

2026 March Update (Instructing) Courses Report

Brendan Doogan, March 2026



Overview

In March 2026 Education Panel Chair Brendan Doogan led Update Courses in Auckland, Christchurch, Palmerston North and Wellington, serving 114 members, supported by Mike Lowe and Jo Northey. Mr Doogan spent ~60h in preparation, 28h on delivery, and 16h on post-event management at the time of writing. Numerous others contributed large amounts of time including Mrs Pygott and Mr Tolley in database and operations, and our hosts Mrs Davey, Miss Caley, Mr Lowe and Mr Bilewitch.

For these participants this was the first fully Education Panel led course, and it was anticipated that there would be change management needed, and meshing expectations. Previous courses had a mainly technical focus; present ones address mainly teaching methods. Based on feedback at the first courses in, Update Courses were renamed Instructing Courses within a week.

The courses were run side by side with Induction Courses to reduce calendar clutter and venue cost, and to share presenters as a way of meeting our succession planning and cost reduction goals re personnel.



Summary

Responses were given by 53 people, with one discarded as a toxic outlier. The survey wasn't completed by most Auckland participants until a week or more after the event, so subsequent participants were encouraged to do the survey before leaving the course venue. Apart from that, there was a good representation from all regions.

- Pedagogy (teaching methods) was very positively received, as was the guest speaker on skill acquisition, Graeme Robson. Both those elements were designed to challenge older methods and introduce modern concepts, which the results clearly show was successful. Respondents want more pedagogical support, loud and clear.
- There is a very strong desire for continued technical support, particularly from more experienced participants. However many people mentioned the technical elements of these courses positively, so for the 2025-6 cycle Education has successfully supported Qualifications, where technical matters now lie, and eased the adjustment to the new course material. It is recommended discussions between the Panels continue to look at this as a matter of priority.
- Enjoying getting together is another strong theme in the results, one that has been the secret of our success in ITFNZ relative to comparable martial arts organisations here and overseas.

There was some useful feedback regarding duration / scheduling / delivery:

- Some participants wanted more time, some wanted less. So the course seems to be the right length, but delivery can always be polished.
- It was anticipated that moving the guest speaker to before lunch would work better, but ran the course to see what would happen without doing that - several people recommended shifting it to before lunch, which is in line with what Mr Doogan and Graeme Robson would like to do next round.
- As per last year some participants found the change between active and less-active sections a bit hard and requested they don't alternate. From the educational perspective it's important to have contrasting activities to improve attention and retention, so that will likely continue in the next courses.
- A popular decision was to over-allocate time for some activities to allow us to not rush if something needed extra attention, and most especially to finish early.
- One or two people preferred to be told what to do rather than to draw out their own knowledge in group work. On the other hand group work was frequently mentioned as a favourite activity.

Access was another commonly requested element. There is a desire for pre-learning materials ahead of courses, activities in the regions, support for & from instructors at the club level, and online options for self-directed and facilitated learning.

There is a strong desire for differentiated courses, which because of various focuses elsewhere haven't been able to be created. One of the main EdCom goals is to add Assistant Instructor and Lead Instructor courses, so it's pleasing to hear there is community alignment with that part of EdCom's workplan.

Finally a critical element requested throughout the country is support for sport coaching development. Aside from Mr Doogan's work with 6-8 mainly Auckland based coaches there is currently no support for studying the coaching craft outside EdCom courses.

Conclusion

- Cost cutting and succession planning goals have now been reached
- More courses like this
- Develop courses for more experienced Instructors
- Technical courses are needed
- Sport Coaching support is needed
- Instructors should work on instructing skills within and between clubs

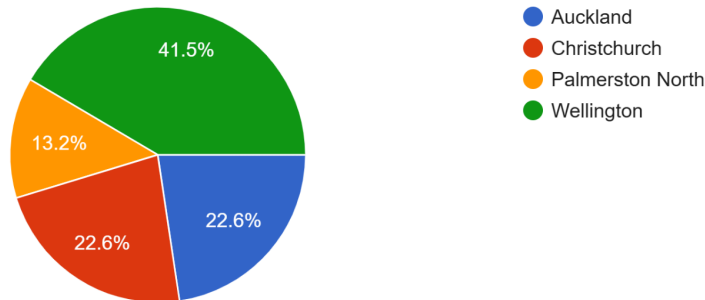


Appendix One - Questions & Responses

Question One

Which city was your course in?

53 responses



Question Two

What did you enjoy today?

Pedagogy

Learning about learning and teaching styles

Sparring and the the earlier morning activities

The course was very informative and eye opening; plenty of new perspectives were introduced and helped refresh how we instruct.

Time to write notes and being verbally prompted was good

I enjoyed the interactive activities and being able to do group discussions for applications.

Ground stuff

Good mix of moving about and verbal teaching

Reviewing instructing concepts and ideas I had forgotten about

The ground self defence, sparring tactics, memory game

Engaging with other instructors and learning new ideas.

I enjoyed the physical sessions with the technique applications, sparring and ground self defence and the memory game

I liked how instead of just talking it was very hands on

Also all of the floor exercises and activities were great fun and kept at a good pace

Applying the things we were learning and working in groups

Sharing of knowledge of teaching

Frameworks for Ground Self Defence and Free Sparring

Learning different frame works to use when teaching

The break falls. The sparring.

Sparring and the the earlier morning activities

Guest speaker and self defence was really interesting

The course was very informative and eye opening; plenty of new perspectives were introduced and helped refresh how we instruct.

Ground defense was good
The ground self defence, sparring tactics, memory game
Engaging with other instructors and learning new ideas.
I enjoyed the physical sessions with the technique applications, sparring and ground self defence and the memory game
Also all of the floor exercises and activities were great fun and kept at a good pace
I enjoyed the ground self
Modern concepts of training designs
The guest speaker Graeme, and the ground self defence section

Social, getting together

The vibe.
The group work
Interaction
Working in groups
Being there and doing tkd with friends and new people.
Catchup with coaching ;colleagues' from other clubs
Meeting people I don't see often enough
I enjoyed the whole day, talking to and interacting with everyone there.
I always enjoy getting together with everyone
Engaging with other instructors and learning new ideas.
Sharing of knowledge of teaching
Catching up with other Wellington students/instructors.
Spending time with my friends

Technical

I enjoyed the interactive activities and being able to do group discussions for applications.
Ground stuff
Sparring and the the earlier morning activities
The break falls. The sparring.
Guest speaker and self defence was really interesting
Ground defense was good
I enjoyed the physical sessions with the technique applications, sparring and ground self defence and the memory game
The ground self defence, sparring tactics, memory game
Also all of the floor exercises and activities were great fun and kept at a good pace
Patterns applications
I enjoyed the ground self
The guest speaker Graeme, and the ground self defence section

Special Guest

Mr Robson.
Grahams session was great
Guest speaker and self defence was really interesting
All of it! But particularly Mr Robson's session
The course was very informative and eye opening; plenty of new perspectives were introduced and helped refresh how we instruct.
Coaching presentation from Graeme Robson

External speaker

The session with Mr Robinson was a highlight

The talk with Mr Robson was very interesting

Engaging with other instructors and learning new ideas.

I enjoyed the talk from Graeme, it was very insightful and helped me as an instructor reflect on the ways I teach classes.

Graeme's talk was quite interesting.

Modern concepts of training designs

Particularly enjoyed Graham's session. Always good to get challenged on how we teach

The guest speaker Graeme, and the ground self defence section

The session from Mr Robson and his coaching presentation

Everything

All of it / everything x 9, for instance:

- All of it! But particularly Mr Robson's session
- I enjoyed the whole day, talking to and interacting with everyone there.

Other

The donuts

I enjoyed making the videos

Presenters

Excellent presenters.

Always love my discussions with Mr Doogan and Mr Lowe.



Question Three

Was there something that could have been better?

Technical

More technical content, less how to teach content

Yes. Technical update from our Grand masters and Masters.

The section on applications could have been better structured

Could there have been pattern technical update of own pattern etc

"I would like more technical pattern tips.

Especially for the BB patterns."

Proper technical update.

I think the ground self defense could have been executed a bit better, especially for those who do not know or have good experience with doing it.

Some coverage of technical aspects of patterns and step sparring"

Less talk more update

Some more technical instruction would be nice but I do appreciate the focus on teaching methods

Usual Pattern trouble Issues

I do miss the technical teaching like GM PM did

I think the technical elements should be the majority of what is taught at Instructor Updates.

The gogy has its place, but I don't think that should be prioritised over technical content, at least for our established instructor base.

I would have liked more info about teaching sparring, Mr Doogan assumed we all knew all the basic drills and terminology he was using but I personally didn't know some of the things he mentioned. I also would have liked more info to be provided in the technical section in the end, rather than us coming up with answers ourselves via group work.

Pedagogy

More technical content, less how to teach content

More on how to teach - Recall Explain Demonstrate Perform (there's a framework here but I can't remember. I should know this!).

Like the reframing rather than update.

I do appreciate the focus on teaching methods

I think talking more about how to teach a range of skill levels at once with everyone also improving

Duration / Scheduling

More time / more in depth etc x5 for instance:

- Maybe session on a Saturday not a Sun (travel issue).
- "Less topics, covered in more depth.
- Maybe explaining how to instruct the different parts more
- More time just to talk more with the organisers and gain more knowledge from them!!

Shorter course x3 for instance:

- I believe the course could've been more concise

- Not much I can think of, maybe went slightly too long. A few people were starting to zone out during the last exercise.
- The course needed to be shorter, much of the afternoon stuff sort of dragged out so maybe condense it or, have pre-course work, for attention span and memory

Rearrange the schedule / polish the delivery x4:

- Having the sit down session earlier in the day
- The intensive activities should have been performed first instead of the stopping and starting. Made it hard to warm up again or stay warm.
- Grouping activity together in one time group to avoid warm up cool down transitions
- The talk after lunch was hard to focus on, as that was when i was most tired.

No / Not sure

No / similar response x17 for instance:

- I think everything was interesting and has enough time to think about what we learned
- Well organised and run course, thank you
- No I was happy with everything
- None, really enjoyed the session

Practical / Active

More practical

More physical as in activity, rather than needing to be more intense

Information management

Often for courses the material gets lost to time. Handouts go west, online resources are hard to find I don't prof this is the case or not but a central location where I can go to Instructor Course 2026 and see all info in one place would be mint.

"Would like notes (link please) from Graeme Robson's section - e.g. book titles, authors.

Delivery

Found that some sections weren't introduced with what the topic & learning target were. Mnemonics section didn't have note-taking breaks. As such, I couldn't explain it to my partner afterwards other than describing the opening activity. Reading the brief helped some, but I feel like I'm having to work that part out myself after the course.

I liked the topics that were on the agenda, but I'm not sure that each was covered in sufficient detail for instructors who may be light in those areas to increase their toolbox to the point where they could confidently deliver a session on the subject.

I would have liked more info about teaching sparring, Mr Doogan assumed we all knew all the basic drills and terminology he was using but I personally didn't know some of the things he mentioned. I also would have liked more info to be provided in the technical section in the end, rather than us coming up with answers ourselves via group work.

Pre Learning

Prior knowledge stumped me a bit by short circuiting / getting confused trying to think of a thing to teach and simultaneously how to use prior knowledge. This could have used time to

think before class, rather than being put on the spot. Prior knowledge of what? Maybe specifically focus on using non-TKD knowledge.

Other

More donuts



Question Four

What was your favourite part?

Frameworks for Ground Self Defence and Free Sparring

Self defense x13 for example:

- Ground defense and break falls
- I like being physically active, ground defense
- The different ways to get some conditioning and fitness in with warm ups.
- Creating games out of Self defence training
- Break fall, teaching methods
- The competitive exercises

Sparring x6 for example:

- Sparring. It spoke to me. Don't get hung up. Just do. It'll come.
- Mr Doogans sparring methods
- Doing the sparring exercises and going over how information can be told without making things more complicated, it was very helpful

Pedagogy

My favorite part was mnemonics because it was an interesting concept and talking with others of imagery we could link with our movement/theory.

The memory game cause I won

Technical

Patterns applications x8

I enjoyed the technical discussion but wished it had been longer with perspectives from more seniors than myself

Special Guest

Graeme Robson presentation x7

Coaching presentation from Graeme Robson that highlighted some parts of our Taekwon-do need to follow traditional coaching method.

The presentation on modern teaching techniques

Learning about block and random learning

Social

Getting instructors together, bringing in some external instructors

Doing group work and learning together and laughing lots

Group work and video recording

Mixing with my TKD peeps.

Presenters

Honestly all three presenters were great.

Everything

This is a required answer. Hard to choose. Sorry!

All of it

Other

Learning some new activities to take back to club.

The donuts

The video making

Group work and video recording

The Ah-ha moments, when things make sense

Seniors joining in

Watching everyone even the masters trying things even if they looked or felt abit silly . Every one seemed to have a nice time

Seeing the seniors practicing instead of just teaching

I enjoyed the technical discussion but wished it had been longer with perspectives from more seniors than myself

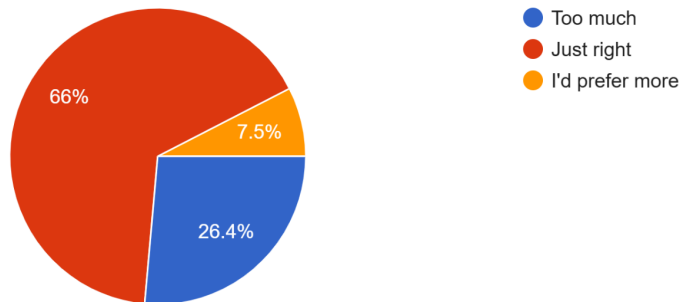
Question Five



Question Six

How did you feel about the amount of theoretical content? (The classroom learning type parts, not the kicky punchy physically active bits)

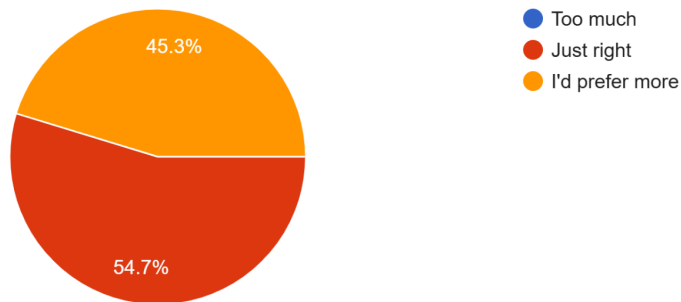
53 responses



Question Seven

How did you feel about the amount of physically active content?

53 responses

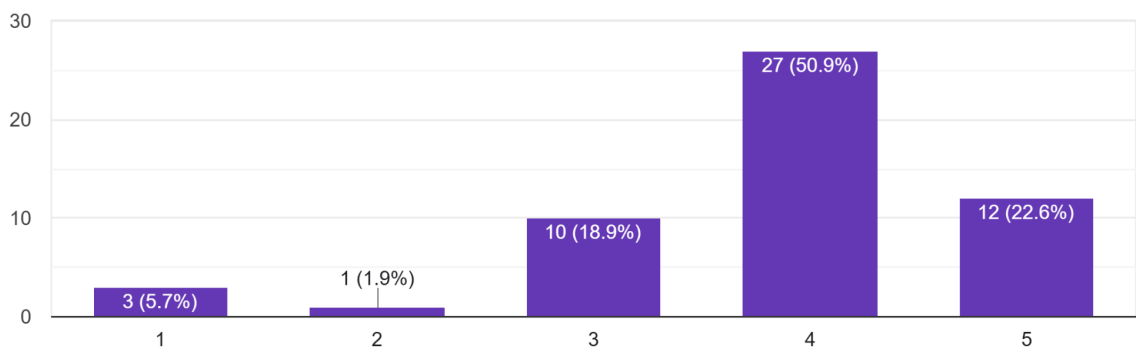


Question Eight



How was the ground self defence framework section?

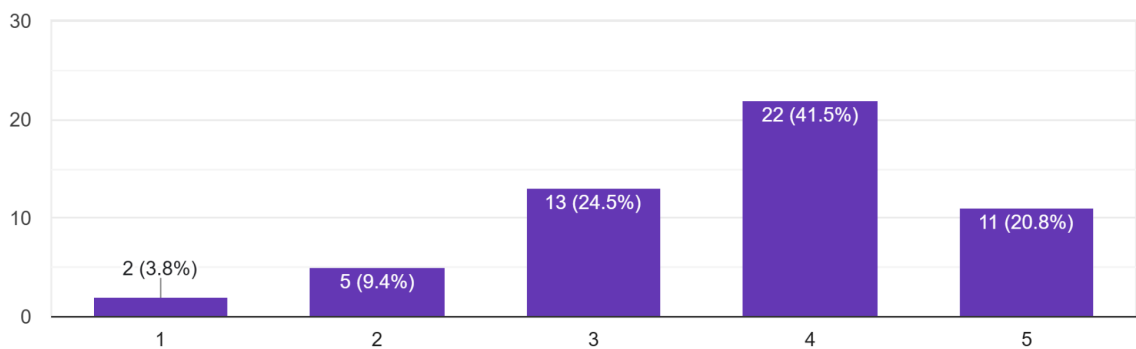
53 responses



Question Nine

How was the free sparring framework section?

53 responses

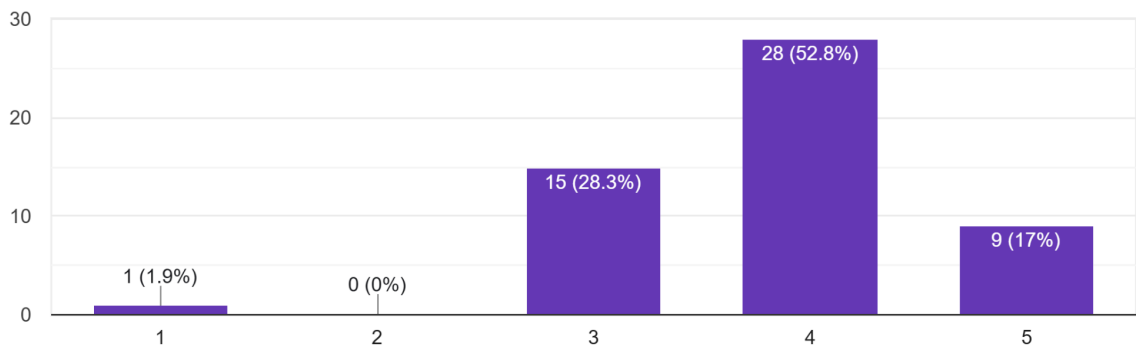


Question Ten



How was the prior knowledge section?

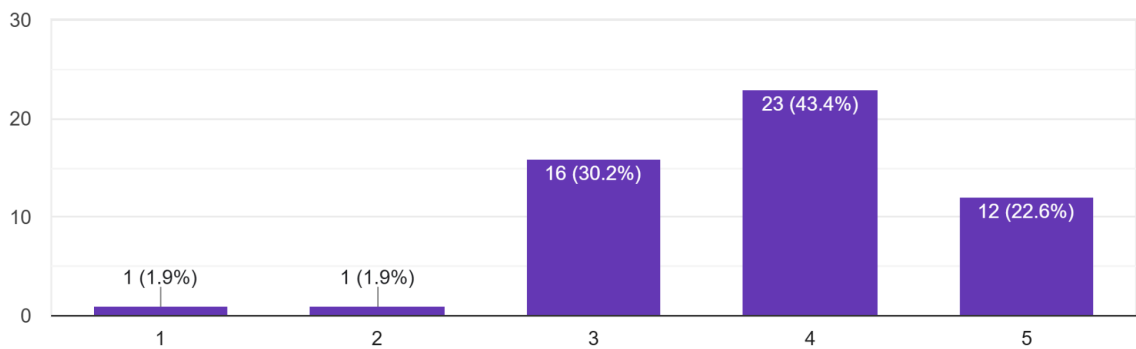
53 responses



Question Eleven

How was the mnemonics / memorability section?

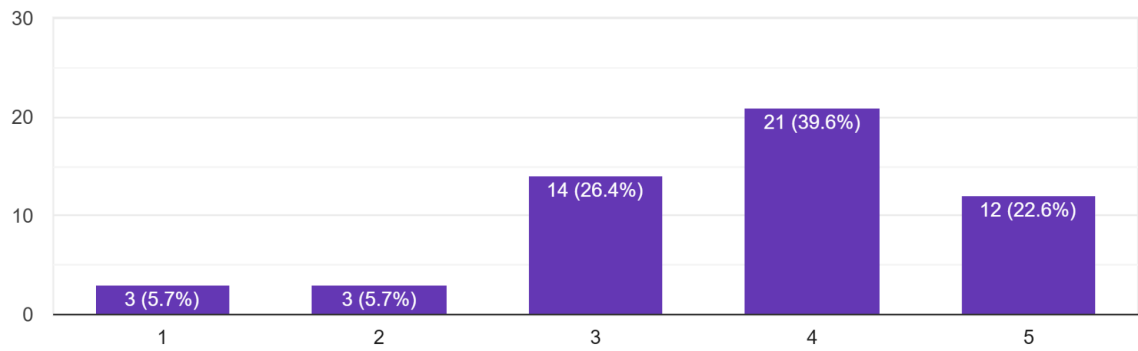
53 responses



Question Twelve

How was the technique applications section?

53 responses



Question Thirteen

As an Instructor / Assistant / Coach would you like further development opportunities and if so, what would they be?

Training with peers

More regular training opportunities for Dan students to work on their syllabus
Not really—a lot of development will come from practice and feedback

Technical updates

Technical update x~10
More things about how self defence can be used in real life situations
I feel I need more technical knowledge on BB patterns
More technical, to make sure we're all teaching TKD techniques the same
Teaching self defence to make it more realistic.
Self-defence

Pedagogy / More Courses Like This

Yes, this level of insight has been instructive, vs previous comparable days with patterns etc
More courses like this, good content and expanding our horizons from the norm a bit
Yes. Staged learning about learning system so the courses can be better tailored to who is participating. Not by belt rank!
As a fairly new assistant instructor just talking to people from different clubs and watching and learning from those who have been doing it a while is great.
Maybe more examples of how to engage effectively with our students and to keep them on the right track.
Yes, continuing on how to teach things better
Teaching self defence to make it more realistic.
Practical methods for planning classes for different class structures. Age groups based, rank based, all lumped together.
Yes, opportunities like this to work with other instructors etc for ideas
Maybe a separate course on teaching 6-9 year old kids
Yes, more specific developments where we can dissect each discipline and formulate a method to teach it to a diverse class
I think it would mostly be about how to teach the younger kids and dealing with different personalities ect in a large group
If we are doing proper teaching updates, the development of syllabus and theory that is more appropriately aimed at kids would be good.
Delving into modern teaching approaches for us especially when we have so much focus on being “right” would be good. Specific examples and ideas.
Yes - info/material and method get together sessions for exposure to variety to take back to club
Yes, I'd like more help in teaching free sparring

Nothing

No / nothing etc x8

No I'm happy with the amount we have

Not at this stage as I will take the learnings back to class to think about how to implement them

Panels clarity

I'd change the name so its more directed in the heads up that people are walking into

Sport Coaching Support

Coaching for specific events. Eg sparring

Yes, coaching on how to coach athletes

Yes, I'd like more help in teaching free sparring

Online support

A monthly newsletter of short tips would be great. Should encourage instructors to submit.

Just a short thing! Could be contribution points for gradings.

Yes, short online courses and videos

Seminars

Maybe the odd seminar

Other / General

.Need to do my instruction in class to work out what I need help on.



Question Fourteen

"What support do you require on your journey as an Instructor, Assistant Instructor or Coach?"

Access

Accessible opportunities of similar level quality in my region or not far from.
Reconnecting with us in the deep south
Maybe more seminars in the south island
A support page
Continuous feedback from other instructors, a good support network
Opportunity to share teaching ideas
Instructors Playbook
Probably some condensed intro to teaching sparring e.g. based on the old yellow belt syllabus mentioned today

Technical support

Technical updates x3
I want clarity and alignment nationally on syllabus and content we can take away. I want to see the ground defence have examples of all the required components. So far i have yet to see anyone demonstrate an effective defence against the T side mount.
I want to see more ideas about combinations etc for sparring, and new techniques every year as the art evolved.

Pegagogical support

A structured plan to learn off and then later can be adapted
Instructor support. Instructing classes
Construction criticism and critique of my delivery.
Practical lesson training,
Feedback as I progress through instructing
I need the grading and tournament systems to measure specific outcomes. We have no objective measure of whether students have learned self-defense to a certain level, and therefore no objective teaching targets.
More seminars like this
Continuous feedback from other instructors, a good support network
Inspiration for lessons. Keeping students engaged while also covering the "boring bits"
Opportunity to share teaching ideas
Instructors Playbook
Opportunities to practice and learn instruction and or coaching
Probably some condensed intro to teaching sparring e.g. based on the old yellow belt syllabus mentioned today
Updated pedagogy to challenge my coaching both for competition and general syllabus, particularly if there are significant changes to syllabus content. As far as I'm aware, there aren't any at the moment so regularly scheduled programming works for me.
Having these courses to go to has been very helpful

Sport Coaching Support

Pathways for expanding on knowledge, especially for sport coaching e.g HP

I need the grading and tournament systems to measure specific outcomes. We have no objective measure of whether students have learned self-defense to a certain level, and therefore no objective teaching targets.

As someone who started as an adult keeping the high performance portion of the students interested and pushing them - I notice some of them feel like they 'outgrow' club because there not getting stretched enough.

Updated pedagogy to challenge my coaching both for competition and general syllabus, particularly if there are significant changes to syllabus content. As far as I'm aware, there aren't any at the moment so regularly scheduled programming works for me.

Support from my Instructor / In club

- Just support from my fellow instructors at my club
- Instructor support. Instructing classes
- Continuous feedback from other instructors, a good support network
- Feedback as I progress through instructing
- Having the other senior instructors around so that they can jump in when needed works great for me
- More seniors at club with similar knowledge / confidence to teach learnings to others
- People around me to show me the ropes
- Opportunity to share teaching ideas
- Opportunities to practice and learn instruction and or coaching

Nothing

N/a / nothing at this stage / no etc x11

I enjoy the support I get at club / similar x3

I don't think I need any more support



Question Fifteen

Any other comments?

No / Thank you

- No / N/A / All good / Thank you! etc x24
- Thank you Mr Doogan, Ms Northey / We can see the passion of Mr Doogan and Mrs Northey which was fabulous.
- Great vibes, really enjoyable training which makes it easier to retain information. Thank you for the time and effort that goes into these events. Much appreciated.
- Keep up the good work / Great course as always / Thank you. Will do again.
- Thanks for an awesome day. / I enjoyed it! / Thank yous for your help
- I also thought Mr Doogan was great. Good day.
- Found it challenging but has me thinking about how to pass on this knowledge we have.
- I was unable to participate in the physical areas due to a broken foot, but i still enjoyed watching and learning, and participating where i could.
- Thanks for the course! Thanks for teaching Mr Doogan and Ms Northey, and thanks for organising Jaret.

Own Region

We would like to be know as our own area in otago and show that we have the numbers

Technical updates

Technical update from our grand masters and masters as standing agenda for next update course.

I like the links to technical patterns documents - thank you for putting those together.

Pedagogy

Maybe throw some pre-reading or study material in prior to the course.

Too many topics covered at very basic levels, not enough depth

Good small group learning

Dividing Courses / Separate Courses / More Courses

- Felt like an instructors coaching course rather than an update course. Nothing wrong with that, but felt more like teaching us how to teach rather than something that is practically keeping us all on the same technical page so students are being taught the same
- I enjoyed the section on teaching methods. It was overall an OK Update course. I think it's good to mix it up from time to time. We don't always just need to focus on changes to patterns etc, but that is still important. I'd consider a 2-year plan where there is one technical course and one a bit more free wheeling.
- I appreciate the time the Education Committee spent delivering this years courses. I acknowledge that it is impossible to please everybody, but I think care needs to be taken to prioritise the needs of our established instructors. Our existing instructors

are, for the most part, the people who have stuck with our organisation for decades, and these are the people we should be catering specific training and development opportunities for, and I suggest that remaining abreast of current technical trends is of most interest to this group. We do need to also provide pathways and development for assistants or new instructors, but this possibly needs to be a separate focus from ensuring our established instructors have what they want/need.

Delivery

I really felt the whole day was geared towards helping us become better instructors as opposed to just focusing on technical details. I thought the guest speaker was really interesting.

"Great organisation of the day overall. Balancing physical activity and theory is difficult, so possibly well pitched for others newer to teaching.

Other

I think that seniors who are disrespectful about the course do need to be pulled up earlier, as a negative tone about the validity and effectiveness of the course can spread easily from certain individuals

Some good tips in the ground self-defense (pad holding to avoid injury) but would add to that the need to train kicking hard from ground - maybe use pads on walls, for example.

Thoughts on the sparring framework - the basics were good, I think the tactics part could be taken a bit more high level. At present, I like the TKD coaching academy framing for different phases of sparring, initiating, engaging, and exiting. Then tactics could be grouped under those headings to support conceptualising when the tactics come into play."



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