

BRITAIN'S NO.1 MARTIAL ARTS MAGAZINE

MARTIAL ARTS ILLUSTRATED

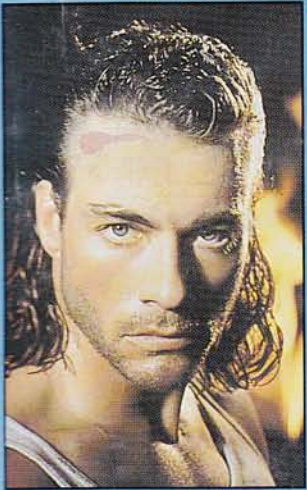


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Van
Damme
A Traditionalist?

Getting To Grips
With The

CARDIO BOOM

continued...



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This is part two of an article aimed at the instructor who wishes to introduce to his/her classes martial arts to music such as an aerobic style kickboxing programme. Previously we covered a number of points related to safety as well as preparation before you start a class. This article will encompass how to structure a class, examples of stations that could be used and how to mark a student's progression.

Music provides a fantastic medium for an exciting and high energy class. It makes people want to move and, consequently, motivating your students is easy and they find themselves working hard as well as experiencing a high level of enjoyment.

Structuring The Class And Class Planning

Many have been the times that great class plans have had to be changed because so many people turned up. You need to adopt a level of flexibility in order to ensure you take a safe, first class training session every time.

There are several ways to structure a class and in general it is not necessary to carry out the whole class to the exact rhythm of the

music. It will actually be dependent upon the size of the class you have, the ability or skill level of the students you are teaching, the area you are working in and the equipment you have available. On occasions, you may wish to take a class where the entire class is taken to the beat of the music, or you may decide that in the main part you want to do bag work, pad work or circuits. Either way, it is essential that you structure the class with an appropriate warm-up followed by the main body of the class and close with a sufficient cool-down.

Below are some examples of how you can structure a class. At Frank Murphy's Black Belt Schools we run beginners classes for forty-five minutes and intermediate/advanced classes for fifty minutes. The times next to each section are just a guideline.

Example 1:

- 1) Warm-up (10 - 15 minutes).
- 2) Main body of the class: kick/punches/footwork/blocks carried out in shadow form to the rhythm of the music (20 - 30 minutes).
- 3) cool down (10 - 15 minutes).

Example 2:

- 1) Warm-up (10 - 15 minutes).
- 2) Main body of the class:

Debbie Bardoe is a cardio kickboxing instructor at Frank Murphy's Black Belt School. Here she illustrates dynamic kicking during the main body of the class after a thorough warm-up.

By
**Catarina
Murphy Part 2**

Getting To Grips With The
Cardio Boom

COVER STORY

kick/punches/footwork/blocks carried out in shadow form to the rhythm of the music (10 minutes) followed by some partner work using air-shields, focus pads or individual work using equipment such as skipping ropes, kick bags, wave-masters and so on (10 minutes).

Conclude this section with an additional bout of kick/punches/footwork/blocks carried out in shadow form to the rhythm of the music (5 - 10 minutes).

3) Cool-down (10 - 15 minutes).

Example 3:

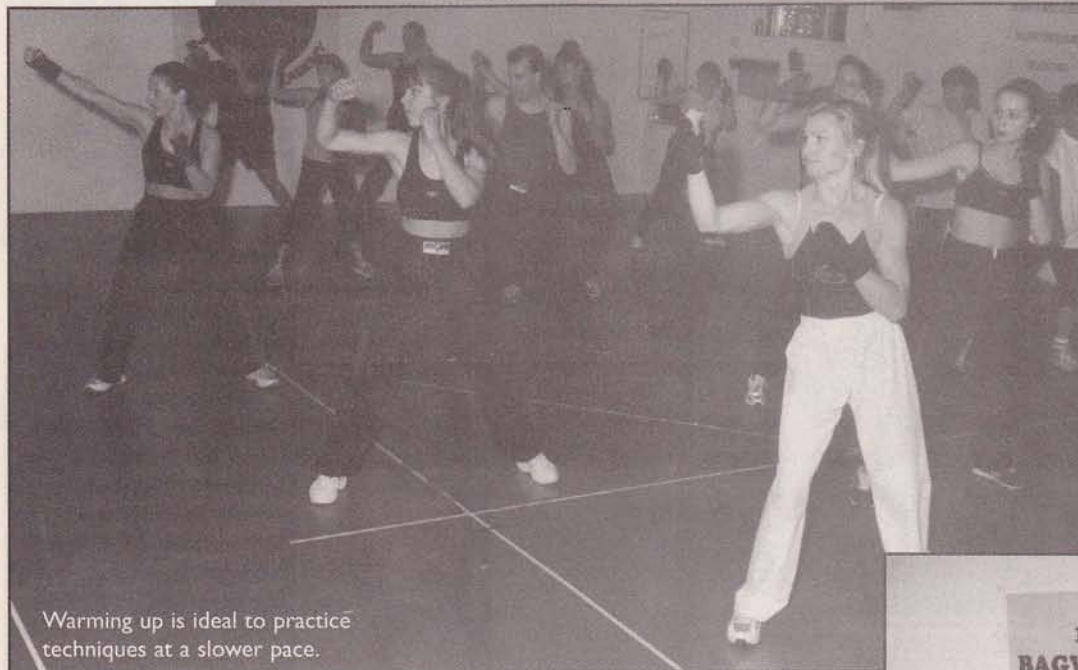
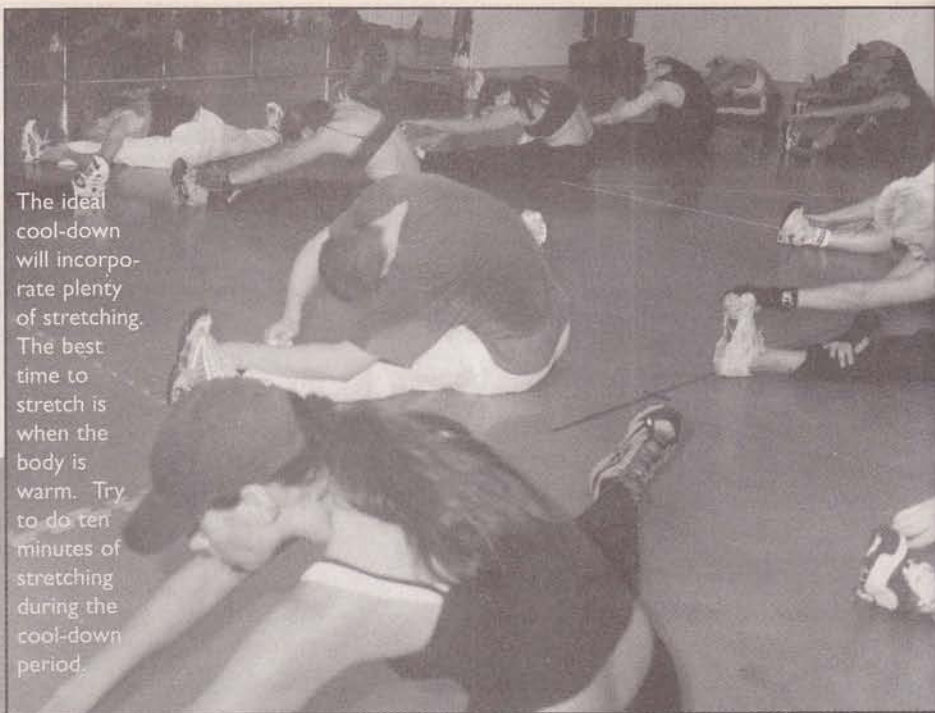
1) Warm-up (10 - 15 minutes).

2) Main body of the class:

kick/punches/footwork/blocks carried out in shadow form to the rhythm of the music (10 minutes) followed by circuits (set up various stations with different pieces of equipment or exercises).

These can be done individually or in patterns). You can also conclude this section of the class with an additional bout

The ideal cool-down will incorporate plenty of stretching. The best time to stretch is when the body is warm. Try to do ten minutes of stretching during the cool-down period.



Warming up is ideal to practice techniques at a slower pace.

of kick/punches/footwork/blocks carried out in shadow form to the rhythm of the music (5 - 10 minutes).

3) Cool-down (10 - 15 minutes).

The Warm-Up

It is important to understand the reasons for carrying out a warm-up.

There are a number of physical, physiological and psychological reactions that take place during the warm-up allowing the body to prepare for more physical exercise. The time span of the warm-up will be dependent on the age group, fitness and skill level of the audience you have, but in general, you want to be doing at least 8 - 15 minutes of warm-up before moving onto the main body of the class.

The first stage of the warm-up is to lubricate the joints. This can be done with

gentle joint rotations. Start off with the upper body working from the neck downwards.

The warm-up is an ideal time to also practice techniques as well as combinations of punches, kicks or blocks that you are going to use during the class. It allows you to do them at a slower pace, allowing the student to focus on correct body alignment rather than speed or power.

Start off with the upper body by doing light punching. Then move onto the legs kicking only at low section and doing the exercises with moderate force. If you have students who are over enthusiastic, only do the chamber of the kick, forcing them to warm-up before getting near any full kicks.

Progress to an increase in aerobic exer-

cise by picking up the legs into a march or light jog, or a light bounce in fighting stance. Carry out a few star-jumps with moderate intensity or simulate skipping with various footwork. All these exercises aim to get the heart rate up gradually.

Once a light sweat has been built up, the student's muscles have warmed up, and their heart beat has been raised to a higher level carry out some basic stretches for the main muscle groups (hamstrings, quadriceps, calves, triceps) which will be worked quite

1
BAGWORK
LEAN FORWARD AND STEP BACK
TURNING KICKS

2
SKIPPING

To make circuits clear, type them out and place them on the walls of the gym. Try to vary them regularly to avoid boredom.

hard during the rest of the lesson.

Now you are ready to proceed to the main body of the class.

Main Body Of The Class, High Energy

An ideally balanced class would perhaps have a 15 - 20 minute aerobic workout using combinations of kicking and punching to the rhythm of the music followed by either partner work or circuits

for another 5 - 10 minutes.

Alternatively, carry out 15 - 20 minutes of aerobic workout and finish off with callis-thenic exercises working different muscle groups.

It is advisable not to do circuits all the time as this may put people off. The key is variety. Have a variety of exercises and try to make sure that they are martial arts specific. Station work is another ideal time where you can go around the stations correcting people on their technique. You must avoid joining in the stations and ignoring the students as they may carry out a technique incorrectly and injure themselves.

Examples of some different stations in circuits are as follows.

- Press-ups.
- Crunches (various types).
- Skipping.
- Squats (with or without weights).
- Triceps dips.
- Biceps curls with weights.
- Kicking/punching combinations on kick bags/wavemasters.
- Thai pad work.
- Focus pad work (combinations of punches and/or kicks).
- Stepping up and down on a step.
- Hopping over an object.

There are many alternatives with a bit of imagination. Use about five stations, starting off initially with 45 seconds at each

make sure you keep accurate time as prolonging the time may result in an injury.

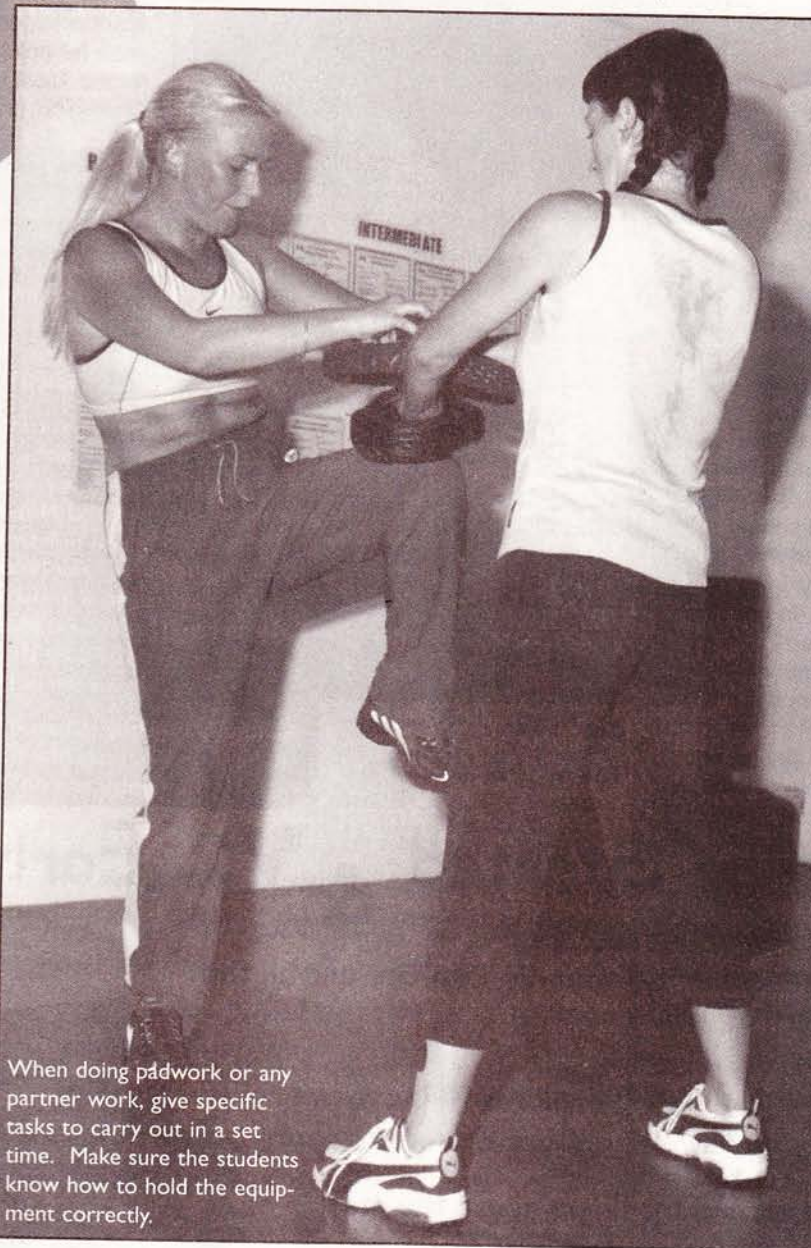
At Frank Murphy's Black Belt Schools, we generally don't carry out circuits or

shield work, make sure you do not stay on one exercise for too long. This too may cause injury, either because of repetitive strain, or maybe the individual has become so tired they lose correct posture and body alignment while carrying out the technique.

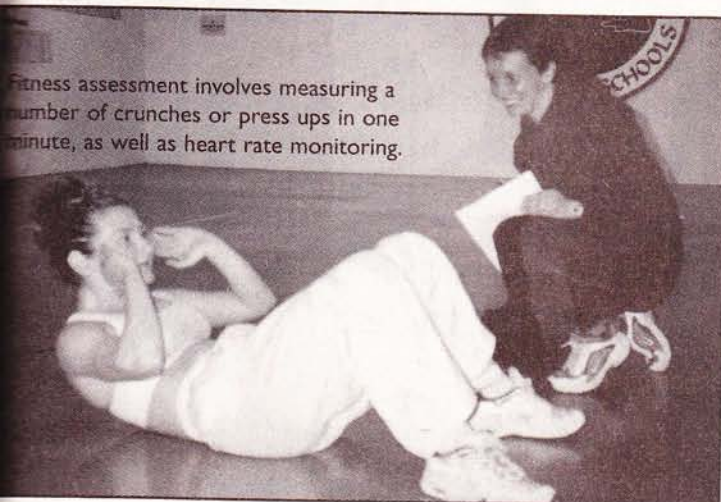
Try to ensure that both sides of the body have been trained to avoid muscular imbalances. Give specific tasks, for example, two jabs and a cross on a set of focus mitts, rather than leaving the student to their own devices.

Specifying the time on a particular exercise often depends on the techniques used and an experienced instructor almost develops a sense of when enough is enough. As a guideline, start with about 30 seconds each person and then build on it adding 15 seconds depending on the fitness and skill level of the class. If you are doing stations, 30 seconds may be too short by the time the students move to the next station and gather themselves together to start the next exercise. It is best to give them clear cues of when to start, stop, transfer to the next station and start again.

So the key is a variety of techniques, alternating partners and the sides of the body at an appropriate time and communicating clearly when to start and stop the exercise.



When doing padwork or any partner work, give specific tasks to carry out in a set time. Make sure the students know how to hold the equipment correctly.



Fitness assessment involves measuring a number of crunches or press ups in one minute, as well as heart rate monitoring.

partner work using the equipment until the beginner has developed some basic technique and strength. It is pointless getting a beginner to do a hard set of circuits before their body has adapted to the exercise, the end result is disillusionment and drop out or, worse still, possible injury.

When you are doing pad work or kick

The Cool Down

The aim of the cool down is to bring the class down from the high energy level slowly, avoiding what is known as a 'Vascular Shunt'. This is the pooling of blood and waste products in the muscles and could cause an individual to feel dizzy and light headed immediately and muscular soreness at a later stage.

Tone down the energy of the class by returning to similar exercises as done in the warm up and gradually slowing down the rate and intensity of the exercises. Move from high impact to low impact and emphasise to the students to do the exercises with half the power. After about 5 minutes move onto stretching which is best done to calmer, relaxed music. This is an ideal time to stretch as

station, then building up to 1 minute, 1 minute 15 seconds, depending on how fit the class is. Don't get distracted and

When you are doing pad work or kick

COVER STORY

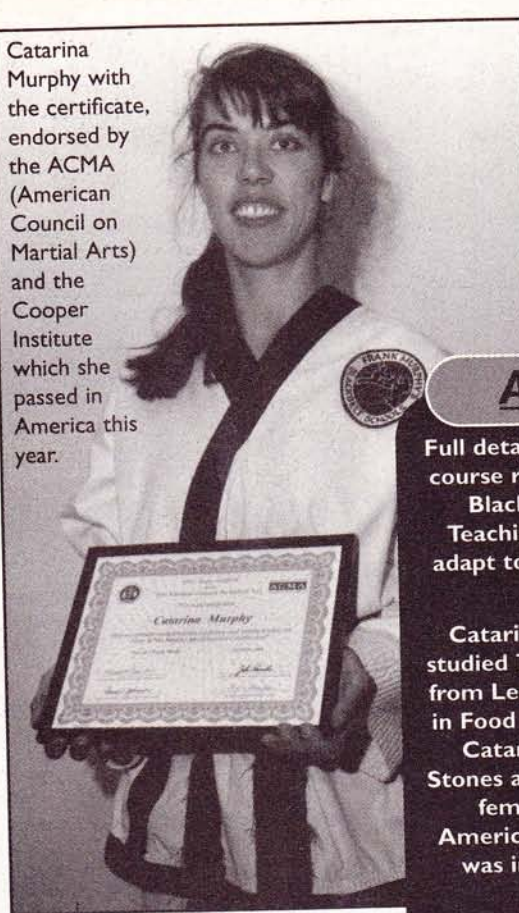
you are very warm and your body will respond well to stretching. The ideal is to do at least 5 - 10 minutes of stretching followed by breathing exercises or Tai Chi style exercises.

Marking The Progression Of The Student

In martial arts we have clearly defined goals with a structured belt system. This too perhaps can be adapted to an aerobic kickboxing programme and some schools have adopted belts.

At Frank Murphy's Black Belt Schools we have taken a different approach as we feel that this programme is more related to fitness than martial arts for self-defence purposes. We associate the belts given out to mark progression in our Taekwondo or Freestyle Kickboxing programmes with self-defence as well as fitness and the other benefits. Consequently, in Cat's Cardio-Kickboxing, we do not give out belts. Instead we carry out a form of fitness assessment approximately every three months. This requires the instructor to understand how to measure fitness, such as heart rate. In this way you can see

Catarina Murphy with the certificate, endorsed by the ACMA (American Council on Martial Arts) and the Cooper Institute which she passed in America this year.



clear, measurable results. The students are able to

assess themselves in the class and the data given is logged. The data can then be compared every three months to see if there is an improvement. A certificate is given out marking a level of commitment and attendance and if there is a significant improvement, special acknowledgement in the form of a small prize (skipping rope) may be given out for the 'Most Improved' or to the 'Fitness Champion' on that occasion.

AUTHOR DETAILS:

Full details on topics mentioned are given during a course run by Catarina Murphy of Frank Murphy's Black Belt Schools offering accreditation in Teaching Martial Arts to Music, which you may adapt to your style. For further details on course dates Tel: 01474 326967.

Catarina Murphy is a 3rd dan Black Belt having studied Taekwondo since 1988 when she graduated from Leeds University with a BSc Honours Degree in Food Science and Nutrition. Formerly Teixeira, Catarina began her training with Master Kim Stones and this year (2000) she was the first British female martial artist to be certified by the American Council on Martial Arts (ACMA) which was inaugurated by the world famous Cooper Institute in Dallas, Texas.

Catarina Murphy is based in Kent and offers accreditation in Teaching Martial Arts to Music. She can be contacted on Tel: 01474 326967.

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