

Martial Arts Styles Studied in Japan

While in Japan, Mr. Heisner studied a number of martial arts systems. This chapter will overview the different styles in which Mr. Heisner trained.

Studying with Master Nara



Training in Hokkaido Japan - Who's Ready for the Next Snow Storm?

The first martial art that Mr. Heisner studied was Shotokan Karate. He obtained a Shodan (First Degree Black Belt) rank in Shotokan. Mr. Heisner studied Shotokan under the instruction of Master Nara Tominoshi.

Master Nara was an "old school" Japanese instructor. Master Nara was a Japanese World War II veteran who was trained for kamikaze missions. The war ended before he was scheduled to carry out his mission.

Master Nara was very strong on the code of "bushido" (the honor code of the warrior). He was very nationalistic. He

was very intense in his training. Needless to say, Master Nara did not train very many Americans.

It was crystal clear from the look in Master Nara's eyes that you were under his magnifying glass, under his scrutiny, in his country and training in his dojo. It was evident that Master Nara expected and received respect. You had better walk uprightly in his dojo! He conducted a very strict old-line style of training.

In the Japanese culture, they take their martial arts training very seriously. There was no light-hearted "goofing off" involved in their training. Once Master Nara got to know Mr. Heisner, he seemed to become more cordial. Mr. Heisner seems to recall one occasion in which Master Nara almost smiled at him.

Master Nara took Mr. Heisner under his wing. Mr. Heisner was honored to have Master Nara teach him the Aiki-Jitsu style. This training has become a strong contributor to our Bushido Kai system. Master Nara trained directly under the founder of the Aiki-Jitsu system. He was a contemporary of the founder of Aikido, O Sensei, Morihei Ueshiba. Mr. Heisner earned and was awarded instructor certification in the art of Aiki-Jitsu.

Finally, while training with Master Nara, Mr. Heisner was also instructed in the art of Bo-Jitsu. This fighting art involved the use of a Bo staff (generally a five or six foot long hard wood pole). Mr. Heisner trained diligently with the Bo and was certified as an instructor.

In summary of Mr. Heisner's training with Master Nara, he received Shodan (First Degree Black Belt) recognition in two styles and extensive training in a third. Shodan rank certifications were obtained in Shotokan Karate and Aiki-

Jitsu, while a high level of proficiency with the Bo staff was also established.

Studying with Mr. Hisao Hotta



Mr. Hisao Hotta - Itosu Ryu

While stationed in Hokkaido, Mr. Heisner also trained in Itosu Ryu under Mr. Hisao Hotta. Itosu Ryu is an Okinawan martial art. Okinawa is off from the Japanese mainland.

Mr. Hotta was an active duty Japanese military sergeant.

Similar to Master Nara, training with Mr. Hotta required extreme discipline and a great deal of effort. Mr. Heisner enjoyed the opportunity to work out with the Japanese military on numerous occasions while training under Sensei Hotta.

Mr. Heisner trained under Mr. Hotta and received his Nidan rank (Second Degree Black Belt) in Itosu Ryu, before returning to America.

Studying with Mas Oyama

On one occasion Mr. Heisner served on a mission to deliver armaments to camp Zama in Tokyo. While at camp Zama, Mr. Heisner had the opportunity to meet and train with other martial artists.