



Judging, scoring and the rules of Muay Thai



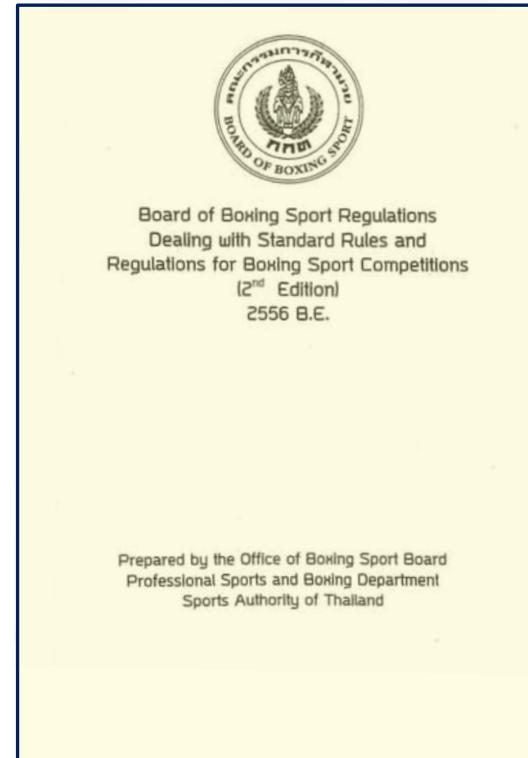
Aims

Present an overview of the rules
and scoring of the sport of Muay
Thai

Presenting the written and ‘official’
version of scoring criteria

Discussing how the criteria are
interpreted the way that scoring
should be actually implemented by
Judges

Prepare you for the judging
assessment



Background

Setting the scene



Tony Myers

Judging Muay Thai

Muay Thai is a sport and like other sports it has its own set of rules and a unique set of **scoring criteria**



Judging Muay Thai

This is different than the criteria used in

K1

Kickboxing

Shootboxing

International boxing

MMA

One Championship



Change over time



Change over time

Apidej Sit-Harun, “voted Boxer of the Century”

2x Lumpinee Champion
2 x Radjadamnern Champion

Adul Srisothorn “Diamond Crown Champion”

2 x Lumpinee Champion
Radjadamnern Champion

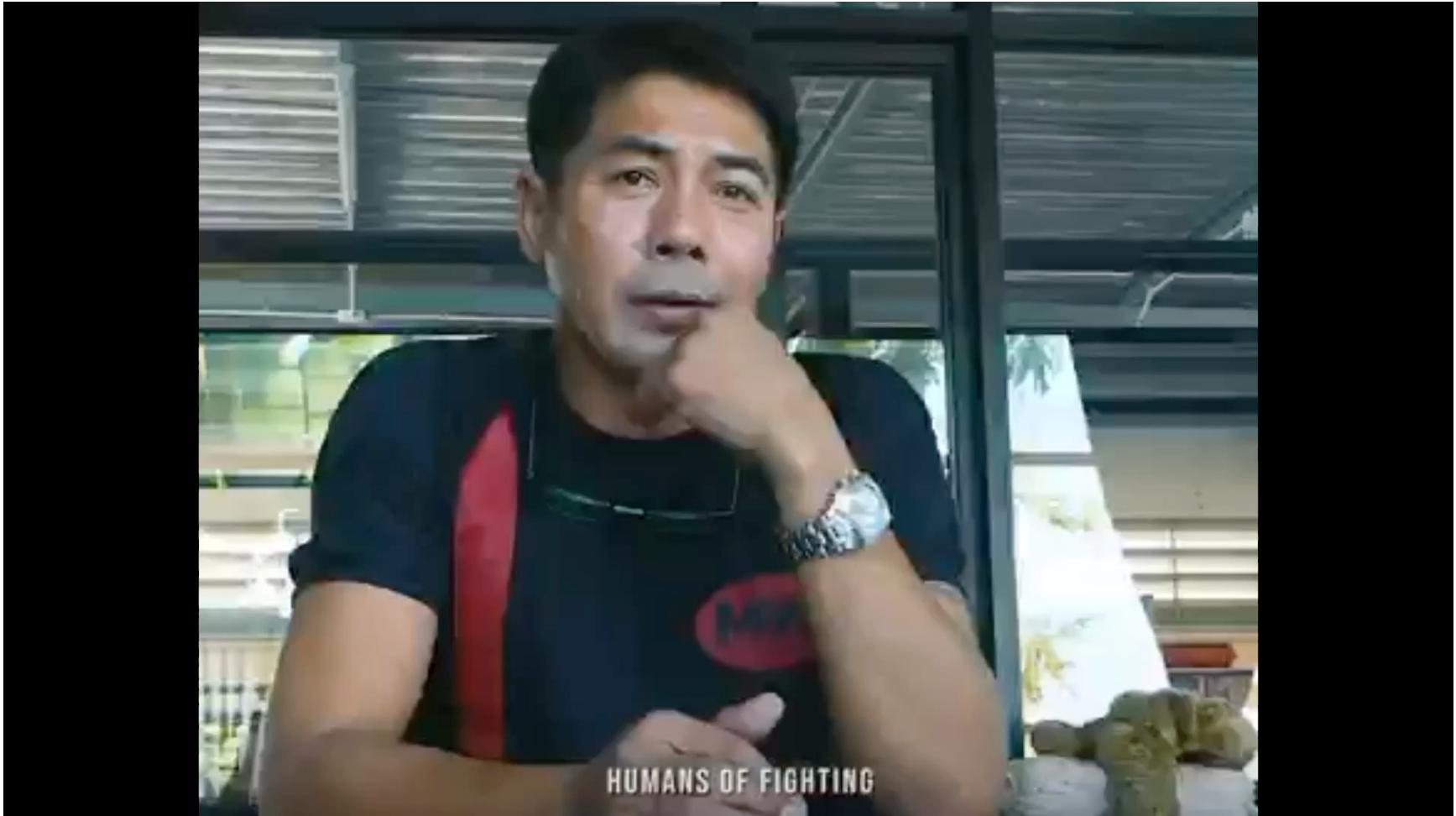
Pud Pad Noi Worawoot “Golden Leg/ Shin”

3 x Lumpinee champion,
Radjadamnern tournament winner

Samart Payakaroon “Jade-faced Tiger”

4 x Lumpinee Champion

Importance of basics and standardised scoring



HUMANS OF FIGHTING

Judging Muay Thai

The criteria, properly applied offers a number of benefits:

It encourages athletes to develop good Muay Thai skills

Offering athletes and coaches a clear focus for training

Research has shown the link between judging criteria and technique selection and quality (Myers et al, 2013; Myers & Nevill, 2008)

It is highly consistent

Again research has demonstrated the consistency of applying the criteria with over 90% agreement on decisions (Myers, Nevill & Nakeeb, 2010)

Professional fights

ใบให้คะแนน มวย

ผู้ตัดสิน _____ ผู้ตัดสิน _____ ผู้ตัดสิน _____
คู่ที่ _____

แดง _____ น้ำเงิน _____

ยก 1	6	7	8	9	10	6	7	8	9	10
ยก 2	6	7	8	9	10	6	7	8	9	10
ยก 3	6	7	8	9	10	6	7	8	9	10
ยก 4	6	7	8	9	10	6	7	8	9	10
ยก 5	6	7	8	9	10	6	7	8	9	10

รวม _____ คะแนน รวม _____ คะแนน
ผู้ตัดสิน _____ ผู้ตัดสิน _____ ผู้ตัดสิน _____
ผู้ตัดสิน _____ ผู้ตัดสิน _____ ผู้ตัดสิน _____

GUARD OF MUAY THAI OFFICIALS

GMTO SCORE CARD

GMTO Judge _____ Venue _____
Fight Class/Title _____ Date _____
Fight number _____

Fighters Name – Red Corner	Fighters Name – Blue Corner		
ROUND	RED	BLUE	Notes
1			
2			
3			
4			
5			

Total Score RED = Total Score BLUE =

RESULT

Official's Signature _____

Scoring

- 10-10 Can't pick a winner
- 10-10+ Boxer has edged a round but not won clearly
- 10-9 Clearly won round
- 10-9 Both boxers are knocked down but one clearly wins the rest of the action
- 10-8 a) A knock down (8-count) 10-8
b) Total domination throughout the round by one boxer
- 10-7 Two knock downs (8-count)

It is possible for different point allocations to be awarded, depending on other action in the round

Professional decisions

Points

Majority decision

Winning by Knockout (KO)

The boxer is knocked down and cannot continue the fight for the count of ten

Winning by technical knockout (TKO)

Outclassed

Cannot continue after end of the round break

Injured

Counted the third time in one round

Counted the fifth time in the fight

Fallen out of the ring and can't return before the count of twenty

Fighter withdraws from contest

Professional decisions

Winning by disqualification

Winning by walkover

Boxer fails the medical, fails to make the weight or does not turn up (not recorded as this in the UK)

A draw

Majority decision is even

Both boxers are knocked down and counted to 10

Both boxers have fallen out of the ring and are counted to 20

Both boxers are seriously injured and cannot continue

Professional decisions

No decision

Both boxers fight dishonourably

No contest

Boxers don't fight (either not engaging and trying to fight, or throwing the fight)

Cancellation of the contest

Ring damage

Riot

Other unexpected situation

What to consider when judging (as detailed in the rules)

Effective Aggressiveness

The most important factor for winning a round:

The number of **clean blows** landed with **power** and **Accuracy** whether moving forwards, backwards, sideways, against the ropes or counter fighting

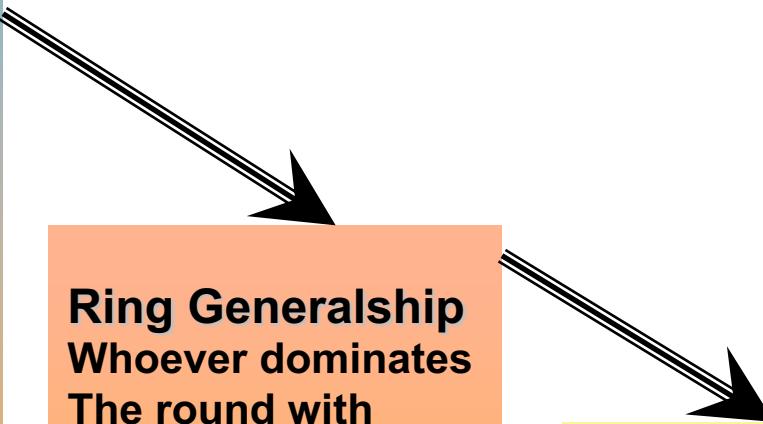
70%

Ring Generalship
Whoever dominates The round with boxing skills to control the action And does not allow His opponent to Perform

20%

Pure Aggressiveness
Who forces the Action, against a boxer who only runs away

10%



The Muay Thai scoring hierarchy



**A boxer can score while moving forward, backward, sideways, or on the ropes.
Judges reward effective scoring with balance and control, not simply advancing**

Muay Thai scoring

Strong signals (often decisive):

Displacement or posture break

Clear visible hurt / change in behaviour

Clean body kick/knee/with balance (and not convincingly returned)

Weak signals (only matter if the fight is otherwise close):

High activity with little effect

Pressure that is neutralised or easily evaded

Contact that is clearly absorbed/checked with posture unaffected

Clean, effective, balanced, and controlling actions score

Effectiveness (visible impact, off-balancing, damage that changes behaviour).

Dominance/control (who is imposing their game, ring command).

Balance & posture (who remains composed, who is disrupted).

Defence and answers (checking, blocking, evading, countering with effect).

Narrative across rounds (momentum and command matter; it is not a round-by-round strike count).

Defend → return with balance” sequences, rather than “trade volume”

Archetypes that win

- The composed kicker controlling range.
- The clinch controller turning and kneeing and breaking posture.
- The counter fighter who scores cleaner and looks dominant.
- The puncher who wins only when punches create unmistakable effect (knockdowns, visible damage, sustained dominance).

Scoring

High-value actions (when clean and balanced):

Body kicks (especially to ribs/torso) that visibly move the opponent or are not blocked well.

Knees (especially to body) with clear effect.

Teep (when it off-balances, disrupts rhythm, shows control).

Clinching dominance: turns, off-balancing, knees that land clean.

Dumps/sweeps (when executed cleanly with the scorer remaining balanced).

Lower-value or conditional actions:

Punches: can score, but usually need clear effect (stun, knockdown, visible damage) to outweigh kicks/knees.

Low kicks: variable; score more if they clearly compromise stance/mobility.

“Busy” combinations: low scoring if blocked, absorbed, or if the striker is off-balance or immediately countered.

“Touching is not scoring; effect is scoring.”

Clinch scoring: clinching can be a major separator in fight

What counts

Control of position, turning, posture breaking,
knees landing clean, opponent neutralised.

What does not count much

Holding without effect, knees that are smothered
or weak, mutual stalling.

Sweeps/throws/dumps

What makes them score (timing, control, opponent
loss of balance).

Key things in scoring

The number of Muay Thai techniques delivered appropriately on target

Effect

Disturbing an opponent's physical equilibrium

If a boxer loses position they get scored on

Disturbing an opponent's psychological equilibrium

If an opponent shows pain or fear they scored upon

Sharp techniques

Beginning in a good balanced position

Delivered quickly (sharply) on balance

Returning to a good balanced position

Comparing the quality of delivery



ROAR
FIGHTING CHAMPIONSHIP

2
Round

Qualities of techniques

Targets – trade between target and physical effect

Score without visual effect

Cleanly on the body or neck

Cleanly across the back

Boxer showing balance and control before, during and after delivery of scoring techniques

The target can be important in scoring

Target



Effect can be important in scoring

Effect



Tony Myers

Different style of fighters

Counter boxers can move backwards or sideways can win just the same as a boxer going forward if they move in a controlled way, maintaining position and scoring

Attacking boxers can win by advancing if they can maintain position and score

Counter fighter



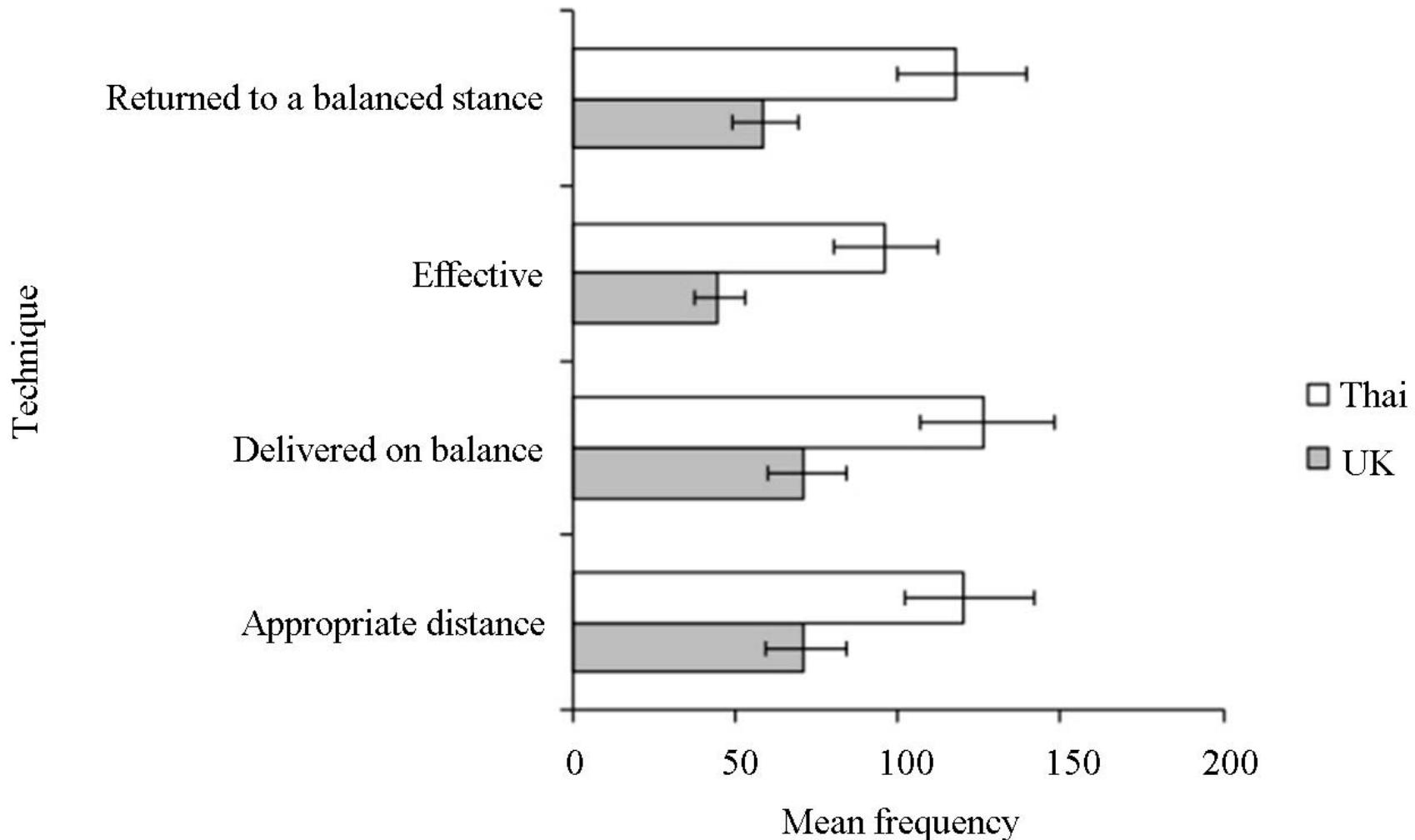
Attack fighter



**Even though you get different styles
there are key things each boxer
needs**

Appropriate technique at the right distance, balance, effectiveness

Myers, T. D., Balmer, Nevill, A.M. and Al-Nakeeb, Y. (2013)



One key to showing strength (by avoiding being easily moved by various strikes)
Footwork (Durn Muay)



The job of a Muay Thai Judge...

The job of a Muay Thai judge is to determine, who, over the whole fight is the stronger of two competitors in terms of Muay Thai

Judges do this by making a comparison of both boxers, their skills and the effective use of those skills over five rounds

The job of a Muay Thai Judge...

This means can mean

determining which of two highly skilled boxers is better in terms of **Muay Thai** across a whole fight

But equally it can mean...

determining which of two rather unskilled boxers is the better in terms of **Muay Thai** across the whole fight (not in terms of another fighting style)

For example

If a boxer can protect against every weapon their opponent throws and they are unable to land techniques, the boxer blocking will win by landing only one single kick.

More than just the techniques landed that influence who wins

Sometimes a person shows strength by just being able to block every technique an opponent throws

A boxer whose leg is caught but the opponent can't throw the boxer down

In the clinch a boxer gets their head pulled down

The boxer who has their head pulled down shows they are weaker

The boxer who gets so tired they can't maintain position

The boxer who can't maintain position is the weaker boxer

More than just the techniques landed that influence who wins

If a boxer catches an opponents kick and kick their opponent over quickly and cleanly with a sharp kick it is better than if they catch and the opponent over slowly kick slowly

In the course of an exchange both catch and kick over the one who kicks over faster and sharper is the best

Scoring Techniques

Punch- with effect scores



Roundkick to body



Score with the knee



Teep (Front kick) score



Catch and attack score



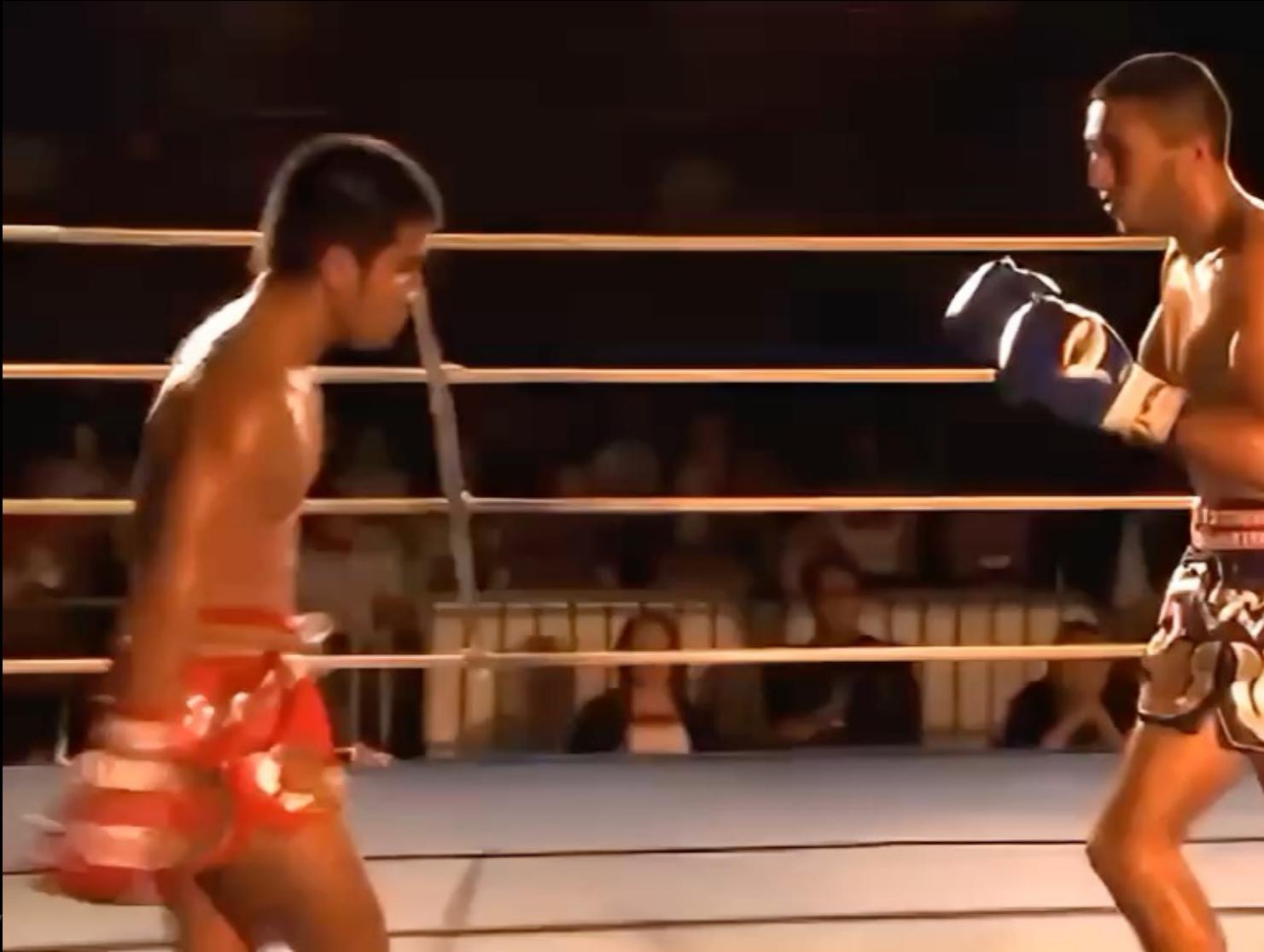
Elbow score



Kick to leg scores well at any particular time only if there is an effect - *but can be effective over the course of a fight*



Leg kick score



Tony

Ring generalship: Controlling an opponent



www.clipLiveMuayThaiGuy.com

คลิปเด็ดมวยไทย สดๆ ทุกยก ทุกคู่ ทุกสนาม

SMS 4221565

You are looking to determine...

Which of the two boxers

Shows they are stronger (in terms of Muay Thai technique)

Shows good stance and position (balanced Muay Thai stance)

Delivers sharp weapons (Muay Thai techniques)

Controls the fight

Judging effectiveness and technique quality

Judges can't actually feel the techniques delivered by a boxer

So, they have to use a combination of an assessment of effect using set of visual clues to determine effect

Target

Techniques cleanly landing on target

Aesthetics

Good Muay Thai style balance before, during and after technique delivery

Sharp clean weapons

Balance

Does a boxer get moved by an opponent's technique?

Condition of the boxers

e.g. one boxer showing they are tired – not being out of breath but not able to keep position

Effectiveness in practice

Maintaining position and good balance are essential in Muay Thai- *before, during and after delivery*

Clean kicks and knees to the body are considered to be more effective than a cleanly landed punch of similar effect

Is often judged in retrospect – *a boxer who shows they are tired by losing position is considered to show the accumulative effect of their opponent's techniques*

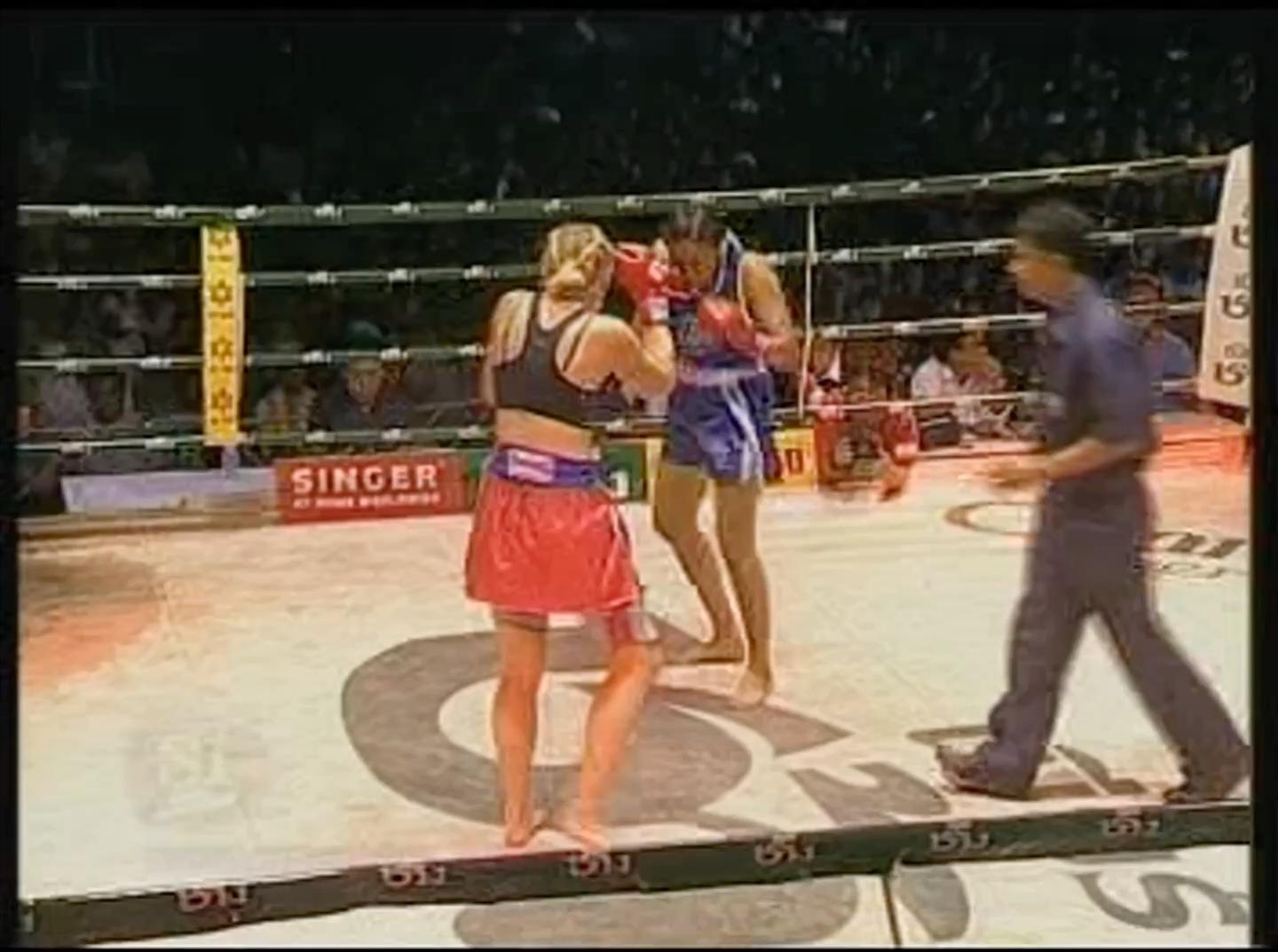
Fouls

Examples
of some
common fouls



It is not over until it's over — knock down on the bell





Click on the QR code to vote on who you thought won round 3





**Click on the QR code to vote on who you thought won
round 4**





Click on the QR code to vote on who you thought won round 5



Who you thought won the rounds

Round 3

Round 4

Round 5

Rough guide used by a Thai stadium fighter

This is **not** the way fights are scored and **scoring really depends on the relative effect of techniques, the sharpness of techniques etc.**

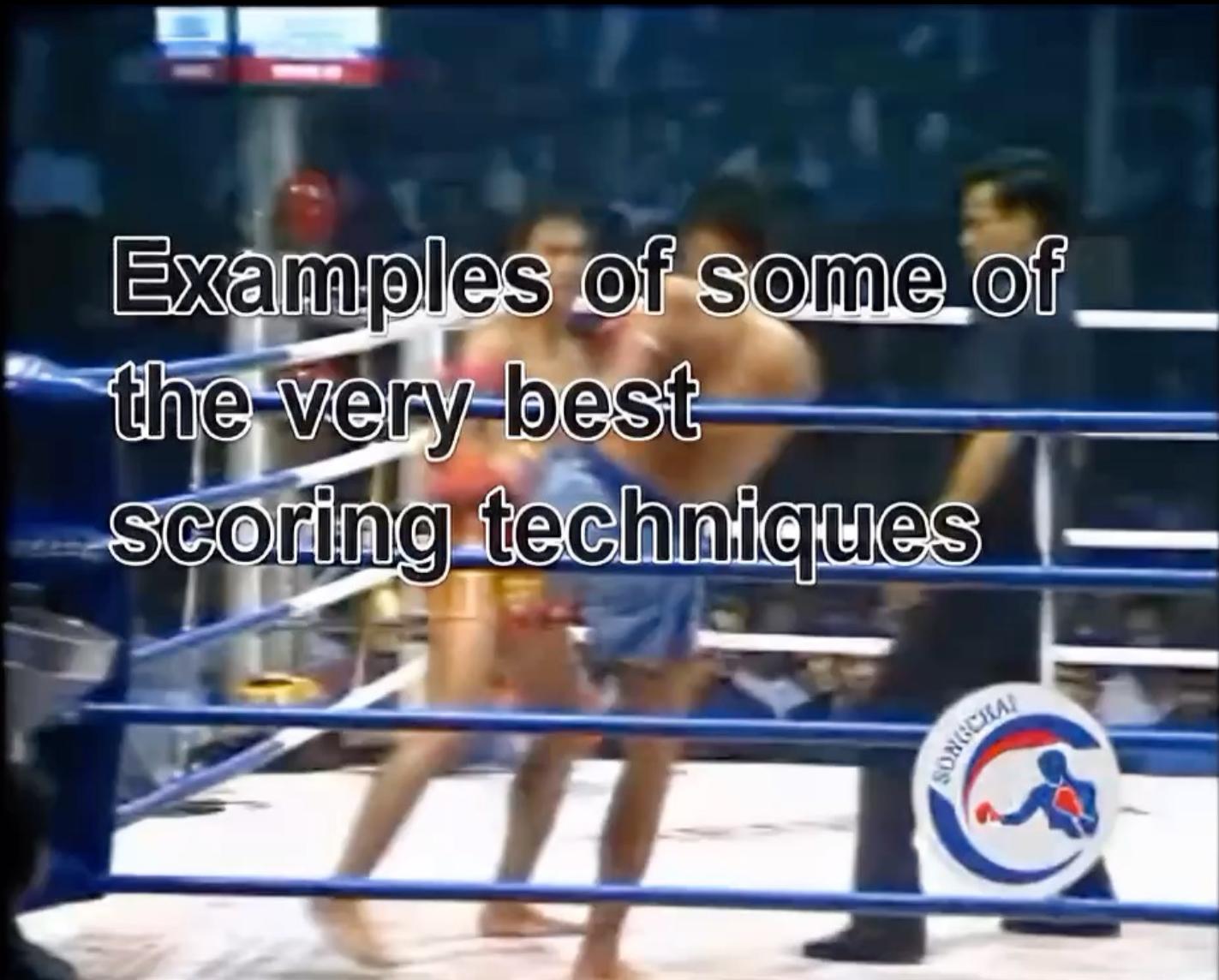
However, all else being equal this is a **rough guide** used by a top stadium fighter to monitor his own fights.

- 1 point punch
- 1 point leg kick
- 2 points round knee
- 3 points kick body
- 3 points straight knee



Best scoring techniques — comparing effect

Examples of some of
the very best
scoring techniques



Fouls

Tony myers

Fouls



**Examples
of some
common fouls**

It is not over until it's over —knock down on the bell



Applying the criteria Judging a fight

**All things being equal...when a
boxer kicks the body and his
opponent punches...**

“Kick win... punch is international...kick is the logo (of Muay Thai) ”



Interpretation of scoring practice

- An analogy used by both
- Radom Na Bangchang
 - Technical Director and referee:
Lumpinee Boxing stadium

- Wan Chai
 - Referee Radjadamnern Boxing
stadium



“A Running Race”!!



BMC 1500M MEN

00:41:16

Other similar systems

Chowdhry Amateur boxing (old electronic scoring system)

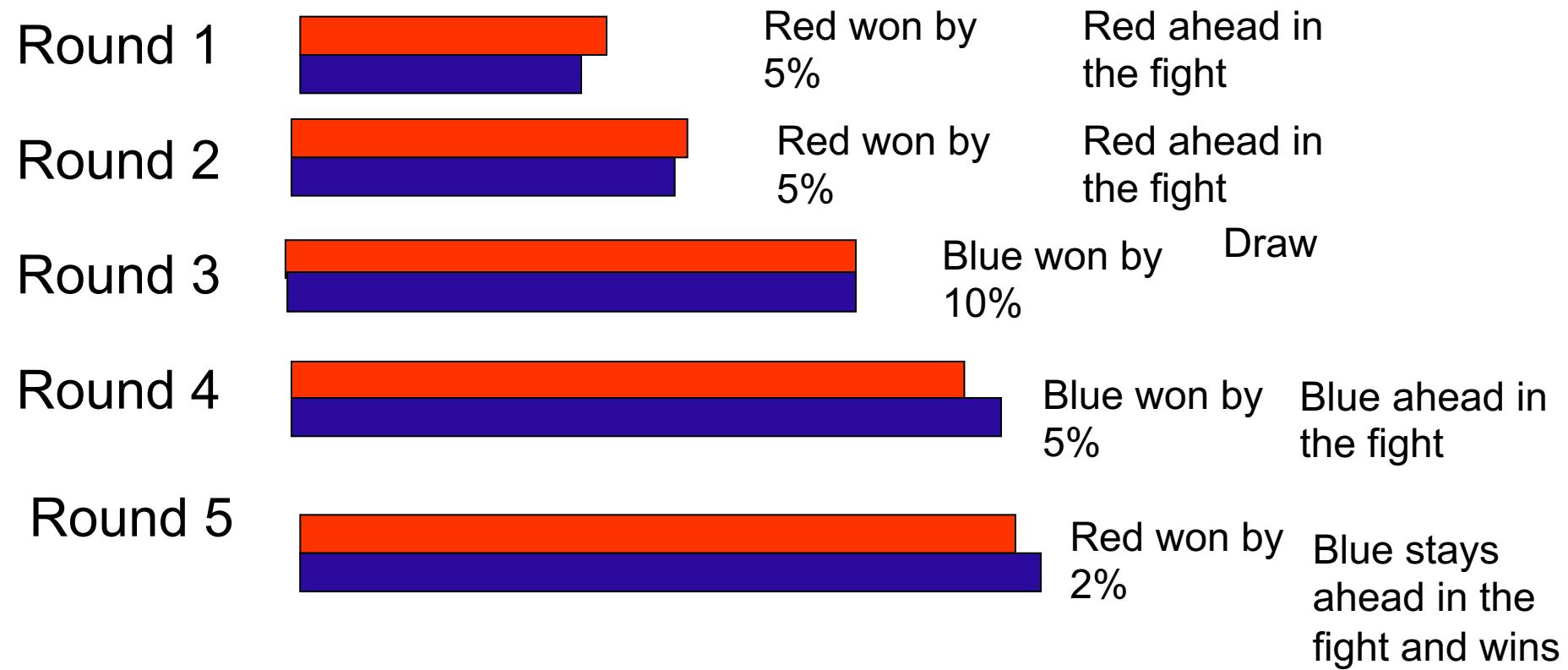
Different way that scores are given but a similar whole fight system

e.g., Boxer can win 2 rounds and lose the fight in the 3rd.

The original concept of the 10 point must system in professional boxing

Designed as an antidote to round by round scoring

A typical fight



Recording scores for that fight

Round	Notes	Score card
1	▪ Red corner slightly ahead *	10*:10
2	▪ Red stays ahead	10:9
3	▪ Drawn round	10:10
4	▪ Blue takes the lead	9:10
5	▪ Blue maintains the lead	9:10
		48:49

Recording scores –example 2

Round	Notes	Score card
1	▪ Red corner slightly ahead *	10*:10
2	▪ Red stays ahead	10:9
3	▪ Red pulls ahead again	10:9
4	▪ Red maintains their lead	10:9
5	▪ Blue come back but does not do enough to catch up Red	9:10
		49:47

Recording scores –example 3

Round	Notes	Score card
1	▪ Red corner clear win	10:9
2	▪ Blue corner comes back but still slightly behind*	9:10
3	▪ Blue pulls ahead	9:10
4	▪ Blue maintains their lead	9:10
5	▪ Red come back but does not do enough to catch up Blue	10:9
		47:48



Tony Myers

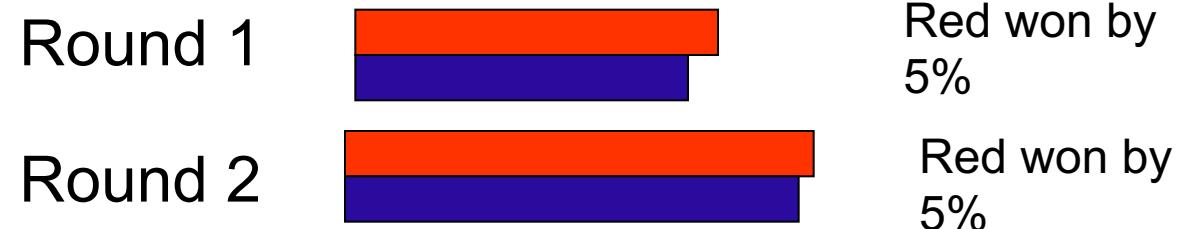
Judging the whole fight - an unusual example

Round 1

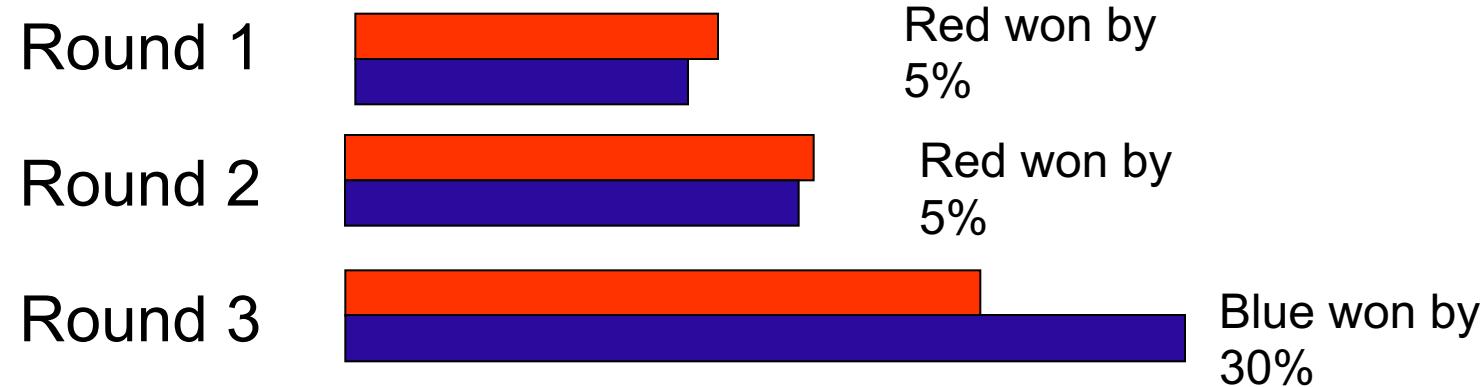


Red won by
5%

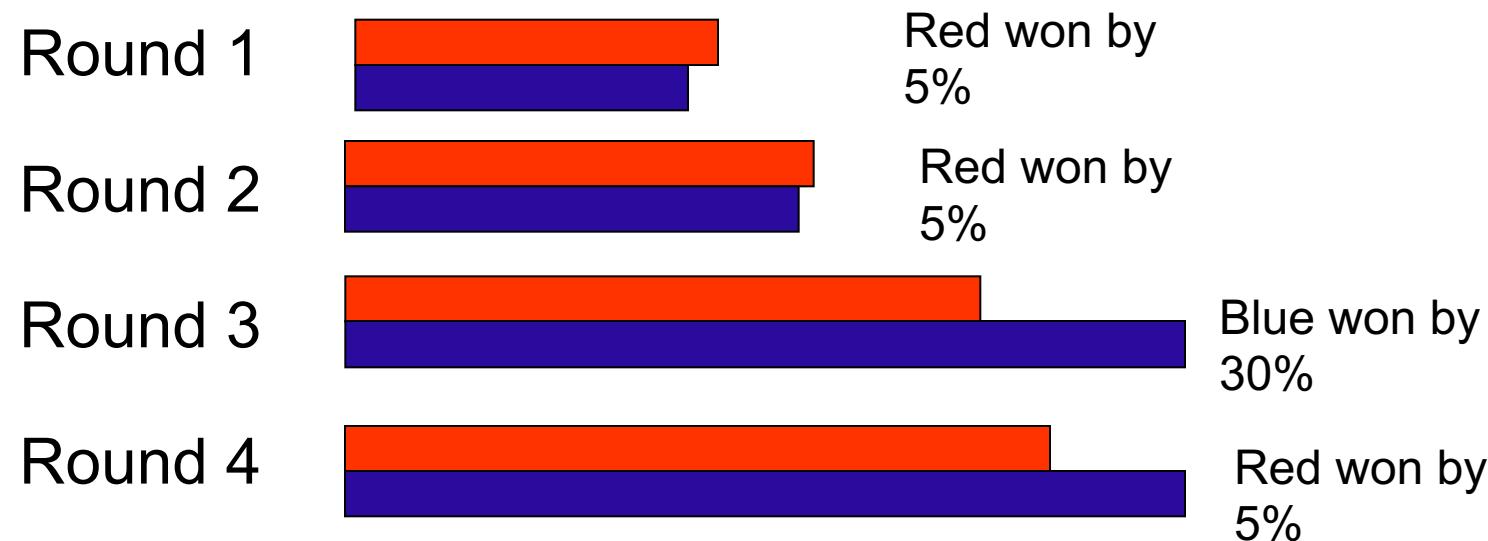
Judging the whole fight



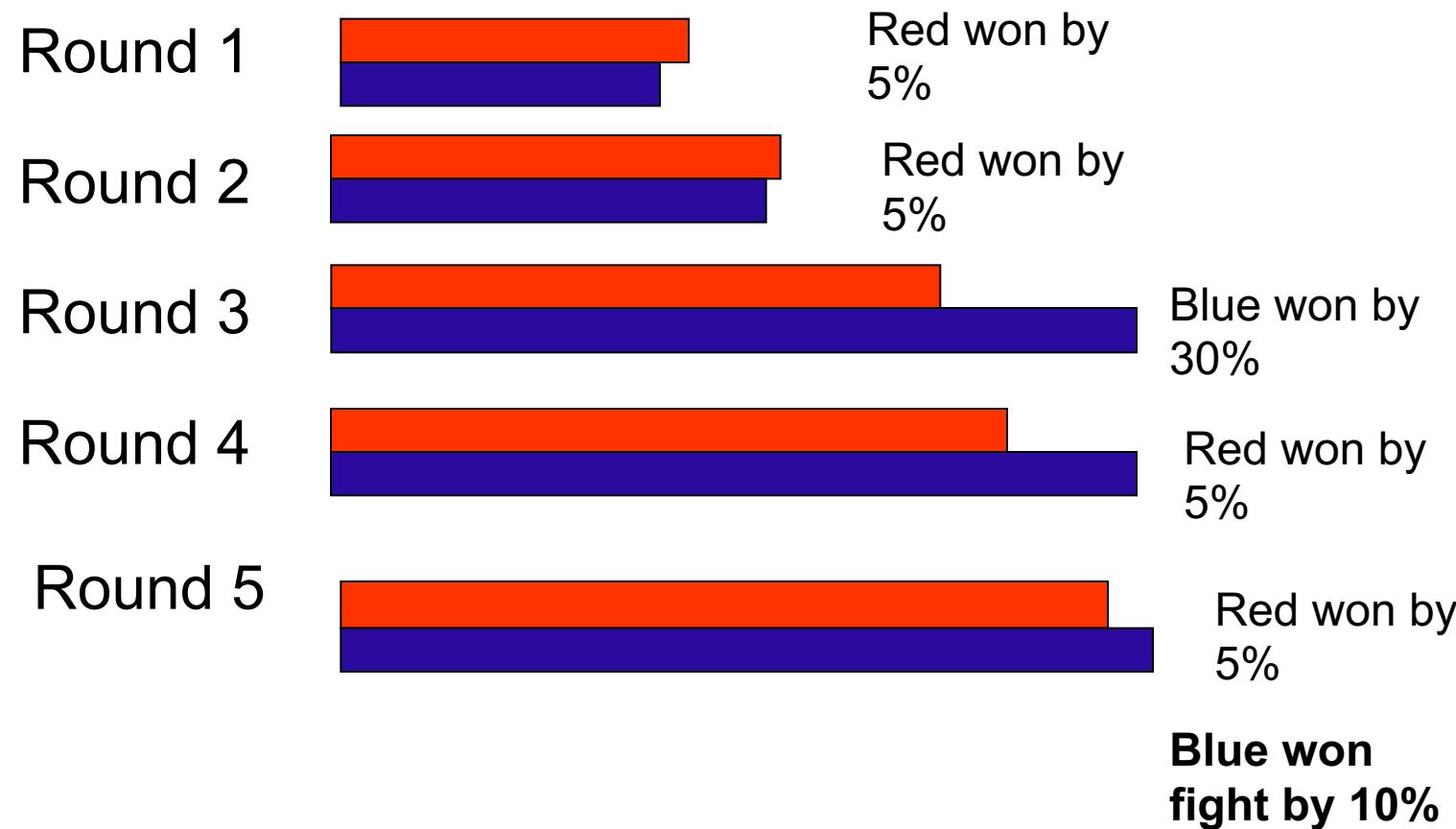
Judging the whole fight



Judging the whole fight



Judging the whole fight



Recording that fight

Judging the whole fight

Round 1



Red won by
5%

10 + : 10

Running total

10 +	10

10 +	10
-------------	-----------

Judging the whole fight

Round 2



Red won by
5%

10 : 9

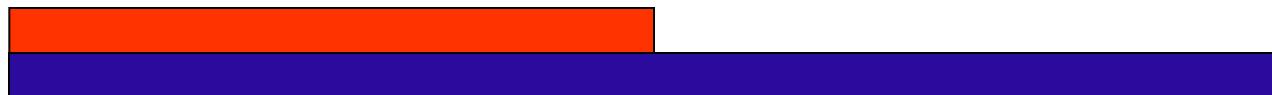
Running total

10 +	10
10	9

20	19
-----------	-----------

Judging the whole fight

Round 3



being so big
a win, it is
possible that
this round is
awarded a
8:10

9 : 10

Blue won
by 30%

10 +	10
10	9
9	10

Running total

29	29

Judging the whole fight

Round 4



10 : 10

Red won
by 5%

10 +	10
10	9
9	10
10	10

Running total

39 39

Judging the whole fight

Round 5



9 : 10

Red
won
by 5%

10 +	10
10	9
9	10
10	10
9	10

Running total

48 49

Completing the scorecard

Indicate the fight number
Make sure you get the
corners the correct way
round

Fill in every round
Indicate clearly who wins
(the scores should indicate
this – the winner should
have highest score)
Sign the card

GMTO SCORE CARD			
GMTO Judge _____	Venue _____		
Fight Class/Title _____	Date _____		
Fight number _____			
Fighters Name – Red Corner		Fighters Name – Blue Corner	
ROUND	RED	BLUE	Notes
1			
2			
3			
4			
5			
Total Score RED =		Total Score BLUE =	
RESULT			
Official's Signature _____			



GMTO SCORE CARD

GMTO Judge Dean James Venue Lumpinee

Fight Class/Title A-class Date 10-10-2026

Fight number 10

Fighters Name – Red Corner	Fighters Name – Blue Corner
<i>Thailand Pinsinchai</i>	<i>Fasuchon Sit O</i>

ROUND	RED	BLUE	Notes
1			
2			
3			
4			
5			

Total Score RED =

Total Score BLUE =

RESULT

Official's Signature _____

Judges can also use running totals alongside round scores if they wish to.



GMTO SCORE CARD

GMTO Judge Dean James Venue Lumpinee
Fight Class/Title A-class Date 10-10-2026
Fight number 10

Fighters Name - Red Corner	Fighters Name - Blue Corner
<i>Thailand Pinsinchai</i>	<i>Fasuchon Sit O</i>

ROUND	RED	BLUE	Notes
1	10 +	10	<i>Red corner edged the round kick and teeps</i>
2	10 ▶ 20	9 19	<i>Red effective body kicks controlled opponent</i>
3	10 30	9 28	<i>Red dominated in the clinch</i>
4	9 39	10 38	<i>Blue effective kicks and punches</i>
5	10 49	9 47	<i>Red maintained lead and protected points</i>

Total Score RED = 49 Total Score BLUE = 47

RESULT
Red

Official's Signature Dean James

Review

**KEY RULE:
JUDGING IS
TOP-DOWN**

Effect + dominance

Visible effect / behavioural change

Balance + posture

Who stays composed; who is disrupted

Clean scoring weapons (on scoring targets)

Kicks, knees ; punches rise with effect

Control of space and clinch

Ring command; turns, knees, dumps with control

Defence + counters that score

Defend then return cleanly with balance

**A boxer can score while moving forward, backward, sideways, or on the ropes.
Judges reward effective scoring with balance and control, not simply advancing**

Tony Myers

Explaining who won

You should be able to explain to someone who won the fight using the scoring criteria directly

To judge the art of
MuayThai...you need to
know MuayThai

Accessing the assessment



Accessing the assessment



Overview

Scoring hierarchy

What scores

How judges decide

Scorecards

Running race

Misconceptions

Rules & decisions

Practice

Research

Resources

Assessment

OVERVIEW

Judging Muay Thai: what the job actually is

A Muay Thai judge determines who, over the whole fight, is the stronger of two competitors *in terms of Muay Thai*. This applies whether the boxers are highly skilled or relatively unskilled: the question is always “who showed stronger Muay Thai?”.

Muay Thai is not scored like other combat sports

The scoring criteria and how they are interpreted differ from K-1, kickboxing, shootboxing, international boxing, MMA, and entertainment formats. Do not import assumptions such as “forward pressure automatically scores” or “punch volume wins rounds”.

Principle: A boxer can win with very little output if they neutralise the opponent and score the clearer, more effective actions. For example, if one boxer blocks every weapon and the opponent cannot land, a single clean, effective kick may decide the contest.

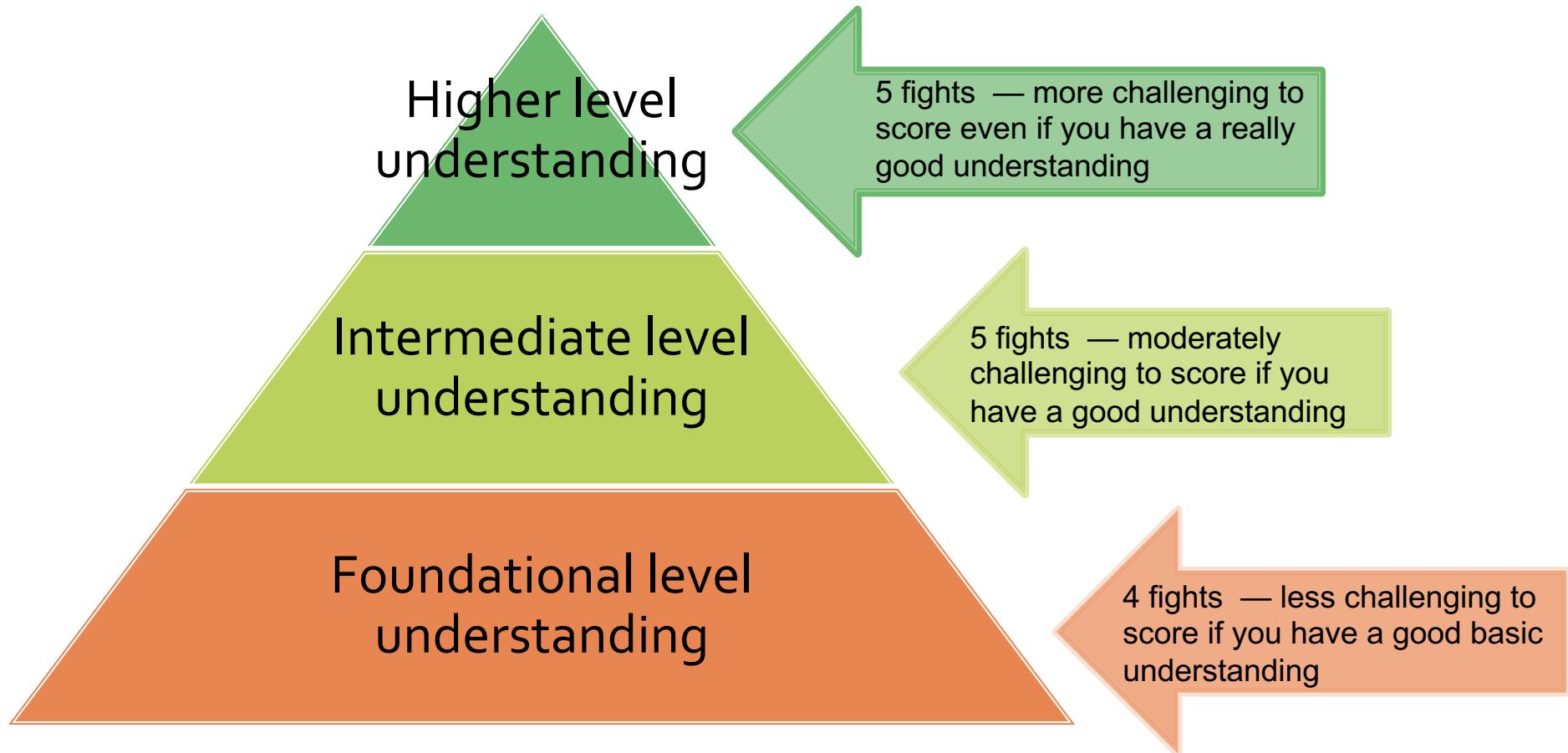
Why standardised scoring matters

- It encourages athletes to develop high-quality Muay Thai skills (not just activity).
- It gives coaches and fighters a clear training focus.
- Research cited in the training material links judging criteria to technique selection and quality.
- When applied correctly, decisions can be highly consistent (the training material cites >90% agreement in

Accessing the assessment

The screenshot shows a dark-themed website for the Muay Thai Judging Assessment. At the top, there is a navigation bar with links: Overview, Scoring hierarchy, What scores, How judges decide, Scorecards, Running race, Misconceptions, Rules & decisions, Practice, Research, Resources, and Assessment. To the left of the navigation is the logo of the Guild of Muay Thai Officials, which features a circular emblem with two figures and the text "GUILD OF MUAY THAI OFFICIALS". Below the navigation is a large, rounded rectangular area titled "ASSESSMENT AREA" in yellow capital letters. Inside this area, the title "Muay Thai Judging Assessment" is displayed in large white capital letters. Below the title, a sub-instruction reads "This area is intended for candidates taking the judging assessment." There is a "Password" label followed by a text input field and a small "Enter" button. At the bottom left of the main content area, there is a link "Back to main site".

Assessment



Assessment

Scoring fights using this link

[Muay Thai Judging
Assessment – Fill in form](#)

Muay Thai Judging Assessment



Assessment

Muay Thai Judging Assessment

When you submit this form, it will not automatically collect your details like name and email address unless you provide it yourself.

* Required

Bio

1. Name *

Your Name

2. Email address *

your_email_address

[Next](#)

Assessment

Muay Thai Judging Assessment

Foundational level

3. Low-challenge fight 1 ...

Red

Blue

4. Low-challenge fight 2 ...

Red

Blue

5. Low-challenge fight 3 ...

Red

Blue

6. Low-challenge fight 4 ...

Assessment

The background image shows the interior of a Muay Thai stadium, specifically Bangkok Stadium, with spectators in the stands and judges seated at a long table in the foreground. A large watermark reading "MUAY THAI JUDGING FAIR. CONSISTENT. PROFESSIONAL." is centered over the scene.

Muay Thai Judging Assessment

* Required

Progression Decision 1

7. Submit assessment now (Foundation Grade only) *

Submit assessment now (Foundation Grade only). If you wish to only attempt the foundational assessment click here

Continue to Intermediate Level If you wish to continue to the next stage click here

[Back](#) [Next](#)

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Assessment

Muay Thai Judging Assessment

* Required

Progression Decision 1

7. Submit assessment now (Foundation Grade only) *

Submit assessment now (Foundation Grade only).

Continue to Intermediate Level

[Back](#) [Next](#)

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Assessment

Muay Thai Judging Assessment

* Required

Progression Decision 2

13. You have completed the intermediate level. Do you wish to submit your assessment now or attempt the more advanced level? *

Submit assessment now (Intermediate Grade)

Continue to a the more advanced level

[Back](#) [Next](#)

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Assessment

Blue
17. Higher challenge fight 4

Red
 Blue
18. Higher challenge fight 5

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