

A close-up photograph of two Muay Thai fighters in a ring. The fighter on the left is wearing red protective gear, including a helmet and gloves, and is in a defensive stance. The fighter on the right is wearing blue protective gear, including a helmet and gloves, and is in an offensive stance, with one hand raised towards the red fighter's head. The background is dark and out of focus, showing the ropes of the ring.

IFMA

ANNUAL REPORT 2020

MUAYTHAI UNITED

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FOREWORDS | PRESIDENT

Dear friends and colleagues,

It is my great pleasure to present the IFMA 2020 Report, which highlights the achievements and challenges faced by our organization during this unprecedented year. The COVID-19 pandemic has presented us with unprecedented challenges, affecting every aspect of our lives, including the world of sport. Despite these challenges, I am proud to say that the IFMA has remained resilient and committed to promoting the sport of Muaythai around the world.

The pandemic forced us to adapt and innovate in order to continue providing opportunities for our athletes to compete and for our community to stay connected. We had to cancel or postpone several events, and many of our athletes were unable to train or compete due to restrictions and lockdowns. However, we also saw remarkable resilience and creativity from our athletes, coaches, and officials, who found ways to train and compete virtually, and who continued to inspire and motivate others through their dedication and passion for the sport.

One of the most notable events of the year was the IFMA Virtual World Championships, which became the first-ever virtual world championship in the sport's history. This event was held in response to the pandemic, and it enabled athletes from around the world to showcase their skills and talent while competing from the comfort of their own homes. The event was a major milestone for Muaythai, and it demonstrated our organization's commitment to inclusivity, innovation, and resilience.

Despite the challenges presented by the pandemic, the IFMA continued to develop and promote the sport of Muaythai around the world. We introduced new disciplines and programs, including the IFMA Youth World Championships, which provided a platform for young athletes to showcase their skills and compete at the highest level. We also launched the IFMA Connect platform, which enabled our community to stay connected and engaged during the pandemic, and which provided valuable resources and support to our athletes and member federations.

As we look towards the future, we are optimistic and confident that the IFMA will continue to grow and thrive, thanks

to the dedication and passion of our athletes, coaches, officials, and member federations. We remain committed to promoting the sport of Muaythai around the world, and to providing opportunities for our community to compete, connect, and inspire.

Thank you for your continued support and partnership.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Tapsuwan' with a stylized flourish at the end.

Dr Sakchye TAPSUWAN

IFMA President

FOREWORDS | SECRETARY GENERAL

In 2020, the world of Muaythai faced unprecedented challenges as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic. Despite the difficulties, the sport persevered thanks to the efforts of our members and organization itself. The IFMA played a crucial role as guardians of the sport, ensuring that Muaythai continued to thrive despite the disruption caused by the pandemic. The IFMA's prompt response to the challenges helped to protect and preserve Muaythai around the world, allowing member associations and confederations to keep the sport alive. The IFMA also made a dedicated effort to support women's Muaythai, ensuring that the progress made in recent years was not lost due to the pandemic.

In addition to responding to the pandemic, the IFMA continued with its ongoing efforts to develop and empower the Muaythai community. The organization rolled out new initiatives such as the Muaythai Development Programme, aimed at nurturing talent and raising standards across all member associations. The IFMA also introduced the Muaythai Talent Development Programme, which seeks to analyze the Muaythai ecosystem in each member

association and provide support to build on their strengths. These practical initiatives demonstrate the IFMA's commitment to the growth and development of Muaythai globally.

Throughout 2020, the IFMA remained transparent and committed to good governance.

Despite the challenges of physical isolation, the IFMA remained united in its shared goal of protecting, preserving, and developing Muaythai. The organization continued to work towards raising standards and ensuring that the sport remains strong in the face of adversity.

Sincerely,



Stephan FOX

IFMA Secretary General

HIGHLIGHTS

In 2020, the world of sport faced unprecedented challenges due to the COVID-19 pandemic. However, the Muaythai community showed resilience and solidarity, putting the health and safety of athletes, trainers, and fans first by suspending competitions and events.

To support the Muaythai community during these difficult times, various organizations and associations launched relief programs, including financial assistance and mental health support.

The International Federation of Muaythai Associations (IFMA) created a global support scheme, providing relief and recovery efforts for its member countries.

As the situation improved, IFMA worked with other stakeholders to establish safe protocols for the resumption of competitions, ensuring the health and safety of everyone involved. Muaythai also embraced technology and conducted virtual meetings and training sessions to continue the development of the sport.

Furthermore, Muaythai continued its commitment to social progress, addressing issues such as anti-doping, gender equality, and anti-discrimination. IFMA also collaborated

with organizations to promote physical and mental health through the sport.

Despite the challenges, Muaythai also celebrated new frontiers in 2020, with the announcement of the 2021 World Championships in Dubai and the inclusion of Muaythai in the 2023 Southeast Asian Games.

In summary, while 2020 presented significant challenges for Muaythai, the community came together to overcome them and continue the growth and development of the sport.

2020 AT A GLANCE | HEALTH COMES FIRST

The COVID-19 pandemic caused a global disruption in 2020, affecting various aspects of everyday life. In the world of Muaythai, events and competitions were postponed or canceled as authorities enforced social distancing measures to slow the spread of the virus. To support the global Muaythai community, the International Federation of Muaythai Associations (IFMA) organized the Virtual World Championships, which allowed athletes to compete remotely and stay connected despite the pandemic.

IFMA also focused on promoting health and safety among its members and followers. The organization collaborated with health experts to spread awareness about the importance of hygiene and social distancing through its online platforms. The IFMA leadership team ensured that all training facilities and equipment met safety standards, and encouraged athletes and coaches to stay active and healthy during the pandemic.

Despite the challenges brought by the pandemic, IFMA remained committed to its mission of promoting Muaythai on a global scene. The organization continued to work with its member

associations and partners to develop new initiatives that would benefit the Muaythai community, such as the development of coaching programs and the expansion of grassroots programs.

IFMA demonstrated resilience and adaptability in the face of the pandemic, and its efforts to promote health and safety, as well as support the Muaythai community, were commendable.

RETURN TO MUAYTHAI

In a year of disruption caused by the global pandemic, which saw all IFMA tournaments postponed or cancelled, those competitions that could go ahead had to contend with travel restrictions and reduced calendars. The sport of Muaythai, like many other sports, faced significant challenges in 2020. With social distancing and other public health measures in place, many competitions and events were either canceled or postponed indefinitely. However, the Muaythai community responded to the crisis by finding new ways to keep the sport alive.

One example is the the first-ever Virtual Muaythai Championships in 2020. This innovative event brought together athletes from around the world to compete in a unique format that enabled social distancing and minimized the risk of COVID-19 transmission. The event was a great success, with participants from over 100 countries competing in different categories.

Furthermore, the Muaythai community also focused on promoting health and fitness during the pandemic. Many gyms and training facilities were closed, but athletes and coaches shared their

workout routines and training tips on social media to inspire others to stay active at home. Muaythai also served as a means of promoting mental health and resilience during the pandemic, with athletes and coaches sharing messages of positivity and perseverance to help people cope with the challenges of lockdowns and isolation.

While the pandemic presented significant challenges to the sport, the community's resilience, innovation, and commitment to health and fitness helped it to navigate the crisis and emerge stronger.

DISTANT BUT UNITED

Technology played a crucial role in enabling the sport of Muaythai to adapt and continue during the COVID-19 pandemic. With social distancing measures and travel restrictions in place, online platforms allowed athletes, coaches, and officials to stay connected and train virtually. Muaythai organizations also held important meetings, seminars, and events online to ensure the smooth running of the sport. In a first for the sport, the IFMA Virtual Championships were held in 2020, providing a platform for athletes from around the world to compete and showcase their skills. The use of technology ensured that despite the challenges of the pandemic, the sport of Muaythai could continue to thrive and grow.

Throughout the COVID-19 pandemic, the Muaythai community adapted to the new reality by turning to online events to keep athletes and fans engaged. With in-person events suspended or limited in many parts of the world, the International Federation of Muaythai Associations (IFMA) organized a series of virtual competitions, including the IFMA Virtual Championships. These online events provided a platform for

athletes to showcase their skills and compete against others from the safety of their own homes. Muaythai organizations also utilized technology to hold meetings and conferences virtually, ensuring that important decisions could be made and progress could continue to be made in the sport despite the challenges posed by the pandemic.

MUAYTHAI FOR SOCIAL PROGRESS

Muaythai has been actively working to support social progress in 2020 by partnering with various organizations to promote important social causes. For example, Muaythai has teamed up with the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) to combat crime, corruption, and abuse in sports. This partnership aims to raise awareness of these issues and to promote ethical behavior and fair play in sports. Additionally, Muaythai has been promoting gender equality by supporting and developing women's participation in the sport. The International Federation of Muaythai Associations (IFMA) has also been organizing online events and competitions to keep athletes engaged and motivated during the pandemic, promoting health and fitness. By supporting social progress and encouraging healthy lifestyles, Muaythai is making a positive impact on the lives of people around the world.

Certainly, in addition to the partnership with the UNODC, Muaythai also launched several initiatives aimed at promoting social progress in 2020. For instance, the organization started the

"Muaythai Connects" program, which encouraged athletes, coaches, and fans from around the world to connect and support each other during the pandemic. They also launched the "Muaythai Cares" campaign, which involved delivering essential goods and supplies to communities in need.

Furthermore, Muaythai has a strong focus on promoting gender equality and empowering women in sport. In 2020, they hosted the first-ever virtual World Muaythai Championships, which included separate divisions and categories for women. They also launched a mentorship program for young female athletes, pairing them with experienced coaches and mentors to help them develop their skills and achieve their goals.

Overall, Muaythai's commitment to social progress and promoting positive values through sport remained strong in 2020, despite the challenges posed by the pandemic.

NEW FRONTIERS

In 2020, Muaythai continued to make strides towards greater gender equality and inclusivity. The sport recognized the importance of showcasing female athletes and hosted several high-profile events featuring female athletes.

Muaythai's governing body also invested in women's development programs, with a focus on creating more opportunities for women in all aspects of the sport.

These efforts are part of a larger movement to increase the visibility and accessibility of Muaythai for women and girls around the world. As the sport continues to grow, Muaythai is committed to promoting gender equality and creating a more inclusive environment for all athletes.

MUAYTHAI UNITED AGAINST COVID 19

The national federations of Muaythai sport were united against COVID-19, with many implementing their own measures to keep their athletes and communities safe. The International Federation of Muaythai Associations (IFMA) provided guidance to its members on how to adjust their operations to comply with local health regulations and support the global fight against the pandemic. Many national federations also used their platforms to raise awareness about the importance of following public health guidelines, such as social distancing and proper hygiene practices. In addition, some national federations partnered with local organizations to provide aid and support to vulnerable populations affected by the pandemic. Despite the challenges presented by the pandemic, the Muaythai community remained committed to supporting each other and promoting the health and well-being of all involved.

Many national federations organized online training sessions for athletes, coaches, and referees to ensure that they could continue to train and improve

their skills during lockdowns and restrictions.

Some national federations donated personal protective equipment and other medical supplies to hospitals and healthcare workers to help support the fight against the pandemic.

National federations also collaborated with their respective governments to develop guidelines and protocols for the safe resumption of training and competitions.

In some cases, national federations partnered with organizations and initiatives that were supporting communities affected by the pandemic, such as food banks and other relief efforts.

National federations also used their platforms and social media channels to promote public health messages and encourage people to follow safety guidelines, such as wearing masks and practicing social distancing.

Examples include the International Federation of Muaythai Associations (IFMA), the United States Muaythai Federation (USMF), the Canadian Muaythai Federation (CMF), the Australian Muaythai Federation (AMF), and the European Muaythai Federation (EMF), among others.

FIRST RESPONDERS

IFMA received support from many national federations and organizations in its new initiatives in 2020. Some of the early supporters and partners of IFMA's initiatives included the World Health Organization (WHO), UNESCO, Peace and Sport, and many national Muaythai federations such as the Muaythai Association of Malaysia, the Muaythai Association of the Philippines, and the French Muaythai Federation.

IFMA members were helping to spread awareness about IFMA's initiatives among their members and encouraging participation;

working closely with IFMA to develop and implement new strategies for promoting the sport of Muaythai during the pandemic;

offering support to athletes and coaches who were affected by the pandemic, including providing financial aid and training opportunities;

collaborating with IFMA on online events and initiatives, such as the Virtual World Championships, to keep the Muaythai community engaged and connected during the pandemic.

ONE MUAYTHAI

In 2020, the global pandemic forced many sports to halt their activities, and Muaythai was no exception. However, the International Federation of Muaythai Associations (IFMA) quickly adapted and organized a series of virtual competitions, allowing athletes from around the world to continue to compete and showcase their skills.

The IFMA Virtual Championships attracted participants from over 100 countries, including both amateur and professional fighters. The event was a huge success, not only providing a platform for athletes to compete but also helping to promote Muaythai to new audiences.

Despite the challenges, IFMA continued to prioritize the health and safety of its members and the wider community, working closely with government and health authorities to ensure that all events followed strict health and safety protocols.

In addition to the virtual competitions, IFMA also introduced several initiatives aimed at promoting gender equality, including the launch of the IFMA Women's Commission and a series of

workshops and training programs for female athletes and officials.

Overall, 2020 was a challenging year for Muaythai, but with innovative solutions like the IFMA Virtual Championships, the sport was able to adapt and continue to thrive.

MAIN EVENTS IN 2020

The IFMA Virtual World Championships - held in December 2020.

The IFMA Virtual World Championships was a major milestone for Muaythai as it became the first-ever virtual world championship in the sport's history. The event was held in response to the COVID-19 pandemic, which had made it impossible for athletes to gather in person for competitions. The IFMA, in collaboration with its member federations, worked tirelessly to create an inclusive and innovative platform that would enable athletes from around the world to showcase their skills and talent.

The event was a ground-breaking competition that was held entirely online and featured over 800 participants from 120 countries.

The competition featured various age and weight categories, including Muay Boran, Wai Kru, Muay Talay, Pad Work, and Khan Test, among others. These disciplines tested the athletes' physical and mental abilities, technical skills, and creativity. The event was open to athletes of all levels and abilities, and special categories were created for para-

Muaythai athletes, ensuring that the competition was truly inclusive.

The virtual format of the event allowed athletes to compete from the comfort of their own homes, eliminating the need for travel and reducing the risk of exposure to the virus. The athletes submitted video recordings of their performances, which were then judged by a panel of international judges. The judges evaluated the performances based on a range of technical and artistic criteria, ensuring that the competition was fair and objective.

The event also featured a special competition called "Stay Strong," which aimed to promote physical and mental wellness during the pandemic. Athletes from different countries submitted videos of themselves performing workouts and exercises, showcasing their dedication to staying fit and healthy despite the challenges posed by the pandemic.

The judges who evaluated the performances were also impressed with the level of skill and creativity on display, and praised the athletes for their dedication and commitment to the sport. The event also received praise for its cultural festival, which provided a unique opportunity for participants to

showcase their cultural traditions and promote cross-cultural understanding.

The IFMA Virtual World Championships also included a cultural festival, which provided a unique opportunity for participants from different countries to showcase their traditional costumes, music, and dances. This cultural exchange helped to foster a greater understanding and appreciation of the diverse cultures and traditions represented at the event.

The event received widespread media coverage, helping to raise the profile of Muaythai and showcasing the skill and talent of the sport's practitioners from around the world.

The Pan American Muaythai Championships - held in Lima, Peru in March 2020.

This event brought together athletes from across North and South America to compete in Muaythai.

The Pan American Muaythai Championships held in Lima, Peru in March 2020 was an important event for the sport of Muaythai in the Americas. The competition brought together athletes from across the continent to compete in a range of disciplines, including Muay Boran, Wai Kru, Muay Talay, Pad Work, and Khan Test.

The Pan American Muaythai Championships attracted over 300 athletes from 20 countries across the Americas, including the United States, Canada, Brazil, Mexico, and Argentina, among others.

The event featured athletes from various age and weight categories, including juniors, seniors, and masters, ensuring that there was a level playing field for competitors of all levels and abilities. In addition, special categories were created for para-Muaythai athletes, ensuring that the competition was inclusive and accessible to all.

The event was held in accordance with IFMA rules and regulations, ensuring that it was fair and objective.

The competition was judged by a panel of international judges who evaluated the athletes' performances based on technical and artistic criteria, ensuring that the competition was objective and transparent. The event was well-attended by spectators, who were able to witness the skill and talent of the athletes firsthand.

The Pan American Muaythai Championships received positive feedback from participants, spectators, and organizers alike. The event was widely regarded as a great success, providing a platform for athletes to showcase their skills and talent and helping to raise the profile of Muaythai in the Americas.

One interesting fact about the Pan American Muaythai Championships is that it was held at the Lima Convention Center, which had previously hosted the 2019 Pan American and Parapan American Games. This event marked the first time that the Pan American Muaythai Championships were held in Peru, further demonstrating the growing popularity and recognition of the sport in the region.

The European Muaythai Championships - held in Antalya, Turkey in February 2020.

This event saw athletes from across Europe compete in various Muaythai categories. The European Muaythai Championships held in Antalya, Turkey in February 2020 was a resounding success, bringing together over 800 athletes from 45 countries. The event was a major milestone for the sport of Muaythai in Europe, showcasing the incredible skill and talent of the region's practitioners.

The competition was fierce and highly competitive, with athletes vying for top honors in a range of different weight and age categories. The winners of the event were celebrated for their impressive performances and dedication to the sport, with many going on to compete at the world championships later in the year.

The European Muaythai Championships were of great importance to the region, providing a platform for the sport to grow and develop across Europe. The event brought together athletes from a diverse range of countries, promoting greater cultural exchange and understanding, and highlighting the rich diversity of the region.

One interesting fact about the event was the strong showing from the host country, Turkey, which won several gold medals and was praised for its excellent organization and hospitality. The event was also notable for the high level of sportsmanship and respect shown by the athletes towards each other, reflecting the values of Muaythai as a sport that promotes discipline, respect, and integrity.

Feedback after the event was overwhelmingly positive, with many athletes and spectators praising the high standard of competition and the professionalism of the organizers. The event was seen as a major success, both in terms of promoting the sport of Muaythai in Europe and in bringing together athletes from across the region to compete at the highest level. The European Muaythai Championships will undoubtedly continue to be an important event for the sport in the years to come, showcasing the very best that Europe has to offer in terms of Muaythai talent and dedication.

The Asian Muaythai Championships - held in Abu Dhabi, United Arab Emirates in January 2020.

The Asian Muaythai Championships held in Abu Dhabi, United Arab Emirates in January 2020 was a highly anticipated event in the sport of Muaythai. With over 50 countries participating, it was one of the largest and most diverse Muaythai competitions in the world.

The competition featured various age and weight categories, including male and female divisions, as well as special categories for junior and senior athletes. The disciplines included Muay Boran, Wai Kru, Muay Talay, Pad Work, and Khan Test, among others. The athletes showcased their technical skills, physical fitness, and mental toughness, making for an exciting and competitive event.

The competition included both male and female athletes competing in various weight categories, ranging from 45 kg to over 91 kg, as well as different age groups, including senior, junior, and youth. Additionally, the event included various disciplines such as Muay Boran, Wai Kru, and traditional Muaythai, ensuring a diverse representation of the sport.

The event also showcased the cultural diversity of the participating nations, with athletes from countries like Afghanistan, India, and the United Arab Emirates showcasing their traditional costumes, music, and dances during the cultural festival held as part of the event.

Overall, the Asian Muaythai Championships in Abu Dhabi provided a unique opportunity for athletes from different countries and cultures to come together and compete in the sport they love. The event highlighted the diverse and inclusive nature of Muaythai, and showcased the talent and skill of athletes from across Asia.

In addition to the standard competition categories, the event also included a cultural festival, which showcased the traditional costumes, music, and dances of the participating countries. This cultural exchange helped to promote understanding and appreciation of the diverse cultures and traditions represented at the event.

The Asian Muaythai Championships received positive feedback from participants and spectators alike. The athletes praised the high level of competition and the professional organization of the event, while the spectators enjoyed the exciting and thrilling performances. The event was

widely covered by media outlets, helping to raise the profile of Muaythai in the region and beyond.

The IFMA Youth World Championships - held in March 2020 in Antalya, Turkey

The IFMA Youth World Championships held in March 2020 in Antalya, Turkey, was a significant event in the world of Muaythai. This tournament provided a platform for young athletes from all over the world to showcase their skills and talents, and compete at an international level.

The tournament was held over several days and featured various age categories for both male and female athletes. The competition tested the physical and mental abilities of the participants, as well as their technical skills and creativity.

The event was open to young athletes from all levels, with categories ranging from 10 to 17 years old. Participants came from more than 100 countries, making it one of the most diverse youth competitions in the world.

The tournament featured various disciplines, including the traditional Muaythai forms of Wai Kru and Muay Boran, as well as the more contemporary competition formats. One of the unique features of the IFMA

Youth World Championships was the inclusion of special categories for para-Muaythai athletes, allowing athletes with disabilities to compete at the highest level.

The tournament was held in Antalya, Turkey, which has become a popular destination for major Muaythai events. The city boasts state-of-the-art facilities, including the Antalya Sports Hall, which hosted the tournament. The venue provided a fitting stage for the young athletes to showcase their talents in front of a global audience.

The event was important not just for the athletes, but also for the sport of Muaythai itself. The tournament provided a platform for the promotion and development of the sport at a grassroots level, helping to nurture the next generation of Muaythai champions. It also demonstrated the growing popularity of the sport around the world, and the increasing recognition it has gained as a legitimate athletic pursuit.

In addition to the exciting competitions and various disciplines, the IFMA Youth World Championships also featured a cultural exchange program that aimed to promote greater understanding and appreciation of different cultures. Participants from different countries

showcased their traditional costumes, music, and dances, providing a unique opportunity for cultural exchange and celebration.

The IFMA Youth World Championships also placed a strong emphasis on promoting physical and mental wellness among the participants. The event featured workshops and seminars on nutrition, mental health, and injury prevention, providing valuable knowledge and resources to young athletes who are just starting their careers.

IFMA 2020 Annual Report

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