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Essay for III Dan Grading

Tournament Sparring

## Tournament Sparring

Throughout the years free sparring has probably been the most competitive aspect of Tae Kwon Do. In this essay, I will share different types of sparring techniques both defensive and offensive. I will also show combinations in tournament sparring that have worked well for me in the past Regional and National tournaments.

Please note that every competitor has his or her own style of free sparring. Although some sparring styles are quite similar, some are completely different from the other. So having said that the techniques and combinations in this essay will not work for everyone. The trick is to experiment with these sparring techniques to see what works for you and what doesn't.

### 2.0 Fitness

Obviously fitness plays an important part in free sparring. The more fit and healthy you are, the more stamina you will have. The best way to do this is to do aerobic exercise. For example:

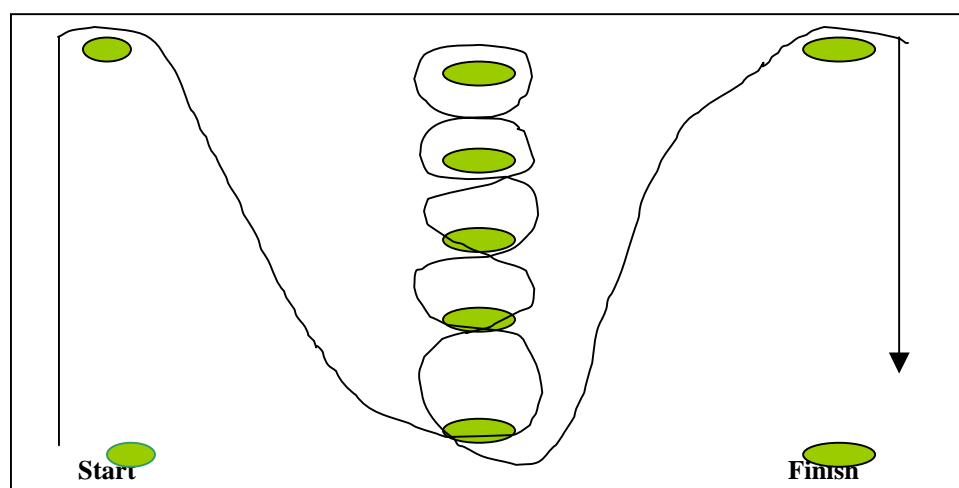
#### 2.1 *Jogging*

Jogging or running is a very basic but very effective exercise. This will increase your stamina and breath control. It doesn't really matter how far or how fast you run. All that matters is that you get a proper work out from it. Also best to gradually run further and further for each run, or keep the same distance but ran faster gradually within each run.

## 2.2 *Shuttle Runs*

Shuttle runs involve sprinting up and down and weaving in and out of cones. You do this five times in a row, usually in a group of four. It's a good idea to time how long it takes for you to complete the exercise. This will increase your competitiveness to beat the time you just got.

The purpose of this exercise is to increase your recovery power making it a lot easier to be fresh on your second round, also to recover from intense kicking and punching combinations during your bout.



## 2.3 *Warming Up*

Warming up a few minutes before your sparring match is quite important. This will have your body ready for your match. Exercise like jogging on the spot and light sparring with your second.

## 2.4 *Pad Rounds*

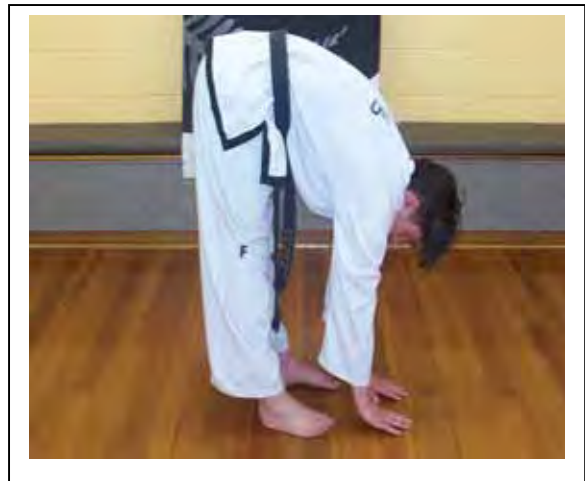
Three two minute rounds on a partner holding a big pad will get you use to the physical drainage involved in free sparring.

Be sure you have a thirty second break in-between rounds. Even tournament sparring usually consists of two, two minute rounds. Its good to do three two-minute rounds. This will make two rounds seem easier.

### 3.0 Stretching

Stretching will increase your flexibility therefore make it easier to go for headshots with your kicks. To prepare for a tournament, I find that split stretching is best because most of my attacks come from the side of my body. However if you're a more front on sparer, e.g. downward kicks, front snap kicks, then these stretches would make it easier for you to execute such kicks.

**Figure 1: Standing**



**Figure 2: Sitting.**

Rock back and forth to increase your stretch, keeping head up and looking forward.



**Figure 3: Split Stretch Standing**

Keeping your legs straight, feet flat on the floor, bending down back straight and looking forward. Move your body to right side grabbing your ankle with your right hand, do that for 10 seconds. Then do the same on the other leg. This will increase your stretch.



**Figure 4: Split Stretch Sitting:**

Sitting down with legs apart with your feet and toes pulled back rocking your body back and forth.



**Static Stretching**

It is best to do static stretching when your just a few minutes away from your match. This will get you used to being quickly stretch.

**Figure 5: Front Risking Kick**

This will stretch your back hamstring and make it easier for front kicks and downward kicks. Keeping your leg straight and toes pulled back, and when your leg has risen up try and bring it down as slow as you can.



**Figure 6: Side Rising Kick :**

Keeping your leg straight and foot and body in side kick position. This will increase your height in your side kicks.



**Figure 7: Back Rising Kick:**

Using the wall for stability, with a slight bend in your leg, rise your leg up, back and for

