

TATSUMAKI DOJO, SLOUGH

On 15 July 2008, the members of Stratford Phoenix embarked on their first visit to an aikido club outside of the YAUK when we went to Tatsumaki Aikido in Slough, the home of Will Timms Sensei and Slough Centre Aikido Club.

Ric & Jan, Russ, Paul, Andy, Vee, and Peter all made the trip - despite various aches and pains – but these soon disappeared when we were rewarded with an open welcome from everyone there. While there were a few new faces on the mat, we knew most of the rest by sight if not by name from the Lowestoft and Institute of Aikido courses, and so the evening was spent reacquainting ourselves with one another

Little did we know until our arrival, that we would be honoured by Mr.Foster himself being there too, but just to watch on this occasion.

Will Sensei opened proceedings with tai-no henko as usual followed by techniques showing close contact and positioning between partners, and soon the lesson took on a familiar aspect with people being flung around with much enthusiasm.

Will handed over to Ric Sensei, saying *“I’ll do the first half of the class and you can do the last two-thirds...”*, work that out if you can! Ric showed some basic immobilisations and movements with a slant on specific manipulation of arms which disturbed balance, again resulting in some flowing techniques, ending with a goshinage. At times there were a few perplexed faces, especially from the higher grades, which is always good to see, but all in all, the spirit and the interaction between the clubs with some 30 people there on the evening brought the place alive. The class went all too quickly.

To cap it all, a fantastic buffet and drinks had been prepared for us after training in their meeting room upstairs at the dojo, where we socialised for some time before hitting the road home. My extended thanks to all at Slough who made our visit so special – we must do it again!

Finally, my thanks to Will and Ken for their perseverance and never-ending humour in the face of all adversity that has been set before them, on and off the mat. While we practise with a sincere discipline and respect for others seldom found elsewhere, they take time to enjoy the integration that this brings so that friendships continue long after the night is over. That is what I like so much about you guys!

Ric Costigan Sensei – Stratford Phoenix Aikido

More information can be found at www.tatsumakidojo.co.uk