Erulkar Testifies in Harassment Suit Against MIT, Sloan's Bitran

By Brian Rosenberg

Enrollment and interest in MIT and Campus Police self-defense and personal safety classes has risen, primarily in response to the 1989 rape of a student who had been for an unusually violent semester.

About 20 people registered for a self-defense physical education class this fall, twice the number that completed the last class spring, according to physical education staff. This is the second time the class has been offered for PE credit.

The self-defense class is designed to make students aware of their environment and to provide basic self-defense training. Students actually know "what it's going to feel like" to be conditioned in a dangerous situation, and gain confidence.

In past years, the instructor dressed a padded, full-body "Red Man" suit and taught students how to handle an opponent. The teacher acts as an assailant and the students have to learn safely from an actual situation.

Campus Police officers advise that a person confronted by a possible assailant should first try to avoid the situation. "If you see somebody coming at you, go the other way," said Sergeant Steven Daley, who teaches self-defense to police officers.

Otherwise, the person should be "the best witness possible" by judging the attacker's height and noting what he or she is wearing, said Sergeant Cheryl Vossmer.

"The Campus Police recommend that you cooperate" rather than resist an assailant, Daley added.

Other disciplines, especially martial arts, emphasize fighting back. For example, Tae Kwon Do teaches offensive and defensive techniques, according to Daley. However, these techniques should be used according to a person's size, confidence, and experience in fighting.

Self-defense classes, on the other hand, teach people skills that they can master immediately, Daley said.

The increased awareness about personal safety is heartening, Daley said. "This is not community. I personally don't like to see people become victims," Daley said.

People interested in self-defense can take advantage of a variety of safety programs offered by the Campus Police and other organizations around Boston and Cambridge.

Streetwise and Safe

Daley and Vossmer are also bringing the safety message to students through a Campus Police presentation called "Streetwise and Safe." Through primarily a lecture format, it teaches on defensive striking and confrontation techniques. However, these techniques usually cannot be practiced during the presentation because of the large audience sizes, Vossmer said.

"I don't care if there are five people interested in self-defense. From the viewpoint of a law enforcement officer, if there are five people interested in self-defense, it's a great thing," Daley said.

Students Leapfrog, Build Human Pyramids in Battle of the Classes

By Sarah Y. Neftigal

For the second year in a row, the Class of 1993 was victorious in Saturday afternoon's Battle of the Classes. About 110 students battled it out in the Johnson Athletic Center by playing leading, staffing marshmallows into their mouths, and building human pyramids while getting to know their classmates.

The Class Council sponsored the second annual Battle of the Classes to foster class spirit. Students were divided by class, then subdivided into smaller teams.

The first event was a three-legged relay race, followed by a game of lemon-juice-tossing, an obstacle course, a marshmallow-throwing contest, and pyramid-building. Classes were awarded 10 points for a first-place finish in a competition, 20 points for second place, ten points for third place, and zero points for last place. This year the seniors came out first overall, the juniors were second, the sophomores were third, and the freshmen were fourth.