



# *Aiwakai Karate do*

## **Aiwakai Kumite Squad Training**

1<sup>st</sup> November 2009, Alfreton Leisure Centre

This was the very first **Aiwakai Kumite Squad Training** session which was led by Aiwakai Kumite Coach, Sensei Keith Walker. It ran alongside the Aiwakai Way to Excellence program at Alfreton Leisure Centre and was a huge success!

**18 students took part in the Kumite training and ranged from 10 year old kyu grades up to experienced club instructors and competition veterans.**

Sensei Keith Walker led a combined warm up for the Squad members and the WTE students which in true 'Keith Walker' style, ended up being a thorough workout in itself. After the bow, the two groups were separated out and Sakagami and Peter May sensei put the Dan Grade candidates through their paces whilst the Kumite squad were drilled in basic fighting techniques and combinations to start with.

After the basics, we moved onto the main topic of the course – Distance & Timing. Sensei explained that you can have the best techniques in the world, and be really mobile and athletic, but it all means nothing without great timing and an understanding of distancing between yourself and your opponent. This theme ran through the rest of the session, with Sensei showing us some great training drills that we can take back to our clubs to work on.

The toughest drill for me was one of the simplest, one person lay on the floor with their legs wide and the other had to stay mobile and jump over their legs continuously for 1.5 minutes. It sounds simple, but after 30 seconds your legs become lead weights and you start to realise how unfit you actually are. Keith Walker Sensei led by example with this by completing the full 3 minutes of this exercise – all without breaking a sweat!

The 2 ½ hour training session quickly ran into 3 hours and beyond as everyone fed off the high energy levels and great coaching. We moved onto more timing drills and we finished off with some 'first point wins' fight offs.

All in all, it was a great training course and I'm certainly looking forward to the next one! Keep your eyes on the Aiwakai website and the newsletter for the next Squad date and venue.