

Cung Le shows there is life in UFC for over 40s

UFC on Fuel 6 went down last weekend and it was a debut for the promotion in China.

The headlining bout saw Cung Le, a veteran fighter of Chinese descent, mark this special occasion with a spectacular one-punch knockout of former UFC champion Rich Franklin.

The local crowd lapped it up and Cung Le gained his most impressive scalp in his career and a big payday to boot. Both men have been in the sport for a long time and are nearing the end of their storied careers.

Both men are old by fighters standards. Le is 40 and Franklin is 38 so they don't have too many fights left. The question is where do they go from here?

Le has won two fights on the bounce so he will be looking for another big fight and another big payday.

Franklin looked like he had a hard weight cut and make now he struggles to make middleweight, a division he was king of until Anderson Silva came tot town.

He is a little small for the light heavyweight division so where is he hoping to go?

If he wanted another shot at the title he would need a few good wins and may not have enough time left in his career to get them in. It would be nice to see him bow out and keep his legacy intact, but he won't want to go out on such a brutal KO loss.

If the UFC do right by him he could have one more fight against a well picked opponent and retire on a high lets hope that's the plan.

Nowadays with the advances in science and 'supplementation' fighters see to be able to continue fighting to a much greater age but this is not good.

There is much more potential for serious injury later in a fighters career and we have seen on numerous occasions the older fighters, who once had cast iron chins, getting knocked out with more regularity.

The problem is fighters are a proud breed and more often than not do not want to quit the sport they so

Standards high at LeisureWorlds

SPORTS

LEISUREWORLD Bishopstown and Churchfield were celebrating on the double recently at the ILAM prestigious White Flags Awards ceremony, **writes BARBARA O'CONNELL.**

The Cork facilities were awarded the Gold Standard White Flag for 2012.

On top on the great achievement of being awarded the Gold Standard White Flag Award for 2012, LeisureWorld was also awarded the Gold Award for the Disability Provision in Bishopstown, and Silver Award for the Disability Provision in Churchfield.

The Disability Provision Award was introduced in 2005 in partnership with The Irish Wheelchair Association and Cerebral Palsy Sport Ireland and has grown in stature every year.

An independent disability access audit is conducted on each facility by the Irish Wheelchair Association.

"The LeisureWorld culture and approach to achieve external recognition within our industry and peers gives a great sense of achievement," Christine Moloney, CEO of LeisureWorld said.

"This continuous achievement is a credit to the dedicated staff and management of LeisureWorld for which I am extremely proud to be part off."

ILAM, the Irish leisure industry employers body which represents gyms, leisure centres, sports, fitness, aquatic & outdoor facilities, announced that 85



President of ILAM, Brian Walsh and Leisure-World Health & Welfare manager, Mark McManus.

leisure facilities from across Ireland have been awarded White Flags for the 2012/2013.

The ILAM White Flag Award is an essential standards benchmark that all swimming pool, sports hall, fitness studio and gym facility in Ireland should strive to achieve.

The White Flag is a visible sign that leisure facilities are operating to high standards and is awarded through an independent group of people, representing several organisations including Bord na Móna, Irish Water Safety, HSE

Environmental Health Officers, The Moyne Institute of Preventative Medicine, and the Irish Hotels Federation, Royal Life Saving Society, County and City Enterprise Board.

Ninety-one facilities entered the gruelling auditing process this year; 86 received White Flag Excellence.

● 21 Received White Flag Excellence to Gold Standard.

● 49 Received White Flag Excellence to Silver Standard.

● 16 Received White Flag Excellence to Bronze Standard.

MMA

By BEN VICKERS

love. This is where they need a strong team around them to be able to advise them as to when might be the right time to hang up the gloves.

I'm sure we don't want to see former legends getting blown away in the first round and tarnishing amazing careers.

On the undercard Thiago Silva scored a come for behind submission victory over Stanislav Nedkov.

It was the first time Silva had won by submission since a heel hook victory back in 2006. It was a much needed win for the big Brazilian after a tough few years.

It was a good scalp too as the previously unbeaten Nedkov had amassed 12 straight wins, 10 inside the distance.

It would be great if Silva could

mount a valid charge towards the top of the light heavyweight division as Jon Jones is running short of challengers, realistically though I don't think he has the skill set to trouble the top 3.

The big one is this weekend though. UFC 154 goes down in Montreal, Canada, and sees the long awaited return of Canadian wonder boy Georges St Pierre after his long battle with injury.

He will defend his welterweight

title against former teammate and interim champion Carlos Condit.

There is no doubt it will be a tough test for the champ as he has been out of action for well over a year.

Condit will be well prepared and has been written off before, he has nothing to lose and everything to gain and that is a dangerous combination.

St Pierre note other hand, he has it all to lose, his title, his 9 fight 5 and a half year unbeaten record and a Superfight with Anderson Silva.

I really worry that this fight will be a snooze fest as Condit will be looking to avoid the takedown by using his great footwork, St Pierre will look for the takedown and to hold position and dominate on the ground.

I hope I am wrong as this fight has been in the making for a long time and if both men let their skills show it could be such an amazing scrap. Fingers crossed.

The co main event sees the technically brilliant Martin Kampmann taking on the up and coming and fiercely powerful Johnny Hendricks. Both men have been impressive in recent fights, Kampmann has stopped his last two opponents.

Hendricks had a close encounter with Josh Koscheck but spectacularly knocked out John Fitch other fight before.

This fight has fireworks in it and is the fight I look forward to most on the card. There are a bunch of talented Canadians stacking the undercard. Long time UFC favourite and serial bonus winner Sam Stout takes on John Makdessi, Ju Jitsu wizard Mark Bocek fights Rafael Dos Anjos and in what is set to be an intriguing battle Nick Ring will take on heavy handed Constantinos Phillippou.

I can't wait for this card and hope it doesn't go down the road of other equally hyped UFC cards and turn into an average showing.

There is quality from top to bottom and with the characters involved I can't see it disappointing. Only time will tell, but I'll be watching.

Comfy seat and silver screen beat high stool and wide screens

A FEW words on the Cork Film Festival. There's a possibility some people think the festival is a bit elitist and that those who attend look down their nose on most of the trash on at the cinema.

That's true. Look, if you watch *Eastenders* or *X-Factor* regularly, you probably shouldn't read on, your cultural soul has already been flushed down the U-bend too many times and you are beyond rescue without resort to an uncoiled clothes hanger.

The reason to go to something at the festival is because you're at least five times as likely to see something original, funny or enlightening than if you were to pick a random movie at the multiplex.

There is the risk that you might see an awful turkey, but there's no shame in

walking out and finding something else. Or going home with a reinforced sense of reverse snobbery and watching moderately famous people eat insects.

The worst response I hear from those who profess no interest at all in our film feast, is they don't want to see a foreign film, because who wants to read a film! "If I wanted to read, I'd get a book!" Probably something by Dan Brown.

Anyone who has ever sat through subtitles realises after five minutes that you forget you are looking at them.

By snubbing the festival, what you are really saying to yourself is: "I have no interest in hearing new stories. Give me something derivative of what I have seen before, otherwise I will be confused and will have to leave my shelter



of mediocrity, which has served me well so far."

OK, rant over, but tomorrow, to round off film week, we will list 10 great sports films you probably have never seen.

One of those was going to be *Buffalo 66*, but I decided against including it, because it skirts around sport, rather than featuring it.

It does however, have the greatest

deluded gambler in screen history, a man who is sent to prison over a bet on a Super Bowl and who decides to kill the man who missed a decisive kick.

Not one person I know who has seen it, likes this film, but trust me, they're all clowns and it's great.

Coincidentally, the US Senate is currently discussing a bill that would legalise betting on single sports games, an activity currently banned in all but four states (Nevada, Delaware, Oregon, and Montana). Hawaii and Utah are the only states where no gambling is allowed, including charity draws and bingo!

Only 21% of Americans believe they should be allowed to bet on sports, although they are allowed to back at the racetrack in nearly half of the States.

But perhaps they would be better off to never know the blindingly frustrating experience of slouching on a high stool in a bookmakers.

Former *Racing Post* writer David Ashforth defined three betting phrases thus: "Each-way: Opportunity to lose twice in one bet.

"Form book: Historical work, useful for predicting what will happen in the past.

"Starter: Official who drops a flag to indicate that hope has ended and experience is about to begin."

Recommendation: The Paddy Power Gold Cup at Cheltenham is the first big betting race of the jumps season. We'll be off to a flyer when Nicky Henderson's Nadiya de La Vega romps home at 16-1 with sportingbet.com.