

Muay Thai

The Origins

The **Muay Thai** (Thai-language มวยไทย) also known as **Thai Boxing** or **Boxing Thai** is a combat sport that has its origins in the Mae Mai Muay Thai, Thai ancient fighting technique. The Mae Mai Muay Thai fights studied both with and without weapons and was used by Thai warriors in war if they lost their weapons.

At present the term Muay Thai today identifies mainly the sporting aspect of the martial art.

Muay Thai has its origins in the ancient kingdom of Siam (now Thailand), as for the rest of the other martial arts, its origins are lost in the most remote and mysterious past full of wars and raids (the invasion in the city of Ayutthaya by the Burmese people against the Siamese, which led to the destruction of most of the historical and cultural archives for this reason the news we have in our possession can not be trusted one hundred percent because historians have had to rely on few writings saved by the repeated invasions and stories passed down orally from father to son).



On the controversial history of this people and the mysterious birth of Muay Thai, there are two theories, the first claims that the people of Ao - Lai was forced to defend themselves against the continuous attacks of robbers and the people who saw them crossing their territory during the migratory period (Tibetans, Bruma, China, Khmer, Burmese, and others), the second says that the people of Ao - Lai was already present in those areas and had to defend themselves from invasions of neighboring peoples.

Taking into account the first theory says that all have originated about 2000 years ago from the tribe of AO-LAI, that around the year 200 BC migrated from northern India to the Mekhong river before reaching what would become the kingdom of Siam, passing through the eastern Tibet, south of the rich valleys of the Yunnan in southern China where they moved in all directions until you arrive borders of the empire and then head back to the south, at which point the people of Ao - Lai was divided into three groups:

The **Shan** , who moved out in northern Burma

The **Ahom** , who went east to Vietnam

The **Ao - Lai** , who kept the name and moved to the land that would become their home, the "Kingdom of Siam"

We can say that in defense of the people Ao - Lai created a fighting style involving the use of weapons and combat Krabong called Krabi. Around 1700 the two different fighting styles split and became;

Krabi Krabong , style involving the use of weapons (sword, spear, javelin, knife, stick).

Muay Thai , the style of combat involving the use of elbows, punches, kicks, knees, head and fight .



The history of this ancient martial art goes hand in hand with the history of the nation and thus the Muay Thai over the years has changed considerably to reach its ultimate form known today. Following this historic route can be seen that as all martial arts including Muay Thai originated in the Shaolin Temple of China, and the first traces can be placed in a historical period called Pre - Sukhothai (200 BC - 1238) and attributed to Buddhist monks in India who were sent to the region called Suvannabhumi (region stretching from southern Myanmar - Burma - Thailand through the central to eastern Cambodia).

At the same time began the migration of the people of Ao - Lai with an inexorable encounter with the local populations where there was an integration and cultural exchange and began the spread of Muay Thai. After the Pre-historic period - Sukhothai Sukhothai was there was the (1238 - 1377), the city became the capital of Siam and also took a great religious importance. In this period was known as Muay Thai Mai Sok It became crucial for the soldiers in time of war, and was used as a defense system and how to workout to keep in constant form in peacetime. Also in these years the king Ramkhamheng wrote *Tamrab - Pichei - Songkram* , the book to learn the art of war.

Following the Mai Sok It took the name of Pahuyuth Ayutthaya era (1377-1767). The capital of the kingdom became the city of Ayutthaya and Pahuyuth became fundamental in countless wars against the Burmese people, becoming a key element to elevate their social position as well as it was practiced in the villages also and especially around the Family Court real. The same re fascinated and entranced by the beauty of Pahuyuth decided to practice it, and so called it "the art of the king."



Most were legendary Naresua the Great (1590 - 1605, during the reign of the Siamese people had been dubbed "the people of the eight arms") and Phra Chao Sri Sanpetch VIII, later known as *Phra Buddha Chao Sua* (in Italian *Tiger King*) for ferocity in battle (1703 - 1709). In this particular period we witness a first important step towards the transformation of Pahuyuth Muay Thai contemporary sports.

Before then, it was considered only as a fighting used in war, was then used as an effective defense system, then switch to a sporty shape that took the name of Dhee or Muay Muay Dhoi. The contenders were facing before an audience during religious celebrations or holidays and duels took place within the courtyards or squares. These meetings did not have time limits, (maximum were used as half-coconuts with holes in them that were floated on the water, and when the coconut sank, a drum signaled the end of the round), had no weight categories and contenders confronted each other without protection. The meetings ended by KO or death of the opponent to surrender and were often forced to deal with more meetings on the same day. In fact, the fighting in those days were more comparable 'in clashes between gladiators in competitive sports themselves.

The rulers were so fascinated by Pahuyuth who created a particular platoon who developed a form of Muay Luang Pahuyuth highly technical and sophisticated that served to protect the royal family and the defense of the homeland. The officers of this platoon were called Dhamruot Luang, Gong Tanai Luak or Grom Nak Muay. Only later, by which time the meetings were on the agenda, was introduced to the use of Kaad Chiek need, protection for your forearms and hands made of hemp rope is not refined that not only protect the athlete served to increase ' incidence of strokes with Gon Hoi (additions of hemp rope on the knuckles forming of lumps). The effectiveness of the shots was further increased by wetting the Kaad Chiek before the meetings, so with the phase of drying, the hemp ropes harden more.

In some circumstances it is said that with the consent of the fighters Kaad Chiek were dipped in resin, or any other type of sticky substance, then sprinkle with abrasive material such as broken glass or stone, thus making hands deadly weapons . Only later were introduced in place of Kaad Chiek, bandages rope with knots on the knuckles and then move to the gloves.



In recent years thanks to the practice of Pahuyuth the Thai army was much feared by their neighbors, but that does not stop Burma in 1767 that he was able to conquer the city of Ayutthaya giving rise to the legend of Thailand's most famous, the "legend of Nai Khanom Thom "

Nai Khanom Thom, heir prince of the kingdom of Siam in Thailand, he was taken prisoner by Burmese gained freedom impressing the Burmese king, beating his bare hands ten of the Burmese warriors stronger. Some of these legends say that he has won, in addition to his freedom, even to all the prisoners who were with him. Nai Khanom Thom is for all thai the spirit of the fighter, one who does not give up the face of adversity and who, with courage and fortitude changing events.

and who, with courage and fortitude changing events. The tradition has fixed that day to March 17, which has become the day of Muay Thai.

In three successive historical phases, was Thombury (1767 - 1782), 1st Rattanakosin period (1782 - 1868) and 2nd Rattanakosin period (1868 - 1925). The capital of Siam was moved along the banks of the Chao Phraya River, calling the first Krung Rattanakosin later Krung Thep Mahanakorn, then became in the end the current Bangkok. Rattanakosin era the Pahayuth took the name of Mae Mai Muay Thai or Mai Muay Thai and during this period he lives his consecration.

So she entered the lives of the people of the Mae Mai Muay Thai was introduced in schools as a subject of study and remained there until 1921. During these years, everyone wanted to practice Mae Mai Muay Thai: rich, poor, old, young, each country organized the celebrations, feasts to all the fighting. This led to an inevitable confrontation between fighters from different regions, which had their own fighting style that changes from region to region.

According to a historical reconstruction were the three most important currents of regional styles that influenced the modern Muay Thai, Korat, Lopburi and Chaya.

The Korat was a fighting style that included a guard low and very stable shots with very powerful punches and kicks, performed in combination of two or three shots. They were used for Kaad Chiek covering the athlete for the entire length of the forearm, so doing it increased the effectiveness of shots on offense and defense greatly improved.



The Lopburi was a fighting style based on the speed and precision of execution of a sequence of four or five shots. The guard unlike the Korat style is very high and less stable this allows greater agility, (main features of the style Hanuman). The Kaad Chiek only covered his hands with reinforcements on the knuckles (hoi gon).

The Chaya was a style that included elbows, knees, punching and kicking, strokes meeting with continuous lateral movement, setbacks and advances. The Kaad Chiek entirely covered forearms and hands and knuckles were reinforcements (hoi gon).

Although we consider only these three styles, one can consider the fourth Muay Pra Na Korn. This style is an amalgamation of the previous three (Rattanakosin era occurred during the rise in capital of what is now known as Bangkok). The execution of the shots could be very fast or very powerful, even the guard could change according to the evolution of combat. The Kaad Chiek entirely covered hands and forearms. In this period were built the first permanent arena for the fights, only after 1925 developed the need to have very precise rules.

Were introduced only after 1945, the weight classes, rounds, gloves to protect your hands and the shell for the genitals (initially made of bark then passed to a sea shell wrapped in a cloth and then become one that is used nowadays), the meetings moved the ring and left the streets and squares. These changes, however, have 'permission to become a sport of Muay Thai modern and safe as it is very hard.

After the arenas were built in stages, the most important are the Rajadamnern Stadium (built between 1941 and 1945 and inaugurated on August 23 of the same year) and Lumpini Boxing Stadium (built after the war and opened on December 8, 1956). The Mae Mai Muay Thai definitely took the name Muay Thai at a time when the kingdom of Siam was the transition from absolute monarchy to a parliamentary monarchy (June 24, 1939) that led to the birth of the Kingdom of Thailand ("land of the free"). During the Second World War returned again called Siam and then again become permanently and Thailand 11th May 1949. Only after the seventies Muay Thai was known and practiced in the Western world, and begins has spread internationally and in Europe.