April 24th

A couple of days ago, one of our fighters fought at Rajadamnern. It was his third outing there, with him going 1 and 1 in his first two bouts there, and he put on a good showing.

I've embedded the video from the Sor Klinmee Youtube channel. Subscribe to the channel for updates from the gym. Sudsakorn and Ekapapop – not to be confused with Ekapon, though the three are friends – will be fighting in France, and there are fights at Theprasit, Rajadamnern, and Lumpini almost every week. Ekapop is doing a four man tournament at 72 kg in France this month.

Robert is in the red corner, Famai the blue. The bout was contested at 45 kg, or 99 lb.

It looked particularly bad for Famai in the first round as Robert was successfully unsettling him with elbows and even scored a couple of what looked to be flash knockdowns. Robert stopped pressing forward, smartly, I think, in the first to save energy for the later rounds. It looked more even for Famai after the first, but he remained tentative and stayed a step behind in the fight.

Robert ended up winning by referee stoppage in the fourth. The referee can stop the fight if he feels one fighter is being outclassed or is not fighting back.

After the fight was over, the people from the gym surprised me by saying Robert's fight was “mei swei,” or not beautiful. In my eyes, Robert had completely dominated his opponent and therefore had fought correctly.

Apparently, winning isn't the only overriding concern as it tends to be in the Western sporting mentality. It's important to win, but one should try to win well. This has a payoff in making a fighter better in the long run and more popular with audiences which is important when careers span one to two hundred fights and pay is disbursed over tens of fights instead of in lucrative single contracts.

They criticized Robert's juking in the later rounds as he feinted and bounced before throwing kicks and said they would would have preferred to see more fluid and powerful technique, in what is considered a beautiful style like Sam-A Tor Rattanakiat's or Nong-O Sit-Or's.

They were, of course, pleased that he won.

When I showed the video to Tappaya back at the gym, he had a different take on it. He'd heard on the phone that Robert had not fought beautifully, so he perhaps came in with different expectations, but his take was that Famai had spoiled Robert's game by being completely outmatched. Tappaya explained that Robert is a good counterfighter with elbows, but he dominated Famai in the opening rounds and basically shut him down so there was nothing to counter. The fight was “Okay” in his book.

From a Western perspective, beating an opponent by outclassing him is pretty sweet. The people at the gym have seen enough fights they're able to look past temporary victories to see what substance makes for lasting success. And for those who criticize the recent performances of Dominick Cruz and Clay Guida, it may be nice to know there's a fight culture that would wholeheartedly agree.

April 5-8

April 12 -- Daniel Fights

April 15-17 -- *Festival in Bang Si Lee*

April 19, 23 -- Songkran in Pattaya