

## EDUCATION & PEDAGOGY OF SPORT

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### *Silat Tempur: An Overview of the Children's Combat Sports*

Submission: 21.12.2018; acceptance: 10.01.2019

**Key words:** Malay, martial arts, fighting technique, *gayung fatani*

#### Abstract

**Aim.** The purpose of this study is to provide an overview of the children's combat sports known as silat Tempur, since it was introduced in 2013.

This combative sport focused on children, particularly beginners aged 7 to 13. The main purpose of this sport is to improve combative techniques among young silat exponents in competition. The silat tempur arena is similar to a fencing platform which aims to relax the exponents when performing silat techniques in competition. The most frequent techniques used in this sport are punches, kicks, catches, blocks and topple down. Nine national silat tempur competition had been organized and each silat exponents will gain points from each match they compete in. The overall winner with the highest points is announced once the series has concluded. silat coaches play an important role in educating their athletes in term of both training and in competition rules and regulation.

#### Introduction

Martial art is a combat sport of traditions and practices, which made for a variety of reasons such as self-defence, spiritual development, competition, physical health and fitness, entertainment, and mental and physical [Anuar 1993]. *Silat* is the type of self defence originated from Malaysia which is deeply entrenched in the traditions and culture of Malays civilization [Shapie, Elias 2016]. The word *silat* means a kind of sport or game, which consists of quick movements in attacking and defending [Anuar 1987]. There are two types of sparring competition in silat; *silat Olahraga* [Anuar 1993; Shapie, Elias 2015a] and *silat Tempur* [Shapie, Elias 2014]. *Olahraga* means the ability for a silat exponent to perform his / her silat techniques in combat with striking and defensive actions such as punching, kicking, throwing, catching, parrying and blocking and any skill related to silat techniques [Shapie 2011]. *Tempur* means combat, sparring or battle between exponents.

The available literature on *silat olahraga* competition suggests that the sport is characterised by brief, high-intensity bouts of activity, short recovery periods and the need for competitors to repeatedly punch, kick and grapple with their opponent [Aziz *et al.* 2002; Shapie *et al.* 2008; Shapie *et al.* 2013; Shapie *et al.* 2018a]. The

overall intensity of a *silat olahraga* match indicated an exertion intensity close to the individual's maximal cardiovascular responses that was sustained throughout most of the match [Shapie 2011]. It is suggested that the competition was not appropriate to children particularly to those who still new in silat competition. Zetaruk [2009] reported that even in non-contact martial arts training, enthusiastic blocking technique may lead to bruising of the forearms in children.

The competition of *silat tempur* was introduced to prepare the young athletes for the sparring competition in silat. As young athletes aspire to senior success, it is important for them to have an appreciation of and be conditioned towards the demands of elite senior *silat olahraga* sport using the *silat tempur* format. It is a platform to establish and develop young athletes who have the courage, are skilled in martial arts techniques and tactical in combat sports [Shapie, Elias 2014]. Thus, the purpose of current study is to provide the overview of *silat tempur* since it was introduced in 2013.

#### The combat sports in silat

*Silat olahraga* and *silat tempur* are the two combative competitions in silat. The *silat olahraga* competition

consists of three divisions according to age and weight either in male or female participants; youths (aged 12 to 14-year-old), teenager (aged 14 to 17-year-old) and adults (17-year-old and above) [Anuar 1993]. By the time silat exponents reach adolescence, it is likely they will be involved in combative competition [Shapie 2011]. Here the adolescence may be in the period of transition from junior or teenager competition [Shapie *et al.* 2018b] to compete in senior competitions.

The *silat tempur* competition focus on children aged 7 to 13. However, it also can be introduced to beginners that are new to sparring competition. The aim of this competition is to improve the techniques of punching, kicking, avoiding and blocking based on the *Seni silat Malaysia* curriculum [Shapie, Elias 2015b; Anuar 2002]. The syllabus focuses on blocks, punches and kicks for the first two levels of the curriculum (lower phase; white to blue belt and blue to brown belt). The *silat tempur* competition provides early preparation for the children to be able to implement the basic techniques of silat before they switch to *silat olahraga*.

### **Silat tempur points system**

The purpose of this silat competition is to improve the self defense techniques for children in silat. The competition only allowed the exponents to move forward and backward on a straight line 2 x 9 meter plantar (Figure 1). The platform equipped with flexible rubber mat (5 cm thick). Anuar [2007] stated the movement during competition is essentially a straight line either forward or reverse (Figure 2-4). Thus, the silat exponents need to have the ability of attack and defense that can contribute to points during the match.

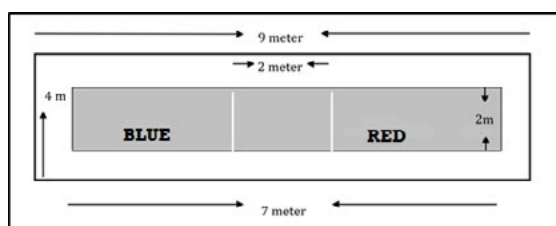


Fig. 1: The arena of *silat Tempur*



Fig. 2: The *silat tempur* competition in 2014.



Fig 3: The *silat tempur* competition in 2017.



Fig. 4 and 5: The *silat tempur* competition in 2018.

The points system in *silat tempur* is similar with *silat olahraga* [Anuar 1992; Shapie *et al.* 2008, 2013] with the ability for silat exponents to score maximum points during 3-rounds of a fight is critical to win the silat match. In silat, any legal/ clear points (hit the target) with punch (1 point), kicks (2 points) and topple down (3 points) will help to increase the overall points scored [Anuar, 1992]. Moreover, any clear defensive action followed by legal/clear point will be awarded an extra point (i.e. 1+2 points for any successful block or dodge followed by successful kick to the body-target) [Shapie 2011]. As the agenda of silat is to differentiate between silat competition and other sports combat competition (e.g. taekwondo, karate, kick boxing), it is important for every coach and silat exponent to understand the mechanism of scoring points of silat competition. Besides, it also aims to display the high quality of silat competition. Thus the understanding of the silat scoring points is very important especially in helping coaches to determine which attack and defensive movements that can give more benefits and chances to their exponent to win in competition. The point for attacking and defensive movement will be given as below:

1. (a) **The act of parrying:** This is assessed when silat exponent succeeds in aborting his opponent's attack with techniques of self defense, resisting and diverting

the direction of the attack, ending in his attack on the target of the opponent. One point will be given for succession of parrying the attack from other opponent's plus extra point (depends on the strike) for landing a strike on the target.

(b) **The act of dodging:** This is assessed when silat exponent succeeds in freeing himself from an attack by using a defense technique. An act of dodging that assessed is one point that results in an attack of the target. One point is given for an act of dodging, and the attack on the target is assessed according to the type of attack made. An attack with the hand gets him one point. This, added to an act of dodging, gets him two points. The same process happens to the act of parrying too. However, there is no point for fighters that succeed parrying or dodging his opponent's strike but failed to make counter-strike that landed the attack on the target.

2. **An attack with hand:** This is assessed if it is strong, effective and gets at the target via any technique. This hand attack is not accompanied by grips or prevented when the opponent dodges.
3. **An attack with leg:** This is assessed in whatever forms as long it gets at the target. This leg attack is not accompanied by grips or prevented when the opponent dodges.
4. **The fall technique:** This is assessed when part of the opponent's body touches the floor. The opponent falls not through any unfair wrestling and clinching, and the other fighter is able to defend himself and does not fall. The technique of causing the opponent to fall as well as the holding of the opponent's body should be the effort of every defense to an attack.

The *silat tempur* match consists of three rounds of two minutes each with one-minute interval between rounds. This is a standard time in *silat tempur* competition. Time stoppages by the referee are not included in the actual bout time, so the actual duration of each round and thus total match time is usually longer than the 3x2 minutes scheduled, respectively [Shapie *et al.* 2008].

The competition derived from practical martial arts exponents that trained in pairs. Thus, the movements of young silat exponents were controlled and limited in order to avoid injury during *silat tempur* match. The arena of *silat tempur* is smaller than *silat olahraga* (9 x 9 meter) to ease the children to perform basic silat techniques such as kick and punch (Anuar 1993). *Silat tempur* has special rules that have been established to determine the game is safe to improve the quality of martial arts skills (Shapie, Elias 2014) for children.

### ***Silat tempur* categories**

There are two categories for children and teenagers to participate in silat competition [Shapie, Anuar 2013].

The first category is for children aged from 7 to 13-year-old. The male and female exponents start from class A (20-22 kg) to free class (50 kg above), differentiated by 2 kg for each class. The second category is teenagers aged from 14 to 15-year-old. The category starts from class A (26-30 kg) to free class (61 kg above). This category is differentiated by 5 kg for each class with 8 classes for males and females [ Shapie *et al.* 2018c].

However, in January 2018 the male and female exponents category starts from class A (under 20 kg) and class B (21-23 kg) to free class (60 kg above), differentiated by 2 kg for each class. The teenager category starts from 15 to 17-year-old. The category starts from class A (40-45 kg) to free class (75 kg above). This category is differentiated by 5 kg for each class with 8 classes for males and females. The change of category was due to the demand to the sports by many silat exponents from the age from 7 to 17 years old, particularly to beginners that started to compete in silat competition at the age of 15 and above.

### **Techniques in *silat tempur***

Silat is a system that consists of positions and movements [Shapie *et al.* 2016; 2018c]. The rules of *silat tempur* competition, which require the exponent to develop a competing pattern which consists of *sikap pasang* (silat posture), *pola langkah* (step pattern), measuring the distance against the opponent, coordination in performing an attack/defence, and finally return to *sikap pasang* (Anuar 1993). When the athlete is moving in silat *pola langkah*, the positions and movements change continuously. As soon as one finds an opening target in their opponent's defense, they will try to attack the opponent with a fast attack.



**Fig. 6 and 7:** The movements in *silat tempur* competition.

The silat step patterns are something that makes silat different from other martial arts [Shapie *et al.* 2018c]. Every movement in a silat contest must be in silat posture (Figure 6 and 7). It should not be similar like jumping in

karate [Cierna *et al.* 2018] and taekwondo [Shapie, Intan 2016] or the silat exponents will be panelised points. The exponent scoring the highest number of points or who knocks his opponent out wins [Aziz *et al.* 2002].

The instruction is given by the *wasit* or referee [Shapie *et al.* 2018c]. There are two main instructions such as "*Sedia, Pasang*" and "*Henti*". *Sedia* or *pasang* mean that participants should be prepared while "*Henti*" is defined as participants' need to stop and get prepared in each corner.

In *silat tempur* competition there are five commons silat techniques used during the sparring such as punch, kick, block, catch and topple [Shapie *et al.* 2013; 2018c]. Just like *silat olahraga*, there are several other skills that contribute to success in *silat tempur* performance where every aspect of these skills will contribute to success of the exponent. There are: swipe, block, dodge/evade, topple down such as (i.e. scissors skills "guntingan"), jump, fake punch, fake kick, and fake swipe (Anuar 1993). All these skills will contribute to the attacking and defensive movements made by each exponent during the competition. *Silat tempur* competition rules state that an exponent is allowed up to four consecutive punches and/or kicks to the opponent during a single attack, upon which the referee immediately breaks off the confrontation [Shapie *et al.* 2018c].

However, not all techniques are necessary for the beginners in silat. As this is a subjective sport, it is important for each exponent to make clean strike that can be observed by the jurors. Thus, several factors will also influence the game such as injury and error of marking [Shapie 2011].

## The competition

The first national *silat tempur* competition was held in University of Malaya, Kuala Lumpur Malaysia on 11-13 April 2014. Fifty-six (56) silat exponents from various club participated in that competition [Shapie *et al.* 2018c]. The second competition of *silat tempur* was held on 22-24 August 2018 in Universiti Teknologi MARA, Negeri Sembilan with a record participation of 100 silat exponents from 6 states which come from numbers of major silat clubs in Malaysia such as Pusat Cemerlang silat, Kelab silat Fatani Bersatu, Akademi silat Shah Alam and Kelab silat Olahraga Bandar Baru Bangi. These are major silat clubs in Malaysia with numbers of full-time coaches.

The introduction of Piala Aminuddin Anuar (Aminuddin Anuar Cup) in 2015 attracted 102 silat exponents. It was held in Bandar Baru Bangi, Selangor. The overall champion for all three competitions was Selangor [Shapie *et al.* 2018c]. Most exponents that competed in the competitions were the new faces and those who have competed since the first competition in 2014.

There was no competition in 2016 because the national committee of *silat tempur* proposing a new format of competition to be held in 2017 (2series) and 2018 (full series of four). Several survey and discussion were held with stakeholders such as parents, exponents, community and association to conclude a series or league of *silat tempur* competition.

The format of the competition was changed with each exponent that competed in each series of competition will get points for each match competed in the competition. Fifty points (50) will be given to the winner of each match and twenty-five (25) points for the loser. Another thirty (30) extra points will be given to the champion of each class. The overall winners will be the one with most points at the end of year.

A proper series of *silat tempur* competition were prepared in order to develop a young skilful silat exponent in combat competition. This is important before they compete in *silat olahraga* which requires an exponent to have the ability of kicking and punching with well-developed local muscle endurance. Moreover, the ability to recover from high-burst intensity actions, particularly during the off-fight periods will aid recovery for the next high intensity action in *silat olahraga* [Shapie *et al.* 2008].

The first series of 2017 was held on 25-27 August and the second series was held on 24-25 November. The competitions received first international participation from Australia. The best male and female silat exponents in 2017 were Abdullah Basir (Malaysian silat Academy, Australia) and Puteri Elissa Sarah Mohamad Nizam (Malaysian silat Academy). While the best newcomer awards for male and female silat exponents category were Mohamad Azraf Luqman Mohamad Nizam (Malaysian silat Academy) and Puteri Eilya Sofea Mohamad Nizam (Malaysian silat Academy). Almost 80 silat exponents involved in these two series of competitions.

Four series of competition were held in 2018 with total of 200 silat exponents from ten active silat clubs in Malaysia. All first three competitions were held at Sherwood Gateway Hotel, Bandar Baru Bangi and the last series was held at Kinrara Resort Hotel, Puchong, Selangor. The competition was upgraded to 5-star competition status due to the best facilities provided to all the committees, silat exponents and spectators that involved before, during and after the competition.

The series of 2018 began on 26-28 January. The Australian silat exponents received recognition by the Seni Gayung Fatani Association on their effort to excel in this sport. The best male and female silat exponents were Abdullah Basir (Malaysian silat Academy, Australia) and Puteri Elissa Sarah Mohamad Nizam (Malaysian silat Academy). While the best newcomer awards for male and female silat exponents category were Amierul Adam Zakaria (Fatani Bersatu silat Olahraga Club) and Puteri Eilya Sofea Mohamad Nizam

(Malaysian silat Academy). The overall champion that received the Aminuddin Anuar Cup was Fatani Bersatu silat Olahraga Club.

The second series was held on 4-6 May 2018. The series also known as “Avengers 2018” due to promotion of sports based on the concept of Marvel Movies Series. The best male and female silat exponents were Amierul Adam Zakaria (Fatani Bersatu silat Olahraga Club) and Puteri Elissa Sarah Mohamad Nizam (Malaysian silat Academy). While the best newcomer awards for male and female silat exponents category were Imran Hadiff Ismail (SRAI silat Club) and Nur Hanan Khalisyah Mohd Rozmi (silat Tempur Serdang Club). The overall champion again was Fatani Bersatu silat Olahraga Club which received the Aminuddin Anuar Cup.

The third series was on 10-12 August 2018. The series also known as “Champion 2018” to promote the champion mentality to the silat exponents. The best male and female silat exponents were Adam Thaqiff Ismail (SRAI silat Club) and Puteri Eilya Sofea Mohamad Nizam (Malaysian silat Academy). While the best newcomer awards for male and female silat exponents category were Imran Hadiff Ismail (SRAI silat Club) and Dayana Izzati Mohamad Zailani (SMK BBB silat Club). For the first time there were joint overall champion as both SRAI silat Club & SMKBBB silat Club received the Aminuddin Anuar Cup.

The final series was held on 1-3 December 2018. The series known as “Final Chapter 2018” to signal the final competition for the year 2018 where the silat exponents can add more points to be recognized as the overall champion for the year 2018. The best male and female silat exponents for the final series were Abdullah Basir (Malaysian silat Academy, Australia) and Puteri Elissa Sarah Mohamad Nizam (Malaysian silat Academy). While the best newcomer awards for male and female silat exponents category were Imran Hadiff Ismail (SRAI silat Club) and Nur Hanan Khalisyah Mohd Rozmi (silat Tempur Serdang Club). The overall champion for the third time Fatani Bersatu silat Olahraga Club which received the Aminuddin Anuar Cup.

The 2018 *silat tempur* awards ceremony was held on 8<sup>th</sup> of December in Kinrara Resort, Puchong, Selangor to celebrate the achievements and recognition to all athletes, coaches, management and all individuals that contributed to the series of *silat tempur*. The overall best male and female silat exponents for the year of 2018 were Amierul Adam Zakaria (Fatani Bersatu silat Olahraga Club) and Puteri Elissa Sarah Mohamad Nizam (Malaysian silat Academy) for the children category. Abdullah Basir (Malaysian silat Academy, Australia) and Nurhumaira Mohammad Sahabudin (SMKBBB silat Club) were the overall best male and female silat exponents for the year of 2018 for teenager category. Table 1 and 2 shows the top 10 ranking based on children category.

**Table 1.** Top ten for overall standing in boy's category (children)

Name	silat Tempur Series (Points)				Overall Points
	I	II	III	IV	
Amierul Adam Zakaria (FBSOC)	180	180	130	105	595
Adam Thaqiff Ismail (SRAISC)	125	75	180	75	455
Imran Hadiff Ismail (SRAISC)	0	130	180	130	440
Ku Mohamad Ammar Ku Mohamad Arafat (FBSOC)	0	180	130	130	440
Mohamad Azraf Luqman Mohamad Nizam (MSA)	75	75	125	75	350
Alieff Ashraff Zakaria (SRAISC)	150	125	0	50	325
Ammar Fakhri Ahmad Kamal (SRAISC)	125	25	75	75	300
Ammar Arshad Md Hisam (SRAISC)	75	80	0	105	260
Mohamad Alif Najmi Mohamad Sidik (SRAISC)	0	80	75	105	260
Muhammad Basir (MSA, AUS)	130	25	0	75	230

\* FBOSC-Fatani Bersatu silat Olahraga Club; SRAISC-SRAI silat Club; MSA, AUS-Malaysian silat Academy, Australia.

**Table 2.** Top ten for overall standing in girl's category (children)

Name	silat Tempur Series (Points)				Overall Points
	I	II	III	IV	
Puteri Elissa Sarah Mohamad Nizam (MSA)	130	180	130	130	570
Puteri Eilya Sofea Mohamad Nizam (MSA)	130	80	80	105	395
Dania Nur Dini Yasmin (STSC)	75	125	80	75	355
Nur Hannan Khalisyah Mohd Rozmi (STSC)	0	25	25	130	235
Alya Aisyah Md Hisam (FBSOC)	50	25	25	75	175
Nur Aisyah Sofyya Rumaizi (SRAISC)	0	25	75	0	100
Khasiyah Rina Hizbullah (SRAISC)	0	80	0	0	80
Dania Elisa Muhammad Afif (FBSOC)	50	25	0	0	75
Nur Damia Insyirah Mohd Helmey (SRAISC)	0	75	0	0	75
Nadine Umayrah Mohd Faizuddin (FBSOC)	0	0	25	50	75

\*FBOSC - Fatani Bersatu silat Olahraga Club; SRAISC - SRAI silat Club; MSA - Malaysian silat Academy; STSC - silat Tempur Serdang Club.

Top five silat exponents in male teenager category were Abdullah Basir (285 points from Malaysian silat Academy, Australia), Muhammad Adam Hariz Azlan (210 points from Fatani Bersatu silat Olahraga Club), Megat Ummar Azahar (Al-Hasanah Youth silat Club), Muhammad Ieman Mohd Junaidi (155 points from SMKBBB silat Club) and Muhammad Hakimie Hakim (80 points from SMKBBB silat Club). The top five silat exponents in female teenager category were Nurhumaira Mohammad Sahabudin (365 points from SMKBBB silat Club), Dayana Izzati Mohamad Zailani (260 points from SMKBBB silat Club), Ku Nur Awadah Ku Mohamad Arafat (175 points from Fatani Bersatu silat Olahraga Club), Dania Safura Amrizam (150 points from SMKBBB silat Club) and Adriana Nuha Zainordi (80 points from Malaysian silat Academy).

There were five more awards given to those actively involved in 2018 *silat tempur* series of competition including best newcomer, talented athletes, best club awards, hardworking athletes and best club manager. The *silat tempur* competition is the only silat league available in Malaysia which is organized by the Seni Gayung Fatani Malaysia Association (PSGFM Official). It is a successful program that challenges young exponents and their parents to keep working with the club management (managers and coaches) in order to actively participate in the national series. The 2019 will begin in March.

### Coaching perspective

Silat instructor plays an important role to provide understanding of the rules of contending during silat training [Shapie *et al.* 2016; Al-Syurgawi 2018]. It is recommended that those developing conditioning elements of training programs for young silat athletes are aware of the frequency of action [Shapie *et al.* 2008] in *silat tempur* competition. The implication from a coaching perspective of the types and frequencies of strikes used would suggest that in training, a large proportion of time needs to be utilized in development of kicking and blocking as well as the conditioning of lower limbs in order to absorb strikes and resist fatigue during a match to being able to defend and counter attack effectively (Shapie *et al.* 2013; Shapie *et al.* 2018a).

### Conclusion

*Silat tempur* is a mini *silat olahraga* sport that is specific to the children aged 7 to 13. The purpose of this competition is to improve the silat techniques for young athletes that are still new to sparring competition. Moreover, it is a platform to prepare the young athletes before competing in *silat olahraga*. The arena for *silat tempur* is smaller comparing to *silat olahraga*. The exponents used common

basic techniques for actions such as block, punch, kick, catch and topple down in spar. Not every technique is necessarily implemented in the *silat tempur* competition. The information gathered will provide information that will facilitate the future coaching of young silat athletes to participate in competition.

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