

The Doc Is In :

Invest Wisely

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I just finished reading the Stock Market reports. After giving it some thought, I'd like to discuss some of the similarities and differences between investing both your time and/or your money. I will explain.

If you expect to profit when investing your money, one of the most important basic principals to be mindful of is called the "risk-reward ratio." This means, the greater the risk of losing your investment, the greater the reward you should expect. For example, if you purchase stock in an oil and gas drilling company as versus buying government bonds, you should expect a much greater return on your investment.

The questions for Muay Thai students are these; are there some techniques that will give me a greater return than others in exchange for the amount of time that I practice? And, are there certain techniques that are riskier to execute than others? I believe there is! Let's compare the spinning-heel-kick (SHK) versus the inside-leg-kick (ILK).

Learning the SHK demands a great deal of practice time. It requires the coordinated integration of the entire body, head; eyes; shoulders; torso; hips; and legs to perform a precisely timed movement. And, once the basics have been learned on a stationary target, they must be refined with even more practice to strike a moving target. This is why I've always considered the SHK an advanced technique.

By contrast, learning the ILK requires the relatively simple action of slightly elevating the knee and the snapping out the foot to kick the inner thigh and underside of the opponents leading knee. Proficiency can be achieved in a relatively short time period, and with significantly less practice-time than the

SHK. The ILK is a more fundamental technique.

If we can agree that the practice time invested in learning the SHK is significantly greater than learning the ILK, then we must ask, what are the risks and rewards for learning each technique?

The reward for properly executing the SHK can be significant and immediate. A well-timed heel strike to an opponent's head frequently ends the contest. However, the risks are numerous. Consider the total commitment required when spinning and the resulting vulnerability to a counter attack while standing on one leg. Add in the difficulty and poor odds of striking a small target the size of the human head and the risk to reward becomes even more significant.

In contrast, the rewards associated with the ILK are more subtle and less immediate than those associated with the SHK. The leg target is far easier to strike than the head. In addition to the physical damage resulting from the repeated strikes to the tender inner thigh and underside of the knee, the opponent is forced to alter his fighting style. The damage to his leg makes it increasingly more difficult to place weight on the leg when attempting to throw an overhand punch or hook-type strike. Also, since his ability to move laterally is severely compromised, he becomes much more vulnerable to your attack

I believe that the ILK vulnerability factor is minimal. Since the snap-kick is executed so quickly, the striker is always in position to either defend a counter-attack or to follow-up the kick with punishing strikes.

In closing, I want to make something very clear. If you are a serious Muay Thai student, you should learn every strike available to you. The greater your arsenal of weapons the more formidable an opponent you will be. However, you should give some thought as to which techniques are the most practical and provide the greatest potential rewards in exchange for the time and effort invested to learn. Remember, the jumping and spinning techniques of Jet Li make entertaining movie watching, but elbows and knees are your short-range weapons, punches for medium-range, and kicks for medium-long range targets. Remember, time is money, use it wisely.