



ANNUAL ACTIVITY REPORT

YEAR: 2015

This document of Annual Report Activity of 2014 is made in relation to the Strategic Plan of IFMA. In the following parts are IFMA strategic objectives and activity reports from 2015.

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WHAT IS MUAYTHAI?

What is Muaythai?

Muaythai is a combat sport of Thai origin. In Thailand, this sport is known under name of Muaythai, in Cambodia as Pradal Serey, in Barma as Lethwei, in Laos Muay Lao, and Tomoi in Malaysia.

It has been a part of the Thai history and heritage for hundreds of years. As with most traditions from ancient times, there are various stories of the history of muaythai. However, all available sources have agreed that muaythai was the primary and most effective method of self-defense used by Thai warriors on the battlefields of conflicts and wars that occurred. Consequently, “Chupasart” a warfare manual was written. It emphasized the martial art uses of each body part. The underlying philosophy of this warfare manual implied that fighting was more than just the use of weapons: Engaging total commitment with the mind, body and soul is more important.

Muaythai is considered by many, the most exciting and dynamic ring sport, incorporating the use of all 8 “weapons” of the human body: the fists, knees, elbows and feet. Muaythai is mostly known as a competition sport, which is either on the professional or amateur level. Nowadays, muaythai is adopted as a fitness activity and is growing in popularity within western countries.

INTRODUCTION

Introduction

2015 was another landmark year for IFMA with the important election to determine the next 4 years in the IFMA leadership taking place.

Dr Sakchye Tapsuwan re-elected as IFMA President; HE Karim Massimov, Prime Minister of Kazakhstan elected as 1st Vice President; 3 elected Female Vice Presidents, Sue Latta, the President of the Oceania Muaythai Federation, Elisa Salinas, President of the Pan-American Muaythai Federation and Ana Vital Melo, President of the Portuguese Muaythai Federation; Stephan Fox was re-elected as the General Secretary and Charissa Tynan as Sport Director.

The different commissions elected their representative in the Executive Board with Janice Lyn for the Athletes Commission, Dr Erdogan Aydin for the Medical Commission, Dmitry Putilin for the Technical and Rules Commission, and Caroline Aebersold for the Ethics Commission. A record number of 110 National Federations actively participated in the world conference and election.

Another important milestone was achieved with IFMA's recognition by FISU and Muaythai's inclusion in the FISU World Championship Programme. 6 important conferences took place with the most important one, a 3-day conference in Bangkok for AIMS, hosted by IFMA; with representatives from IOC, IWGA, FISU, TAFISA and many others. The IFMA General Secretary, Stephan Fox, was elected President of AIMS, which shows the credibility IFMA has in the world family of sport. Mr. Fox also will be sitting in the SportAccord Council.

After the championships in Malaysia, Russia and Uzbekistan in the previous 3 years, Thailand was the host of the Royal World Cup, which in the first time in the history of Thailand, 4 Royal trophies were donated to a sporting event. 110 countries participated in the event, the conferences and workshops.

EXECUTIVE BOARD 2015

Executive Board 2015

Honorary President

H.E. General Pichitr Kullavanijaya (THA)

President

Dr. Sakchye Tapsuwan (THA)

General Secretary

Mr. Stephan Fox (AUS)

Treasurer

Mr. Kajorn Prowsri (THA)

Vice Presidents

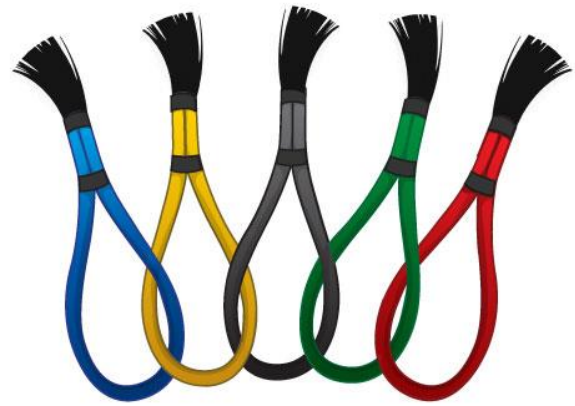
1. H.E. Karim Massimov (Kazakhstan)
2. Mr. Yeo Kyu Tae (Korea)
3. Mrs. Sue Latta (New Zealand)
4. Ms. Ana Vital Melo (Portugal)
5. Mr. Gennadiy Trukhanov (Ukraine)
6. Mr. Driss El Hilali (Morocco)
7. Mr. Tim Lee (Hong Kong)
8. Elisa Salinas (Mexico)

Executive Committee Members

- | | |
|--|---|
| 1. Zhou Jin Biao (China) | 13. Rodrigo Jorquera (Peru) |
| 2. Sherzod Tashmatov (Uzbekistan) | 14. Petr Ottich (Czech Republic) |
| 3. Detlef Turnau (Germany) | 15. Pernilla Johansson (Sweden) |
| 4. Sham Seetaram (Mauritius) | 16. Janice Lyn (Canada) – Athletes
Commission |
| 5. Dmitry Putilin (Russia) – Technical &
Rules Commission | 17. Charissa Tynan (Thailand) – Sport
Director |
| 6. Halil Durna (Turkey) | 18. Erdogan Aydin (Turkey) – Medical
Commission |
| 7. Lucas Managuelod (Philippines) | 19. Caroline Aebersold (Australia) – Ethics
Commission |
| 8. Victoria Nansen (New Zealand) | 20. Sami Kiblawi (Lebanon) |
| 9. Shahnaz Azmi (Malaysia) | |
| 10. Cheryl Garcia (USA) | |
| 11. Mervyn Tan (Singapore) | |
| 12. Rafal Szlachta (Poland) | |

IFMA'S INVOLVEMENT

IFMA's Involvement



Muaythai towards
Highest Sport Recognition



2015 KICK-OFF

2015 Kick-Off

IFMA started 2015 really successfully. In January, IFMA Vice President, Mr. Driss El Hilali, and General Secretary Mr. Stephan Fox, had a meeting at the IFMA International Office. They discussed final details for the African Championship. Mr Hilali made a detailed presentation on the cultural side of the event, focusing on bringing together the unique and diverse cultures from all over Africa. IFMA sports director, Charissa Tynan, finalized the agenda and Mr Hilali, detailed the cultural program. IFMA General Secretary Stephan Fox thanked the Moroccan Federation, which is fully recognized by their government and National Olympic Committee for all their efforts in continuing to be one of the most active IFMA and African member.

This particular activity relates to the 2nd Point under "Marker 1: Organisational Structure" of the IFMA Strategic Plan: Strengthening the development of Muaythai in some African countries.

MAIN HIGHLIGHTS OF THE YEAR

Main Highlights of the Year

Muaythai Enters FISU

On the 22nd of April, at the SportAccord Convention and Business Summit, muaythai signed the official contract with FISU for full recognition. The official contract was signed with FISU President, Mr.Claude-Louis Gallien and IFMA President, Dr.Sakchye Tapsuwan in front of over 200 representatives from the Olympic, SportAccord and World Games family.

Dr.Tapsuwan stated, “Exchanging sport, education and culture is an important platform of the Olympic movement and FISU has done such an outstanding work since 1949, we truly thank them for their trust, we will not disappoint and will continue to use the power of sport to make a positive contribution to society.”

Mr.Gallien welcomed muaythai into the FISU family and again highlighted that sport has a unique power and that Muaythai and IFMA has greatly established itself using the power of sport for the good of society. We now have a fantastic platform to exchange education, culture and sport and FISU is looking forward with great anticipation for combined success.

Special awards and presentations were also given to Mr.Eric Santrond and Mr.Oleg Matytsin from Russia for their outstanding contribution. Another important day for muaythai, where history has been made!

This particular activity relates to the 3rd Point under “Marker 3 of the IFMA 2013-2016 Strategic Plan: Global Placement.

Plan: Working through the appropriate university channels to stage a FISU sanctioned World University

Stephan Fox Elected President of AIMS

A president’s elections took place at the AIMS Annual Meeting, with IFMA Secretary General Mr. Stephan Fox, emerged victorious and is not only the new president of AIMS but also a SportAccord Council Member.

The new president revealed the importance of working with national federations to promote AIMS sports at the grassroots level and to highlight ethical and cultural issues. Fox warned of the need to protect member federations as a means of supporting all the athletes especially against rival groups and he will work closely together with SportAccord, IWGA, FISU and the IOC to ensure success.

MAIN HIGHLIGHTS OF THE YEAR

IFMA Elections

The important election took place during the Royal World Cup to determine the next 4 years in the IFMA leadership.



IFMA President Dr. Sakchye Tapsuwan, was elected for another term by the vote of 96 national federations that took part in the IFMA 24th Annual General Meeting. Dr Sakchye thanked all the delegates from the 5 continents for giving him their trust for another term, stating that as a Thai he is truly proud that muaythai is now world recognised with its inclusion in the World Games, its recognition by FISU and also its inclusion in the indoor Asian Martial Art Games, the Asian Beach Games and so many more. It is a testimony of the global recognition of muaythai as a cultural art form and a combat sport. He is looking forward to continue to be part of the 130 national federations taking muaythai to the highest sporting recognition.

HE Karim Massimov, Prime Minister of Kazakhstan, elected as 1st Vice President; 3 elected Female Vice Presidents, Sue Latta, the President of the Oceania Muaythai Federation, Elisa Salinas, President of the Pan-American Muaythai Federation and Ana Vital Melo, President of the Portuguese Muaythai Federation; Stephan Fox was re-elected as the General Secretary and Charissa Tynan as Sport Director.

The different commissions elected their representative in the Executive Board with Janice Lyn for the Athletes Commission, Dr Erdogan Aydin for the Medical Commission, Dmitry Putilin for the Technical and Rules Commission and Caroline Aebersold for the Ethics Commission. A record number of 110 National Federations actively participated in the world conference and election.

MAIN HIGHLIGHTS OF THE YEAR

IFMA the Only Non-IOC Recognized Sport Nominated for Ultimate Sports Federation Awards

The category shortlists were announced on March 31st for the international sports federations and associations that are vying to become winners in the inaugural SportBusiness Ultimate Sports Federation Awards.

Unveiled exclusively in a SportBusiness Intelligence Webinar in association with SportAccord Convention, World Sport & Business Summit, which featured a panel discussion with several of the external award judges. The category shortlists have been named for six of the nine categories.

The 10 finalists for the SportBusiness Ultimate Sports Federation and Association Award was published and Muaythai is filled with joy as it is one of the top 10. The top 10 lists included FEI (Equestrianism), FIBA (Basketball), FIH (Hockey), FIS (Skiing), the ICC (Cricket), IFMA (Muaythai), IJF (Judo), the IOC (Olympics), IPC (Paralympics), and ITTF (Table Tennis).

Muaythai truly stands out as the only martial art that has been nominated for an international Emmy, the only non-Olympic sport winning the Spirit of Sport Award, and now, is one of the only non-Olympic martial arts recognized in the top Ultimate Sports Federations list by SportsBusiness.

This particular activity relates to the 1st Point under “Marker 3 of the IFMA 2013-2016 Strategic Plan: Global Placement.

Plan: Contributing to promote the values, cultures and sporting aspects of Muaythai.

The First Promotional Event for the World Games 2017

The city of Wroclaw, in conjunction with the Polish Muaythai Federation, hosted the first promotional event in Wroclaw showcasing the beauty of muaythai, traditions, cultural heritage and muaythai as an exciting ring sport. The arena was filled with distinguished personalities from the Vice Mayor of the city of Wroclaw to the CEO of World Games, the Ambassador of Thailand, the IFMA General Secretary, along with so many fans.

The main three matches were Thailand versus Poland with Poland winning two and Thailand one to the delight of the audience showing that the Polish athletes are ready to bring pride to the host nation.

Many events would follow in order to bring the best of the best to Wroclaw and showcase to the world that muaythai is a true asset of the World Games.

This particular activity relates to the 3rd Point under “Marker 3 of the IFMA 2013-2016 Strategic Plan: Global Placement.

Plan: Working with the World Games for inclusion.

CONFERENCES AND WORKSHOPS

Conferences and Workshops

SportAccord Convention

In November 2014, IFMA signed a partnership contract for SportAccord Convention 2015. SportAccord is the umbrella organization for all (Olympic and non-Olympic) international sports federations with 93 full members, of which muaythai is a proud member among other international sports federations.

The sport of muaythai, under the International Federation of Muaythai Amateur, has been a proud member of SportAccord (formerly known as GAISF).

In 2015, IFMA went to Sochi and attended the convention from April 19-24. Sport Accord Convention is known as the world's premier annual event at the service of sport.

The SportAccord Convention was filled with many delegates and representatives from the sporting world who came together and continued sport and cultural exchange. IFMA, the world-recognized governing body for the sport of amateur muaythai represented the cultural art and competition sport in order to take muaythai to the highest sporting recognition. IFMA had the opportunity to demonstrate at the Sport Demo Zone at the convention again showcasing the art of 8 limbs to spectators of all ages.

IOC/AIMS Workshop

IOC/AIMS workshop was held at the Olympic Capital, Lausanne, in November and it was chaired by Kit McConnell, the IOC Sports Director. The meeting was opened by IOC Director General, Christophe de Kepper, welcoming all the 23 AIMS member federations and he outlined the importance of cooperation between AIMS and the IOC. Stephan Fox, AIMS President, thanked the IOC for inviting the 23 recognized international federations to the IOC headquarter organizing this important meeting. It was a historical moment when IOC President Thomas Bach welcomed each member of the delegation in person and took time for some discussions with the representatives of the 23 AIMS member federations.¹

Ambition to get recognition by IOC is IFMA's biggest goal since 2012. The IOC Executive Board approved recognition status of the Alliance of Independent Recognised Members of Sport (AIMS), subject to the signing of MOU and some minor amendments to the AIMS Constitution. After all the requirements are fulfilled, AIMS would finally receive a provisional recognition and become an "IOC Recognised Organisation". Final amendments to the AIMS Statutes are aimed for completion and ratification at the next AIMS AGM in April during the SportAccord convention, 2016.

This particular activity relates to the 1st Point under "Marker 3 of the IFMA 2013-2016 Strategic Plan: Global Placement.

Plan: To be possibly IOC recognised.

¹ <http://www.ifmamuythai.org/2015/12/successful-first-iocaims-workshop/>

CONFERENCES AND WORKSHOPS

TAFISA World Congress

IFMA is a member of The Association For International Sport for All (TAFISA) since 2008 and in 2010 IFMA had become a member of the TAFISA World Sport for All organization, another IOC recognized sporting organization. TAFISA World Congress was held in Budapest, Hungary, in October 2015 and hosted by Hungarian Leisure Sports Association. TAFISA invited all the stakeholders, and all its members for this congress to discuss about critical issue, Sport for All- the Ultimate Legacy.

450 participated delegates of 71 countries during this congress raised a fund of HUF 1.000.000 to a Hungarian foundation, Suhanj, that supports adults and children with impaired eyesight and other types of disabilities to participate in mass sports events.



This particular activity relates to the 4th Point under “Marker 3 of the IFMA 2013-2016 Strategic Plan: Global Placement.

Plan: Strengthen our relationships with organisations working with the mobility impaired.

AIMS Conference



All of 23 AIMS member federations had a meeting in Bangkok to restructure AIMS with the objective to establish itself as larger stakeholder and more independent group in the world of sports. The main agenda of this conference was an amendment of the constitution. The changes of the constitution have been made in close cooperation with the 3 IOC recognized sporting groups: ASOIF, AIOWF, ARISF. In addition, the membership criteria for AIMS have been tightened with the input of the IOC recognized sporting federation.

The sport meeting took place 2 days before the Opening of the IFMA Royal World Cup, where the 23 world-recognised non-Olympic sport

CONFERENCES AND WORKSHOPS

convened for an Extraordinary General Assembly and many other workshops. Muaythai is a member of the recognised world sport community since 2006 and this year.

The meeting was packed with important topics and the world of sport sent leading representatives to be part of this meeting from the IOC, World Games, FISU, OCA and many guest speakers will be part of the workshops.

The meeting was co-hosted by the Royal Thai Government and the Ministry of Tourism and Sport. Her Excellency the Minister of Tourism and Sport, Mrs Kobkarn Wattanavrangkul stated that – Thailand is proud to be the host of so many dignitaries from all the sports and sporting organisations and that muaythai, under the General Secretary, has taken an important part of this group. It is a fantastic opportunity for Thailand to experience and understand these sports, some of which might not yet have a national federation, but are included in important multi-sport events in which Thailand could potentially compete in the coming years.

IFMA President, Dr. Sakchye, stated that IFMA is looking forward to being the host of this important gathering and for all the sports and sporting organisations to enjoy unique Thai hospitality and to be part of the IFMA Opening of the Royal World Cup.

This particular activity relates to the 1st Point under “Marker 3 of the IFMA 2013-2016 Strategic Plan: Global Placement.

Plan: To be possibly IOC recognised.

Muaythai Youth, Education and Sport Forum

Along with the competition events of the IFMA Muaythai University World Cup, various side conferences and meetings were conducted, with the main forum being on Youth, Education and Sport. Speakers were coming from various parties namely, UN Women with the UNiTE to End Violence Against Women campaign, SportAccord, FISU, Thailand University Sport Board, the Thai Government, IFMA, and many others. Over 200 participants from over 70 countries participated in this important forum which truly shows that the power of sport must and can make a difference to society.

In the highly anticipated lead up to the Summer Olympics in Rio 2016, everyone was excited to have a dynamic video presentation from the Brazilian Government with a special address from HE Gilberto Fonseca

CONFERENCES AND WORKSHOPS

Guimarães de Moura and an informative session from Sec. Flávio Campestrin Bettarello on the games and additionally on opportunities for youth in social inclusion activities through sport.



This particular activity relates to the 6th Point under “Marker 4 of the IFMA 2013-2016 Strategic Plan: Fairplay.

Plan: Ensuring fairplay on all levels in the organization and regular workshops and seminars take place. – Muaythai will be a credible sport and set an example for the next generation.

EVENTS

Events

IFMA Muaythai University World Cup

The City of Bangkok was announced as a winner for hosting the FISU World Cup.



It was a rightfully outstanding event. Athletes from 40 different countries and from all five continents took part in it. This World Cup was sanctioned by IFMA in cooperation with the Amateur Muaythai Association of Thailand (AMTAT) under Royal Patronage, the University Sports Board of Thailand, and the Department of Physical Education.

The forum on Youth, Education and Sport was a part of IFMA's first Muaythai University World Cup, under the patronage of FISU and organised by the Institute of Physical Education and sponsored by the Thai government. One session was run by Mr Kristof Szucs, the Integrity Advisor from SportAccord, who spoke about Sport Integrity, highlighting issues on Doping and Match fixing claiming the two as activities that only benefits the gambler but devastates the sport, the athletes, the coaches, the media, the fans and sponsors as a whole.

During this event, all VIPs and participants from all National federations visited one of the Thailand locations of the global project, SIYG Campaign that targets people of younger age from challenging backgrounds. This campaign's aim is to encourage these youths to take up muaythai training and through their participation in training and dialogue programs, to be inspired for positive self-development. Taking action in our society is part of muaythai, and IFMA sticks to its commitment to make positive changes around the globe.

*This particular activity relates to the 1st Point under "Marker 2 of the IFMA 2013-2016 Strategic Plan: Competition/Event & Development Programmes.
Plan: Promoting Muaythai values and education at an international level.*

EVENTS

Pan-American Championships

In 2014, there was the *Pan American Muaythai Challenge* in South America where top South American athletes participated. This was a good opportunity for countries like America, Peru, Argentina, Costa Rica, Ecuador, Suriname, and many others to showcase their strength and at the same time that Pan America has strong intentions to hold the future World Championships.

Now, muaythai in Pan America is striving and all Pan American countries finalized and got qualifications for the upcoming Royal World Cup, which is the first official qualifier for the 2017 World Games held under patronage of the International Olympic Committee.

Peru Muaythai Association hosted one of the biggest muaythai events held in the region, the *Pan-American Championships* as a part of a 3 day Peruvian Festival. Peru Muaythai Association under the direction of General Secretary, Rodrigo Jorquera, put together a world class event which held in Lima. This event was hosted by the Peruvian National Muaythai Federation which is recognized by the National Olympic Committee of Peru in collaboration with Peruvian Sports Institute and sponsored by Magdalena del Mar.

The main match was USA Superstar, Kevin Ross, who took on the Brazilian champion, Leandro Duarte. And the Female fight was between Peruvian fighters Luna Tobin against Paraguayan Araceli Fornera for the South American Title. The world was able to witness the best of Pan American fighters in the ring.

IFMA Royal World Cup

In March, IFMA took part at the press conference for the Royal World Cup with over 200 participants from national and international federations. It was the biggest single-sporting event in the history of Thailand with the greatest awards given, when the combination of the 4 Royal Cups came to make this one major event. Dr Sakchye Taspawan, IFMA President, stated that this event was an honour for Thailand to host.

In June of 2015, the Royal family of Thailand, for the first time in history, donated four trophies for this event. His Majesty King Bhumibol Adulyadej, Her Majesty Queen Sirikit, His Royal Highness Crown Prince Maha Vajiralongkorn and Her Royal Highness Princess Maha Chakri Sirindhorn each respectively donated a trophy.



IFMA Royal World Cup hosted over 2500 people which includes athletes, officials and delegates coming for this ten-day event from all five continents. One of the highlights was the Night of Olympism where the five pillars of Muaythai – Respect, Honor, Tradition, Fair Play, and Excellence were celebrated and honoured. Each night there was an award for the best past and present athletes, social campaigns and they were voted by countries and the panel of judges. The night of Olympism was planned in cooperation with the Brazilian Government to get audience and everyone else into the mood for the 2016 Olympic Games located in Rio De Janeiro. Brazilian flair with samba, Brazilian carnival, and capoeira was included.

EVENTS

The 2015 Royal World Cup was the first qualification event for the World Games 2017 in Poland. Sofia Olafsson was the winner and the first athlete to qualify in her division to compete at The World Games 2017 under IOC Patronage. The whole process for all the 31 sports on the programme in Wroclaw is going to be completed only in January 2017.

These particular activities relate to the 2nd Point under “Marker 3 of the IFMA 2013-2016 Strategic Plan: Global Placement.

Plan: Promoting cultural exchange for Muaythai, a sport with no borders and broadcasting in television programmes.

MUAYTHAI'S GLOBAL FIGHT FOR WOMEN

Muaythai's Global Fight for Women

Superstar Buakaw Joins HeForShe Campaign with UN Women

IFMA signed an important campaign with UN Women 2 years ago to end violence against women. WMC president, Gen. Chettha Thanajaro, says that giving back is important and Muaythai must continue to help with the transforming the lives of those in need by instilling positive development. IFMA President, Dr. Sakchye Tapsuwan, stated that Muaythai is in various campaigns such as Muaythai Against Drugs, Sport is Your Gang which has won the Spirit of Sport awards and the important UN Women campaign. Using our champion athlete will help to change perspective and stereotypes, forging greater understanding of tolerance and trust. Sue Latta, IFMA Vice President and President of Oceania Muaythai Federation and former world champion who is one of the key person in the campaign, says that Muaythai is a martial art based on respect. Respect, meaning gender, religion, social background and races. Muaythai continues to use its power to contribute to a better society.

IFMA Recognises the Work and Efforts of Sue Latta

This year female muaythai has truly become popular, even in some countries more popular than its male counterpart. The award of Female Hall of Fame went to Sue Latta from New Zealand (on the left). She is an outstanding athlete, team member and coach. Now, she is the Chairperson of the Female Commission and Vice President of IFMA. Her dedication and commitment to the sport and art of muaythai, to the athletes, and to the overall value and growth of the sport over the past few years. Thanks to her extensive knowledge and comprehensive research projects, the female uniform and safety equipment saw significant alterations and enhancements. Sue has furthermore led the initiative to improve a standardized additional uniform which will allow Muslim female athletes to participate in the sport of muaythai. Her hard work can only confirm that she truly lives by the five pillars of muaythai which are tradition, culture, respect, excellence and fair play.



These particular activities relate to the 1st and/or 2nd Point under "Marker 3 of the IFMA 2013-2016 Strategic Plan: Global Placement.

Plan: Full implementation of the campaign in all of IFMA's member countries. – Partnerships with other sports and organisations in the campaign.

MUAYTHAI FOR PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES

Muaythai for People with Disabilities

Rafal Simonides, former IFMA champion, and presently the Ambassador of the Muaythai Against Drugs and Sport Is Your Gang campaign in Poland made multiple projects to introduce muaythai for the youth and kids.

One of the projects Rafal organized in cooperation with the city authority of Wlodawa city in Poland was an open training session for all people regardless of gender, ability, age and culture. Rafal also created a special training for people with different abilities and also presented the history of Muaythai from its foundation until nowadays with its latest recognitions. Rafal plans to continue and expand his projects and involve people with disabilities into muaythai as it could be only positive impact on them.

Alex Paraná is another person, who uses his passion for muaythai to help other people, in this case disabled ones. Alex is a coach, who teaches Muaythai for the visually and hearing impaired, as well as wheelchair users. He also cooperates with the academy of Thai Paraná in Brazil. After six years of working with the academy, Alex stated:



"I won my success with traditional classes, I sought more. If the Muaythai can be affordable for some, it has to be accessible for everyone. Teaching people who see, hear and walk is simple. Why not develop the methodology for the others?" After he visited Thailand, he decided to develop and start his first project "Eyes of the Soul", dedicated to the visually impaired. Alex made contact with the association in Cuiabá and talked to the psychologists about the possibility to make it happen. The psychologists were interested and his first class started with 10 students. According to his Facebook web page one of his student, Lucia Ferreira, 42, who has been part of the project from the very beginning stated: *"My self-esteem has changed. When we have a disability there is a lot of prejudice, whether in the family, at work, in the streets and muaythai brought me to safety, reliability and gave the autonomy I needed. Today, if I want to go for quiet walk around the city, or work out, I no longer need my husband's help to bring me to the gym or leave college."*

Later on, he put on an effort and developed another project called "Thai Pounds", designed for those with a hearing disability. The last project is "Movement Thai", directed to wheelchair users. According to Alex, the project began timidly, but now the academy has a wheelchair instructor, Larissa Vieira, who has passed the

MUAYTHAI FOR PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES

teachings to new students. She used to swim for many years and after the removal of a tumour in her spinal cord when she was only 15, she became paraplegic.



This particular activity relates to the 4th Point under “Marker 3 of the IFMA 2013-2016 Strategic Plan: Global Placement.

Plan: Strengthen our relationships with organisations working with the mobility impaired.