



FILIPINO MARTIAL ARTS & MODERN ARNIS



In Ancient Philippine History, the Filipinos were always regarded as skillful swordsmen. Sword fighting was both an art and a skill, and it protected our ancestors from invaders who wished to conquer their beloved islands.

Such skills became recognized as a powerful weapon during the Spanish regime, **Arnis / Kail / Eskrima** is an ancient art practiced primarily for self-defense by the Filipinos during the pre-Spanish period. During the Spanish Colonial Period, Arnis was used to fight against the Spanish invaders. The Filipinos' stand against the superiority of their armed adversaries in mortal combat is honoured throughout their history.

Spaniards was treated to many skillful Filipinos. Such skills became recognized as a powerful weapon for a revolt during the Spanish regime, thus, the people were prohibited from carrying their bolos and the practice of their use was forbidden. Determined not to lose the skill, the Filipinos revolutionized their drill into an indigenous games, dance, and a new weapon replaced the sword; emerging into existence in the form of a long wooden stick they call it Arnis.



Prof. Remy Amador Presas founded the Modern Arnis system in 1957 in his hometown of Hinigaran, Negros Occidental, Central Philippines. He formed the Modern Arnis Federation of the Philippines in 1972 before leaving for a global promotion of Arnis, entrusting the art to a student from his family circle to continue it in the Philippines.



As the father of Modern Arnis and an ambassador of Filipino Martial Arts to the U.S.A., he organized the International Modern Arnis Federation Inc. in June 1991 and received the Hall of Fame Award for the 3rd time.

During his 25 years in the United States, Remy returned several times to the Philippines to develop the cadres whose sole purpose would be to build up Modern Arnis in the home country. The result is an entire generation of Filipinos – young and old, including women and children – dedicated to the practice and promotion of Modern Arnis, as well as the preservation of and support for all Filipino martial arts.



In the United States, Arnis has also gained recognition as the martial arts of choice for military and law enforcers. It has been adopted into the American as part of its law enforcement tradition. Because of its distinct movements and forms, an Arnis practitioner, commonly called an Arnisador, can easily escape many forms of street attacks



In Europe, Germany has invested much in its propagation, as evidenced by two successful FMA festivals held in the country in February 2002 and March 2004. The first and second FMA Festival was originally initiated by Grand Master Dieter Knuttel and Master Alfred Plath.

The principles of Arnis can be applied even if the only thing you have in possession at the moment of attack is just your cellphone, bag, umbrella, ballpen, or just your empty hands for combat. Knowledge of Arnis can be very useful in our daily lives not only as a form of self defense but as an excellent exercise to stimulate body movements and enable proper blood circulation. Ironically,



The foundations of IMAFP were planted as far back as 1995

when Grandmaster Remy

Presas instructed his former student, Shishir Inocalla, Modern Arnis and establish the International Modern development process culminated in 2000, when GM Board of Directors and officers



to get together old and New Student of Arnis Federation in the Philippines. The Remy Presas inaugurated the first IMAFP

Prof. Remy A. Presas dreamed of Modern Arnis becoming the Martial Art of the World before he retired and brought the art back to his homeland. The International Modern Arnis Federation Philippines, Inc. (IMAFP) was

founded by Grandmaster Remy A. Presas in February 2000 in Manila before he passed away on August 28, 2001. To this day we still mourn the loss of a great teacher, fighter and Father of Modern Arnis.

With the death of Grandmaster Remy Presas, the Filipinos mourned the passing of a great teacher and leader. It was very unfortunate that he died in a place far from home, where none of his family, students and colleagues could be with him. Deprived of the opportunity to comfort him on his last days, to bring him messages from the people he loved back in his hometown of Hinigaran, or to hear his last words, the followers of Grandmaster Presas pledged their strongest commitment to continue his work in the Philippines and ensure that his lifelong dream is honoured and realized.



Here in the Philippines, not every Filipino is aware that Arnis is the legacy of our ancestors, the hidden wealth that our forefathers had left for us to nurture and develop.

THE MODERN ARNIS MASTERS IN THE PHILIPPINES



The Filipino martial arts, particularly arnis, are guided by the spirit of tradition. This remains true despite the countless innovations and techniques that were developed during modern times, or the many styles that sprung forth from the genius of many masters. They continue to be guided by the freedom-loving spirit of the Filipinos as manifested in their culture and history.

The Council of Masters of Modern Arnis is the safe-keeper of this tradition as well as its guiding spirit. Many of the masters have been training in Filipino martial arts from childhood. They have been gifted with the knowledge passed on from generation to generation. In the olden days, the masters were not adorned with belts or ranks; it was not necessary. One proved oneself not through promotional exams but in the field of actual battle or combat.

It is this tradition that spurs the IMAFP masters to undertake the task of strengthening the classical roots of Modern Arnis.

Committed to Modernization

Grandmaster Remy Presas installed and standardized the belt and ranking system in order to enforce a modern-day standard of safety, rules of play, and promotion for Arnis. He innovated the method whereby arnis can be taught and practice with safeguards and rules. With the help of his students and other masters, the present day rules and standards of play in Modern Arnis have been developed and documented to guide the conduct of sport competitions and tournaments. Continuously researching in the education, culture and the arts now reveal a colorful history of the Filipino Heroes.

The IMAFP masters continue to innovate and develop further techniques. They also lead in the research and recovery of lost aspects of the Filipino martial arts. Their most important contribution to the preservation and development of the art is to continuously and selflessly teach it to several generations of students. Today, the use of Arnis has gained worldwide acceptance as more and more countries embraced the tradition evolved by the Filipinos.



Grandmaster and Father of Modern Arnis had fulfilled his lifelong dream: to bring the art back home to its people, at the same time when it enjoys the success of worldwide appreciation.



Arnis is now the Philippine National Sport and the National Martial Art. It is a cultural heritage, a complete and perfect martial art, and above all, the pride of the Filipino people.