertising the club, but thought that the cost was too high, and when it had been done in the past it had not resulted in any real membership increase. The members present agreed that advertising The Coast was not a good idea.

Patrick Sanford noted that there had been substantial activity from the website and email address and Tom noted that the phone number had also resulted in several interested persons. It was agreed that the website and phone would be retained as the best points of contact.

4.4 Authorised Purchases

Patrick Sanford noted that the club had authorised the purchase of DVDs to build a library, but that none had been purchased in the past year, and that the amount of potential purchase was to be reviewed annually. He noted that the previous amount authorised had been \$400.

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| The members voted to authorise purchases up to \$400 for DVDs for the club. |
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Patrick also mentioned that Dave Jarrett had requested authorisation at the previous AGM for annual subscriptions to various internet resources for Aikido, and that Dave had been given the action to research these resources and report back to the club Directors. Dave had not done this action, so no internet resource subscriptions had been purchased. Court Milley was given the action to continue the research and the club authorised funds to obtain useful subscriptions that could be accessed by all club members.

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| The members voted to authorised \$50 to \$100 for internet subscription(s). |
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5.0 CLOSE MEETING

Patrick Sanford introduced the newly elected Directors and Officers of the Halifax Aikikai. He then requested that the meeting be closed. Geoff Sanford moved that the meeting be closed, Margo Gesser seconded the motion and all present agreed to close the meeting.

The Halifax Aikikai Association
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Annex A, Financial Statement, 2005-06

The following is a scanned copy of the financial statement for the Halifax Aikikai Association for 2005-2006 (the 2006 fiscal year). It has been signed by two directors, as well as the Treasurer who prepared it.

To view the financial
statement for the
HAA fiscal year
2005-2006, refer to
the signed copy of the
AGM Minutes located
at the Dojo.

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Annex B, Halifax Aikikai Dues Policy

Halifax Aikikai Dues Policy

1.0 Introduction:

The Halifax Aikikai Association (HAA) is a not-for-profit organisation dedicated to the study and practice of Aikido. No member, director or officer of the HAA receives money from the HAA, other than for costs incurred in the performance of HAA activities. The HAA has expenses and therefore charges dues.

2.0 Basic Information:

Rates are set and reviewed at the Annual General Meeting (AGM). Students receive a discount. Dues are based on a per-month cost, but are collected for four-month terms. Terms and rates are:

| | Per Month | Per Term | | January – April |
|---------|-----------|----------|--------|----------------------|
| Regular | \$30 | \$120 | Terms: | May – August |
| Student | \$20 | \$80 | | September – December |

- Existing HAA members are expected to pay for each term at the beginning of that term.
- Existing HAA members are expected to pay their dues in full each term, regardless of the number of classes that the member can or does attend.
- Dues are payable to “Halifax Aikikai”, and are collected by the Treasurer or some person designated by the Treasurer to act on his/her behalf.

3.0 New Students:

Persons starting Aikido are permitted to take one class for free to determine if they wish to try Aikido. After trying a class, newcomers will be requested to pay for their first month (as opposed to the whole term) to allow a better determination if they wish to pursue Aikido. The “first month” is defined as the calendar month or part thereof, greater than one week; a time period of less than one week can be provided to a newcomer for free, as long as the newcomer is willing to pay the dues for the following month. After completing their first paid month, newcomers are requested to pay for the remainder of the term, and the CAF fee (see section 4.0, below).

4.0 CAF and NSAF Dues:

The HAA is a member of the Canadian Aikido Federation (CAF) and the Nova Scotia Aikido Federation (NSAF). Both federations have annual membership fees for each student at each member dojo. HAA pays these annual fees on behalf of all regular members, in October of each year. In order to be covered by the national insurance policy, students must be members of the CAF. New students who stay past the first month are requested to pay the \$15 CAF membership fee when they pay for the rest of the term. NSAF fees are only paid annually, by the HAA on behalf of students.

5.0 Suspension of Dues:

If a member knows that they will be completely unavailable for a **whole month** or **number of whole months**, their dues can be suspended by the club Treasurer, provided that:

- a. the member notifies the Treasurer **in advance** of the absence (it is not sufficient to ‘disappear’ then return and expect/request suspension of dues to be retro-active).
- b. the member’s dues are currently in good standing (suspension of dues will not be permitted until any outstanding dues are brought up-to-date).

Exceptional cases can be assessed on a person-by-person basis, by a minimum of the Treasurer and Chairman, but may also include other club directors/officers. These instances are very rare.

6.0 Consequences of Non-Payment:

Existing members whose dues become in arrears for one term will be given a written or verbal warning from the Officers, Directors and/or instructors of the HAA.

Existing members whose dues become in arrears for more than term will be asked not to practice until all dues are brought up-to-date.

7.0 Drop-In Fee:

There is no drop-in fee structure. Visitors from other dojos are welcome to practice for free. If a visitor is going to stay for an extended period of time, that person is expected to pay normal club fees for the duration of their stay.

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Annex C, Halifax Aikikai Survey Results Summary

**Halifax Aikikai
2005 Survey Results Summary**

12 respondents – not a great data set, but not bad for 35 – 40 potential respondents.

1. Sunday Class:

2/3 in favour, most who noted potential increase in fees didn't seem to mind.

2. Grading

split 50-50 on subject of scheduled gradings.

perceived advantage was usually motivation

perceived disadvantage was usually truer test occur with little or no notice

3. Feedback

almost 50-50 (5 true, 7 false) for current feedback being adequate

Most comments were provided by people who replied 'false'

Most 'false' comments wanted 'more' feedback, more specific while practicing and more general (overall progress) off the mat.

Feedback, Other – too varied to summarize

4. Leave Early

2/3 leave early – reasons: too tired, 8pm too late; less frequent: only 1 hour in evening.

2/3 would stay for entire 1.5 hr class

(Last question must have confused people, because it was poorly positioned)

(Almost all did not want a single class.)

5. Female Participation

1 person thought we encouraged or discouraged female participation (respondent not a female)

Most wanted to see more females practice regularly and stay with the club.

Some wanted less physical practice and reinforcement of idea that Aikido is not about strength.

One point in particular. On respondent stated that he "had heard" that a woman had volunteered for something at the last AGM but was turned-down.

I don't recall such an event; does anyone else recall such an event?

(I questioned some others afterwards, but no-one asked remembered such an event.)

6.a. Desired benefits

Balance (physical, and between body/spirit)

physical activity with a spiritual side

6.b. goals met? 3/4 yes

6.b.i. yes, what helps? physical training & instructors' guidance

6.b.ii. no, what better? more feedback, improvisational training, spiritual development

6.c. no summary, only two responses

7. Other info/feedback

Aside from being mentioned specifically in this catch-all, the following reflect ideas mentioned in the feedback in other areas:

Mostly good club,

More feedback

More multiple attackers training

Some sort of training syllabus or regular schedule