



Arnaud  
van der Veere

# MUAY THAI

- LEARN THE TECHNIQUES OF MUAY THAI & KICKBOXING
- BUILD PHYSICAL STRENGTH
- IMPROVE MENTAL SKILLS

MEYER  
& MEYER  
SPORT

# THE AUTHOR

Arnaud van der Veere started Muay Thai in 1968. His trainers were people from Thailand, who emigrated to Holland in the early 1960s. In 1975, Arnaud traveled to Thailand where he encountered the original practice of the sport. He trained in many different gyms and fought as farang Thai under Thai coaches and trainers, and he started teaching in 1979. Soon the Dutch government found his work useful as he was able to help groups that others were not even able to reach. The government hired him to train and help special, extremely difficult adolescence groups.

After he graduated from university with a doctorate in biochemistry, he studied marketing (Erasmus University Rotterdam) and created 12 different courses/schools and still continues to educate himself.

Since 1984 (publication of his first book on kickboxing), Arnaud van der Veere has written many books, which have been translated into different languages, and thousands of articles in magazines and newspapers, acted in movies and in high-level stage programs, has been on TV, and conducted seminars worldwide.



Muay Thai



## **Word of thanks**

Writing a book is something you are never able to do alone. For the publication of this book, I would like to specially thank Miss Jaguar To from Force One Hong Kong who made this book possible. She was my student and the first woman who had the courage to open a gym not operated by a man. I admire her for all the work she has done and still is doing for Muay Thai as she has suffered enormous personal losses and harm yet still has a good mood and a great mind. In addition, you can find her in the gym every day.

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# Muay Thai



Meyer & Meyer Sport

Muay Thai

Arnaud van der Veere

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## FOREWORD

When I was asked to write the Foreword to this book, I honestly broke out in a sweat. I can talk very well, and I am a man of action. But writing? No, I am not a writer and I will never be. Yet I could definitely not decline Arnaud van der Veere's request. Anyone who knows me and my long kickboxing history knows that I pretty much live for the sport. And that is why I always like to participate in everything that makes a positive contribution to it, be it Radio, TV or Newspapers.



This is also the case for the book "Muay Thai" by Arnaud van der Veere, and that is why I chose to sit down behind my dusty and shaky writing table. I do it because I saw immediately that the book "fills a need." It is clearly written and accessible to anyone and should stand in the bookshelf of anyone who is serious about the sport. All techniques of kickboxing are very well described by Van der Veere on the basis of clear images. Of course I know better than anyone that most of the work is carried out in the gym, but even in kickboxing a bit of theory cannot hurt.

In short, as a multiple European kickboxing champion and owner of – in all modesty – the largest and most beautiful martial arts center in the Netherlands, I can heartily recommend this book. And if I recommend a book, then that means something. Not only that I am far from being a born writer, I am also not really the most avid reader. Even at my "old age" I still prefer to spend my time in the gym.

For "Muay Thai" by Arnaud van der Veere, however, I made an exception.

*Jan Oosterbaan*

[www.oosterbaangym.nl](http://www.oosterbaangym.nl)

## 1 THE SPORT OF MUAY THAI

After years of research, it was discovered that martial arts originally came from India. The roots are thought to be Kalaripayattu, the mother of all martial arts. This dance-like fighting form is not to be used in combat or competition in the ring. Kalaripayattu is currently still practiced in Kerala, a beautiful state located in southern part of India. The legend of this practice begins in the Ramayana, where men were meant to play a part in the heavenly battle between the gods. In the pictures of the Ramayana, there are many battles between gods and supernatural beings. These battles contain the basic fighting forms of Kalaripayattu.

Travelers, monks, gurukal of Kalaripayattu, the army and Ramayana figures have transported the soul and movements of the art all over Asia. Each country took a part of it and formulated its own principles and rules. Because of this, there is great variety within the martial arts. According to legend, Bodhidharma needed monks to stay awake during meditation and created a series of exercises also based on Kalaripayattu. These movements seemed to be the origin of Shaolin Kung Fu. The art then was introduced to Thailand. In Thailand, Muay Thai is a practical application of these actions in real combat.

The increasing number of training classes and gyms that exist today may be proof that people today want a total martial art workout to relax the body from stress and fatigue. Muay Thai provides the opportunity to train safely and, if desired, to also train or fight competitively with a partner or opponent.

In the past, the world of Muay Thai was a men-only world. However, since 1990 an increasing number of women have participated in, and even teach, classes every day. In my lessons and shop, the number of active women is still increasing. It is positive to see that they take the martial arts serious and live accordingly.

Dutch Muay Thai was practiced only by a lucky few (amongst them was Arnaud van der Veere). In the beginning of the 1970s and '80s, the Netherlands was the center of Europe for competition, with Amsterdam known as the "fighting city." Great names arose from the little country.

The first person to introduce full contact fights in the Netherlands was Charles Dumerniet. Thanks to him, the Chakuriki style and its creator Thom Harinck rose to

fame. The "red devils" took the full contact "world" by storm with their own mixed fighting style and red kimonos.

K-1, a Japanese-based organization, made the sport a commercial success. They took the competitive element of the sport to the extreme and maximized professionalism. Behind the master of this organization, Kazuyoshi Ishii, stood a number of famous Dutch trainers, including Jan Plas and Johan Vos. Fighting was combined with show and glamour, making it a fun night out for the family.

K-1 stands for karate, Kung Fu, kickboxing, and many other martial arts to practice combat-like situations in the ring under a tournament system. The system provided the first commercial place for fighters to perform to their top of abilities and earn a good living. At times more than 80,000 spectators watch the performances of the "gladiators." After the great successes, K-1 got competition from new ring styles like Shooto, cage fights, and free fight.



Moving to the professional realm changed much within the martial arts. Trainers are forced to take students to the edges of their abilities, top athletes have to live a disciplined lifestyle, trainers must continue to be educated and study the science of movements, coaches and all others must be able to assist in first aid, dieting, weight control, weight training, etc. In the old days, there were masters and students. A master was considered to know all. In the current situation, there are no masters any longer. A trainer is the person who works with the fighter to improve his or her skills, help him or her reach maximum abilities and help him or her move on to the next level. No longer do we work with color belts or fake diplomas. Both trainer and student need to perform and prove who and what they are.

To open a gym is no small matter anymore. To rent a place and start teaching is only possible at the beginner's level. To bring students to a higher level in competition, good equipment plays an important role. Competition or recreational training programs are a matter of planning. I use Dutch Muay Thai to treat students' addiction, mental problems, physical disabilities, and more. Students need to study their sport and prepare for training. Books and visual media are a great help to everyone. This book and available visual media are your guides in the ring sports.

## 2 HISTORY OF THAILAND AND MUAY THAI

The history of Muay Thai is bonded to the country Thailand. When the Thai (also known as the Dai in China's province Yunan, where the Thai originated) invaded the northern part of Thailand, the country was already occupied by the Mon and Khmer. The Mon reached the central part of Thailand around the first century after leaving Burma and settled down. The Khmer came from the area now called Cambodia and inhabited the eastern part of Thailand.



Under the Mon, the kingdom of Dvaravati became powerful and rich. The capital was based where Nakhom Phanom is now situated, a bit west of Bangkok (Krung Thep). They promoted Theravada Buddhism and created new religious sites. In the 11th century, the Khmer attacked the central low lands and conquered the Mon. The capital of the country became Lopburi. It was around this time that the Thai entered the area of what would become Siam.

In 651 AD, the Thai founded an autonomous kingdom in the Chinese Yunnan area called Nanchao. Continuous pressure by the Chinese army irritated most of the Thai and they decided to move away from the territory. The people then moved toward the Mekong. They explored the region, and some stayed while others moved on. During their travel, they encountered different enemies and were involved in many wars. During war and traveling, their medical knowledge reached a high level, and even today this knowledge is still used in many traditional practices.

When on the move, a warrior needs to be inventive and adaptive. The Thai learned to use many different weapons and took over the weapons and tactics of their opponents. In doing so, they developed a warrior system of armed and unarmed combat. When they took warriors in captivity, the Thai placed them in their ranks and learned their ways of fighting. After learning, they improved or changed the techniques and methods until they fit their specific demands and needs.

During the 12th century, the Thai invaded Burma, now called Myanmar, from the north and settled there. Today the tribe that settled in this area is called Shan (Shanstate). In light of history, the Shan are still more connected with the Thai than the Burmese. On the way to Burma, some Thai groups separated and founded city states called Muang (one named Fang still exists).

To live a relatively peaceful life, the Thai had to pay tribute to the Khmer. Increasing pressure from the Khmer and the ever-rising cost forced some Muang to cooperate and turn against the Khmer. In 1238, a group of Muang organized a collective battle against the Khmer and defeated them. The battlefield was near the first capital of Siam (Thailand) Sukhothai. In 1256, Kublai Khan swept his armies over the province of Nanchao and the Thai fled, seeking refuge in the new kingdom of Sukhothai.

This resulted in the establishment of a new kingdom and the designation of Sukhothai as the capital. The united army spread its influence over a large area now known as Burma, Malaysia and Singapore. Originally, the Thai were called



Siamese which refers to the Chinese word "Shan" that means gold or yellow. Due to this, the Shan in Burma kept the name in honor of the Thai founders.

From 1275 (until 1317) the Thai were governed by the great Ram Khamhaeng who laid down the fundamentals of the Thai alphabet. Thai is based on Sanskrit and Pali. The founding of a national language created a feeling of unity and nationalism. Ram Khamhaeng was a true promoter of the arts, among which was the art of Muay Thai.

After his death, the Ayutthaya period began in 1350 and lasted until 1767. The new capital of Ayutthaya was located on the Chao Phraya river near today's Bangkok. The Ayutthaya period was marked by the increased influence of the Hindu Khmer and the treatment of the kings as half gods. The founder of Ayutthaya, king U'Thong took for himself the name Ramathibodi (1350-1369).

During the Ayutthaya period, Siam was in a constant state of war with Burma. The Burmese conquered the citizens of Ayutthaya in 1569 and ruled them until 1584. This period was ended by the warrior king Naresuan. This king was an excellent Muay Thai fighter, warlord, and tactician. As a strategist, he is considered to have written the first book on the origin, fighting methods and art of Muay Thai. King Naresuan is a national hero who freed Siam from the Burmese invaders.

In 1603, the Dutch were the first to set up a diplomatic mission in Siam, and the Thai chose Holland as the first diplomatic settlement in Europe. The understanding between the two nations is still at a high level even today. Considering its history, it is not strange that in Muay Thai Holland is number one in the heavyweight world ranking list and next to Thailand in lighter weight classes.

The Dutch were the first to establish a diplomatic mission in 1604 in Siam's capital. In reverse, the Thai started a mission in Amsterdam, the Netherlands as the first settlement in Europe. A great boxer of that time Nai Khanom Dtom made history. In a challenge for his freedom, he competed with 10 Burmese warriors and defeated them all. After the fights, he was released for his courage and honored for his skills. Muay Thai flourished under the reign of the "tiger king" Pra Chao Sua, who was not only a skilled fighter but also a man who studied and recorded all details of the art. He was known for traveling in disguise to all parts of his kingdom to take part in competitions. During the time of peace, warriors and civil servants had to stay in shape with physical practice. Muay Thai became an important part of all training and recreation. Non-military citizens were also interested in the art.