



On April 11th and 12th, Gilles TACHE and Jean-Claude HAMEL came back to the Mulatière, for our greatest pleasure, to supervise their annual internship as they have been doing since 2014. This time, the organization had been a bit modified, since in the absence of Marie and Jacky, who were held up in western France on a construction site in Jacky, our friends from Nice, Cannes and Pierrefeu had to organize themselves without the truck and therefore got into two private cars. And they all arrived on Friday evening, at the same time as René who was coming from Basel, just in time to join us at the small party organized by our friend (and practitioner) Thierry, aka "the Coyote" to celebrate his retirement! So, despite the good resolutions everyone had made (no kidding!), we got home later than expected and the night was short!

But despite this, on Saturday morning, we were about fifteen people at the dojo for the Kenjutsu class offered by Jean-Claude at 6:30 am! Thierry and Seb had left Grenoble well before the dawn to join us, and there was also Jean-Marie, Olivier, Catherine, Sophie and Flavien, who arrived respectively from Belgium, Redon, Gif sur Yvette, Tours and Bourg-en-Bresse. Also Gilles, from the Iaido section of the Mulatière, and a few brave ones from our section, of course ! After a gentle warm-up, Jean-Claude made us work on the theme that had been chosen for the Gasshuku (Aka : Embu). And the pressure didn't take long to rise and drive away the last remnants of sleep!

The 8 a.m. chocolate madeleine café was enhanced by the croissants brought by Thierry (no. 2, aka "Pikachu"), who had promised them to us the day before to make up for his absence from the first class! And so we started again at 9:00, well reassured by this first break and joined by the rest of the team: Eric, Savinien and Anastasia, who were coming from Grenoble, Carlos from Saint-Etienne, and still the same Lyonnais reluctant to work too early in the morning!

We started as usual with an explanation of the theme of the Gasshuku



This year I had proposed "EMBU", and if Marie and Jacky were not there, we still had their calligraphy that had arrived by mail a few days earlier!

So I was able to explain in a few words what led me to choose this theme, then we started working...

.... with a whole series of exercises designed by Gilles and Jean-Claude to better make us feel the sensation of "Playing War". First of all with the Kihon Tandoku, and since there were exams planned later, the future 5iem were in first line to feel the pressure a little better!

Then with the Tokushu Waza, Sugatsu, and Shamen to feel the notion of leaving (really!) at the last moment, when the attack can no longer be modified, and Uchi-otoshi, beginning with a more realistic work with a shorter distance, before returning to the Kata,

And finally with various exercises extracted from Kata to discover where this notion could be found and worked on, with of course adaptations according to the level of the practitioners. And if we all had some cold sweats, no Jodoka was mistreated during this morning!



The noon picnic was an opportunity to take a breath, especially since we were able to enjoy the sun and even take a nap for those who are better organized.!



We got back to work at 2:30 p.m. and started by the Sôtai no Te developed by Gilles, before moving on to the study of Omote. Embu oblige, each Kata was first demonstrated by volunteers!



Then at the end of the afternoon, while the exam candidates were reviewing their Kata, we had a moment to work on Ran-Aï, which allowed us to release some tension after Embu's work!

And then at 5:30 p.m., the exam session began. After having done the Tandoku with the three candidates for 5th Kyu (Thierry "the Coyote", Thierry "Pikachu" and Alex), Cécile and Chucho presented the Kihon Sotai and the Kata they had been asked for 1st Kyu.

Congratulations to all five for their success (with a special mention to Alex and Cécile!) and thank you once again to Jean-Claude and Gilles for accepting this additional responsibility as they do every year.



After these moments full of emotion, most of the practitioners gathered as usual at Yves and Nathalie's place for a meal together. Eliane had prepared lamb shanks with garlic, and Yves and Nathalie had prepared cardoon gratins (cardoons from the garden, peeled during a workshop together a few weeks before). The shanks were of good size and the appetite of the eaters was put to a severe test. But it was really good and everyone faced their fate with courage and managed to finish their plates!

And the next day, we began at 9:00 for the final session. After working together on the first three Kihon Tandoku, we were divided into two groups: the practitioners below Shodan devoted the morning to Kihon Sôtai, and the others worked on Kage. At the end of the morning, the members of Seiryukai had some time for Kusarigama, while the others kept working on Kage or Samidare.



At noon, after a last picnic together (the appetite was not really there, it seems that the agape of the previous day had left traces!), everyone went away on their own. Since some people still had a long way to go, the meal didn't last very long.

While waiting for next year for a new edition, I end as usual by thanking all those who made this Gasshuku possible, our teachers (especially!), the practitioners who sometimes came from far away (and it was a real joy to have the opportunity to work with them !), and also, of course, all the SMR Jodo Lyon practitioners who were involved before and during the Gasshuku.