

BAB Coaching Handbook Index

BAB CONTACTS AND DUTIES	2
RULES; SAFETY AND LEGAL REQUIREMENTS	3
COACHING MATTERS.....	5
COACH LEVEL APPLICATION REQUIREMENTS	6
PRINCIPLES OF TEACHING	10
PRINCIPLES OF TRAINING	11
IMPROVING TECHNIQUES AND SKILLS	13
THE BODY IN ACTION.....	15
COMPETITION	17
CHILDREN	18
LEARNING DISABILITIES	19
PLANNING	20
HOW TO SET UP AND RUN A CLUB	21

BAB CONTACTS AND DUTIES

The current Management Committee's details, comprising of elected and non-elected (appointed) members, will be kept up to date on the BAB Website or as a circulated list. The elected members serve on a rolling basis for three years. A non-elected (appointed) member may be replaced at any time by the calling of an extra ordinary meeting, with the replacement of the member as an agenda item or similarly at an AGM. Three months notice must be served to the BAB secretary in either case.

Elected Management Committee

Chairman (BAB CM)

- To control all procedural matters

Vice Chairman (BAB VC)

- To assist the Chairman and to officiate in his/her absence

Secretary (BAB Sec)

- To administer all documentation and usually the first advisory contact

Coaching Development Officer (BAB CDO)

- To be the technical advisor on all coaching matters

Finance (BAB FO)

- To advise on all Financial Policies

Non Elected Management Committee

Data Protection Officer (BAB DPO)

- To facilitate in the implementation of all data protection laws and regulations

Insurance Advisor (BAB IA)

- To advise on insurance matters

Coaching Administration Officer (BAB CAO)

- To assist in the organisation of coaching courses. Normally the first contact before the BAB CDO

Web Master (BAB WM)

- To promote and facilitate all web based inquires. The web master will also direct all enquiries to the appropriate BAB official.

Membership Advisor (BAB MA)

- All prospective Associations will contact the BAB Secretary who will pass all their details to the membership advisor

First Aid Advisor (BAB FA)

- To advise on First Aid matters

Individual Association members should not attempt to contact any officer directly.

RULES; SAFETY AND LEGAL REQUIREMENTS

Please use these procedures in conjunction with the current BAB Insurance guidelines.

Coaching Ethics

The Board has approved and adopted the Sports Coach UK code of ethics.

Legal requirements

There are no legal requirements specific to Aikido. The law extends into every activity and Aikido is not immune.

Equal opportunities

The Board is committed to a policy of equal opportunities. The aim is to promote equality of opportunity for all. Coaches should encourage participation by reducing obstacles and increasing opportunities.

Code of Conduct

All Aikidoka and especially the coach have a responsibility to behave in a manner which maintains and enhances the reputation of their Association and the Governing Body. Aikido is a martial way practising a controlled form of potentially dangerous techniques. At all times coaches should facilitate the safe and ethical practice of Aikido.

Coaches should encourage an ethos in which each student is aware of his Duty of Care. This would include such considerations as;

- The safe execution of technique.
- The maintenance of a safe environment
- Awareness of the need for personal hygiene
- The Boards policy on drugs and alcohol.
- The appreciation of the need for practice appropriate to grade.
- Awareness of equal opportunities issues
- Awareness of the need for appropriate language.
- An appreciation of ones personal responsibility for insurance cover.
- Any other issue concerned with the proper running of a club.

Aikido has as its ethical basis as the resolution of conflict through the development of harmony in the conduct of human affairs. It therefore requires that all practitioners should accord each other respect and consideration at all times.

Mats

The mat surfaces should be safe clean and hazard free.

Lighting

Lighting should be adequate for safe vision.

Heating

Heating should be appropriate to the welfare and comfort of the student.

Ventilation

Adequate ventilation should be ensured throughout the practice session

Spatial Considerations

The need for adequate space should be taken into account. As a guideline the recommendation is 2 square metres per practitioner. Consideration should also be given to vertical clearance.

Surrounding Area

“Surrounding area” is defined as any part of the training area – not just the matted area.

The surrounding area should be hazard-free and where hazards are identified, steps should be taken to limit or reduce any risk.

Premises

Coaches and their assistants should have knowledge of emergency assistance, the location of escape routes and assembly points and where First Aid equipment is stored.

Changing Facilities

Coaches are responsible for ensuring that the premises and facilities are adequate for the practice of Aikido.

Emergency Exits

Fire escapes should be clearly marked and kept free from obstruction. A central assembly point should be known.

Equipment

Any equipment used should be in safe working order and only used by appropriate groups.

Weapons

All weaponry used in Aikido practice should be used and carried with the greatest of care and discretion. In addition, practitioners should be aware of, and implement, the guidelines issued by Perkins Slade (available on request). All weapons must be blunt.

The minimum space recommendation for pairs training with weapons is 5 square metres per practitioner.

This advice is applicable to all weapons.

- Weapons should only be carried when it is known that they are required at a particular training session. Coaches should therefore inform their students as to when weapons are actually required.
- Weapons should only be carried directly to and from a practice. Weapons should not be left in the car boot all week.
- Aikidoka should carry their Association's Membership book.
- The Aikidoka should ensure that their weapons are carried within a secure bag at all times and hence not directly visible, and should ensure that the bag is not left unattended at any time.
- Travelling on public transport with weapons should be avoided if possible.
- If an Aikidoka who is carrying weapons is stopped by the Police, every possible assistance should be given to the officer(s) including an explanation given of why such weapons are being carried. No attempt to conceal the fact that weapons are being carried should be made.

Weapons and safety

The use of weapons requires special consideration in respect of the students' safety.

- Weapons instruction should only be taught by an experienced coach.
- Ensure the students know how to check their own equipments and its safe use.
- Weapons and any related equipment must be checked prior to the class
- The student's gi must be worn correctly to ensure no item of the gi can tangle or interfere with the use of the weapon.
- The Dojo floor must be clean and present no tripping hazards.
- The Dojo must be large enough for the number of students and the activity. This may be obvious to the front of the students but can be overlooked in the area behind the student.
- The coach must ensure the students always practice what is being taught and not permit any horseplay during the training session.
- The law regarding the carrying of weapons in a public place is contained in Section 1 of the Prevention of Crime Act 1953 & Section 139 of the Criminal Justice Act 1988.
- The words "reasonable excuse" and "good reason" in each of the Sections provides a defence for Aikidoka. However, in carrying such weapons, the Aikidoka demeanour is the most important factor. If the Aikidoka complies with the above advice and offers a complete explanation to the Police, there should be no problems.

COACHING MATTERS

Communications

An Association appoints its own Coaching Liaison Officer (CLO). It is expected that an Association uses its CLO to contact the BAB Coaching Team. Direct contact between your Association's members and the Board's Coaching Team is discouraged as this may result in possible confusions. The coach should maintain frequent contact with their Association CLO.

What Coaching Awards are there?

There are three Coaching levels: levels 1, 2 and 3 as defined in the coaching syllabus.

New Members

Associations who join the BAB will have an assessment by the BAB coaching team with regard to accreditation for coaches.

Dojo Etiquette

The British Aikido Board has within its affiliated membership organisations whose style and practice of Aikido reflect different traditions and interpretations of O'Sensei Ueshiba's original core of teachings. As such, these traditions express the etiquette of Aikido in different ways.

Practitioners should adhere to the rules and code of conduct laid down by their Association.

COACH LEVEL APPLICATION REQUIREMENTS

Coach Level 1

This award is for students beginning to instruct without supervision at club level.

The student must comply with the following minimum standards when applying for this course

- Candidates must be at least 18 years of age
- Hold the grade of 1st Kyu
- Recommended by their Association

COACH LEVEL 2

This award is for coaches who are beginning to instruct within the broader Association.

The student must comply with the following minimum standards when applying for this course

- Hold the Coach level 1 award
- Candidates must be at least 20 years of age
- Hold the grade of 2nd Dan
- Recommended by their Association
- Provide evidence of practical coaching for at least two years from their coaching level 1 award

COACH LEVEL 3

This award is for experienced coaches who are beginning to instruct at national level within their Association.

The student must comply with the following minimum standards when applying for this course

- Hold the Coach level 2 award
- Candidates must be at least 23 years of age
- Hold the grade of 3rd Dan
- Recommended by their Association
- Provide evidence of practical coaching for at least three years from their coaching level 2 award

HOW TO COACH

Coaching Methods

When explaining basic techniques to a class of students there will always be differing views as to the most suitable demonstration method. Some of the methods instructors can deploy are outlined below and are the main strategies taught on the BAB coaching course.

Whole – Part – Whole

- Demonstrate the whole technique and allow the students to practice it as one movement
- Then break it down into parts for students to practice. The breakdown points will depend on the significance of each portion of the technique to the aim or objective of the session. Each part is taught on its own - the link may be directly related to the whole technique or may be a different practice that conveys a feeling or elucidates a concept that is required in the performance of the whole technique.
- Eventually put the parts together to make the whole again.

Repetitive Practice

- This is useful for most beginners as they may find it rather awkward just to co-ordinate. The coach will need to repeat the same basic technique over and over again. "Patience is a virtue".

Use of Applications

- Students can sometimes learn quickly when the technique is related to an application, ie show how a body movement exercise is used against a punch to the body.

Imitation

- Beginners can be taught basic techniques by imitating the coach, step by step at each command. The coach should repeat this copying procedure several times until they are satisfied with the student's progress.

Progressive practices

- These are intended to show progressive advancement through a range of skills by increasing the demands on the students in the form of skills and competences. The steps or degrees should be flexible enough to allow an individual to learn what is being taught as well as advancing in complexity as appropriate to the class, group or individual.
- In order to create these progressive stages of teaching and coaching Aikido it is essential that technically correct techniques are taught and learned from the outset Then build on the foundation by introducing progressive stages e.g. a beginning movement, a different ending, a different attack, introduce technique from the opposite posture etc.
- Progressive Practices have to move from what a student should be reasonably secure with to an area that needs introduction and consolidation. The coach should split the class according to the needs of different groups of students e.g. according to grade. The coach could send different groups of the class along different directions to enable them to practice according to their capabilities. This means different groups will be moved on at different rates according to their development. This encourages students to master skills and motivates them to progress.

Demonstration

- The coach should demonstrate the technique from various positions.
- The coach demonstrates it slowly, keep the explanation simple, brief and to the point Work on one point at a time. This enables the coach to communicate physically, visually or verbally what they require the student to practice.
- As well as involving personal demonstration, there might also be occasion to use another student to demonstrate a point in order to pick out the good points shown by that person. There are also videos, films, charts and books which can be used.
- Coaches can encourage students through demonstrating advanced technique to give students a vision of their future with improved technique.
- Teaching positions i.e. strategies before the coach demonstrates a technique. The coach should always arrange the class so all can see and hear; this might vary from a single row to a horseshoe or circle formation.

General points

- The coach should use different Ukes to show different aspects of a technique
- On occasion use each of the students as Uke, to emphasis a particular point so that the Uke can feel the technique.
- The coach should name the technique and be careful not to swamp the students with too much detail all at once. Coaching points should be emphasised and restricted to one main point. The coach can come back later and demonstrate re-enforcement of the point and provide feedback indicating that on the whole - the students did the technique well and could then introduce a secondary point to concentrate on.
- When teaching those with special needs, e.g. hearing or sight deficiency, the coach should ensure that these students have appreciated what is expected of them from the demonstration.
- Senior students practising with the less experienced will learn new insights into a technique as well as helping a lower grade improve. Similarly putting a senior student into a teaching position makes them re-examine the technique.
- The successful coach will allow students to work independently whilst moving round to correct and help those who are experiencing difficulties.
- The coach should not over correct and should restrict correction to the basic points. This will produce the best improvement. Always be prepared to move on if points are picked-up quickly or back if difficulties arise.

Observation and assessment of performance

This is probably the most important part of the coach's role, but it is often neglected. The coach should not just take a class and teach, however well planned. The success of your next session will depend on the evaluation of what you have taught, how it was received and practiced by the students. This information is vital for assessing how well both coach and student(s) are progressing towards the success of the longer term plans.

It may help for the coach to make some general comments on specific points at the end of each class.

Full evaluation of the students will of course take place at the regular gradings. This not only shows the progress of the student but the percentage of passes indicates the general progress of the class and reflects on the ability of the coach.

Observe and feel the mood of the class

A coach will be able to tell from the mood of the class how well they are communicating. If the class is enjoying the content of the lesson it will be shown in their concentration and performance. They will demonstrate an improvement in technique and an eagerness to learn more. If there appears to be a feeling of apathy then the opposite will occur. The coach should be very aware of these signs in the class or it will stagnate.

Recognise general and individual faults

Be sure to correct the class as a whole in the early stages as this can speed progression. Was it because it was not demonstrated properly? Did the class misunderstand? What ever the reason stop the class and emphasise the point of correction. When individuals have a continuing problem with the same movement the coach has the option to put them with someone who is better at that particular movement and a transfer of skill should occur.

A coach should be conducting an examination, in the sense that they should be continually monitoring the progress of individuals and the class as a whole. It is good practice for the coach to make notes of drawbacks and the progress of the group or individuals as the programme moves along. It should not be left to chance as to whether your coaching is a success.

Ready or not to grade

Well before gradings are to take place the coach will know whether the student has reached the required level. The progressive assessment of their improvement is most important, especially as they begin to reach higher levels, from this the coach can advise whether they should grade or not.

Recognise the highs and lows

From your own experience you will know that everyone has the peaks, troughs or plateaus during some part of their training. Recognising this and the ways of dealing with it will be most beneficial to your coaching and to your students. Feelings of inadequacy often come a few weeks after promotion. It is good to be sympathetic and give constructive encouragement.

Effective communication

Effective coaching requires effective communication. Once the coach stands in front of the class he or she is expected to be the expert. Remember when coaches fail it is not usually because of their lack of skill or knowledge of the art. It is probably because they have failed to communicate with their students, the students will lose interest and the students begin to attend less regularly so the coach's plans and programme become distorted. Effective communication is sending and receiving information efficiently. The coach should be prepared to be a good listener, receive feedback and act on their feedback.

Use of jargon

The coach should remember when beginners start they are filled with nervousness and confusion. Don't add to this by using Aikido jargon. Tell them not to worry about the names and technical terms. Remember they have enough to learn with the techniques.

Communicate by demonstration

Because students watch intently what the coach is teaching, be clear and obvious in what is shown. It is important that what they are looking at sinks in. Ensure that the coach's body positions and commentary are precise and to the point. Don't waffle, be brief, use simple English and watch the jargon.

Prepare to listen

The coach should not just be blinkered or self centred but be prepared to listen. Invite students to ask questions and respond to their feedback from the class.

When to use Aikido language

After the initial stages it is good practice for a coach to introduce the technical terms in Aikido

When coaching use KISS - Keep It Simple, Sensei.

PRINCIPLES OF TEACHING

Organisation of training sessions

What you do in a training session should not be decided or planned on the way to the Dojo or on arrival. The coach should make sure students are settled as to what they are going to do especially in terms of organisation and timing.

Plan the session. Basic planning is essential for the smooth running of a class, but the coach should be flexible as to the level of the students' abilities. A regular routine of warm up and stretching relevant to the techniques to be taught should be in the training programme.

On the planning of the main theme ideally one should take a basic principle and work on it throughout the session, teach and practice it at whatever the students' levels. Moving from one totally different thing to another causes confusion especially for the beginner.

Arrive at the dojo in good time. Ample time should be allowed for general preparation.

Start and finish on time.

Group work

Grouping similar ability groups is useful because the student can be put in a group relevant to their ability level.

Team teaching

Team teaching is considered good practice when using high grades and assistants to ensure what has been shown is being practised correctly.

Mixed ability groups

Often the coach will have beginners through to Dan grade in the same class because students attend classes to suit their own personal and working conditions. They cannot make specific or regular sessions, some come when they can at varying times, some have more consistency. .

A coach should begin by addressing the class as one, tell them what is intend for the lesson and perhaps demonstrate the various stages of one principle with basic through to advanced, the lower grade students need to see where they are going. The coach should use other coaches and high grades where ever possible by integrating them for correction purposes.

Teaching beginners

Whether the coach has a beginners' class or is taking newcomers and filtering them into established sessions, each student will have an individual requirement. It is safer for the unfit student to progress steadily and safely. It is important to familiarise yourself with the information the student has given prior to practice, for example, on their application form.

The coach may be asked to recommend a diet – don't be tempted. Find someone who is an expert or advise them to see their Doctor or a clinic.

PRINCIPLES OF TRAINING

Why students train

Students of Aikido will give several reasons for training. Uppermost will usually be a desire to keep fit mentally and physically - whilst learning new and different skills which may be useful in modern society.

Fitness can be defined as "The ability to carry out daily tasks with vigour and alertness, without undue fatigue and with ample energy to enjoy leisure time pursuits and to meet unforeseen emergencies".

There are two types of fitness

- Motor fitness - learning the techniques.
- Physiological fitness - making the body fit enough to be able to do the techniques.

Each of these types of fitness can be divided up into single components.

- Motor Fitness - Balance, Coordination, Agility, Spatial Awareness.
- Physiological Fitness - Strength, Speed, Endurance, Flexibility.

For us to gain this fitness means that the body has to be trained to cope with the stresses and strains placed upon it during the practice of Aikido and every day living.

The rate of progress of a student towards fitness will greatly depend on the frequency of his attendance and the length and intensity of each session.

FITT

F = Frequency (How often)

I = Intensity (How difficult)

T = Time (How long) T = Type (Different Types of Practice)

The short term effects of training are likely to be the heart rate increases, the breathing rate rises, heat is generated in the body, sweating occurs.

The long term effects of training regularly are the heart becomes stronger the lungs become more efficient; muscles tone up and become more flexible. You can practice for longer periods without fatigue.

Factors

Factors that may affect fitness are Age, Diet, Genetics, Health or Injury, Drugs, Environment, Technique, Gender, Psychological, Exercise and Rest.

The Fitness and Learning Curve

Each student will pass through stages of learning and fitness; it is suggested that progression along these curves should be gradual rather than sudden because this enables the body to cope with changes and prevents the occurrence of injury and excessive overload.

Theoretically, improvements in performance occur as a result of practice. The rate of improvement may be fairly rapid to begin with then it gradually slows down until a plateau is reached. Repeated practice will eventually produce further slight improvement before another plateau is reached. This links the short term and longer terms of the effects of training.

Coach responsibility

The coach should plan and identify how often a skill should be practiced, how many times each session it should be repeated, and how much rest is required for the student. This will vary from individual to individual, depending on how best they learn, their levels of fitness, skill complexity and workload intensity.

To be effective there should be a distribution of practice, the style of instruction should allow for the effective acquisition of skill along each individual's learning curve.

A coach should appreciate that each technique, sequence of techniques and application requires a specific and unique combination of neural and musculo - skeletal elements. Every physical action will demand a specific mix of speed, strength, stamina, suppleness, skill, the blend of which will be unique to that action and to each individual person.

Overload

In order for the body to improve it should from time to time have more demands made upon it.

It must be stressed that overload, although necessary, must be performed in a safe and progressive manner

This occurs because the body adapts to a new stimulus and progression takes place. Progression should be gradual rather than sudden because this enables the body to cope with the changes and prevents the occurrence of injury and excessive overload.

Physical overload would manifest itself in the student becoming breathless, increased heart rate and looking very hot and sweaty. Excessive overload means that student will become too tired to concentrate on performing the movements accurately and carefully, consequently interest may be lost and injury may occur. Monitoring of each student during each session should be careful so as to avoid overload of this type. A coach should make the activities specific to the individual's needs and demands.

The principle of overload can also be used to refer to the degree of movement at a joint or series of joints. This will not increase unless the "end position", or limit of the normal range, is not only achieved but exceeded on a regular basis. At all times during sessions a coach should be aware of the physiological limitations of their students. As previously stressed, the overload should be performed in a safe and progressive manner.

IMPROVING TECHNIQUES AND SKILLS

Basic principles

Coaches should be aware of the degree of mobility which is required in a joint or group of joints. The coach should be fully aware of the structural and physiological limitations to a range of movement. Regard should be taken of dynamic static and ballistic methods of training.

Dynamic

When the session or part of session is physically energetic enough to cause the muscles to work and generate a large amount of heat and give greater speed and flexibility of movement.

PNF - Proprioceptive Neuromuscular Facilitation

To get the best from PNF training, the help of a partner is essential. PNF is based on the simple fact that when a connective tissue and surrounding muscle are worked intensively they and their nerve receptors become fatigued. Any tissue that has been worked needs a short rest to recover and during the recuperative period it is in a vulnerable condition.

Taking the hamstrings as an example of a muscle group to be stretched, using a partner.

- Lie on the floor, back flat and shoulders and upper body relaxed
- Leg flexed at hip to approximately ninety degrees, knee extended ankle dorsiflexed
- Partner positions self so that s/he can push against the back of your leg
- Partner eases your leg forward to a position when you feel a slight discomfort
- At this point you push against your partner by strongly contracting the hamstring muscles
- Your partner does not allow your leg to move
- After a count of 10, you relax the hamstring muscles.
- Partner continues to apply the same pressure to your leg again to ease it, if possible, further into the stretch position
- After 10 seconds of partner pressure, the sequence is repeated, usually at least three times
- Some form of heat source - heat lamp, warm bath or shower, radiator, sauna.

Ballistic

Involves some form of rapid high-intensity movement at the end of a joint range. Because of the potential risk of injury and possible negative effect of ballistic exercise upon the range of movement, this type of stretching is not recommended.

Principles of movement

This emphasises the importance of movement as a whole

During a training session each sequence of moves is practiced over and over again. This can be done as either individual skills practice or work with a partner. Each activity, is to improve the quality of the movement; the improvement of posture, precision, technique, balance and distance.

Coaches will instruct students to enable them to eventually realise the use of a whole body movement, the unification of body and mind, in the performance of all techniques - a life long target. The quality of the performance or any technique will only be acceptable when students are made aware of this type of demand upon their performance.

Correction methods

Corrections should be made in a positive way to retain the student's motivation.

- Show the mistake and then explain it.
- Correct the whole class on one important point.
- Work with groups/pairs/individuals to show how a technique or part of a technique is performed correctly or with greater precision and accuracy.
- Positively reinforce a point done well and then indicate that this technique may need a little more work on a particular aspect.
- Use student as uke to "feel" the technique.
- The coach may act as an uke to feel the technique and explain any errors.

Motivation and Feedback

The level of success achieved by an individual is a combination of ability and the desire to achieve a standard. Feedback can assist this process.

Motivation

- Self - motivation - is often the strongest motivator of all, the desire to take on and learn Aikido will overcome most obstacles.
- Success - To feel that you have successfully reached a specific standard. Every student, irrespective of ability and commitment should have the opportunity to achieve success every training session.
- Personal goals - most students have personal goals perhaps to breakfall safely/quietly, without pain, to emulate a particularly good coach in some respect or other role models.
- Praise - from coach or someone for whom the student has respect.
- Satisfaction - A satisfied student will have a continuing involvement in Aikido.

Feedback

Feedback is a two way process and it is essential that the caring coach creates a programme which allows for this process

- Aspirations - A coach should be aware of the aspirations of his students and help fulfil them.
- Recognition/praise from a coach that a student has persevered with commitment and tenacity through discomfort, pain, periods of lack of success, boredom, and other training setbacks. Also recognition by student that they have persevered to achieve some degree of success.
- This is done through structured communication.
- Correction – if you have corrected, you should have watched for changes and provided feedback. Correcting and not observing changes can de-motivate.

Counselling

Students will often approach the coach for advice of all kinds. The coach should restrict such advice to two areas – performance and attitude.

Performance

In order to counsel students about their performance the coach will assess the components of each student's performance and discuss these objectively, with a view to continuing to develop the student's true potential.

A coach may well when giving feedback to a student counsel him/her to try an alternative approach to an

aspect of Aikido in order to perform better and make progress. This should be done on an individual basis and not in class time, to ensure confidentiality.

Attitudes

Without being intrusive, the coach should have more than a passing interest in the life of the students in order to fully realise their potential. The coach should understand the importance of a harmonious balance between practice and life in general. Over emphasis on one may adversely affect the other.

The coach must be aware that the student will put trust in the coach and that this relationship will shape the students attitudes to aikido. It is essential that the coach does not abuse this trust.

THE BODY IN ACTION

How the body works

The heart - Blood flows into the upper chambers of the heart (the atria) via the pulmonary vein (from the lungs) and the vena cava (from the body). These then contract pushing the blood into the ventricles which in turn contract to send the blood through either the pulmonary artery to the lungs or the aorta to the rest of the body. At rest this process occurs around 60-80 times per minute. The rate and depth of the heart beat increases with exercise; the rate up to over 140 times per minute and the depth up to 35%. Up to five times the normal volume of blood is in circulation during exercise than at rest.

The lungs - take in air from the atmosphere and extract the oxygen from it through the alveoli which are tiny air sacs surrounded by capillaries. This oxygen is exchanged for the carbon dioxide contained in the blood which is then expelled during exhalation. During exercise the volume of air taken in increases up to six times and the number of breaths by four times. This is in order to give greater gaseous exchange. Vital capacity of the lungs is the total air taken in one breath. Men have a vital capacity of between 4 to 5 litres and women 3 to 4 litres.

The muscles - work on a ratchet type principle. Individual fibres link with each other in order to contract and the more linkages there are the stronger the contraction. In order to contract muscles require energy and for repeated contractions - oxygen. The energy is gained from products such as Adenosine triphosphate (A TP) and glycogen stored within the muscle and oxygen from the blood. During exercise up to 25 times more blood is used by the muscle in order to acquire as much oxygen as possible.

The Ligaments and Tendons - Tendons are contractile structures and therefore inherently flexible and capable of being stretched. Ligaments are the "glue" which hold joints together and are inelastic bands of fibrous tissue.

Exercise programme

The components of fitness are flexibility, speed, strength and endurance. These will improve depending on:

- Duration of training
- Frequency of training
- Intensity of training

Any exercise programme should contain:-

- An aerobic component
- A flexibility component
- A strengthening component
- An endurance component

A recommended structure of any exercise programme is-

- Warm up 5 - 10 minutes
- Activity 15 - 40 minutes
- Cool down 5 - 10 minutes

Warm-up and Cool Down

Warm Up

It is important to prepare the body for the strenuous work involved in taking part in an activity. Correctly done it helps prevent injury to muscles, tendons and ligaments, and improves flexibility; muscles also react more quickly when they are warm.

A warm-up is a planned series of exercises aimed at thoroughly preparing the student, physically mentally for the activity ahead.

Stage 1

This could consist of walking, jogging, or light running. It is important to build up slowly, make sure exercise is light and lasts about 5 mins. This results in heart rate increase, more blood and heat flows to muscles and then heat is generated in the muscles as a result of the chemical reactions in the muscle cells.

Stage 2

Consists of movement and rotation of large muscle groups and joints e.g. arms, shoulders, legs, hips, so resulting in muscles becoming warmer, more elastic, and giving improvement of joint flexibility and helping prevent injuries. More vigorous exercise at a later stage will be less stressful.

Sometimes a third stage may be utilised which involves practising actions and the movements required. For instance in Aikido it might be useful to use Tenkan tai-sabaki as part of the warm up routine or solo practice of Aikido movements.

Cool Down

After activity it is important to prepare the body for resting state. Cool down can reduce the stiffness in muscles which is sometimes experienced after strenuous activity.

The principle factors are

- Avoiding ending vigorous activity/exercises suddenly.
- Reducing the level of activity slowly.
- Decreasing lactate levels and preventing muscle cramps.
- Helping remove waste products from muscles and reduce.

COMPETITION

The element of competition exists in some styles of Aikido to test the quality of aikido practice. This is generally done in one of two ways; either by two or more Aikidoka demonstrating their skills in a more or less predetermined manner, subjecting that demonstration to the judgment of their peers; or by a more direct one to one competition where the object above all else is to test and to demonstrate aikido skills against more committed attacks.

The competition arena should be regarded as the Dojo. All those involved in competition including competitors, competition officials and spectators, should display the highest standards of conduct and behaviour.

Aikidoka involved in competitive Aikido should refer to their own association for competition rules and regulations.

The NCF run a key course on mental preparation for performance and an advanced workshop on mental training where more on the subject is considered in greater depth.

CHILDREN

Children and young people

The Boards guidelines are that children be grouped as follows:

- Age 6 to 12
- Age 12 to 14
- Age over 14

Coaches have a responsibility to treat children in their care with as much consideration as would be given by their schoolteachers and parents.

The following are key points in the coaching of children

- Children under 14 years of age should not practice with adults.
- Coaches need to understand the physiology of children and teach exercises appropriate to their developed mental age and build to adolescence.
- Keep it simple - teach step by step, don't just tell them what to do.
- Be patient - Let the children learn what you are showing them in their own time.
- Don't push them beyond their natural abilities.
- Accept mistakes and handle them in a positive way. If you never made mistakes you never learn.
- Keep it fun - let them learn by playing. For example warm-up games, flexibility games, etc.
- Give children a clear idea of the behaviour you expect and set a good example.
- Be encouraging. Remember younger children rely on people like you to tell them how well they are doing.
- Don't nag; give one warning and then a punishment, once is enough! Be consistent but be fair.
- The younger the child, the shorter the attention span. One hour is generally considered sufficient training time for the average 12 years old or below.

LEARNING DISABILITIES

A learning disability is any factor which inhibits a student's learning. The coach must be aware that this can be physical or mental or both.

Disabled persons should be treated the same as able-bodied persons, except where their condition demands special consideration.

The coach needs to identify the learning disabilities which may exist in the class. Some problems are visible and obvious and others may be identified from the membership application. The coach should be aware of the following conditions that typically make learning more difficult: poor hearing or sight; poor co-ordination and balance; poor spatial concept or perception; slow reaction times; poor physical condition through being overweight; undernourished or generally unfit

It is important that visiting Sensei are made aware of any such conditions, especially those that are not visible and obvious.

Some students may need special medication, of which the coach should be aware.

The coach must ensure that the student has easy access to such medication.

PLANNING

The coach's ability to plan a meaningful programme is vital to the students' development.

Planning should be based on the association's syllabus. In order to do this, the coach must formulate a medium term scheme of work. Based on this scheme of work, the coach will devise the lesson plan.

The coach should try to, systematically, prepare his or her work, taking into account all the factors which will affect performance. A well structured programme will create the right sort of environment and help build the student's confidence. This gives the student a sense of achievement and of realising their potential.

The training programme needs to meet two essential criteria:

- It should develop skills and performance.
- Allow the students to experience success and enjoyment.

The scheme of work is a plan of what is to be covered in broad outlines over for instance six months. The lesson plan is based on the scheme of work and covers immediate training needs.

HOW TO SET UP AND RUN A CLUB

Opening a new club

Some of the main points to think about when considering whether it is feasible to open a new club are:

- Are there enough potential members in easy travelling distance?
- Will the club be able to be open at peak training times?
- Consideration and regard should be made for other existing Aikido clubs in the immediate vicinity, not least because this could detract from numbers expected.
- Is the cost of the premises feasible, bearing in mind the anticipated income? Are there any hidden charges (caretaker costs)? What is the length of the lease?
- Will there be enough cover for the coach in case of illness or holiday, continuity of training is important for keeping members.
- What age group does the new club wish to target juniors, seniors or both?
- Will the Association support this location?

Premises

There are many different types of premises and each comes with its own set of pros and cons. Listed below is a comparison of some of the most common premises. All premises should be easily located so directions can be advertised and precisely given to newcomers. Access should be safe for participants, this should include well lit areas in the winter and be physically safe i.e. paths etc.

Sports or Leisure centre

For

Usually have mats available and facilities such as bar and showers; greater profile and presence, with exposure to members of public; will sometimes assist with advertising; may host 'Have A Go' and Demonstration Days at which clubs will be invited to participate; basic charge with no hidden extras; car parking is usually available. There is an access to phones.

Against

Usually more expensive than other premises, peak times are likely to be taken by other clubs and activities, leaving less popular times which might lessen the attractiveness of the club; booking may sometimes be done on a week by week basis causing more paperwork or in advance in which case more money up front is needed, noise distraction from other groups, cancellations due to major events. The Leisure centre may be located outside of town.

Church, Community or Scout Hall

For

Cheaper hire costs than a Sports/Leisure Centre; more able to get peak times; normally have basic facilities such as changing rooms and showers; may allow 'block booking' which will reduce paper work; car parking may be available; notice board may be available for advertising purposes; less noise distraction, more private than a Sports Leisure Centre.

Against

Mats would probably not be provided unless a gymnastics club or other martial arts club is happy to let you borrow their mats; if you do provide your own mats then storage space may be a problem; mats may need to be insured against fire and theft; space may be limited allowing for smaller classes only; a lesser profile and presence than that of a Leisure Centre, however there may still be public spectators; usually located close to a community.

Privately owned versus leased properties

For

As premises will not be utilised 24hrs day other groups may be interested in sharing costs and use; area can be adorned to best effect for training purposes; training times can be chosen; may have area for administration or for 'putting up' visitors; no noise distraction from other groups allowing an atmosphere highly conducive to training; Lottery funding may be available to offset some of the initial cost

Against

Large initial cost of acquiring such premises; unless purpose built, a great deal of time and effort is required, if the premises need to be altered or 'fitted out' for the purpose of training; mats would have to be purchased separately and stored, possibility of additional insurance arrangements, car parking may not be available; no casual spectators. Associated bills are rates, heating, electricity etc.

Other locations e.g. Youth Clubs, premises that include Other Martial Arts Schools.

For

Normally the cheapest of all types of premises - however some schools now running their own budgets can be quite expensive; changing rooms and toilets provided; ability to extend youth section of club by interest from current School! Youth Club students; minimal noise distraction from other groups. Permanent booking normally allowed with little or no cancellations.

Against

Mats are not usually available and should be provided; if you do provide your own mats then storage space may be a problem; caretakers fees may be added on top of the hire charge; holidays and examinations may disrupt training times in school premises; no casual spectators; minimal car parking available.

Other points to consider

The main equipment required will be the mats. Whilst a club initially does not necessarily need mats to learn basics, the lessons would be restricted because of this constraint. Mats used should be serviceable and safe. Matting will be a problem if the club does not have financial support from its Association as mats are expensive. A cheaper alternative are foam mats over which a canvas is stretched and fixed to a wooden frame. This is possibly better as the mats are thinner and hence can be stored away more safely and tidily. Car parking should be considered, even if it means utilising a local Supermarket car park. People will be dissuaded from attending if they are unable to travel easily to the location.

Basic running or Starting up

Having considered the above and decided upon the location, the next step is to decide how the club is to be run. Initially the coach will take the bulk of this on until responsible students are identified, unless existing students are able to help the coach in this new location. On the night, delegation can assist enormously.

All the necessary membership cards / books and application / membership forms should be generated. Starter packs describing the club, fees and training times are a good idea.

Check with your Association to ensure that you are aware of how you are expected to deal with the paperwork and the requirements of the Governing Body. Accurate record keeping is essential to ensure that certain Association and Governing Body requirements are met and all necessary insurance's are in place.

Decide how best to record member's information, will you be using a paper based / card files system or have you access to a computer on which to store records and remember your back-up copies.

Get the club off the ground with a demonstration on a well advertised date. An offer of the first practice free or a taster session can also serve to publicise a new class. The best time for training should be decided, it will depend upon when most members of the public can attend in the area, particularly if your new club is set up near offices, factories, etc.

The press are loath to come out on weekends, so hold a press call for them during a week-day lunch time. Provide them with photographs and a short statement of facts about your martial art as they will (hopefully) use as a basis for their article. What is interesting to us may not make interesting copy to a newspaper. Action photographs, a personal slant work best.

Be ready and able to sign new students following the demonstration or taster day. Don't let them get home and have second thoughts. Have all your club information material on hand with application forms.

Approach the local community and sports councils to see whether grants are available to help provide equipment for the club. Offer the community something in return, in respect of young people's classes, lessons for disabled people etc.

Demonstrations at local fetes and other events should be sought to raise the profile. In order to do this you may need the support of your Association or parent club.

Running an existing or new club

The club will be managed differently according to whether it is a members' club or a proprietary club. In the former situation, the club operates by a constitution and the members have voting rights. In the second instance, the club is, in effect, owned by one or more persons, this could occur when premises are owned or leased

Fees will be payable on a nightly, weekly, monthly, or contract basis and a method for recording receipt of these fees is essential. If the club is very prosperous, then VAT and other taxes may become payable.

A proportion of the club's income should be set aside for publicity purposes. Few clubs devote enough money to publicity, yet this brings in new students. However, the effectiveness of publicity should be measured against the response it generates. Your application form could contain a question asking how the new applicant came to hear about the club.

Some clubs allow beginners to join throughout the year and merely work them into the rest of the class. Other clubs run special beginner's courses. Students should be registered immediately upon joining and a means of identifying expiring registration certificates should be operated.

Every new member should be fully introduced to the club. Rules should be explained and a training syllabus provided. A personal training record book/membership book is strongly recommended and a welcome booklet produces a vehicle to do this. The more you make a new member feel they are part of the club and that they belong, the longer you will keep beginners.

A grading is a continuous assessment process and the examination is purely to put a neat marker at a specific stage of accomplishment. Beware of entering students too early for no one should fail a grading. When someone phones for information, have something you can post them to convey a professional attitude and ability to be able to provide further information.

This is essential to prove that training requirements are being met, especially with regard to grading. In the case of a Junior Class these records can also assure parents that their children are regularly attending classes.

Results of gradings are necessary as validation in the case of lost record books, or where a student changes their dojo or associations.

Contact number for students are important in an emergency, especially with children, and should be maintained and, most importantly, on hand at all training sessions.

Note any special requirements of those with special needs. This could be related to special medication or procedure, and again should be on hand at all training sessions. (But remember confidentiality)

Injuries and accidents

Please use this accidents procedure with the current BAB Insurance guidelines

Details of any injuries should be kept in the club Accident Book. In addition, information regarding any existing injuries declared by students should be made available to all coaches, and doctor's notes provided where necessary.

Club memberships and Association licences

Ensure that you and your students have up to date Association membership and BAB insurance cover.

It may be useful to keep information on club members on a computer but remember to back up information regularly. Any records should be kept secure and confidential and used only in the best interest of the members. Recording data on association's members should comply with the current Data Protection Act

Financial Records

Clearly such records are essential to ensure no irregularities and also potentially to satisfy the tax and VAT authorities. The scale can vary from simple accounts to having to have the accounts audited. This really depends on the scale of the monies involved and the needs of the club members. Whilst one person may be responsible it is always a good idea to regularly check and make estimates of what monies are collected and spent compared to what the books show. Recording income and expenditure, as well as reviewing any bank statements is necessary to ensure you do not go into the red and a check by someone else would protect from financial wrong doings. In certain circumstances Clubs can reclaim income tax paid on interest monies - contact the Inland Revenue for their advice.

Booking the dojo

You may believe that if you are merely a hirer then all you have to make sure of is that your payment goes in on time? Not so, there are other catches. You have generally to sign an undertaking which can range from a simple A4 sheet produced for hirers of a Church Hall to a ten page document from the local Sports Centre.

This undertaking or contract is clearly important as it sets out who is responsible for what and what has to happen in certain circumstances etc.

Additionally bear in mind it is a legal document and take advice before signing if unsure.

If you are renting premises then a tenancy or lease is created. Usually you become responsible for all repairs, rates and insurance - again take advice if necessary. A lease can require the tenant to put the premises into good order even if it was run-down when taking the tenancy. The watch words are "BE CAREFUL"

Clearly insurance and the health and safety issue raise their heads again. A Risk Assessment should be carried out at varying times. Producing a standard check list speeds up future checks and ensures things are not missed.

Advertising

The most obvious route is to use the BAB web site to actively promote Aikido. There is a link from the main BAB page to a section "How to start Aikido?" which is a simple step-by-step guide as to what to do.

- Yellow Pages have a national number you can call 0800 555444 which will allow you a free one line entry into your local yellow pages book
- If you phone 0800 555444 you can also get a free one line insertion in Yell.com the directory on the web.
- Thompson's local also will also give you a free one-line entry in your local directory
- Your local library holds a list of local organisations and you can get on this list free of charge.
- Main local councils will have a web site and offer local organisations a free page on their website. They may have a sports development team so it is worth contacting them and to make yourself known.
- Finally you can often get village notice boards to take your adverts free of charge.