

Martial Arts On the Rise As Way to Work Out

Benefits of Tae Kwon Do, Karate Go Beyond Physical, Attract Diverse Participants

BY AMY L. SEELEY
FEATURES EDITOR

The small front room of Master Nicolas McDonald's U.S. Tae Kwon Do Institute in Durham buzzes with activity. Children ranging in age from 6 to adolescence sit on the floor, talking to one another or listening to walkmans. Some of the more energetic boys chase each other around, practicing loose interpretations of tae kwon do motions.

But in the classroom, students sit on the mats between the mirrored walls, anxiously waiting for their names to be called. It is an unusual group. Small children with tiny limbs squirm next to larger, more sedate adults. In the back of the classroom, proud parents, some with infants, rest on benches. It is exam day at Master McDonald's.

Personal Teaching

McDonald himself presides over the exams. The large, balding man in his late 20s commands respect among his students, as he demonstrates what he wants them to do.

Ann Marie Brown, who helps instruct some classes, said McDonald made the difference in the unique "feeling" of the school.

"The student body really looks after each other," she said. McDonald, who has been practicing tae kwon do since he was 10, said the instructor was the most important factor influencing a student's learning of martial arts. He uses positive correction, rather than criticism, to help students learn.

Pam Powell, an instructor at Allen's ATA Taekwondo Center Inc. in Chapel Hill, also stressed the importance of a teacher's style. "You've got to find the right student-instructor base."

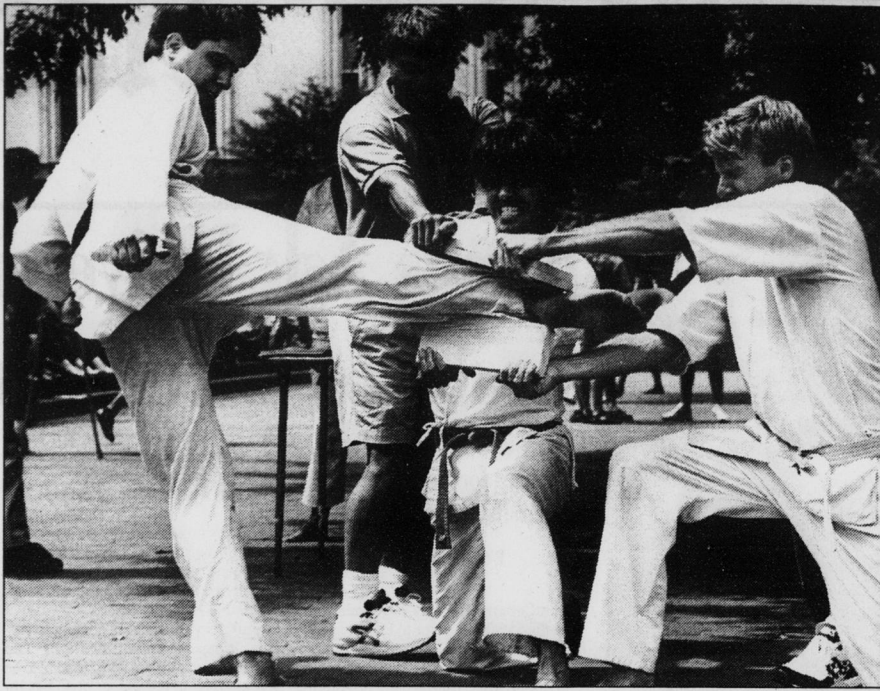
Brown, whose husband and two children also attend McDonald's institute, said the master instructor took a personal interest in the lives of his students.

"What's kept us here is having such a great instructor," Brown said. "He offers a lot of moral support."

Focusing on the Mental

"We teach more than self-defense. We teach principles ...," reads the brochure for McDonald's institute.

Many practitioners of the martial arts



Members of UNC's Carolina Martial Arts Club assist Mason Baldwin as he breaks through boards with a tae kwon do kick. Martial-arts organizations around the Triangle have increased in popularity and availability.

say they provide as much benefit mentally as physically. The arts teach discipline, concentration and values.

"All martial arts are really idealism," McDonald said. "It's idealism in action." Eight-year-old Marina Pluta of Durham has been practicing tae kwon do for 3 1/2 years.

Her slight frame, loose brown hair and delicate face belie the lessons she said she had learned from Master McDonald.

"Usually I didn't take control of myself," Marina said. "It taught me not to be so greedy."

Everyone can gain something from enrolling in the martial arts, McDonald said. For people with a lot of energy, the arts teach focus and control. Shy people can build their self-esteem and confidence.

The martial arts even have been known to help children with attention deficit disorders, and a child with cerebral palsy attends McDonald's classes as part of his therapy.

Ann Marie Brown said the ability to concentrate came as much from the physical practice in class as the lectures and meditation-type exercises.

"You find yourself forgetting everything," she said.

Adam Lischer, who trains and assists with classes at Chapel Hill Tae Kwon Do Inc., said students also learned the principles behind the arts from their peers. "People see ranking students and how they behave," he said.

Powell of Allen's Taekwondo, who began tae kwon do after seeing her son prac-

"(Martial-arts students) learn how to avoid situations. They become more sensitive to their environment."

JESSIE BOWEN

Master instructor at Karate International in Durham

tice, said the arts had affected her character.

"I feel more comfortable," she said. "It built my self-confidence up."

Lischer said he became involved to challenge himself physically.

"(But) it becomes more and more of a mental challenge rather than physical," he said.

Jessie Bowen owns and serves as the master instructor at Karate International in Durham. As an only child, he needed confidence that he could defend himself in a threatening situation, Bowen said.

"I turned my greatest fear into my professional life," he said.

Like Bowen, many students of martial arts begin their involvement to feel safer.

But students learn more than just how to defend themselves physically, Bowen said.

"The first thing is prevention," he said. "They learn how to avoid situations. They become more sensitive to their environment."

Lischer said tae kwon do's nonviolent

philosophy encouraged mental defense over the physical.

"You're trying to do something hard rather than taking the easy way out," he said.

Joining In

Most of the Triangle's martial-arts schools report a diverse body of students, with men, women and children in equal proportions.

Nicolas McDonald and Jessie Bowen's schools are family-oriented and encourage families to enroll together.

"No matter what category they fit in, martial arts is for them," McDonald said.

Children, who are easily enthralled by the high kicks and acrobatic moves depicted in movies, often want to learn the martial arts.

"What they see on TV ... all that stuff's for show," said Ann Marie Powell of Master McDonald's.

But even without the Hollywood glamour, children enjoy learning the arts.

"From the first class they took, they absolutely loved it," Brown said of her two children.

Parents usually don't mind their children's interest because the martial arts promote positive values and exercise, instructors said.

In fact, the children's involvement often draws in the parents. Pam Powell said parents who wanted to participate might do so vicariously first through their children.

"They're inhibited when they get older," she said.

Brown, who began tae kwon do after her children had, said she and her husband joined for the physical benefits.

"There's a lot of exercise involved with it, so it's very good for you," Brown explained.

Martial arts are one of the best ways to get aerobic exercise as well as relieve stress, McDonald said.

Female students also have been joining increasingly to learn self-defense techniques.

Many martial arts schools offer one-time sessions on self-defense, but longer courses also are popular.

Adam Lischer said many women enrolled at Chapel Hill Tae Kwon Do because of the female instructors who could serve as role models.

"I think women want to learn how to defend themselves," he said. "They're just getting tired of it."

For whatever reasons, the martial arts are drawing Triangle students by the hundreds, establishing themselves as the way to keep mind and body fit.

Jones Emphasizes Life In Performance, Lecture

"I would train my children to be fierce and strong and incredibly competent. That is how I want my company to be," Bill T. Jones said in a PBS documentary about his work. He has taught his company well.

Saturday night in Memorial Hall, the Bill T. Jones/Arnie Zane Dance Company proved its fierceness and strength to a zealous audience, who gave the dancers three curtain calls and a standing ovation.

Friday afternoon, Jones gave a lecture in the Student Union's Great Hall that described his choreography and asked some very hard philosophical questions.

WAYNETTE GLADDEN

Dance Review

Bill T. Jones/Arnie Zane Dance Company

Jack Arnold, a former dancer with the Pilobolus Dance Company and now a dance instructor at UNC, said Jones was one of the few choreographers who still welcomed dialogue about his work.

"It's amazing that this stature of company is still doing grassroots lecture-demonstrations," Arnold said.

"Jones is still interested in reaching out to the public. Dancing doesn't have to be just pretty. It can be politically oriented, too."

Jones began his lecture saying, "There is too much talk in the world today." So he talks through his dance.

Since 1988, when Jones's partner and companion of 17 years, Arnie Zane, died of AIDS, the main theme of Jones' choreography has been mortality and the "subtle hum of concern about death in the face of life."

Now Jones also is HIV-positive and dedicates his dance to shedding light on what it really means to be alive. His next comprehensive work with this theme, "Still/Here," will debut in the United States next September.

"I am part of the vanguard of young men who, at their time of really getting going, came to their decline," Jones said. "AIDS is a guilty disease," he emphasized. "There are innocent victims, but for the most part, the victims aren't innocent. People struck by it are mostly homosexuals and drug users. How do we deal with these people who aren't innocent? What is this epidemic teaching us? Is it similar to the Black Plague or World War II?"

"We could blame it on the '60s, on LSD, on Woodstock or maybe on the relaxing of moral values. Perhaps I represent progress," he said.

Jones' lecture was unsettling and thought-provoking. "I'm bred to be a father and have 52 nieces and nephews," he said. "But I'm a homosexual, and I'm not breeding."

He comes from a family of 12, and his parents were poor migrant workers. "My parents were potato pickers, but they wanted me to be a superstar," he said.

Now, Jones, who has his superstar status, questions the meaning of life. He asks whether people really experience life richly or just go through the motions. "Our culture encourages us to go faster," he said.

One student raised his hand to challenge Jones' philosophy of living life in the moment, not for it. "Do you really think that we should just live for the moment and not plan ahead?" the student asked.

Jones replied, "I had to cut out the bullshit in my life. Are you really happy with your life? If you had a short time to live, would you change your life? Are you doing what you want to do, or what you're supposed to do?"

"It's good to plan ahead, but do you feel your tears? Do you feel your heart beat? When you fight with your girlfriend, do you really fight with her, or are you constantly thinking ahead? The mastery of life is to really be there in the experience."

In the performance Saturday night, the audience experienced a slice of life as Jones experiences it, no holds barred. Each piece had its own message and meaning and asked its own questions.

The performance provoked an exchange of commentary and questions within the

audience. There were positive reactions and angry reactions, but there was definitely reaction.

The first piece, "And the Maiden," was a soulful solo to old slave hymns and gospel music.

In the beginning, the dancer, whose long, beautiful arms seemed to stretch from one side of the stage to the other, performed very rigid elementary ballet combinations center stage. The choreography greatly contrasted the slow, yearning hymns.

As the piece progressed, the movement became more writhing, free and almost jazzy. The movement reflected the music, which also became more light and upbeat. By the end, with the song "Beulah Land," the movement had lost all its stern ballet qualities and became a very joyful African kind of dance. The dancer performed emphatic preaching-like gestures demonstrating a new-found pride.

Finally, the music stopped and the dancer walked to a skeleton suspended from upstage left. She bowed to it and reached inside to turn off a small, gleaming light in its ribs.

This is the kind of symbolic choreography Jones is famous for. Perhaps the dancer had shaken off the rigid movement symbolic of slavery and finally defeated it in the end. Perhaps the skeleton represented death, which she confronts in the end. The audience decides.

The third piece on the program provoked the most reaction. "Another History of Collage" began with the spoken words, "Dreams Freud Dreamed or dreams Freud dreamed Freud dreamed." Large light bulbs were suspended in a kind of umbrella from the top of the stage and an overweight, bald dancer stood in a black suit center stage. The words stopped and strange animal noises filled the auditorium.

This surreal piece seemed to explore the unconscious mind, chaos and riot. All types of dancers filled the stage in bizarre costumes.

They appeared to represent all the different kinds of people in society. Male dancers appeared in children's dresses and dance belts (jock straps).

Their movement was angered and emphatic. Perhaps the theme of this piece was how society interacts in an increasingly chaotic world.

Near the end of the piece, the animal noises turned into sounds of real rioting. The overweight dancer slung another dancer over his back and flung her around in an airplane spin.

The feeling was violent as she flailed her arms around hysterically. Finally the noises died, and the dancers united on stage in a row, one hand resting on the shoulders in front of them. They hugged each other calmly.

A striking element of this piece was nudity. Toward the end, one man danced completely nude and a woman danced topless.

This added to the chaotic reality on stage. It was not gimmicky or tasteless.

However, some members of the audience were offended. I counted 25 people who left. One lady exclaimed in a huff, "What a waste!"

In most of the pieces, people in the audience seemed to shift in their seats uncomfortably. The pieces were heavy and addressed hard issues: homosexuality, AIDS, death and life.

Besides one muffled sound cue and some sketchy timing in the second piece and the last piece, Jones brought these issues to the stage effectively and forced commentary about each piece and what they represented.

"Nobody wants another artist with his heart on his sleeve," Jones said in his lecture. "But if you touch one person or illuminate one area, then that is useful for human kind."

Jones achieved this in his performance and as demonstrated by one audience member's exclamation as he left the performance, "Bill, you go!"

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Telephone 6032	845
Gas 60	
Electricity 4568	
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Student Loans 175	
Insurance 125	
Credit Cards 165	
Overdraft (CHK) 189	
Entertainment 300	
Utilities 100	
Other 50	
Subtotal 700	275

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Campus Calendar

- MONDAY**
- 11:50 a.m. The Loreleis will sing in the Pit.
 - 2 p.m. University Career Services will present Job Hunt 101, basic information on how to use the UCS office for seniors and graduate students, in 210 Hanes Hall.
 - 2:45 p.m. University Career Services will present Job Hunt 102, resume writing workshop for seniors and graduate students, in 210 Hanes Hall.
 - 3:15 p.m. University Career Services will present a workshop on resume writing for internships for undergraduates in 307 Hanes Hall.
 - 4 p.m. Student Bicentennial Planning Committee will meet in Union 224.
 - 6 p.m. UNC Toronto Exchange will hold a mandatory meeting in 317 Bingham Hall. Bring your \$100 check if you haven't paid yet.
 - N.C. Hillel Mitzvah Corps will meet to make Challah covers for Jewish seniors. Bring \$2 for pizza dinner.
 - 6:30 p.m. The Physical Therapy School will present a lecture on how to get into PT school in 106 Fetzer Gym.
 - 7 p.m. Students Organized for Farm Worker Awareness will meet in Union 205.
 - 7:30 p.m. The Ballroom Dance Club will tango in the women's gym.
- ITEMS OF INTEREST**
- Sigma Gamma Rho Sorority will celebrate Founders' Week all week. Look for information about events on campus.

For the Record

Friday's men's soccer photo misidentified the N.C. State player. No. 13 was fullback Matthias Berrang. The DTH regrets the error.

Had Mono Recently?

If you have had mononucleosis in the past month, you may have developed antibodies to this disease. These antibodies can be used as controls for MONO TESTING. If you qualify we will pay \$50.00 for a PLASMA DONATION. Please call or come in for details

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