

## The record of my lai at Kyoto Taikai

I was healthy and I could participate in the 96th Kyoto Taikai on 3 May in 2000.

I could do enbu just as I wanted to.

I am thankful to this happiness and it is sinking deeply into my mind.

I could do enbu with a calm, peaceful mind.

This was just like last year.

I started to learn Oe sensei's iaido in 1957 (Ihwa 32. summer). However, I could do like this for the first time last year.

I was 85 years old last year. I could do just as I wanted to for the first time then.

I could do with Mushin this year, too.

Yamaoka Tesshu sensei attained higher perception when he was 50 years old. It took many years for me to become like him. I feel ashamed that it took me so many years. The environment and our mental states are very different from ones in his age, and we lack many things now. I really feel ashamed. I did not expect that my enbu would be like this. I walked to the place, stated to enbu, as usual. I started to do Nuki, moved, and finished as usual. After I finished all, I felt I could do enbu with Mushin. That was an unexpected, very natural enbu. That was not produced by my intention, and not by any other person's intention. I can say; this is the result of my long hard practice.

The state of my mind this year was a little bit different from the one last year.

I had a kind of intention this year.

The intention:

- I wanted to do enbu just like last year. I did enbu with my whole heart. I really wanted to do just like last year. I went to the place with this strong wish, and then I noticed several photographers there.
- The photographers were trying to take my pictures. I decided to do enbu for them to take pictures easily.
- I made the main points clear and did enbu calmly for the photographers.

I had such intention. I was a little different from last year.

I did five waza Mae. (Koryu)

- Sheiza Ippon Me Mae
- Roppon Me Uke Nagashi (Oe sensei – In the early days.)
- Tate Hiza Shihon Me Uki Gumo
- Oku Iai Roppon Me Tana Shita
- Nuki Uchi

Yamamoto Takuji sensei guided us:

Choose the difficult waza Mae at the Taikai.

I followed his guidance. Although I am very old, I wanted to challenge hardships and accomplish them.

When we become very old, we tend to choose easier waza Mae. However, I dared to challenge difficult ones. Until when can I keep challenging?

I regard this idea as Yamamoto sensei's will.

I went back to the waiting soon after. I finished all. Then I was told by a young man there. He said: "I've understood very well how to move."

I was very happy to hear that and I felt clearly. If we do enbu calmly (composedly), earnestly, and do the main points clearly, it will be helpful to the young people in doing Iai.

I felt relieved and I was satisfied with my enbu. I said to myself: "I should do like this from now on." I noticed I had a kind of satisfaction last year and this year and that satisfaction remained in my mind. I got satisfaction, because I did enbu as I wanted to. The young man also got satisfaction because he could understand well how to move.

I want to do enbu that gives me satisfaction and gives the spectators satisfaction, too.

This was a great experience I got at Kyoto Taikai. I got this satisfaction at the age of 85.

Although I spent many years on doing Iai, I got this satisfaction at last. My long, hard practice is very meaningful now.

This satisfaction is the result of my lifelong practice. I am really thankful to this.

Iwata Norikazu (87 years old) 6th May 2000

I think it is a great honor to translate Iwata sensei's writing, although my English is not good enough. I did my best to convey what Iwata sensei got at Kyoto Taikai. I was deeply moved to read his writing.

Yuriko Terao