

## BLOOD, SWEAT AND TEARS

The article is about the so-called "ultimate fighting". This new sports mania has been overtaking the United States. It consists of a series of bouts of ferocious head butts, choke holds, elbow chops, and a lot of knees to the groin.

Its popularity has made the founder of the Ultimate Fighting Championship - a brutal pay-per-view TV elimination tournament - a multi-millionaire. The competition involves eight challengers from all over the world. They engage in elimination bouts in a 9-meter octagonal ring enclosed by an one-and-a-half meter chain link fence. On average, a match lasts approximately two-and-a-half minutes when it is usually ended by a contestant tapping the mat. Though broken noses and lost teeth are par for the course, there have been surprisingly no serious injuries so far.

The prize for the match can be as little as \$5,000 and only as much as \$150,000. Competitors have different reasons for entering the competition and fighting. The majority of them are tall, well-built men in their twenties with a grudge on their shoulders and a hunger for money. Almost all of the fighters still hold modest day jobs. Many of them are also devout Christians who maintain that competing in the UFC is a way of "spreading the Word".

Ultimate fighting's promoters argue that ultimate fighting serves as an important social safety valve, a valuable outlet of aggression that can be limited to the ring site.

Critics of the sport do not agree with these arguments. They compare the sport to human cockfighting that caters to "the lowest common denominator in our society."

- **an epithet** - a characterizing word or phrase added to or used in place of the name of a person or thing - pridevek, eptitet - "*The Conqueror was an epithet of William I. of England.*"
- **a bout** - a contest as of boxing; match - doba, poskus, napad - "*I have never attended championship bout.*"
- **to gouge** - to dig or force out with or as if with a gouge (to gouge out an eye) - dolbsti, izliti oko - "*Eye gouging is forbidden.*"
- **to grapple** - to engage in a struggle or close encounter, come to grips - zgrabiti, spoprijeti se - "*Every man has to grapple with the problem of what he wants to do in life.*"
- **par for the course** - exactly what one might expect; typical - tipično - "*Broken noses and lost teeth are par for the course.*"
- **innocuous** - not harmful or injurious; harmless - neškodljiv - "*The women exchanged innocuous gossip over lunch.*"
- **albeit** - although, even if - čeprav - "*He is poor, albeit he has got a well-paid job.*"
- **a valve** - any device for holding or controlling the flow of something - zaklopka, ventil - "*Ultimate fighting serves as an important social safety valve.*"
- **to cater to** - to provide or supply what is needed or gives pleasure, comfort, etc. - dobavljati, preskrbovati - "*The dotting husband catered to his wife's every wish.*"
- **staunch** - strong, substantial - neomajen, trden - "*This is a staunch little cabin.*"
- **a contingent** - a share to be contributed or furnished - delež - "*The women are a small but vocal fan contingent.*"