Reviewer’s report

Title: Pre-competition habits and injuries in Taekwondo athletes.

Version: 2 Date: 22 January 2005

Reviewer: Andy M Lane

Reviewer’s report:

General

This is an interesting study that addresses a limitation in the literature, especially weight-making in Taekwondo. The authors acknowledge that this is a pilot study and express caution towards interpreting the findings of their study, which is something I believe to be an entirely appropriate approach to the study. The work is mostly well written, and I have specified sections I think could be re-worded. I think the paper could be shortened and focused more on weight-making. The discussion is interesting but not focused and the introduction could develop the case for the study rather better. I think the paper would be enhanced if some of the information included in the discussion was used to develop the case for doing the study.

Major Compulsory Revisions (that the author must respond to before a decision on publication can be reached)

1) Strengthen the case for the study;
2) Provide a rationale for the data analysis strategy.

Minor Essential Revisions (such as missing labels on figures, or the wrong use of a term, which the author can be trusted to correct)

Comments

‘Most martial arts athletes practice between two to four times per week’ – this is a speculative statement. I doubt whether elite competitors train only 4 times per week, especially if training includes conditioning work, which could enhance skill and therefore be part of the authors definition. The authors do not reference conditioning work in the first paragraph. I think the authors should either provide a reference to support the statement or re-word the sentence to clarify exactly what they mean. Later in the paper the author qualifies evidence based on persona experience. It might be better if this was used earlier in the paper.

The review of weight-making is appropriate; the authors should make the link between taekwondo and sports such as boxing more clearly.

‘Athletes using this weight control technique are mistaken in thinking that an advantage will be gained over the opponent competing at his/her natural weight’. I agree with this statement but research to investigate both the prevalence of beliefs and strength of belief systems is scarce. The contention aspect of this sentence is the notion that athletes are mistaken. The authors might wish tc provide stronger evidence in support of this statement.

Provide reference the software package Statistica.
Results.
The results are descriptive. It would help if the authors provide a rationale for some of the analyses that were conducted.

It would help if the authors reported the prevalence of weight-making strategies among players.

Discussion
The discussion is interesting. It tends to drift onto factors not necessarily part of the main study such as the psychological factors section.

Discretionary Revisions (which the author can choose to ignore)

**Which journal?:** Appropriate or potentially appropriate for BMC Medicine: an article of importance in its field

**What next?:** Unable to decide on acceptance or rejection until the authors have responded to the major compulsory revisions

**Quality of written English:** Needs some language corrections before being published

**Statistical review:** No

**Declaration of competing interests:**
I declare that I have no competing interests.