

featured **MERCHANT**

Aerobic Kickboxing

By **Marcello F. Cancelliere**

What exactly is aerobic kickboxing?

Aerobic kickboxing is a combination of martial arts and aerobics. It combines many of the kicking and punching techniques of traditional martial arts with the music, rhythm and cardiovascular workout of an aerobics class. No uniforms, belts, or board breaking are required. Classes appeal to die-hard aerobic enthusiasts as well as new participants. They offer a refreshing, physically and mentally challenging change requiring nothing more than the desire to get in shape and the willingness to have fun doing it.

There are various types of aerobic kickboxing classes. Some incorporate the use of heavy bags, others elastic bands, and some utilize only a cardiovascular segment. Samantha Tisdale of Northeast Philadelphia enjoys the workout because, "It's a tough class and it's never boring or repetitive."

Why is aerobic kickboxing so appealing?

In addition to being new and exciting, aerobic kickboxing classes burn tremendous amounts of calories. In March of 1996, Muscle and Fitness Magazine devoted a four-page spread to kickboxing and rated aerobic kickboxing as the #1 caloric burner with 800 calories burned per hour.

The benefits do not end here! One of aerobic kickboxing's greatest appeals is the inclusion of basic self-defense techniques into the aerobic routine. The techniques taught provide the class with relevant self-defense movements and a sense of mental motivation. Loretta Griffin, a hair stylist from Philadelphia, chose aerobic kickboxing over traditional aerobics because, "It is two workouts in one—cardio and self-defense."

Another reason for the popularity of the program is that it is easy to follow. The format of the program provides regular participants with

With Hollywood stars such as **Downtown Julie Brown, Teri Hatcher, Paula Abdul, Carmen Electra and Pamela Anderson** adding a little "kick" to their training regiments, aerobic kickboxing has found its way into nearly every health club and martial arts school in the country.

a challenge while enabling new participants to comfortably join the class. Combinations are kept simple, consisting of no more than four to six different movements at a time. Janet Slusarski, a research administrator from Northeast Philadelphia states, "Aerobic kickboxing has allowed me to feel just a bit more coordinated than I have felt in the few aerobic courses I have taken."

What should you look for in a program?

As previously mentioned, aerobic kickboxing has many benefits. However, before you invest a lot of time and money, do some research on the local programs. The decision on which aerobic kickboxing program to join requires careful consideration.

For starters, ask who is instructing the class and what his or her credentials are. An instructor that is experienced in both martial arts and aerobics is the best choice. Although some may be more qualified in one than the other, look for qualities that appeal to you. The best way to do this is by taking a trip to the local gym or school and observing a class. If possible, ask the instructor if you can participate. After you complete your research on the different programs, choose the one that satisfies your expectations and begin working towards a better you!

Red Tiger Taekwon-do is a martial arts organization that has been in the Philadelphia area since 1983. Currently, Red Tiger is offering an aerobic kickboxing program known as "CARDIO-KICK" at three locations in the Philadelphia-area. The class is one hour long and consists of five-minutes of warm-up and stretching, followed by 30-45 minutes of cardiovascular training, 15-20 minutes of bag-work, and ends with a five-minute cool-down and stretching segment. Cardio-Kick differs from other programs because it incorporates the use of heavy bags. The bags offer members resistance during their training, which aids in the conditioning and toning of major muscle groups. More importantly, according to Donna Stargell, a database administrator and Cardio-kick student. "The bag segment is a great way to reduce stress."

From burning calories and learning self-defense techniques to relieving stress and having an exhilarating workout, Cardio-Kick and other aerobic kickboxing classes offer participants an alternative to conventional fitness programs. Visit your local facility today and get a foot up on the coming year. Who knows, maybe you will be kicking yourself into great shape this year.

Marcello F. Cancelliere is a fifth degree black belt with over twenty years experience. He is the developer of Cardio-Kick, teaches at Red Tiger Taekwon-do and has won several international awards for his participation in the martial arts. You can contact him at 215-969-9962 or visit www.red-tiger.com

