



June 6-7, 2009 ● Toronto International Centre

BJJ Grandmaster to hold Prestigious Tournament at MMA Expo Toronto

APRIL 29, 2009 – TORONTO - Mixed Martial Arts Expo Toronto is pleased to announce the signing of what promises to be one of the most prestigious Brazilian Jiu Jitsu tournaments ever held in Canada. The Grandmaster Barreto International BJJ Open will be held on the show floor of MMA Expo IV, June 7, 2009 at the International Centre. Grandmaster Alvaro Barreto (pron. ba-hetto), a 9th Degree Red Belt, is recognized as one of the top BJJ masters in the world.

BJJ Prof. Mark Stables of MECCA/Carlson Gracie Team knows well the significance of Grandmaster Barreto's appearance. *"I applaud MMA Expo on bringing Grandmaster Barreto to Toronto. A 9th degree Red Belt is rare indeed and this will be only the second time in history that Canadian BJJ practitioners will have the opportunity to meet someone who has achieved the pinnacle of BJJ rank. I was honoured to bring Grandmaster Carlson Gracie to Toronto in 2005 and was blown away by his wealth of knowledge, his humility and his stories that spanned the history of Brazilian Jiu Jitsu. Participating in Grandmaster Barreto's high-profile tournament will be an experience to remember."*

Locally the tournament is managed by BJJ Professor Shah Franco of the Franco-Behring Association. *"Everyone in the BJJ community can take great pride in the fact that Toronto has secured this event",* stated a very pleased Shah Franco. *"One of our objectives was to find a great venue and a well-organized event with which to partner. Working closely with MMA Expo president, Gerald Chopik, we were able to offer both to Grandmaster Barreto."*

The Barreto tournament celebrates both individual and team performance. In addition to winners in adult, teen and junior divisions, The Barreto Cup itself will be awarded to the school achieving the most tournament points. Importantly, according to Professor Franco, *"This does not necessarily mean the school with greatest number of first place wins takes home the sought after Cup. In fact, a school with a fair number of second and third place finishes could easily win the top prize."*

Not restricted to Ontarians, the Barreto Cup is expected to draw competitors and referees from across Canada and the USA. *"As local organizers, the Franco-Behring Association is thrilled to not only have Grandmaster Barreto and Master Sylvio Behring come to Canada to personally attend this event, but to also have them invest their personal time to deliver an in-depth Referee Clinic."*

The clinic offers referees and school owner-operators the unique opportunity to be awarded Certificates of Completion from the highest level of authority in the sport. *"This gives participating refs great personal recognition with the elite in BJJ. And moving forward these graduates will be instrumental in raising the level of refereeing for the benefit of the sport right across Canada; a very important undertaking as we work toward taking Jiu Jitsu to the Olympics",* offered Franco.

MMA Expo president, Gerald Chopik, obviously pleased this tournament will be held at MMA Expo IV, had this comment: *"When I launched MMA Expo in 2005 I intended it to become an industry event that celebrated all martial arts and would become known as 'the event' within which to hold some of the top martial arts tournaments in the country. Having Grandmaster Barreto of Brazil stage his tournament on site at MMA Expo is testament to the fact that we deliver a well-organized, high quality event. MMA Expo and The Barreto International Open make for a winning combination and I sincerely look forward to working with the entire BJJ community to help deliver a top-notch tournament that becomes an annual event."*

Another first: MMA Expo and the Barreto International BJJ Open will also be webcast live in HD across the 'net. Tournament registration can be found online at www.MixedMartialArtsExpo.com.

MEDIA: For more information contact Gerald Chopik at gchopik@MixedMartialArtsExpo.com.