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The warriors' quest

On the night of 29 November, 2008 all those in attendance at Rooty Hill RSL witnessed the first official Australia King of Ring Pankration Lightweight and Middleweight title belts presented by the vice president of the Australian Federation of Pankration, Mr Avid Prosilis.

The first fight commenced with a roar from the crowd for fighter Willem Meuwissen, who took on Rhys Boyd. He applied a kimura that seemed to be the end of the fight, but Boyd managed a great escape. It was a hectic round of fighting until the end, but there was no clear decision, so an extra two-minute round began. A struggle was on, but Boyd eventually mounted,

threw in the strikes and a halt was called by the referee declaring Boyd the winner.

The second fight was the Middleweight Elimination Title Fight with George Kratalis (nicknamed the 'The Kat'), a State Pankration Champion with three years of martial arts experience in Muay Thai and Pankration. His opponent, Anthony Padovana, was a BJJ Champion and two-time State Pankration Champion. Padovana was on the end of a brutally hard slam to the ground and Kratalis was declared the winner by TKO, advancing to the title fight in the final.

The third fight was the second elimination for the Middleweight title with Reggie Ramos against Nathan Hurihanganui, who snared a tight rear-naked-choke and forced Ramos to tap out, moving Hurihanganui to meet George Kratalis in the final for the Middleweight title.

The fourth fight saw Josh McLaren battle Mike Anderson, in one of the night's most spectacular fights. The fight was won by Mike Anderson, who

was seen to have had a slight advantage in stand-up by the judges scoring the bout.

The fifth fight featured some beautiful and exciting displays of boxing over three rounds between coach and former boxing champion, Pankration Master Kon Papiroannou, and Anthony Dimitriou, the head referee for the Australian Federation of Pankration Athlima.

Fight six was a highlight, with Robert Whittaker attacking Kas El-Hassan with punches and kicks, and El-Hassan returning it just as fiercely. The fight was aggressive and riveting, but El-Hassan was running low in energy and eventually couldn't continue, so the referee announced Whittaker the winner.

In fight seven, Goktan Akturk versus Michael Hubbard, Akturk put a key-lock submission on Hubbard and was declared the winner by tap-out.

In Goran Latinovich's bout with Uno Ekmekslar, the fight was stopped by TKO, with Latinovich the winner.

AUSTRALIA'S XFC RETURNS!

February 2009 will see the return of one of Australia's pioneering MMA promotions, the Xtreme Fighting Championship (XFC).

Headlining the return event is UFC and Pride heavyweight veteran Soa 'The Hulk' Palelei, who has signed to compete in the brand new XFC cage.

"XFC promotes from 135lb (61kg) all the way to 265lb+ (120kg+) and has a number of events planned across Australia's vast and beautiful land in 2009," said promoter Justin Lawrence in a recent press-release.

Further announcements regarding XFC shows, ticketing information and fighter matchups will be made soon.

Any fighters or sponsors interested in XFC can contact XFC president Justin Lawrence via email to xfcpromoter@gmail.com.

KEN SHAMROCK TO RETURN TO MMA

UFC Hall-of-Famer Ken Shamrock announced that he'll make his return to the ring at the *Valentine's Eve Massacre* event in Fresno, California.

In addition to Shamrock, the show will feature Wargods' heavyweight champion Lavar 'Big' Johnson, Buddy Roberts, Mike Moreno, Tonya Evinger, Jennifer Tate and Isaac De Jesus on the fight card.

Also featured will be up-and-comers such as Ken Shamrock's son, Ryan Shamrock, and Zoila Frausto.

The bout will be Shamrock's first since losing to Robert 'Buzz' Berry at Cage Rage 25 in March 2008. He is on a five-fight losing streak and looking to turn things around this month.

Shamrock was supposed to have faced Kevin 'Kimbo Slice' Ferguson at EliteXC's 4 October event, but was not medically cleared to fight by Florida's athletic commission when he suffered a cut over his eye in training the night before the fight.



The lightweight title fight between Mario Yokoyama and Mike Abela started with Mike throwing the punches, but Yokoyama was quick to evade them. With lightning speed, Yokoyama shot for the takedown and swiftly secured an arm-bar, to be declared the first Australian King of Ring Pankration Lightweight Champion.

Fight 10 was between the two winners from the elimination middleweight title fights, George Kratalis and Nathan Hurihanganui. The fight went the distance of two five-minute rounds, with round one evolving around clinching, takedowns and some furious ground-fighting as each man tried to finish the fight. But it was not to be so, as they battled fiercely on to round two. An exciting fight finished in mid-action with both fighters on the floor, but Kratalis had the advantage in points and was declared the first Australian King of Ring Pankration Middleweight Champion.

— Jeni Satchaphansy