



# J.K. Kang's Tae Kwon Do

13311 Pearl Rd.  
Strongsville OH 44136  
440-238-9842

## **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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Contact Ken McEntee, The Write Company  
440-238-6603  
E: ken@thewriteco.com

Mark Vanyo  
440-238-9842

## **Chuck Norris' new league to feature local fighter**

MIDDLEBURG HEIGHTS - Popular actor and martial arts legend Chuck Norris believes his new World Combat League (WCL) will ultimately compete with professional football, basketball and baseball in popularity. A local martial artist is one of only 50 fighters in the U.S. chosen to get the new league off the ground.

World-class martial artist Mark Vanyo, of Middleburg Heights, has been selected to compete in the heavyweight category in the eight-team league. The WCL is a new concept that combines the intensity of kickboxing with the thrill of team sports. Fighters include some of the country's top-ranked martial arts performers.

Vanyo, 32, a former Grand National champion, is chief elite instructor at J.K. Kang's Tae Kwon Do Center, in Strongsville. He will see his first action on March 4, in Las Vegas.

"I feel really lucky to be chosen," Vanyo said. "I think they selected me because of my kicking ability. Most people my size don't possess my kicking dynamics or flexibility, which bring a new flavor to that division and entertainment for the fans."

Vanyo, at 6-foot-1, and 230 pounds, has been training for more than 20 years in the martial arts and has competed for years as a champion in various martial arts fighting styles. A graduate of St. Edward High School, he has operated the Tae Kwon Do school named after his master, J.K. Kang, for more than six years.

The WCL held its inaugural event this fall in Dallas, drawing about 5,000 spectators. League officials expect to expand to 16 teams by 2007. Cable networks ESPN and Spike TV have expressed interest in televising the



competition.

"This is going to be one of the most exciting sports to come along in a long time," said Norris, a six-time martial arts World Champion. "I believe in time the WCL will become the fourth largest professional league in the country, next to football, basketball and baseball."

Norris said he has brought together the world's most experienced martial arts producers to make his vision become reality. He said the league may eventually become the first martial arts entity to award a \$1 million contract to a fighter.

The competition is based on modified kickboxing rules. The events' presentation aims to combine the excitement of martial arts fighting with the thrill of fans rooting for their favorite teams. The actual fighting style will reflect a marriage between the remarkable technical skills of today's premier sport karate athletes with the full contact excitement of kickboxing.

The 2006 season will feature monthly competitions set in venues that hold at least 5,000 spectators. Following a five-month season, a playoff series will be held to determine a champion which will hold the distinction of "America's toughest city." The 2006 season will feature eight teams in two divisions. Cities represented include Miami, Philadelphia, New York, New England, Dallas, Houston, Los Angeles and Oklahoma. Each team is composed of five men and two women.

Norris said a portion of the WCL profits will go his KickStart program. The program, started in 1992, teaches martial arts in public middle schools to motivate students to stay away from gang activity, drugs and violence.

For more information about the World Combat League, visit [www.worldcombatleague.com](http://www.worldcombatleague.com). The World Combat League is headquartered at 6020 NW 4th Place, Suite G, Gainesville, Florida 32607. Phone: 352-331-0260.

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**Editor: The image of Mark Vanyo, embedded in this document, has been sent as a separate file. It also can be downloaded at [www.thewriteco.com](http://www.thewriteco.com). Go to the *Press Area*.**