Muay Thai makes its way to NAFA

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MUAY THAI

NAVAL AIR FACILITY ATSUGI, Japan – The martial art of Muay Thai is the newest to join a list of martial art forms in the combatant program at Naval Air Facility (NAF) Atsugi.

Muay Thai is a form of kickboxing that originated many years ago in Thailand.

“Muay Thai is different,” said Culinary Specialist 2nd Class Donald Simpkins, a student of Muay Thai for almost 2 years. “You never stop learning. There’s always a different technique and it’s something different every day. That’s pretty much why I like it.”

After arriving at NAF Atsugi, Simpkins began to do Muay Thai at an off base gym. He liked it so much that he and his instructor, preferring to be known as Far, wanted to share the opportunity to learn Muay Thai with other Sailors.

“Far wanted to pretty much come over here and teach,” said Simpkins, “Because it was pretty much easier for the Americans to come to Halsey Gym then to come out to Far’s gym.”

The Muay Thai class has only been up and running for several weeks. But has had nothing but positive responses from the get go.

From the first day of the three hour course, the number of students was above what was expected and the class is still growing.

The interaction between the instructors and students is also very good, despite the language barrier.

“Instructor Far is from Thailand and he interacts very well,” said Chris Martin, asst. athletic director and participant of the Muay Thai class. “He’s able to communicate with body language and gives positive feedback, just by the tone of his voice and response. He’s good at correcting students and demonstrating the proper techniques.”

The adult classes are held every Saturday from 9 a.m. to noon. Students may come and go as they please, as the class is not required for the full three hours.

Children’s classes are held every Wednesday and Thursday from 3:30 p.m. to 5:00 p.m.

“Come out and give it a try,” said Martin. “If you’ve never done it, it’s fun. It’s tough. You don’t have to have aspirations of being a Muay Thai fighter but you can come out and train and develop the

skills and the confidence. It'll definitely get you in shape – physically and mentally."

For more information, please contact Ranger Gym at 264-6160 or Halsey Gym at 264-3847.