



Announcement

The New Tomiki Aikido Dan Grade Syllabus: A Harmonisation of Two Transmissions

For a number of years two different Dan Grade, covering the practise of Kenji Tomiki's aikido, have been operating concurrently within the BAA. While both syllabuses represented the Tomiki legacy, they each had a different emphasis and historical route of transmission.

The mainstream BAA syllabus has been formed over the 45 years of the Association's existence from the teachings of Japanese sensei such as Senta Yamada, Riki Kogure, Inoue and of course Kenji Tomiki and his long term assistant and supporter Hideo Ohba. This inheritance has been maintained and developed over the years by our own senior British instructors, who have continued to preserve and teach the Koryu Kata, developed by Ohba Shihan in the 1960s and 70s. These kata, as their name koryu (traditional) implies, seek to maintain the link between the sport based innovations of Tomiki's aikido and the aikido originally taught to both Tomiki and Ohba Shihans by its founder Morihei Ueshiba.

The second tradition represented within the BAA has been that of the Shodokan, a development springing from the work of Fumiaki Shishida and Tetsuro Nariyama with the acknowledgement of Kenji Tomiki towards the very end of his life. This syllabus has placed more emphasis of the development of skills for the practise of randori and the utilisation of the Randori no Kata for purposes of self-defence.

Within the BAA, as members will know, these traditions were represented organisationally in separate division of the BAA. However it was always intended that these two traditions would be unified organisationally and the separate syllabuses harmonised into one.

The decision to make that next step and harmonise the two syllabuses was taken at the 2008 AGM. Since then, on the instructions of the EC, senior teachers of the BAA have been meeting to develop a syllabus that will at the same time keep the BAA abreast of the most recent developments from Japan, yet still maintain the important link with the legacy of Hideo Ohba by continuing to develop and practise the Koryu Kata.

Accordingly, the technical development group convened by the Vice Chairman presented the new syllabus to the EC on the 14 June 2009, where it was accepted and adopted for Dan Grading for all members practising the aikido of Kenji Tomiki.

The new syllabus recognises that members from both transmission routes will have to take on new learning and consequently has cascaded down elements of both Koryu Kata and the Goshin Ho to early stages for examination. The intention has been to make this learning more manageable and to bring it forward. Thus it may be seen that at each equivalent grade it can be recognised that a BAA Dan Grade has a more comprehensive knowledge of the complete Kenji Tomiki and Hideo Ohba legacy, than in other examination systems.

The introduction of the new syllabus on 1st July 2010, will be accompanied by a comprehensive programme of courses at each of the Summer Schools and BAA sponsored day courses in the regions to develop and support members technical understanding and development. It the EC's intention that this new syllabus will help to ensure that the BAA is recognised as a leading player, in partnership with our friends in Japan and Europe, in transmitting the best of all the elements of Tomiki Aikido to the world.