

Martial Arts

*The lethal combination of ancient
fighting skills...*

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by

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Mixed Martial Arts

Mixed martial arts is greatly popular now. It is as well-liked as wrestling was in the Seventies and Eighties. The difference is that everyone knew that wrestling was choreographed, whereas mixed martial arts (some fans call it cage fighting) is not. Mixed martial arts is for real and for very high stakes similar to those of world championship heavyweight boxing championships.

Mixed martial arts or MMA used to be completely unregulated and that put many people off in the late Eighties and Nineties, but now that there are safety rules (some, anyway), this extreme sport has become more mainstream. There are now two types of MMA though, sport and street. The former is more governed than the latter where virtually anything goes.

Despite the growing popularity of mixed martial arts, there is still no real governing body for the sport, although there are quite a number of organizations vying for the privilege on both sides of the Atlantic. Britain has at least three companies trying to become the regulator of MMA in the UK. The USA approximately the same.

One of the top organizers of MMA bouts, if not the top organizer, is Ultimate Fighting Championship or UFC. They put on pay-per-view fights on cable television which can pay top fighters nearly a million dollars a fight! This just goes to show how popular mixed martial arts has gotten.

Aside from proceeds from pay-per-view and national TV, there is a huge amount being taken from spin-offs like videos, DVD's and T-shirts. There are also collectibles, dolls and board games to say nothing of documentaries and books. Web sites on mixed martial arts abound as do blogs and forums. Most fighters also have Twitter and Facebook sites.

This has provoked youths of both sexes to join a gym and take up martial arts. This can only be a good thing. Training frequently will counteract the trend in Western children towards corpulence and will also help tackle bullying and street violence. Trained fighters hardly ever become bullies or muggers.

The fad for MMA appears to be fairly recent, but that is not the case. Inter-disciplinary martial arts fighting was well-liked in the 1890's in Europe. Then there was the documentary film 'Kings of the Square Ring' featuring Muhammad Ali in around 1980. The modern craze took off in the early Nineties, but it is in full swing now.

Mixed martial arts, or pankration, was an Olympic sport 2,000 years ago and fans tried to reinstate it as such in 2004, although the movement failed, but

who knows what the future will bring? A lot of powerful legislators believe that the sport is too violent and that it ought to be regulated more closely. The supporters and the fighters disagree, so we will have to wait and see which opinion wins out.

Choosing The Best Martial Arts Style

Martial Arts are more well-liked in the Developed world than ever before, but which one should you choose to study, if that is what you have resolved to do? There have always been masters of the traditional, ancient, martial arts have established their own styles.

Aikido and Brazilian Jiu Jitsu are examples of this, but now it seems as if more masters are attempting to set up their own disciplines than ever. Look at Bruce Lee's own particular style and Gracie Jiu Jitsu.

This makes it even harder than ever to decide on which martial art to study or indeed, whether to train in the fantastically popular sport of Mixed Martial Arts, which is really contested by fighters who have studied several martial arts.

There have been contests to find out which is the best martial art for more than a hundred years but the jury is still out. Some times one discipline wins and other times a different one does.

Perhaps it depends on the ability of the fighter rather than the sport itself. Muhammad Ali with boxing won the championship known as Kings of the Square Ring in around 1980.

Maybe the first thing to do is ask yourself why you want to learn a martial art in the first place. All fighting styles will teach self-defence, self-confidence and self-discipline and they will all allow you the chance never to get bullied in unarmed fighting again whether it is in school, in a bar or on the street.

You ought to also examine your self and your body sort. Some combative arts are extremely athletic. Look at the jumps and high kicks in Tae Kwon Do, while other styles are a little more laid back like Jiu Jitsu and Judo, because they teach you to use your opponent's impetus to gain an advantage.

Karate and Kung Fu require fast reflexes. Bruce Lee could stand three feet from a person who had a coin on his open palm; raise his hand from his side, snatch the coin and replace it with another one in $\frac{5}{100}$ ths of a second.

Not everybody is going to be able to train long enough to do that, but I think that not all body kinds would permit it anyway.

It is a decent idea to rent a few DVD's on the different fighting styles and attempt to work out what appeals to you personally. If you find that you like a number of them, why not go down to a local dojo that teaches mixed martial arts?

The trainers there will be less prejudiced in favour of one skill and will have experience with diverse body kinds and temperaments.

Make sure you spend some time choosing a respectable gym or dojo to go to for advice. Most places will give you an interview and a free first lesson. If you explain your predicament, they are certain to be able to help you come to the correct decision about selecting the best martial arts style for you.

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