

Resource document:

Winter

Physical Training Combative

Bob VanElsberg
robert.l.vanelberg.civ@mail.mil
Strategic Communication Directorate
U.S. Army Combat Readiness/Safety Center
Fort Rucker, Ala.

Narrative:

Combat operations in Iraq and Afghanistan have demonstrated the need for Soldiers to have well-developed skills for hand-to-hand combat. To equip Soldiers to meet that challenge the Army has developed a four-level combatives training program. Ensuring Soldiers safely complete the challenging, sometimes dangerous training requires the careful use of Risk Management. The goal is Soldiers fit to fight, not sidelined with injuries preventing them from being battle ready.

Key Messages:

- House-to-house, hand-to-hand combat has become a feature of the current conflicts being fought overseas. Training Soldiers to best their opponents in such close quarters combat is essential not only to winning but also surviving. The required skills can only be developed through rigorous, sometimes risky training that can injure Soldiers, potentially seriously. Therefore, the careful use of Risk Management is a must for the training to be both safe and effective.
- Ensure instructors carefully supervise students in combatives training, ensuring they avoid improper moves that can injure themselves or harm others. Instructors must also carefully measure each Soldier's skill level to avoid prematurely advancing them to the next level.
- Soldiers must ensure they take advantage of the protective equipment provided for combatives training such as gloves, headgear and mats to reduce impacts -- especially to the head. During training Soldiers must abide by the rules presented in their safety briefs to avoid causing serious injuries to their opponents.

Talking points:

Training must be provided by certified instructors knowledgeable in both the skills being trained and the tenets of RM, ensuring Soldiers graduate uninjured and prepared for combat.

Soldiers must use the protective headgear provided to reducing their vulnerability to severe head injuries such as concussions and skull fractures. Gloves and rubber mats also reduce

impacts, lessening or eliminating injuries during the often intense, rigorous training.

Using a crawl-walk-run approach allows instructors to develop controls appropriate for each level of combatives training. The goal is to ensure Soldiers are prepared for the techniques they'll be exposed to as they progress to the next level of training, reducing their vulnerability to injury.

Tips:

Protective gear, such as gloves, mats and headgear should be used appropriately to prevent injuries, but not eliminate pain. Overpadding during training will cause unrealistic responses on the battlefield, which can endanger Soldiers' lives.

Soldiers should recognize safety gear may protect them from superficial injuries, such as a cut or broken nose, without necessarily eliminating the danger of more serious injuries, such as brain trauma.

Tapping out should not be done merely to avoid pain, but to indicate the Soldier is no longer capable of taking aggressive actions against their opponent.

Commanders should ensure a medic is present during all levels of combatives training should a Soldier receive a head or body injury.

Soldiers must be properly and completely trained for the techniques of their current level before progressing to the next level of combatives training,

Historical Reference:

https://armypubs.us.army.mil/doctrine/DR_pubs/dr_f/pdf/tc3_25x150.pdf

<https://www.benning.army.mil/infantry/197th/combatives/index.html>

Statistics:

- During fiscal year 2012, 27 Soldiers suffered Class C and 53 Soldiers suffered Class D injuries while involved in combatives training or practice according to the U.S. Army Combat Readiness/Safety Center's Risk Management Information System.

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