

## Is This Legal?: The Inside Story of The First UFC from the Man Who Created It

By Art Davie, Sean Wheelock

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On November 12, 1993, an entirely new sport was unleashed on an unsuspecting viewing public--one that was unlike any other, and one that would come to redefine combat and action sports for a new generation. The sport was mixed martial arts (MMA)--although it hadn't been named that yet--and the event was the Ultimate Fighting Championship. The creation of ad man and serial entrepreneur Art Davie, the UFC entered nearly 90,000 households through pay per view television with an explosion...an explosion of blood--as Dutch karate champion Gerard Gordeau kicked fallen Sumo wrestler Teila Tuli right in the face during the first minute of the opening fight. This shocking scene was only a prelude of what was to come that autumn night in Denver, and worldwide over the next 20 years. Now, for the first time, the true story of how the UFC and the sport of MMA came into existence will be told by the man who started it all. Art Davie is the Dr. James Naismith and Abner Doubleday (with a touch of PT Barnum) of MMA, yet his name is largely unknown. That is, until now. In this vivid and fast-moving, first-person account, Davie tells the story of his creation, which has flourished into the billion-dollar behemoth Ultimate Fighting Championship. Davie's is a tale of perseverance and against-all-odds determination, as he worked tirelessly for four years to see his idea come to brutal fruition, meeting resistance at every single turn. It's also a mash-up of martial arts, celebrity and business culture, involving a highly improbable cast of characters, ranging from Academy Award nominee John Milius, NFL Hall of Fame running back Jim Brown, action star Chuck Norris, Brazilian Jiu-Jitsu godfather Rorion Gracie and pay per view pioneer Bob Meyrowitz. Davie's story of how he created the Ultimate Fighting Championship, and thus invented the new sport mixed martial arts, is one for not just fight fans, but for fans of mavericks in business and life, who stop at nothing to fulfill their dreams. Whether you're a hardcore supporter of MMA, or have never watched a bout in your life, you'll be enthralled by Davie's story of ultimate triumph tempered by constant near-disaster. Davie created the sport of the 21st Century, which arrived two decades early and with virtually no fanfare or warning. He started a revolution, and his revolution was televised.

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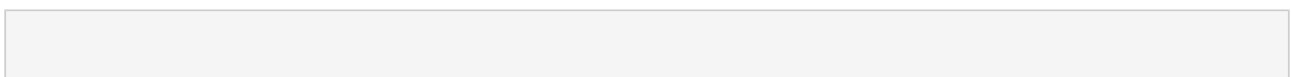
*By Art Davie, Sean Wheelock*

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### **Editorial Review**

#### Review

I thought I knew just about everything there was to know on the birth of MMA in this country. What I found out in *Is This Legal?* is that I knew barely anything. Art and Sean have masterfully crafted a fascinating and compelling must-read for anyone who prides themselves on being a combat sports fan. --Kevin Kay, President, Spike TV

This is a must-read for all UFC fans! *The Man, the Myth, the Legend*, Art Davie tells the true, inside story of how he created the Ultimate Fighting Championship. You will laugh out loud when you discover the human side of how the toughest sport on the planet got its start! --Tedd Williams, Owner, Gladiator Challenge & UFC Veteran

*Is This Legal?* is an honest, shocking, enthralling and nostalgic look back at the creation of the modern age of mixed martial arts in the United States. This is all the real stuff that no one gets to see or hear about, when the newest combative sport of MMA was forged, and Art Davie was one of its founding fathers! Thanks goes out to Art for persevering, and giving all professional martial artists a place to ply our wares and test our skills. --Randy Couture, UFC Hall of Famer & Former UFC Heavyweight and Light Heavyweight Champion

#### About the Author

Art Davie is the creator of the Ultimate Fighting Championship, and the father of mixed martial arts (MMA). Davie came to sports and entertainment from the advertising agency business. Spectacle and creativity was always a theme in Davie's work. Davie even performed his own stunts in TV commercials. Davie had an epiphany in 1993, and created the television tournament that pitted boxers, wrestlers and martial artists against each other. This was the Ultimate Fighting Championship, the franchise that exploded on Pay-Per-View TV, and two decades later, is still going strong. In addition to being the UFC's founder and creator, Davie co-produced, created personalities, booked, matched fighters and served as the organization's commissioner. In 1998, Davie brought the popular *K-1: The New Fighting Sport* from Fuji TV in Japan to American television with a show at the Mirage Hotel & Casino in Las Vegas. The fire to create new TV shows brought him to Mandalay Sports Entertainment in 2003, where he developed pilots, including *King of the Streets*, a drag-racing reality show; *Fight Quest*, a mixed-martial arts reality show; and *MAGIC (Making a Great Inner City)*, with Earvin "Magic" Johnson. Davie attended New York Military Academy (where his roommate was Donald Trump), St. John's University and Pace College in New York. After military service, he worked with youth gangs in New York City as a member of the Youth Services Agency - Crisis Task Force. As a United States Marine sergeant, he had top secret clearance, and worked at the Commandant's Communications Center in the Pentagon. He was later awarded the Navy Achievement Medal with combat "V" for his service in Vietnam. Sean Wheelock holds the distinction of being the only person to serve as play-by-play commentator on the FIFA World Cup, Super Bowl, US Open tennis and world championship fights in mixed martial arts. One of the best known American commentators in both MMA and soccer, Wheelock's broadcasting work has taken him to over 25 countries, and dates back to when he was 18 years old. Wheelock is currently the play-by-play commentator for Bellator Fighting Championships, which airs nationally across the United States and Canada on Spike TV, as well as worldwide. He has also called numerous kickboxing and boxing matches for ESPN/ESPN2, Fox Sports International, EuroSport and Metro Sports Television. Wheelock has served as the BBC's North American sports correspondent since 1996. He has called three Super Bowls for the BBC, and hosted their weekly series on the NFL. Wheelock works annually as a commentator at the US Open for the international television broadcast. A lifelong Kansan,

Wheelock lives in the Kansas City suburb of Shawnee, Kansas with his wife Kelly, originally of Odiham, Hampshire, England, and their young daughters Ellee and Hadlee.

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