

**For Immediate Release:**  
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## **UFC® RETURNS TO ACTION WITH STACKED CARD HEADLINED BY INTERIM LIGHTWEIGHT CHAMPIONSHIP**

### **OCTAGON MAKES FIRST-EVER APPEARANCE IN JACKSONVILLE WITH A TRIO OF EVENTS AT VYSTAR VETERANS MEMORIAL ARENA**



#### **FEATURED BOUTS:**

**(#1) TONY FERGUSON vs. (#4) JUSTIN GAETHJE**  
**(C) HENRY CEJUDO vs. DOMINICK CRUZ**

**Las Vegas** – UFC® returns with one of the most stacked cards in recent history, set to be headlined by a bout guaranteed to deliver fireworks as No. 1 ranked lightweight contender [Tony Ferguson](#) and No. 4 ranked [Justin Gaethje](#) battle for the interim championship. In the co-main event, [Henry Cejudo](#) intends to prove that he is the greatest UFC bantamweight champion of all time as he looks to defeat multiple-time title holder [Dominick Cruz](#). This will be the first of three events taking place at VyStar Veterans Memorial Arena in Jacksonville, Florida on May 9, 13 and 16 respectively, future cards will be

announced at a later date. These events will be closed to the public and will be produced with only essential personnel in attendance.

**UFC 249: FERGUSON vs. GAETHJE** will take place Saturday, May 9 at VyStar Veterans Memorial Arena in Jacksonville, Fla. All prelim bouts will be simulcast on ESPN, ESPN Deportes and ESPN+ in English and Spanish beginning at 6:30 p.m. ET with the UFC Fight Pass prelims. The prelims will continue exclusively on ESPN & ESPN+ 8 p.m. ET and the ESPN+ Pay-Per-View main card will kick off at 10 p.m. ET.

“I can’t wait to deliver some great fights for the fans,” said UFC President Dana White. “I want to give a big thanks to Mayor Curry, VyStar Veterans Memorial Arena and Florida State Boxing Commission Executive Director Patrick Cunningham for getting this thing done and giving us a venue to put on these incredible cards, as well our media partners including ESPN and ESPN+, for bringing it to fans. My team is ready to go and the fighters are excited to get back in there with these back-to-back events.”

“As we move step-by-step on the path toward economic recovery, we are proud to host these UFC events at the Vystar Veterans Memorial Arena,” said Jacksonville Mayor Lenny Curry. “The UFC organization is a renowned entertainment brand that’s presented a safe and sensible plan to use this Jacksonville location, and we are thrilled to have our city highlighted nationally on ESPN and ESPN+. With Jacksonville continuing to outpace other cities and regions, we are excited to continue to lead as host to these world-class, international sports entertainment organizations.”

“Florida’s State Commission and the Department of Business and Professional Regulation have been in continued coordination with the Ultimate Fighting Championship (UFC) to identify options for bringing the UFC to Florida for upcoming events,” said Florida State Boxing Commission Executive Director, Patrick Cunningham. “Florida welcomes the UFC to the Sunshine State, and our commission stands ready to sanction the events to be held on May 9, 13 and 16. Health and safety protocols will be in place to ensure the safety and wellbeing of all individuals who are helping to make these events possible. With this triple date feature of UFC events coming in May, Florida is continuing to build a strong collaboration with UFC that sets the foundation for more opportunities that we hope UFC will choose to host in our state in the months to come.”

One of the most exciting and unpredictable athletes on the roster, **Ferguson** (26-3, fighting out of Orange County, Calif.) is on the verge of becoming the first two-time interim lightweight champion in UFC history. Currently on an incredible 12-fight winning streak, Ferguson has defeated the likes of Donald Cerrone, Anthony Pettis and Rafael Dos Anjos. He now looks to notch his record-setting 13<sup>th</sup> win in a row and raise UFC gold once again.

Known for his unrelenting fight style, **Gaethje** (21-2, fighting out of Arvada, Colo.) has earned a post-fight bonus in every single one of his UFC bouts. One of the best knockout artists in the division’s history, Gaethje has earned stoppage wins over Donald Cerrone, Edson Barboza and James Vick. He now looks to secure another iconic finish and earn his first UFC championship.

**Cejudo** (15-2, fighting out of Phoenix, Ariz.) is one of only four athletes in UFC history to hold two championships at the same time. To accomplish this feat, he netted impressive victories Demetrious Johnson, TJ Dillashaw and Marlon Moraes. After recently relinquishing the flyweight belt, Cejudo now plans to reassert his dominance over the bantamweight division by taking out one of its greatest champions.

Returning to action for the first time in three years, **Cruz** (22-2, fighting out of San Diego, Calif.) intends to prove that he is still the best bantamweight in the world. A former UFC and WEC champion, Cruz

holds wins over Urijah Faber, TJ Dillashaw and Demetrious Johnson. He now looks to be the first person to defeat Cejudo at 135-pounds and regain his lost crown.

**Additional bouts on the card include:**

- No. 2 ranked heavyweight contender **Francis Ngannou** (14-3, fighting out of Paris, France by way of Batie, Cameroon) meets No. 6 **Jairzinho Rozenstruik** (10-0, fighting out of Paramaribo, Suriname) in a battle of KO artists
- In a clash of featherweight contenders, No. 7 ranked **Jeremy Stephens** (28-17, 1 NC, fighting out of San Diego California by way of Des Moines, Iowa) takes on No. 9 **Calvin Kattar** (20-4, fighting out of Methuen, Massachusetts)
- Fan favorites meet, as **Donald Cerrone** (36-14, fighting out of Albuquerque, N.M.) takes on **Anthony Pettis** (22-10, fighting out of Milwaukee, Wisc.) in a welterweight bout
- **Greg Hardy** (6-2, 1NC, fighting out of Coconut Creek, Florida) squares off with undefeated **Yorgan De Castro** (5-0, fighting out of Fall River, Massachusetts by way of Mindelo, Sao Vicente, Cape Verde) in an exciting heavyweight bout
- Heavyweight grapplers look to make a statement as **Aleksei Oleinik** (58-13, fighting out of Moscow, Russia) welcomes back former UFC champion **Fabricio Werdum** (23-7, fighting out of Los Angeles, Calif.)
- **Ryan Spann** (17-5, fighting out of Beaumont, Texas) aims to continue his momentum against crafty veteran **Sam Alvey** (33-13, 1NC, fighting out of Temecula, California)
- Former UFC women's strawweight champion and No. 7 ranked **Carla Esparza** (16-6, fighting out of Irvine, Calif.) takes on No. 8 **Michelle Waterson** (17-7, fighting out of Albuquerque, N.M.)
- **Uriah Hall** (16-9, fighting out of Queens, New York) goes for his third straight win against decorated grappler **Jacare Souza** (26-8, 1NC, fighting out of Rio de Janeiro, Brazil)
- Welterweight finishers collide when No. 13 ranked contender **Vicente Luque** (17-7-1, fighting out of Westwood, New Jersey by way of Brasilia, Brazil) faces **Niko Price** (14-3, 1NC, fighting out of Cape Coral, Florida)
- Exciting featherweight grapplers go to war as **Bryce Mitchell** (12-1, fighting out of Sherwood, Ark.) meets **Charles Rosa** (12-3, fighting out of Coconut Creek, Fla.)

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### **About UFC®**

UFC® is the world's premier mixed martial arts organization (MMA), with more than 318 million fans and 80 million social media followers. The organization produces more than 40 live events annually in some of the most prestigious arenas around the world, while broadcasting to nearly one billion TV households across more than 170 countries. UFC's athlete roster features the world's best MMA athletes representing more than 65 countries. The organization's digital offerings include UFC FIGHT PASS®, one of the world's leading streaming services for combat sports. UFC was acquired in 2016 by global entertainment, sports and content company Endeavor, along with strategic investors Silver Lake Partners and KKR. UFC is headquartered in Las Vegas, Nevada. For more information, visit [UFC.com](https://www.ufc.com) and follow UFC at [Facebook.com/ufc](https://www.facebook.com/ufc), Twitter, Snapchat and Instagram: @UFC.

### **About VyStar Veterans Memorial Arena**

VyStar Veterans Memorial Arena, nominated for the 2020 Academy of Country Music Award's 'Arena of the Year,' is North Florida's premier arena for entertainment greats such as Chris Stapleton, Dave Matthews Band, Elton John, Jason Aldean, P!nk and is home to the Jacksonville IceMen and the Arena Bowl Champions Jacksonville Sharks. VyStar Veterans Memorial Arena is managed by ASM Global, the world's leading venue management and services company connecting people through the power of live experience. ASM Global manages over 300 sports and entertainment stadium, arenas, theaters and convention centers worldwide and is committed to bringing its guests the ultimate event experience in Northeast Florida.

### **About ESPN+**

ESPN+ is the multi-sport, direct-to-consumer video service from The Walt Disney Company's Direct-to-Consumer and International (DTCI) segment in conjunction with ESPN. It reached 7.6 million subscribers in less than two years and offers fans thousands of live events, on-demand content and original programming not available on ESPN's linear TV or digital networks, along with premium editorial content.

Programming on ESPN+ includes hundreds of MLB and NHL games, exclusive UFC, Top Rank boxing and PFL fights and events, top domestic and international soccer (Serie A, MLS, FA Cup, UEFA Nations League, EFL Championship, EFL Carabao Cup, Eredivisie, and more), thousands of college sports events (including football, basketball and other sports), Grand Slam tennis, international and domestic rugby and cricket, new and exclusive series, acclaimed studio shows and the full library of ESPN's award-winning *30 for 30* films. Fans can sign up for ESPN+ for just \$4.99 a month (or \$49.99 per year) and can cancel at any time.

ESPN+ is available as an integrated part of the ESPN App (on mobile and connected devices) and ESPN.com. They are the industry-leading all-in-one digital sports platform, delivering a rich, personalized experience to tens of millions of fans every month.

### **About Disney's Direct-To-Consumer & International**

Disney's Direct-to-Consumer & International (DTCI) segment includes Disney's international media operations stretching from Europe to Asia to Latin America and the Company's direct-to-consumer streaming businesses, including Hulu, Hotstar, ESPN+, and the recently launched Disney+ service. DTCI also manages global advertising sales and ad technology for Disney media properties which include ABC, ESPN, Freeform, FX Networks, National Geographic, and the Disney Channels. The Company's media distribution operations are also part of the Direct-to-Consumer & International business segment.

### **About ESPN**

ESPN, the world's leading sports entertainment enterprise, features more than 50 assets – eight U.S. television networks, ESPN Radio, ESPN.com, ESPN International, *ESPN The Magazine* and more. ESPN is 80 percent owned by ABC, Inc. (an indirect subsidiary of The Walt Disney Company) and 20 percent by Hearst.

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