

For: Melanie Lee Lockhart  
Fundraising Assignment  
April 9, 2009

Submitted by:  
Jolene Bergen

---

# CFC Fights for the Cure

---

A fundraising proposal  
in support of the  
Canadian Breast Cancer  
Foundation (CBCF)

---

**For: Giuseppe DeNatale**  
President of Canadian Fighting  
Championship (CFC)

**Created by: Jolene Bergen**  
Communications coordinator for  
CBCF

**Date: April 9, 2009**



**He has him pinned to ground; he's in half-guard.  
Oh, he just gave up his back, he's got his hooks in, and folks, it's all over!  
The Canadian Fighting Championship has just defeated breast cancer!**

That's right, the Canadian Fighting Championship (CFC) has the opportunity to take down and beat breast cancer by sponsoring a fundraising campaign with the Canadian Breast Cancer Foundation (CBCF). In addition to saving lives by raising money for breast cancer research, this event, tentatively titled **CFC Fights for the Cure**, will help your organization reach its stated objectives to "expand the mainstream potential of the CFC brand" and to deliver "world-class MMA events and original content to a cultivated, passionate, and intensely loyal customer base."

And just how is a breast cancer fundraiser going to help the CFC build a loyal following for its brand? That answer is also right on your website: "Our strategy is to give back to the community, promote and give maximum exposure to fighters, continue to set the standard for safety and quality, and contribute to the positive development of MMA and muay thai kickboxing."

This event simultaneously presents the CFC with an opportunity to introduce mixed martial arts (MMA) and kickboxing to a wider audience, legitimize the sport as a true athletic competition – one with the heart, soul, and passion that these skilled athletes possess – and gain front page media coverage.

Partnering with the CBCF to fight for a cure for a prevalent and destructive disease will show a more compassionate and sensitive side of a sport that is often viewed as bloody, barbaric, and unnecessarily violent. This may convince new audiences to take a first or second look at the sport and the CFC.

But don't be concerned, the CBCF understands that MMA and kickboxing are powerful, passionate, and intense combat sports. This is what makes the partnership so great; the women and men who battle breast cancer are also involved in an all-out war that requires a fierce and passionate commitment to do whatever it takes to ground and pound the cruel and sadistic disease that is breast cancer.

Just like in combat fighting, breast cancer has few rules and will stop at nothing to defeat its opponents. Sadly, these are our mothers, grandmothers, fathers, aunts and uncles, our wives, and our daughters. Today, breast cancer attacks one in nine women, and one in 100 men.

We have to stand up and fight against this disease; and who would be a better challenger than the trained athletes of the Canadian Fighting Championship.

## The Opportunity

Mixed martial arts has a knowledgeable and devoted fan base that continues to expand. The explosion of the Ultimate Fighting Championship (UFC) has resulted in MMA becoming one of the fastest growing sports in the world, including in Canada. Pay-per-view events are packing neighbourhood sports bars as people are piling into their friends' basements to watch their favourite fighter in matches that require skill, training, mental discipline, and strength.

And thanks to Canadian athletes like Georges St-Pierre (GSP), Canadians are embracing the sport as their own. Not only is GSP setting new standards of success inside the octagon as the Welterweight champion, he is starring in a Gatorade commercial with legendary athletes like Muhammad Ali, Tiger Woods, and hockey great, Gordie Howe.

It's not only GSP's new stardom as a commercial and movie actor that is attracting fans to the sport; it's his wholesome and approachable attitude that makes him a likable fighter and champion. He is dismissing the stereotype of the feared, fanatical fighter in favour of a highly skilled, passionate, professional athlete, all without sacrificing the intensity and fervour of the sport.

This, in turn, is attracting a new viewing audience to MMA events – women. UFC president Dana White said, "We're blown away by how many women are getting involved in the sport<sup>1</sup>." Women are attending events, training at MMA gyms, taking kickboxing fitness classes, and closely following the careers of their favourite fighters and the sport as a whole.

This is an audience that the CFC has an opportunity to expand to. The trouble often is overcoming the perceptions of extreme, senseless violence and outlandish antics and accepting MMA as a sport with serious, skilled, and trained athletes competing for pride and, of course, a championship belt. Partnering with an organization that women recognize, generally support, and accept as their own may be the ticket to opening up this perception. It may make more women, and men, take a second look at the sport and see past these stereotypes.

By partnering with a charitable organization that does great work for the population at large, like the CBCF, the CFC is meeting its set objectives by expanding the potential, entering new markets, legitimizing the sport, offering the widest opportunities to fighters, and giving back to the community. It appears to be a win-win situation.

However, there are challenges and threats in every situation; we'd be amiss not to address these concerns head-on. While this event offers the CFC the opportunity to expand and alter its tough-guy image, there will be naysayers and MMA fundamentalists who will oppose a supporting a breast cancer event. Martial arts have traditionally been a male-dominated sport and some men do see it as a boys-club, no women allowed.

---

<sup>1</sup> Fox 5 News: Las Vegas News, "Women Gone Wild". Feb 9, 2007.  
<http://www.fox5vegas.com/news/10973402/detail.html?taf=vegas#>. 04/07/09.

Although we understand these men are often hardcore fans, I do believe that they are so devoted and loyal that they will not turn away from the sport or even this particular event. There may be some grumbling and complaining, but I wouldn't be surprised if they used this as an opportunity to introduce their female partners to the sport they cherish.

Secondly, advertisers and partners for the event could be reluctant to back this fundraiser. Some hardcore sponsors may not feel that this new and expanded audience is in keeping with their own. However, breast cancer affects many, many people in Winnipeg and across the province, and the CBCF is well-known and recognized for the work we do. This event may expand your partnership base and create new business relationships within the city and across the country.

On a similar note, we also acknowledge that the CFC is a relatively new organization that continues to grow both its audience and its economic stability. Producing an event for charity, especially during a low time in the economy, may not appear to make financial sense. But we think it does, in fact, it is the best time to try something new and expand to new audiences.

Men (particularly married men) are more likely to spend their family's discretionary income on an activity that involves other members of the family. And really, a fight event that doubles as a date night is a no brainer. Even better, a new loyal fan base may develop from this fundraising event, building long-term revenue prospects. This event is an investment in the CFC brand. It will help the CFC gain wider media coverage, establish new relationships, and cement MMA as being a worthwhile sporting entertainment event in Winnipeg.

Thirdly, we recognize that as a male-dominated sport, the question may arise why support a "women's" issue? This is very easily addressed. Breast cancer attacks more women than men, this is a fact. However, breast cancer affects as many men as it does women. Every man has a mother, who had a mother. Many fighters have sisters, wives and girlfriends. Many fighting fans have daughters. The statistic is that one in nine women will be diagnosed with breast cancer. That means that there is a good chance it will be your mother, your sister, your grandmother, your in-law, your aunt, your cousin, your friend, your co-worker, or your daughter.

Breast cancer may be seen as a women's disease, and the CFC may be viewed as a man's sport, but we know that both of these expand beyond traditional gender stereotypes. What better opportunity to break these barriers than to connect the two in one great event.

## CFC Fights for the Cure: The event

In most respects, the event itself will be the same as the many other successful fight cards the CFC has produced. In no way should this partnership affect the quality of the fights or the fighters chosen for the event's card.

What we'd like to see from this event is a splash of pink, literally. We'd like to have fighters wearing red and pink shorts, as opposed to the traditional red and blue, with red and pink corners (CFC fighters are secure enough to wear pink, right?). We'd prefer to have the home team wear pink.

We'd also like the official CBCF logo (the pink ribbon inside the oval) to appear in the ring, as well as on the tickets and other print/promotional material.

It would be preferable to see a female MMA or kickboxing match on the fight card for the night. This match-up, as with the rest of the card, would be at the discretion of the CFC.

The demonstrations between matches are another opportunity to promote the sport to this expanded audience. This could include demonstrations that emphasize the skill and athleticism needed to compete at this level. It could be presentations by training facilities that are open to or cater to individuals interested in recreational training or fitness opportunities. Or it may be demonstrations that emphasize these opportunities for children. Many parents are looking for an activity that challenges their child physically and mentally while teaching them discipline, focus, and dedication.

A short pre-fight program should include brief remarks from someone related to the MMA scene that has been personally affected by breast cancer, if possible. Also speaking would be a representative from the CBCF, and a representative from the CFC to explain why you have chosen to associate yourselves with our foundation. The entire proceedings should amount to about 10 minutes in length.

The CBCF will use our media and PR channels to communicate the event to the media and to our audiences. This will include online mentions on our website and through our social networking links. We will work with our friends in the media to gain exposure that the CFC may not otherwise attract.

Furthermore, we'd like to work with you and your partnering associations to set up introductory workshops or crash courses during the week or day of the event to provide a general overview for our audiences who may not be familiar with jiu jitsu, muay thai, or kickboxing rules and styles.

These classes should be specifically for people who have pre-registered through the CBCF's website (<http://www.cbef.org/en-US/Prairies%20NWT.aspx>), but open to men, women, and children, depending on the amount of interest received. They can be paid classes.

These classes will create a more educated audience for the event day, as well as provide another opportunity for local MMA and kickboxing training centres to attract new clients. Interested media could also be invited to these workshops.

There is also an opportunity for a silent auction, 50/50 draw and promotional/informational booths to be set up inside the venue. We'd like to work with the CFC to attract sponsors for these giveaways.

**The Breakdown:**

For this event to function successfully, we'd like the CFC to provide the following:

- All fighters for the event,
- Event venue (presumably at the Convention Centre where past events were held, may be able to work out in kind donation with vendor),
- Event staff,
- Promotions for the event, including posters, ticket sales, advertising, and regular media relations (CBCF will also use established channels to promote the event),
- Logistics for the event, including security, emergency personnel, necessary equipment, judges, liquor licence, food services, table and chair rentals, etc.
- Other overlooked regular fight event-- including pre- or post-event -- supplies, staff, or materials,
- A pre-determined portion of the proceeds from the event to the CBCF.

In turn, the CBCF will provide the following for the CFC and this event:

- Event advertising/promotions on our website and through the CBCF's advertising channels,
- Media promotions through our media channels,
- Direct event promotions with our stakeholders, also for the MMA workshops,
- An introduction to our established clientele, including local businesses and media,
- The opportunity to align with a reputable charitable organization, building the CFC brand as responsible, altruistic, and community-based,
- The opportunity to break into and promote the sport to a new market with a growing potential of loyal fans, both benefiting the CFC and your related partners/sponsors, and
- The opportunity for fighters and fans to give back to their community, share their experiences with breast cancer, create awareness of the disease, and help to create a future without breast cancer.

## What's in it for CBCF?

It may appear strange that the CBCF wants to align itself with the CFC, but only at first glance. As already mentioned, breast cancer affects everyone in one way or another, and it's time to play hardball. To reach our objective of achieving a future without breast cancer, we cannot afford to play safe, we must be tough.

Partnering with the CFC allows the CBCF to reach another audience that may not otherwise understand the desperate need we have to make breast cancer history. This audience, your devoted MMA fans, may not be aware of how frequently individuals receive the breast cancer diagnosis, they may not understand the prevalence of this cancer among men, and they may not already be inundated with the "pink" message.

We need everyone's help to beat this disease, and we already have our own line-up of devoted fans that attend our events, support our cause, and work with us to promote our objectives. We are very thankful for them and cannot say enough wonderful things about the support they give us. Yet, it appears the more successful our message is promoted, the harder we have to work to make it new.

Partnering with the CFC offers us a fresh way to attract attention to our cause by drawing attention to yours. By pushing the envelope, we may get people to pay attention to us, to take the time to read and understand the meaning within the message, and to create a buzz around both the CFC and the CBCF.

This partnership also provides a way in which individual and businesses can support the CBCF without compromising on other values or interests. We try to provide our supporters with a wide-range of opportunities in which to give to our organization while receiving. However, not everyone wants to kiss for the cure, golf for the cure, bat against breast cancer, walk, run or jog for the cause or buy pink. By adding a buy-a-ticket-to-your-favourite-sports-entertainment-event-and-sit-back-and-relax option, more people can support breast cancer research while going about their regular activities.

The same rationale applies to businesses and organizations. Working with an alternative sponsor, namely the CFC, we are also opening our doors to developing new relationships both personally and in the business community. As well, we are providing a related opportunity for these companies and organization to help find a cure for breast cancer.

Overall, we see this fundraising event as an opportunity to expand our audience, to further distribute our messages, and to provide individuals and organizations with a simple, convenient, and alternative method of supporting breast cancer research.

## And the winner is...

Just as in an MMA match, there needs to be some criteria to judge whether the event was a success or not.

Namely, the event will be declared a victory if:

- Total attendance for the event increases by 25% (from average event),
- Media coverage of the event includes:
  - The front page of both major newspapers, including images,
  - Print stories in major cities across the Prairie/NWT Region,
  - One national paper/media source,
  - One local television station,
  - Three local radio stations, including 92 CITI FM and 94.3 Curve FM or Hot 103, and
  - An increase in mentions on social networking sites, including Twitter and Facebook (increased from mentions of regular, non-fundraising CFC events).
- Local interest in MMA and Kickboxing increases, as measured by after-event/continued enrolment in related centres and at following CFC events,
- Overall, the event receives positive support from the CFC's sponsors, partners, and loyal fans, and
- A substantial amount of funds are raised for the CBCF.

If there is a unanimous declaration of success by the CFC and the CBCF, we just may have challenge CFC Fights for the Cure to a rematch next year!