

# White

Continued from Page B4

for \$4 billion earned White a reported \$360 million for his 9 percent ownership stake.

“I haven’t bought anything yet, I don’t really need anything,” said White, whose primary residence is Las Vegas, also home to the UFC corporate headquarters.

“My oldest son is a freshman in high school this year and he’s a huge football kid, a quarterback, so most of my money has been going to the school football team right now.”

As the UFC has evolved into one of the world’s hottest sports properties and White has emerged as a global figure as the company’s most visible face, one thing hasn’t changed — the soft spot in his heart for the Bangor area.

White, his wife and three children still maintain a home in Levant, and he visits the area several times a year.

“I love Maine, and I get up there as much as I can,” White said. “My daughter’s birthday is in August and we have a house in Vegas and a house in Laguna [California] and a house in Levant, but Levant is where she wants to go for her birthday, so I’m taking her there.”

White’s loyalty to the region prompted him to bring an August 2014 UFC Fight Night show featuring light heavyweight contenders Ryan Bader and Ovince Saint Preux and veteran middleweight and Lincolnville native Tim Boetsch to Bangor — perhaps the smallest city ever to host a UFC card.

He’s back in the area this weekend to record the latest episode of his newest venture, the Web-based reality-show hit “Dana White: Lookin’ for a Fight.”

“When I brought the UFC show there two years ago it didn’t make sense financially for us, but I wanted to do it for the city of Bangor to bring some tourism into town,” he said. “It’s the same reason I’m doing this now.”

“The last time I was up there hanging out at my house, I decided I wanted to film an episode up there, so we called the local promoter and he agreed to do it. Apparently the arena’s sold out, so there will be a ton of people downtown before and after the fights. I love being able to financially impact the city of Bangor and obviously Levant where I live.”

## Talent search

“Lookin’ for a Fight,” available on YouTube and UFC Fight Pass but soon headed to the Netflix streaming service, features White and former UFC fighters Matt Serra and Din Thomas visiting different areas of the country to sample local culture and check out regional MMA promotions in search of UFC-level prospects.

“I’m looking for somebody who can be a world champion, I’m looking for a guy who impresses me,” said White, who has signed four fighters to UFC contracts since the show’s pilot episode aired in September 2015. “Obviously I’m there live watching it, so I want to see how the crowd reacts to him, I want to see how he fights under real pressure when me, Matt and Din are sitting there watching.”

“Then when I go backstage to meet him, I want to see what type of personality he has. I’m looking at all of that.”

Friday’s 7 p.m. MMA show in the Cross Insurance Center’s grand ballroom is being promoted by Lewiston-based New England Fights. The eight-fight card will feature a main event between bantamweights Alfred Khashakyan (7-2) and Brazilian Ricardo Lucas Ramos (8-1).

Khashakyan, a training partner of former UFC women’s bantamweight champion Ronda Rousey, is of particular interest to White. After making his permanent move to Las Vegas, he managed such former MMA stars as Chuck Liddell and Tito Ortiz before being named UFC president in 2001 after convincing childhood



JIM YOUNG | REUTERS

Dana White, president of Ultimate Fighting Championship, speaks about Republican presidential nominee Donald Trump at the Republican National Convention in Cleveland in July.

friend Lorenzo Fertita and his brother Frank to buy the promotion for \$2 million.

Ramos already has appeared on one “Lookin’ for a Fight” episode, but suffered his first loss, to Manny Vasquez, for the vacant Legacy Fighting Championship bantamweight title on Feb. 5 in Hinckley, Minnesota.

The Bangor show also will have a heavy local flavor, with four fighters (Ryan Sanders, Josh Harvey, Aaron Lacey and C.J. Ewer) from Young’s MMA and a fifth (Jon Lemke) from Team Irish MMA Fitness Academy in Brewer scheduled to compete.

White offered some advice for the hometown combatants.

“Go out and perform, man,” he said. “Don’t even think about me sitting there, but know that I’m sitting there. You know what I’m mean? I’m watching, and I might not ever be up there again to see it.”

## Of combat and culture

Mixed martial arts are just part of “Dana White: Lookin’ for a Fight.”

Seven shows have been produced since the pilot episode — which discovered UFC prospect Sage

Northcutt — was filmed in Lake Charles, Louisiana, and Atlanta, Georgia.

“I came up with the concept for it, put the cast together and then we went out and just funded it ourselves to put up on YouTube,” he said.

The shows have become a huge internet success, with recent episodes routinely attracting more than 1 million views each.

Fans of the program have seen White and his friends involved in such activities as riding rodeo bulls in Texas, camping in Sioux Falls, South Dakota, and performing stand-up comedy in Hollywood.

“[Stand-up comedy] was the scariest thing I’ve ever done, even scarier than riding a bull,” said White of his debut at the Laugh Factory in Los Angeles.

White’s plans during his Queen City stop include participating in one of the region’s summer entertainment staples.

“We’re going to do a lot of stuff at the Bangor State Fair,” he said. “I built a demolition derby car and I’m going to join the demolition derby at the fair. I’ve never done it, I’m looking forward to it.”

“The other thing is I’ve

got this nasty Ferrari coming in and I have a 1969 Chevy Camaro up there, and we’ve rented out a drag strip where me and Matt Serra are going to drag race.”

White and his cohorts will leave from Maine and go directly to the site of his next “Lookin’ for a Fight” episode, the Black Hills of South Dakota.

“We go from 7 in the morning until midnight every day, but we have an absolute blast doing it. It’s a fun show to film,” White said.

The Bangor and Sturgis visits are the last episodes before the show is picked up by Netflix, an online streaming service with 83 million subscribers that is perhaps best known for the original series “House of Cards.”

“They bought 16 episodes, eight in this country and eight out of the country,” said White. “We’re going to be doing shows in Russia, Thailand, the [United Kingdom] and a bunch of other countries. We’re literally going to go everywhere.”

## UFC and its future

While White is enjoying his newfound role of reality show star, he has no

plans to relinquish his UFC duties. He’s agreed to a five-year contract to remain the company’s president under its new ownership, and according to multiple reports his annual compensation will include 9 percent of the UFC’s future net profits.

White sees nothing but continued growth in a company he has watched blossom from its \$2 million sale price in 2001 to the recent \$4 billion price tag, despite considerable turnover among its stars over the years as well as a recent run of new champions in several weight divisions.

“Do you know how many times I’ve heard, ‘Oh my God, the Chuck Liddell era is over, Chuck Liddell is retiring, what’s the UFC going to do? They don’t have stars anymore,’” said White. “Or, ‘Oh my God, the GSP [Georges St-Pierre] era is over, what are they going to do without GSP?’ Or, ‘Oh my God, the Anderson Silva era is over, what are they going to do without Anderson Silva?’”

“They say the UFC has peaked — and we just sold it for 4 billion dollars. I can’t read this stuff or listen to these morons who talk about it. They know nothing about the business and they don’t understand how it works. We do.”

White envisions the new ownership group expanding the UFC’s reach across numerous media platforms and ultimately guiding the promotion into an even more prominent position within the global sports spectrum.

“First of all, Frank and Lorenzo and I obviously did a good job in building this sport and everything else, but at the end of the day we’re not media guys,” he said. “These guys are real media guys, this is what they do. This is what they’re the best at.”

“Go back and look 15 years ago, when I used to say wait until you see where we take the UFC in the next 10 years. Now wait until you see where me and my new partners take the UFC in the next five years. It’s gonna blow everybody’s minds.”

# College

Continued from Page B4

Heinrich previously was an intern at Syracuse, where his assisted with recruiting, film breakdown, player evaluation and recruiting travel. He is a 2015 graduate of SUNY Cortland with a bachelor’s degree in sport management.

While there, he worked three seasons as a quality control coach and video coordinator. He was directly responsible for all film duties.

Heinrich also has one season of professional experience after spending the 2013-14 NFL season on the New York Jets’ game-day operations staff.

## Husson women land 2 Mainers

The Husson University women’s basketball program has received commitments from two former eastern Maine three-sport standouts.

Bangor High School

graduate Sarah Bragg and Gardiner’s Morgan Carver will join coach Kissy Walker’s team this season. Each played basketball, softball and soccer in high school.

Bragg averaged 11.2 points, 3.4 rebounds and 1.9 assists and shot 69 percent from the foul line last season for coach Joe Johnson’s Rams.

“Her competitiveness and work ethic allowed her to play at high level in three sports at Bangor High,” Johnson said in a press release. “She played pivotal roles on the teams she was on and was one of the most coachable kids I have had the pleasure to coach.”

Bragg plans to play on coach Terren Hall’s Husson softball program next spring.

Carver averaged 14 points per game at Gardiner, where last season she was the leading scorer and ranked first in steals and second in rebounds. Her efforts helped the Tigers capture the Class B North championship.

# Broncos

Continued from Page B4

Wellman comes to Hampden after serving as assistant varsity coach and junior varsity head coach for the Brewer High School boys soccer program last fall. He also coached JV tennis for the Witches last spring and has been involved in the school’s intramural strength and conditioning program.

Wellman had moved to the area from Michigan, where he played soccer at Saginaw Valley State University, an NCAA Division II program.

Wellman subsequently enlisted in the U.S. Marine Corps and was deployed to Iraq. He also played on the USMC’s soccer team.

Emajoe coached Hampden girls’ soccer team to a 6-5-3 regular-season record and the sixth seed in the Class A North Heal point ratings in 2015. Hampden then upended third-seeded Brunswick in the quarterfinals before losing to eventual state champion Bangor 3-0 in the semifinals.

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