

Woolgoolga's Karate Event a Great Success!

North Coast Goju Kai Karate-do has hosted arguably the most skilled and charismatic Karate Master in the world today. Our Number One Master (Saiko Shihan) Goshi Yamaguchi, son of the famous Gogen "The Cat" Yamaguchi Hanshi has this year brought his own son Gohei Yamaguchi Shihan to Woolgoolga as part of a 3 stage Australian Tour. Saiko Shihan has twice visited the North Coast of NSW in the past, the 2006 seminar was at Yamba and in 2009 he taught in Grafton. We have been fortunate to attract his presence 3 times within 10 years, as he is highly sought after and constantly travels the world teaching in over 75 countries. This was Gohei Shihan's first visit to Australia, he was quite taken by the friendly locals and expressed his wishes to return soon.

This seminar took part over 3 days in the local Dojo at Woolgoolga Public School. Principal Paul Clark of the school gave an inspiring welcome speech which was a fitting introduction to a very successful seminar. Australian students revelled in the awesome teachings of 74 year old Shihan Goshi Yamaguchi. It is incredible to comprehend Master Yamaguchi, being one of the fastest and most powerful people on the floor, at age 74! Having begun his training at 8 years old, his vast knowledge and flawless karate form is a pleasure to witness.

Total attendance in Woolgoolga was over 150 members of International Karate-do Goju Kai Association (IKGA) mostly from NSW and Queensland. The other two seminars were held in Albury/Wadonga which was hosted by Steve Colangelo 7th Dan Renshi Shihan and the Victoria Branch, prior to visiting us. Then over to Perth to be hosted by Brian Mackie 8th Dan Kyoshi Shihan, Director and Chief Instructor of Australia and Oceania, and his West Australian Branch.

Other Goju Kai Masters in attendance were Paul Starling 8th Dan Kyoshi Shihan, Vice President of IKGA, from Sydney. Also Tom Curtis 6th Dan Renshi Shihan, Queensland Branch Chief and Lindsay Johnson 5th Dan Renshi Shihan, New Zealand Branch Director. The event was hosted by Woolgoolga Instructor Rick Burton who was awarded his Master's degree in February this year. Rick is now a 5th Dan Renshi Shihan, he is also NSW Branch Chief and President of North Coast Goju Kai Karate-do (NCGK).

The seminar was well attended with the hall being filled to capacity each evening. Monday night saw as many junior members (under 16 years) as seniors present, with numbers around eighty on the floor. All pushed past their limits to achieve higher levels of ability and understanding in technique, speed and mobility. On Tuesday morning a fortunate two dozen senior members enjoyed a 7.00 till 9.00 am training session on Mullaway Beach. This training had a focus on breathing techniques and their relation to exercise, kata or patterns, and partner work. The timing and breathing is similar to Tai Chi with a distinct karate application. A perfect way to greet the early morning sunrise, through a textured horizon of clouds, misty rain and feathering waves.

Tuesday and Wednesday evening training became increasingly intense. Tuesday being more orientated towards Form and Kata, Wednesday's theme was sparring or kumite. During these 3 hour sessions the Master gave instruction on many areas of Goju Kai Karate, culminating in high voltage sparring drills Wednesday night, which left everyone exhausted and invigorated.

The Master's son amazed onlookers with his speed, power and crisp technique. The two Japanese exponents of this traditional Martial Art complimented each other throughout the Australian Seminar tour. The close bond between this father and son team is incredible to witness and the intensity of their Karate is awe inspiring. Yet another visit by the World-renowned IKGA Chief Instructor has inspired all of the Australian Instructors and students for the next few years! They have renewed enthusiasm, new training themes and drills to implement, along with eager anticipation of the next visit to our shores.

Our Saiko Shihan (Number One Master) Goshi Yamaguchi strongly advocates Peace, Harmony and Cooperation between all people in the World. Our teaching develops Honour, Respect, Loyalty, Self-Discipline, Control, Empathy and Understanding. We are a family friendly organisation, not many activities encourage parents to participate alongside their children? Amongst the few, we certainly do!

Sustained Karate training will maximise a person's potential and improve so many areas in their life! Anyone interested in learning Karate for self-improvement and self-defence is welcome in our clubs. Now is the time to start. Please visit NCGK.com.au for further information on training venues on the North Coast of NSW. Let your personal journey begin today!