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Open letter to the Academy - National Seminar 2007

Dear Members,

At the end of the National Seminar at Birrigai this year I received a tremendous amount of positive feedback from both students and instructors, saying they all had a great weekend and thanked me for organising such a great event.

Firstly I wish to acknowledge and thank everyone for their comments. I also personally enjoyed the event and I sensed a great deal of camaraderie from everyone there.

But it was much more than a one-man show. What made this event memorable was the fantastic team spirit that everyone brought with them to the seminar. So really, all the congratulations I received must be shared with everyone because it was a team effort.

I tried to encapsulate the contributions that individuals had made during the closing ceremony, but it's difficult to mention everyone, particularly when there were many who contributed to the overall organisation by their willingness to do tasks even without me asking.

I wish to extend my gratitude and appreciation to (in no particular order)

- The Canberra committee for setting the events they wanted to see in the program.
- Graham Darby for organising the band, ringing and chasing people, running the games session, organising the movie camera, projector and boom box, general mover and shaker and overall Mr Nice Guy!
- David Rowley for contacting several instructors to forward information about the seminar.
- To the CIs and members of Sunshine Coast, Hughes and Evatt branches who between them provided about 75% of the seminar attendees.
- The presenters (who I might add had very little input from me on the content they presented):
 - Dave Burgemeister for a creating and presenting a great Boxing and Judo session.
 - John Bear and his team, David, Patricia and Rishni for a great Jo taking session.
 - Peter Wilson for the loan of the San Ryu Do sports weapons equipment.
 - Judges, Line judges, timekeepers, scorers etc for the San Ryu Do session.
 - David Rowley for the technique review and for running the Two Man Attack and Basic Steps competitions.
 - Sam Godwin and Kris Arnold for the morning stretch session.
 - Mark Tomasich for showing us how grappling should really be done.
 - The Canberra Shodan Trainees for all their assistance in helping with the Two Man Attack and being Burgy's crash test bodies!

- Peter and Jon and others from Sunshine Coast for helping with the Friday BBQ.
- Those that helped with drinks and ice tubs (sorry I can't remember who you were!)
- All the people who helped with loading/unloading and handling the mats.
- Desley Speck for checking everyone into the site and for coordinating the meal clean-up crews.
- All the people on the meal clean-up teams and to the Canberra Shodan Trainees for serving meals on the Saturday night.
- Alan Maconachie for running the gift shop and other administrative tasks in the background.
- To all the girls who dragged the boys off the sidelines for a dance on Saturday night.
- To Everyone for leaving their rooms in a tidy state before the cleaner arrived on Sunday.
- David Rowley and Dave Tuckfield for the loan and transportation of their mats.
- To all the people who helped with moving furniture about.
- To Carol Gainly and the team at Birrigai for providing and maintaining a great venue.
- To the Birrigai Kitchen staff for all the great meals – Yumm!
- To anybody else who I missed or if you did something that I didn't notice, my sincere thanks!!
- And finally to all the attendees who without you bringing your enthusiasm and smiles along in your single minded pursuit to have a good time on the weekend – A BIG THANK YOU!!!

The National Seminar for 2008 will again be held in the Canberra area, hosted by Graham Darby and his team from Evatt Branch. Please spread the word about how much fun you had on this Seminar so we can gear up to an even bigger event next year.

Soke Morton has provided us with the inspiration and the vehicle of our Martial Arts practice. It is now up to us all to drive and maintain it. No one person can do this. It requires a dedicated team of teachers and administrators and even more enthusiastic students to keep the vehicle mobile and on track. It is a team effort and this last Seminar demonstrated to me that we still have what it takes to practice a good Martial Art and also to have a great time in the process.

See you all at the next year!

Sincere regards



Shihan Edward Scharrer, Nanadan
 Chief Instructor St Edmunds
 National Chief Instructor
 Deputy Principal PMAJJK Inc.