

AZ Scorpions **STRIKE**

By Jamie Holthuysen **Ready To**

National Fight League (IFL) is expanding in Arizona, with a team of five top fighters led by Don "The Predator" Frye, the legendary UFC, K-1, and PRIDE champion.

Don is considered one of the original "cross-trained" MMA competitors. He was a collegiate wrestler at NCAA powerhouses Arizona State University and Oklahoma State University, he holds a 2nd degree black belt in Judo, and has fought as a professional boxer. You can even catch Don on the silver screen in *Big Stan*, an upcoming Ron Schneider film.

Coach Frye and the Scorpions live and train in Tucson, and are eager for their first



you've ever seen Don in the ring, "nurturing" isn't the first thing that comes to mind. "He's put so much time into managing," Mollie says. "It's a different world for him, but he's doing great."

"I expected to just fade out of the picture with my wife, my family, and my horse," Don adds. "But because MMA got so popular, I got another chance to get involved in the sport."

When asked why he thinks MMA is so popular these days, Don explains that "Society has had its balls cut off. Everything is so politically correct now...MMA fighting is really one of the only ways for men to be



Rocco, Steve and the Predator

participant) and Gareb Shamus (chairman of Wizard Entertainment Group), the IFL is the first organized MMA competition to utilize a team system. Each team has a roster of five fighters, who represent five different weight classes — from 155 pounds to Heavyweight.

The new Arizona team is a clear indication of how big the local market is, and how much talent is waiting in the wings. (See feature on page 6 about Ray Steinbeiss, who fights with IFL's Razorclaws.)

"I wouldn't be involved in anything I didn't think was top quality, and I think Arizona fight fans are going to love their home-grown team," Don says. "When I'm looking for a fighter, I want someone with big character who keeps his word...that means more to me than anything else, and it's the most important thing about being a man." ¶

Editor's Note: Watch for profiles of the Scorpions team members in upcoming issues of Fightground.

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official fight against the Tokyo Sabres on February 2, 2007 in Houston, Texas.

I got a chance to see Don and his squad work out in a high school wrestling room, their long-time training venue of choice. Don was joined by his wife Mollie, the most beautiful fight promoter I've ever seen, and by two of his long-time trainers — Rocco Depaolo (striking) and judo master Steve Owens (grappling).

Mollie says that it's been very interesting to see Don move from being a fighter to someone who has to nurture others. If

men, by watching the fight or being in the fight. Society has been feminized, and now the men are revolting."

IFL events reach more than two million viewers on Fox Sports Network (FSN), and attendance at live events is impressive. What's more, the League is grabbing up some big-name sponsors, and will be going public in the near future. (Yes, you'll soon be able to invest in your retirement and support MMA at the same time.)

The brainchild of Kurt Otto (a real estate investor and life-long martial arts

IFL RULES

The IFL rules have been designed to highlight both athleticism and strategy, and to keep the athletes safe and healthy. That includes no form of head butting, hair pulling, elbows to the head or face, or strikes to the spine, kidney throat, or back of the head. Combatants are not allowed to use abusive language in the fighting area, or any form of unsportsmanlike conduct that causes an injury to opponent. The fans? Well, that's another story.

SCORPIONS TEAM ROSTER



155lbs. — Ed West



170lbs. — Gabe Rivas



185lbs. — Shane Johnson



205lbs. — Open



Heavyweight — Chad Griggs