

SPORTS & RECREATION

Bucksport High graduate scores MMA victory in Kansas bout

BY ERNIE CLARK
BDN STAFF

Ray “All Business” Wood went into hostile territory Saturday night and delivered most of the hostile moves in defeating local favorite Brandon Phillips in the co-main event of the EFC III mixed-martial arts card held before 2,500 fans at the Kansas Star Arena in Mulvane, Kansas.

The 26-year-old Wood, a Bucksport High School graduate and former New England Fights MMA featherweight champion who now lives in Amarillo, Texas, controlled the bout from the outset to win a three-round unanimous decision.

Wood, who trained at Young’s MMA in Bangor before moving first to South Carolina two years ago and then to Texas last summer, improved his professional record to 8-1 with his third consecutive victory, all since leaving Maine.

“I wanted the finish but I did what I had to do to get the win,” said Wood after arriving back home on Sunday afternoon.

“I haven’t had the opportunity to go the full 15 minutes but three times in my career out of nine fights, so it’s always good to be able to go the distance and know I’m capable of it.”

The previously undefeated Phillips, a product of nearby Wichita, Kansas, has been a regular with the Wichita-based Evolution Fighting Championship promotion that staged the show.

Coming off a first-round knockout victory over Chris “Lionheart” Jones on March 4 at Bellator 151 in Thackerville, Oklahoma, Wood took the bout with Phillips at a catchweight of 150 pounds on just two weeks notice after Phillips’ original opponent dropped out of the fight due to injury.

The taller and rangier Wood used his striking game, particularly an assortment of kicks, to back

Phillips against the cage wall throughout the first two rounds of the bout, which started at 11:45 p.m. EST and was live-streamed on the EFC Facebook page.

From there the former Bucksport High wrestling standout had little difficulty scoring numerous take-downs.

“I did my homework on my opponent and he wasn’t a great ground fighter,” said Wood. “He was all striking from what I saw, so I knew if I took it to the ground I could easily pound out a win.”

“Every time I shot in I was able to capture the takedown and get it done there, and even on the ground he didn’t pose too much of a threat. I just wanted to do more of the veteran thing and play to my strengths and go after his weaknesses.”

Wood, who now trains at Nick’s Fight Club in Amarillo, then was able to land effective elbows and fists

while in top position, and several times he was able to take Phillips’ back and pursue submission attempts.

The 26-year-old Phillips (4-1) was at his best in the third round, but that success was limited to occasional overhand right punches that landed.

But Phillips was unable to follow up quickly enough and Wood more than held his own, scoring two additional takedowns during a final round that otherwise featured both combatants standing up.

“This gives me stuff to work on back at the gym,” said Wood, who was cornered for the fight by his wife Tiana and Mark Heathcote, a former state championship wrestler from Hudson and Central High School of Corinth who now lives in Oklahoma.

“I took this fight on two weeks notice. I didn’t have a full camp, (Phillips) had a full camp and he was still more tired than I was, so it was a success all around.”



PHOTO COURTESY OF NEW ENGLAND FIGHTS MMA

Ray “All Business” Wood, 26 of Bucksport, went into hostile territory Saturday night and delivered most of the hostile moves in defeating local favorite Brandon Phillips in the co-main event of the EFC III mixed-martial arts card held before 2,500 fans at the Kansas Star Arena in Mulvane, Kansas.

GONE FISHIN’



Blah Tyler Mallory-MacDonald (right) checks his line with John Eastman while fishing in the Kenduskeag Stream in Bangor Wednesday.

Bangor starts fitness challenge contest

The City of Bangor has started a Spring Training challenge for anyone who works or lives in Bangor. Mayor Sean Faircloth and the city have teamed up with Employee Health Solutions and official sponsor, Bangor Savings Bank, to challenge the people of Bangor to get moving.

The Red Sox-themed challenge began on May 1. Participants who exercise 150 minutes per week will earn raffle entries to win great prizes such as Red Sox merchandise, fitness trackers, and tickets to see the Red Sox play at Fenway.

Physical activity has been proven to increase mental sharpness and decrease rates of cancer, diabetes, and heart disease,” said Faircloth Mayor. “This initiative is open to all citizens in the Bangor area - and it would be a home run to win a Red Sox prize in the raffle, so please spread the word.”

Those that meet the 150 minute per week exercise goal will be entered to win every two weeks. Register at bangorpublichealth.org.



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Kurtis & Carissa Marsh
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