

Martial Arts & Close Combat

Despite all the technology and weapons technology, human recruits must master close combat. This is pointless against some species like the Lorgans, but upgrades make it worthwhile. Carter has been an avid martial arts fan since his youth, so it was no wonder he distinguished himself there.

The recruits were used to physical training by now and they were all in excellent shape. Even Henry and Gina had become sporty in the meantime and Gina now looked much more attractive. She and Henry spent every weekend together and everyone knew that they were a couple. But none of them would have thought that the efforts could become even harder.

Jazzir stood in front of them and explained: »You have surely discovered that your training plan now contains the term close combat instead of martial arts. One could argue, of course, that there is no difference. But in fact, there is. Last year we did martial arts. General techniques of different martial arts styles. You have learned and internalized the movements and your partner sparring was used to apply the movements to the living object.

But close combat means that you should really use the techniques you learned. You will train in twos or threes. It is no longer a matter of performing certain movements. It's about killing your opponent as quickly and effectively as possible. For us, in training, this means unconsciousness, surrender or leaving the circle. Don't worry, unconsciousness is rare. You practice with protective equipment so that you are still alive

when you have been beaten up. This is serious now. You must behave in the ring as if your counterpart would kill you if you do not take him out first.«

They all got protectors for the head, soft parts, and other important places. As they lined up in teams of two, Tim asked if there were any restrictions when Jane asked him not to aim at her face. Jazzir said that the real fight knew no rules and they had to learn to survive without them. The protective clothing was there so that head hits, blows to the soft tissues and all other weak points of the body could be applied. At tournaments, this was forbidden because it could cause serious damage, as a soldier this was exactly the intention. Rod, in particular, found it very liberating not to have to hold back when he bombarded Carter with everything he could give in power and punches. Carter had no chance to land a blow himself because he was too busy protecting himself. Jazzir interrupted the two and showed Carter how he used his smaller body size and agility to avoid and counteract Rod's hard punches. So Carter was able to score a few goals and Rod learned at the same time that he also had to defend himself. Leena also had problems because she couldn't do anything against Kelly's many years of training. The hard blows and effective kicks pushed Leena onto the mat in frustrating regularity. But Leena was not alone with this. Jimbo, Jane, Tim, Tom, and Nambur also had problems asserting themselves. Carter was astonished how well Henry, Gina, and Urma did. They quickly learned that close combat was more than technique. The reaction of the body had to become an automatism through repetition. You had to learn to react without having to think first. Jazzir explained that they had the whole year to do this, and they would take that time. »Close combat is

underestimated by most species. Since distance weapons have been invented, it is no longer necessary to face an enemy directly as often. In addition, many people like to argue that the physical superiority of the Lorgans makes close combat pointless. But that's not true. A good melee fighter can also defeat a Lorgan. For example, no Lorgan would ever dare to attack a T'zun directly.«

Carter set himself the goal of being as dangerous unarmed as he was armed. His greatest wish was to learn from the T'zun themselves.