

Muay Thai Training in Bangkok



As a member of Hogan's Institute of TaeKwon-Do, not only was my honeymoon a fantastic reason to go to one of the most beautiful countries in the world, it was also a fantastic opportunity to train!

Master Hogan had given me details of a friend of his, John, who lives and trains Muay Thai in Bangkok. After spending the best part of three weeks travelling around Thailand, topping up my tan and gorging on Thai food, I was in Bangkok and ready to go.

My wife Jess and I met up with John at the Dusit Thani hotel and as Jess went for treatments at the hotel spa I went with John to the Town in Town gym where he trains near the world famous Lumpini Thai Boxing Stadium. We were met at the gym by Charlie, the owner and former World Muay Thai Champion. John had explained to Charlie that I was a student of Master Hogan and was keen to do some Muay Thai training.



After I had warmed myself up it was time to step into the ring for Charlie to put me through my paces.

As a Taekwon-Do student, the first thing you notice about doing pad work Muay Thai style is they stand a lot more square to their opponent and that the focus pads used for jab crosses are not held in a statutory position. Instead, the person holding the pads drives the pad towards your fist making a very satisfying thud if you hit the pad square on. Very much like training with Master Hogan, every time my guard dropped, Charlie would throw a hook to the side of my head as a reminder! Kicking in Muay Thai is very different to that of TaeKwon-Do. The most common kick they use is a turning kick (Dollyo Chagi) but instead of generating the power by turning your hips into the kick and pivoting the supporting foot, the practitioner raises on to the tip toes of the supporting leg and as the leg comes around, simultaneously swings the arm down to give the kick more leverage and power. Unlike TKD, these kicks can also be aimed at your opponent's legs. The Teep (foot thrust) is another commonly used technique which is used to push your opponent back and create distance and knock your opponent off balance. The use of elbows as an offensive technique is not unusual to a TKD student as they are fundamental attacking tools used in self defence and patterns. However, in Muay Thai they are acceptable in sparring too.

The blocking and defensive techniques in Muay Thai are also different to TKD. The guard is held in a high position and attacks to the body are blocked by raising the knee to the corresponding elbow. One of the reasons this is used instead of bobbing and weaving is the

acceptance in Muay Thai for knees to be thrown and by ducking you are more susceptible to such attacks.

To get my used to using the knee, Charlie. Instructed me to grip one of the gyms punchbags and practice driving my knees into it as I raised onto the arch of my supporting leg. Kneeing is a very common technique to throw when in a clinch position.



John took me through grappling which as mentioned is a good opportunity to use knee techniques. It is also an opportunity to throw your opponent and incredibly difficult to master as your first instinct to escape the clinch is to pull your body away from your opponent but this just gives your opponent an invitation to push your head down and knee you!

I got to put everything I had been shown into practice with a light sparring session with John at the end of my training and all fits together very well to create a very effective fighting system.

A huge thank you to Charlie and John for giving me the opportunity to train with them both and I would recommend it to any other members of Hogan's Institute of TaeKwon-Do if they are in Bangkok. Also, thank you to Master Hogan for arranging a very memorable training session.



Taekwon,
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