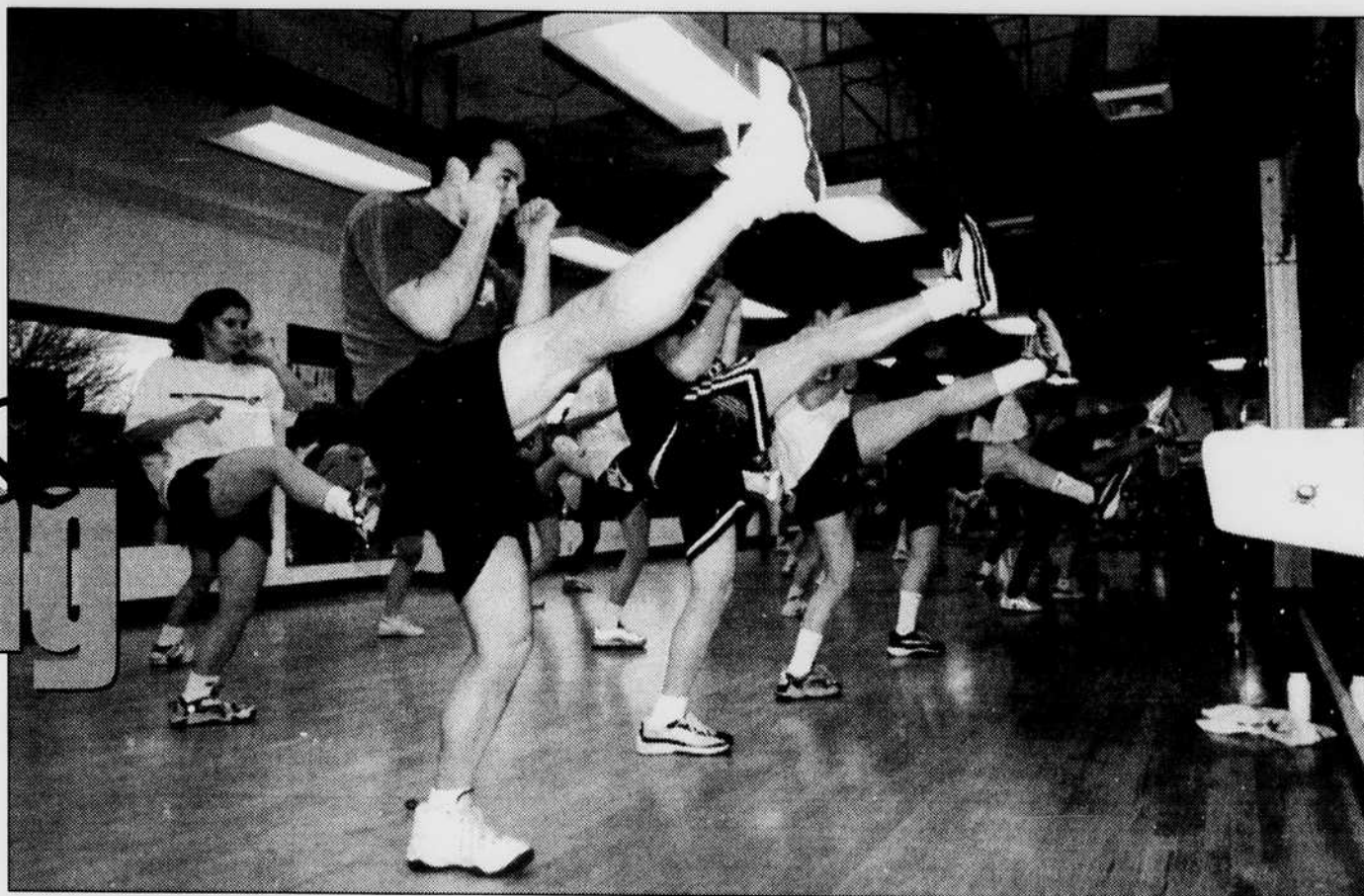


# Fit & Kicking

The latest fitness fad, aerobic-kickboxing, has taken Eugene and the nation by storm



Scott Barnett/Emerald

## Where to go

Local aerobic-kickboxing classes can be found at the following locations. Call for specific days and times for classes:

- **Ironworks Gym and Fitness:** 485-4475
- **Courtsports Athletic Club:** 687-2255
- **24-Hour Fitness:** 344-1028
- **Oakway Fitness:** 343-3314

By Kristen Howard  
for the Emerald

**S**weating profusely, Sam James is jabbing and punching at no one. Strands of her short black hair are plastered to her face, but she doesn't notice the intrusion. She is concentrating instead on kicking her imaginary opponent.

Is it amateur boxing night? No, it's aerobic-kickboxing, a new exercise trend that is spreading to health clubs and gyms all over the country.

Aerobic-kickboxing is a blend of aerobics, boxing and martial arts, rhythmically set to music. The fitness industry's largest publication, "Muscle and Fitness" magazine, rated aerobic-kickboxing as the No. 1 calorie burning workout in comparison to all other forms of aerobic exercise.

This appealing statistic, along with a massive advertising campaign for an aerobic-kickboxing home video called "Tae Bo," is attracting so many new participants that gyms and health clubs are fighting to keep up with the demand.

James' class was taught by Alaina McCullough at Ironworks Gym and Fitness in downtown Eugene. McCullough describes her class as an intense, fat-burning workout. "The class uses kicking, punching and

jump rope moves to get you mean and lean," McCullough said. "It develops balance, coordination and mental strength."

McCullough's class is one of many exploding onto the exercise scene. A survey of fitness centers in Eugene found that most aerobic-kickboxing classes were developed because of the bombardment of inquiries. All of the gyms surveyed introduced their classes within the past few months.

McCullough believes the demand for aerobic-kickboxing classes began with infomercials for "Tae Bo," an aerobic-kickboxing program developed in Los Angeles by Billy Blanks. Blanks, a seven-time national champion in karate, created "Tae Bo" for home exercise use.

The "Tae Bo Video Library" has been heavily advertised, attracting Hollywood celebrities such as Farrah Fawcett, Sinbad and Neve Campbell. Celebrity endorsements can add to a trend's hype and, unfortunately, can cause safety considerations to be ignored.

Debra Kneble, a physical therapist and athletic trainer at Orthopedic and Sports Therapy in Eugene, explained additional safety concerns.

She said aerobic-kickboxing, like most aerobic activities, is a high-impact exercise, and

participants run the risk of musculoskeletal injuries. Kneble said possible injuries include hip strains from kicking and ankle and knee injuries from the impact of the jumps.

She also said that because the aerobic-kickboxing trend is so popular, classrooms are being packed to capacity, running the risk of exercisers accidentally kicking each other. Fortunately, Kneble said she hasn't seen an aerobic-kickboxing-related injury yet.

McCullough believes the aerobic-kickboxing trend will continue, especially through classes. She said there is an added value in taking a class, as opposed to working out to a home video such as "Tae Bo."

"I make my classes different every time; the videos are always exactly the same, which gets boring," McCullough explained.

Only time will tell whether the aerobic-kickboxing trend will endure or whether it, like so many other exercise trends, will soon be forgotten. James said she thinks she will stick with aerobic-kickboxing because it makes her forget she's working out.

Still breathing heavily, she says the workout was intense.

"I am going to be so sore tomorrow. But it was great. That was a whole lot more fun than running on a treadmill."

**Members of Alaina McCullough's aerobic-kickboxing class at Ironworks Gym and Fitness in downtown Eugene practice their moves. Aerobic-kickboxing is a combination of aerobics, boxing and martial arts set to music.**

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1:00-1:50					Body Sculpt 220 GER
2:00-2:50					<b>New!</b> Kick Box Aerobics 220 GER
5:00-5:50	Low Impact Aerobics 220 GER	Body Sculpt 220 GER	Kick Box <b>New!</b> Aerobics 220 GER	Body Sculpt 220 GER	
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REGISTRATION - 102 Esslinger. Registration begins Monday, March 29th, 8 a.m. - 5 p.m.; CLASSES RUN FROM April 5 - May 28, 1999 (8 weeks.) For more information call 6-4113 or drop by 102 Esslinger.

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