

CENTRE OF POWER - AQUA KICK BOX

Part III: The Jab

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This is the third in an ongoing series of articles that will share information about Aqua Kick Boxing from a Centre of Power focus.

Part I and II discussed the evolution of Aqua Kick Box, the proper 'Stance technique' and the benefits of this new water activity.

First master the move to release the mind from a physical focus. This opens the spirit to the joy of powerful movement in water.

Legend:

- t = doing the move on the tempo of the music, using every beat (appropriate music speed is 120 = 128 beats per minute).
- 2xt = doing the move on double tempo, very quickly
- ct = count
- j'om = jogging or marching
- sw = swivel or twist move
- ext = external rotation
- n, w, x = positions of the jogormarch: n = lifting the knees in front of the body; w = lifting the knee to the side of the body; x means lifting the knee across the body
- A = anchored, no bouncing on the move
- L = light bounce, using buoyancy to assist move
- alt = alternate
- fr = front
- dia = diagonal
- sd = side
- rt = right
- lt = left
- rpt = repeat on the same side

JAB THEME:

In land boxing classes, the jab is the most basic of all "punches". It is used to open space in combinations of moves and to "keep busy". An important cue would be "punch - pull". In this aqua style of boxing we are thinking about positive space and surrounding ourselves with the feelings associated with positive energy exchange. Following is a guide for an aqueous approach to the jab. While there are some similarities to land, there are also fundamental differences. Enjoy the differences!

- start position (front stance) with hands up, palms face in, loose fingers, two knuckles up
- as arms extends, palm turns downward towards pool bottom (pronation)

- aim jab, visualizing the destination as a 'place of power'
- jab with purpose in a straight line, keeping elbow in
- keep elbow soft on full extension
- begin and end the jab with elbows close to hips, pointing straight down
- focus on the retraction phase of the movement
- keep shoulders relaxed
- breathe out on the elbow extension
- double focus - on both the delivery (elbow extension) and return (elbow flexion)

JAB VARIATIONS:

1) ALTERNATE FRONT JAB (alt fr jab)

It is important to develop the basic skills in order to execute the aqua jab safely and effectively. If time is not spent on proper technique, then injury could result.

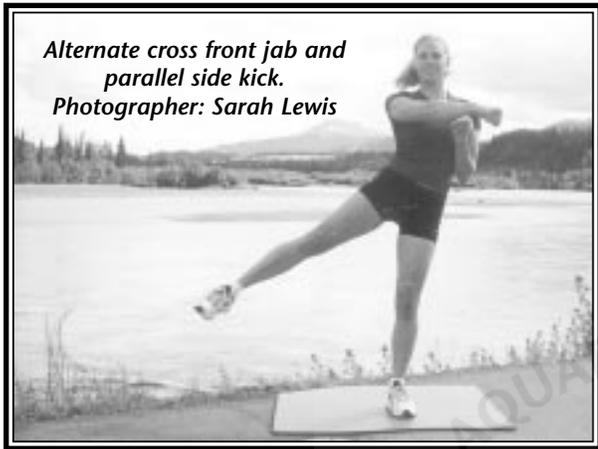


*Alternate front jab,
lateral view.
Model: Krista Prevost*

Skill Development: It is recommended that the leader use 16 counts; 8 counts; 4 counts; and then 2 counts of the following exercise to give the time needed to practice and develop the skill

- 1) Try the right front jab with front stance (both feet side by side); lift left knee (lt knee) on repeater narrow jogormarch (rpt n j'om)
- 2) Try the left front jab with front stance; lift right knee as you jab (rpt n j'om)

Building smooth transitions: For beginners, in order to ease the transition from right front jabs to left front jabs, use speed ball (punching an imaginary bag quickly, just think of Mohammed Ali in training, with narrow shuffle (2xt n j'om) as a transition move. Count down (verbally and/or visually) to signal the change of sides.



*Alternate cross front jab and parallel side kick.
Photographer: Sarah Lewis*

- maintain ready position with non moving arm
- maintain solid stance with non moving leg
- look straight ahead
- legs...anchored, repeater n'jom

2) ALTERNATE CROSS FRONT DIAGONAL JAB
(alt x fr dia jab)

Basic Skill Development: Using counts of 16's; 8's; 4's; 2's

- 1) Try rt x fr dia jab with front stance (both feet side by side); lift lt knee using rpt x j'om * x j'om: lift knee across body towards opposite shoulder, activate the obliques on this move.
- 2) Try lt x fr dia jab with front stance; lift rt knee on rpt x j'om

Building smooth transitions: For beginners to ease the transition from right cross front diagonal jabs to left cross front diagonal jabs, use speed ball with narrow swivel on tempo (t n sw). Count down (verbally and/or visually) to signal the change of sides.

Fun Variations: Skill development:

Block of 32 counts. (Repeat the following sequence 4x).

- 1) Try fr jab with front stance; change the rhythm, keep n j'om legs

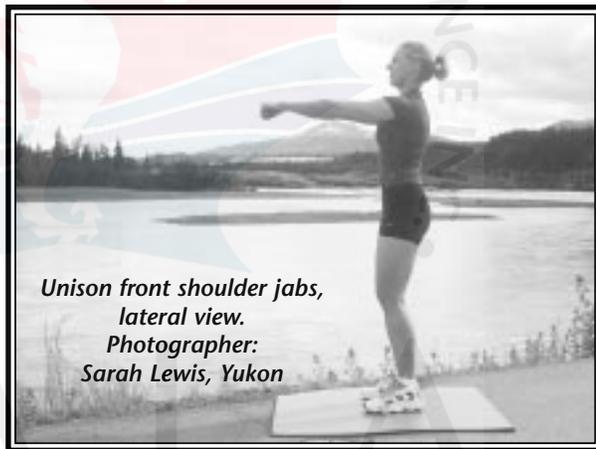
Move on the following counts:

- ct 1. rt fr jab - lt n j'om (knee lift) - Anchored *standing leg 'glued' to the pool bottom (A),
- ct 2. return to ready - front stance - A,
- ct 3. rt fr jab - lt n j'om -A,
- ct 4. return to ready - front stance - A,
- ct 5. rt fr jab, ct 6. lt fr jab/return rt fr jab, ct 7. rt fr jab, - n j'om - A (lt knee lifts, rt knee lifts, lt knee lifts),
- ct. 8. return to ready - front stance - A

Block of 32 counts. (Repeat the sequence 4x). Repeat sequence starting with lt fr jab.

Block of 16 counts. (Repeat the sequence 2x on rt and 2x on lt). Total counts: 32

Block of 8 counts. (Repeat the sequence 1x on rt and 1x on lt). Total counts: 16



*Unison front shoulder jabs, lateral view.
Photographer: Sarah Lewis, Yukon*

Fun Variations: Skill development:

Block of 32 counts. (Repeat the sequence 4x). Repeat on rt and lt. Total counts: 64

- 1) Try x fr dia jab with front stance; change the rhythm, add n sw legs

Move on the following counts:

- ct 1. jab - n sw - knees and hips face away from jab,
- ct 2. return to ready - n sw - knees and hips face centre,
- ct 3. jab - n sw - knees and hips face away from jab,
- ct 4. return to ready - n sw - knees and hips face centre,
- ct 5. jab, ct 6. jab, ct 7. jab, - n sw - knees and hips face away from jab , and bob 2x ,

Cuing is essential when teaching the technical aspects of the move.

Helpful hints or technique cues: The following cues can be effectively communicated both verbally and visually.

- ready position
- strong stance
- eyes focused
- jab - deliver right (rt), return rt

ct. 8. return to ready - n sw - knees and hips face forward

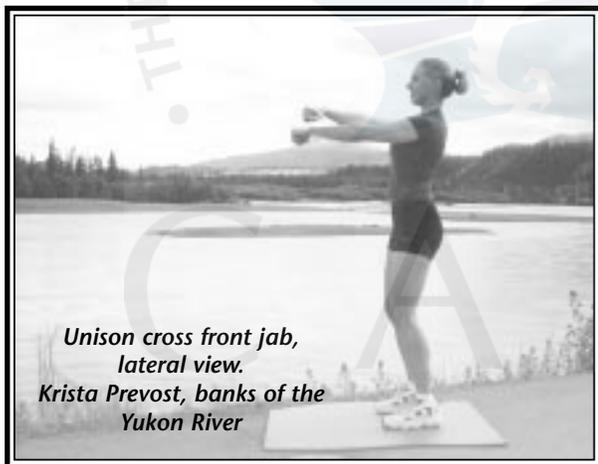
Block of 16 counts. (Repeat the sequence 2x on rt and 2x on lt). Total counts: 32

Block of 8 counts. (Repeat the sequence 1x on rt and 1x on lt). Total counts: 16

When you feel it is appropriate, add cues which stimulate the "spirit or soul aspect" of the movement.

New cues to add: The following cues work well with the choreography above and can be communicated both verbally and visually

- work the oblique abdominals
- control spinal rotation
- listen to your body
- keep body comfortable
- feel abs working
- bring opposite rib to hip
- toe ball heel placement of foot
- powerful knee lift across body
- keep elbow soft on extension
- feel strong
- visualize strength and beauty in each rep
- be in control
- gather power
- share power



3) **ALTERNATE SIDE JAB** (alt sd jab) * There are two variations of this side jab. For the purpose of this article, perform the jab to the side of the body, with the hand just below the water and leading with the front of the fist. The hand will be pronated at the end of the side jab.

Basic Skill Development: 16's; 8's; 4's; 2's

- 1) Try rt sd jab with front stance (both feet side by side); lift lt knee on rpt w j'om
* w j'om: Externally rotate at the hip and lift knee to the side of the body. The knee will face up at the end of the lift and the inner thighs will face forward.

- 2) Try lt sd jab with front stance; lift rt knee on rpt w j'om

Building smooth transitions: For beginners to ease the transition from right side jabs to left side jabs, use speed ball with wide shuffle (2xt w j'om). Cue, shake those shoulders baby!

Fun Variations: Skill development:

Block of 32 counts. (Repeat the sequence 4x). Repeat on rt and lt. Total counts: 64

- 1) Try sd jab with front stance; change the rhythm, add jj legs (jumping jack - abduction and adduction at the hips, jump legs apart, jump legs together)

Move on the following counts:

- ct 1. jab - jump legs apart,
- ct 2. return to ready - jump legs together,
- ct 3. jab - jump legs apart,
- ct 4. return to ready - jump legs together,
- ct 5. jab, ct 6. jab, ct 7. jab, - jump legs out , and bob 2x with legs apart,
- ct. 8. return to ready - jump legs together

Block of 16 counts. (Repeat the sequence 2x on rt and 2x on lt). Total counts: 32

Block of 8 counts. (Repeat the sequence 1x on rt and 1x on lt). Total counts: 16

When you feel it is appropriate, change the leg action to a side kick.

*Try kicking away from the jab (opposite side.)
Try kicking toward the jab (same side.)*

New cues to add: Can be communicated verbally and visually

- keep hips level
- keep back long
- listen to your body
- keep body comfortable
- feel abs working
- think positive
- toe ball heel placement of foot
- feel the surge of energy
- powerful elbow flexion on return
- be solid
- know the destination
- jab in a straight line
- keep eyes focused side/ change the focus front (ready position) to side (on elbow ext)
- always return to strong stance, ready position, holding power position