

Journey to Okinawa from 16th until 28th July 2008

by Pierre Lorenz

For the first time the Tesshinkan section of the Kobudô Kwai Germany planned and organized a training journey to Okinawa on its own.



In the early morning of Monday, 16th July 2008, we all met highly motivated at the airport of Frankfurt. The entire group consisted of ten kobudôka:

Frank Pelny, Sebastian Edelmann, Stefanie Grzeja, Pierre Lorenz, Birthe Babies, Matthias Junkherr, Andreas Kutschke, Doreen Schilling, Victor Vollmer and Andrea Bernhardt.

► Wednesday & Thursday (16th and 17th July 2008)

At 11.20 a.m. the Boing 747-800 of China Airlines took off to Okinawa, and after a short break in Taipeh (Taiwan) we landed in Naha, Okinawa, at 10 o'clock (local time) on Thursday, where we were welcomed by Tamayose-Sensei and Uehara-Sensei.

After having checked in a reasonable hotel in Oyakebaru, we visited and stripped the Okinawan address number one for martial arts products "Shureido".



Thereafter we were invited to a typically Japanese meal by Tamayose-Sensei.

Whilst Frank Pelny and Sebastian Edelmann held a council with Tamayose-Sensei, the individuals of the group used the day's remaining time to have their first training lesson in the backyard of the hotel.



The schedule said, that we had been free to do whatever we had wanted to on Friday. Thus Friday began the same way the Thursday had ended with – a training lesson in the backyard.

We spent the following time with being guided through the centre of Naha-City (Matsuyama Park, Fukushu-En Park, Naminoue Beach, Kokusei-Dori) by honbu-kai-Trainier Frank Pelny.

We enjoyed the end of the day by another training on our own on the roof terrace of the hotel the manager kindly put to our disposal.

► **Saturday (19th July 2008)**

After a short training unit, we explored Naha's centre anew (Budokan, Funakoshi-Memorial, Kokusei-Dori).



In the evening Tamayose-Sensei invited us to a welcoming party. The celebration took place at his recently bought estate, which shall become the ground of his new dōjō. But there were not only us, but also a Canadian group of 29 budōka led by Frank Clayton. The welcoming party was used to interchange experiences intensively and actively.

The party offered some highlights, too, like a traditional Okinawan tea ceremony (buku-buku), traditional dances (odori) and demonstrations by Tamayose-Sensei (êku), Frank Pelny (bô), Sebastian Edelman and Tyrell Wilkins (both sai).

► **Sunday & Monday (20th and 21st July 2008)**



On Sunday and Monday we trained with the Canadians under the guidance of Tamayose-Sensei very motivated from 10 until 12 a.m. and from 1 until 3 p.m.

The joint training was finished with further highlights: the shō-dan-examination of Lisa Wilkins and the ni-dan-examination of Jessica Chen. Our hon-bu-kai-trainer was honoured by functioning as a co-examiner.

In the evening Tamayose-Sensei invited the German team to his estate anew. While some of the participants had dinner after having done some cleaning work, Frank Pelny and Sebastian Edelman were able to have a some-hours-lasting conversation made possible by a translator with Tamayose-Sensei.

► **Tuesday (22nd July 2008)**



On Tuesday we travelled with a hired bus to Ocean Expo Par on Motobu. In order to end that day we enjoyed another training unit on the roof of the hotel.

► **Wednesday & Thursday (23rd and 24th July 2008)**



The mornings of both Wednesday and Thursday were used to explore and discover this island further. (Wednesday: Sueyoshi Park, International Cemetery, Matsumora Memorial; Thursday: Shuri-Jô, Enkaku-Ji, Kinjô-Chô no ishidadami, theme park “Okinawa World”. The afternoons of both days remained reserved for training with Tamayose-Sensei (5 until 7.30 p.m.)

► **Friday (25th July 2008)**

We started with another roof-training on Friday. Thereafter we had the chance, made possible by Tamayose-Sensei, to visit the very interesting museum of Karate run by Tesuhiro Hokama (10th degree black belt, Nishihara Town).



After having watched and admired the beauty of the ocean ground on a boat with glass floor, one of these famous beach trainings followed. Even the approaching typhoon was not able to demoralize us.

Thereafter we were invited spontaneously by Tamayose-Sensei to have dinner with him in his home-dôjô.

► **Saturday (26th July 2008)**



Saturday was our big day: At 10 o'clock the dan-examinations started. Watched by the vigilant eyes of Tamayose-Sensei, Uehara Kensyu, Uehara Ryusei and Frank Pelny everyone could pass: Stefanie Grzeja and Pierre Lorenz were awarded with 1st dan-degree, Mathias Junkherr and Andrea Bernhardt with 2nd dan-degree and Sebastian with 3rd dan-degree.

After having passed the examinations successfully we could watch some Gojû-ryû demonstration during the Gojû-ryû Budô Sai on the occasion of the 120th birthday of Gojû-ryû-founder Miyagi Chojun.

In the evening we were invited to have dinner in a traditional restaurant by Tamayose-Sensei.

► **Sunday & Monday (27th and 28th July 2008)**



On Sunday our entire equipment was put into the suitcases again. Some of us used the remaining time to have last training on Okinawa this year.

Only Frank and Sebastian were challenged a last time, surrounded by some 9th and 10th degree black belts. They participated in seminar for jury members held by Okinawa Ken Kobudō Renmei.

On the afternoon we returned to the airport. After a short break in Taipeh (Taiwan) we finally returned home on Monday morning.

Being strained, but happy about that well-organized Japan-journey everyone of us left Frankfurt.