

“BATTLEFIELD FIGHT LEAGUE” Leads Charge For MMA Across B.C.

ARTICLE BY JOSH OLIVEIRA



From left to right at the table: Gurdarshan Mangat, Marcus Vinicios, Jeremy Kennedy, Matt Baker, Jacen Brooks, Jay Golshani, and Micah Brakefield

If you're a mixed martial arts fan in British Columbia who hasn't heard of Battlefield Fight League, then you've probably been living under a pile of sweaty gym mats. Or maybe you just haven't yet realized the benefits of watching live, local MMA.

Either way, that ignorance would be surprising given on how rapidly the promotion has blitzed the regional fight scene. After staging ten events throughout B.C., in just its first sixteen months, BFL recently presented yet another stacked card, this time in Vancouver, on September 17th 2011.

BFL11: “Payback” at Granville Street’s Vogue Theatre, featuring the company’s first-ever amateur heavyweight title fight between current amateur middleweight champion, Micah Brakefield against physically massive submissions specialist, Adam Santos. (For full results, check: battlefieldfight.com)

Long-time company president, Jay Golshani had this to say about BFL’s swift and successful rise to regional MMA prominence, “Fighters join our promotion and they put their trust in us. Some of them train 2 times a day and some spend up to 6 hours a day in the gym. Our job is to put our guys on the map and market them in a proper fashion so that they can make a good living off what they do. The first huge step towards that goal is going on live television which begins at our very next event, Battlefield 12 in Vancouver. This will open up all kinds of doors and new opportunities for Battlefield and all of our athletes.”

The thing is, for Battlefield Fight League, it wasn’t always about securing trendy venues or crowning new champions.

On the contrary, the story of Battlefield Fight League began quite humbly with a small, invitation-only event at the Rocky Mountaineer Station, on May 15th, 2010. On that night, insider-attendees quickly recognized the upstart promotion’s unusually strong commitments to high production values, quality match-making, and developing home grown MMA talent.

That first event featured only amateur fighters, not paid professionals, which has been true of all BFL shows in the lower

mainland. This is due, at least partly, to peculiar civic regulations that have recently allowed only the sport’s leading brand, the UFC, to promote professional MMA in Vancouver.

Nevertheless, Battlefield Fight League 1 featured many impressive, previously unheard-of amateur talents, like Jacen Brooks, Gary Mangat, Chris Day, Matt Dwyer, and David Kennedy, among others, who have continued fighting with BFL.

That mutual loyalty between Battlefield Fight League and its many regular fighters provides consistency, which is one of the greatest joys of following BFL events. The promotion has also continued adding fresh talent, while always retaining its focus on organizational competence and high-quality fights.

By just their third show, BFL had already crowned their first amateur champion, while, during the recent BFL11 card, they crowned an amateur title-holder in four separate weight division. No other MMA promotion in B.C. takes so seriously the process of grooming and constantly testing its developing talent.

As a result, much of the regional amateur crop, fights at BFL shows.

Not content with being simply the most-successful amateur MMA promotion operating in Vancouver, the BFL recently began showcasing professional fighters, elsewhere in B.C.

First, they did so in the Vancouver Island city of Nanaimo with a pair of professional shows this past spring. Then, more recently, at BFL10: “War” in Vernon of the Okanagan Valley on August, 20th. They have already announced their return to Nanaimo for more professional MMA action, early next year.

Their non-amateur shows feature a mix of experienced regional professionals, including many lower-mainland residents, and other young fighters who have already proven themselves within the BFL’s amateur circuit. A pair of international stars has also already been seen within BFL in UFC veteran, Jesse Taylor and a B.C. raised MMA superstar, Denis Kang.



Newly Crowned Battlefield Fight League Heavyweight Champion Adam Santos

Yet another reason for Battlefield Fight League’s rapid growth in Vancouver is their practice of frequently holding amateur shows at new venues. To date, that list has included events at Richmond’s River Rock Casino, the centrally-located Edgewater Casino, the Vancouver Trade and Convention Centre, and most recently, the Vogue Theatre on Granville.

The promotion’s multiple television deals, including a landmark local-station deal with CHEK TV and a strong relationship with Canada’s own premium-cable outlet, The Fight Network have also contributed to the company’s steady growth.

If all that weren’t enough to explain the BFL’s emergence on the Vancouver sports scene, they also have a proven commitment to social responsibility, thus far donating over \$15,000 to the B.C. Children’s Hospital.

The path to success for any regional sports entity is fraught with potential pitfalls, which can be even more hazardous for a sport as sometimes-controversial as MMA. But the dedicated BFL team, along with its many talented young fighters, seem perfectly poised in thrilling B.C. fans for years to come.

If contact sports is your cup of tea, attend the next Battlefield Fight League that comes to town. In doing so, you’ll help support local athletes who have realistic hopes of one-day fighting on that glowing screen in your living room.

Besides, as they say in the biz, nothing compares to the thrill of live MMA.



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