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Irish boxers Lee and Duddy may face-off

Irish boxing promoter Brian Peters puts fight offer on the table

By KENNETH HAYNES, IrishCentral.com Staff Writer

Published Sunday, August 23, 2009, 11:55 AM
Updated Sunday, August 23, 2009, 12:04 PM

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Irish boxing promoter [Brian Peters](#) has put the offer on the table for [Andy Lee](#) and [John Duddy](#) to face-off in a prestigious boxing event at the [University of Limerick Sports Arena](#) on November 28 to be aired on RTE.

Peters has promoted both middleweight Irish boxers in the past. The promoter said: "I see the deal for this fight as a 50/50 one because to me the status of both men is on a par - but to make it that bit more attractive to them I'm prepared to offer a €35,000 bonus to the winner.

"Dangling the carrot of a bonus of this nature should certainly make the fight more interesting to both parties. Although there is a lot of serious talking still to be done."

Lee, who scored the 19th win of his career on Saturday against [Anthony Shuler](#) in [Indiana](#), is game to fight Irish superstar boxer Duddy.

"I'm up for the fight with John Duddy, this is a fight the public have been speculating about for some considerable time and I believe it will be a memorable occasion with plenty of edge and drama," he said.

Limerick native Lee is ranked third in the [European Boxing Association](#) and 14th in the [World Boxing Association](#) ratings, showing off his advanced technical boxing ability around [Germany](#), [Ireland](#) and the [U.S.](#)

[Derry](#) boxer John Duddy is scheduled to make his return to the ring at [Madison Square Garden](#) in [New York](#) in October.

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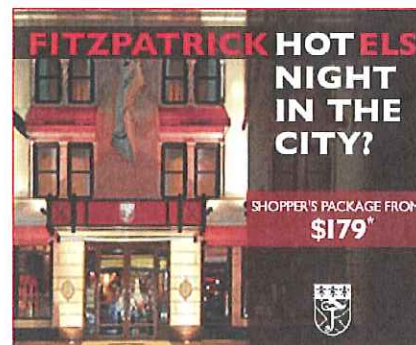
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John Duddy to make comeback at Madison Square Garden

Irish boxer returns to New York on October 10

By PADDY KELLY, IrishCentral.Com Staff Writer

Published Friday, August 21, 2009, 11:59 AM

Updated Friday, August 21, 2009, 12:19 PM

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Irish boxer **John Duddy** will return to **New York** on October 10 in a bout at **Madison Square Garden**

This is his first fight since splitting from promoters **Irish Ropes** in a length row over finances and a possible world title shot in **Belfast**.

The middleweight suffered a major setback when he lost on a split decision to **Billy Lyell** on April.

That defeat, the first in the 26 fights since he had turned pro, wrecked Duddy's chances of a world title shot against **Kelly Pavlik**.

However, his comeback is bound to spark huge interest in the **Big Apple**, where the 30-year-old enjoys massive support from the Irish.

Madison Square Garden will probably be sold out for this fight so make sure to book your seats now!



Derry boxer John Duddy

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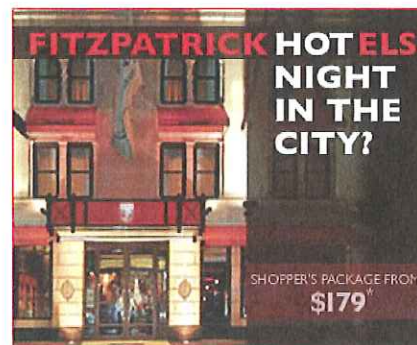
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Open Letter From Irish Ropes President

Published Wednesday, April 1, 2009, 10:44 AM
Updated Thursday, July 23, 2009, 5:28 PM

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Open letter from [Irish Ropes](#)

After reading some derogatory stories unfairly criticizing [Irish Ropes](#) Promotions for canceling its March 16th scheduled "Erin Go Brawl II" pro boxing show at [WaMu Theater in Madison Square Garden](#), I am compelled to set the record straight about why we pulled the plug 10 days out and to explain what really happened leading up to the final decision.

First, though, I'd like to offer my condolences to [Liam Neeson](#), and his family, for the loss of his wife. He attended several of the shows we promoted and I met him at many Irish benefits. Liam is a great man.

I'd also like to congratulate [Bernard Dunne](#) on his great world-title winning performance last weekend and also to his promoter, [Brian Peters](#), and trainer, [Harry Hawkins](#) - you reap what you sow! I'd also like to congratulate [Mathew Macklin](#) for winning the British middleweight championship, [Paul McClosky](#) for successfully defending his British title, and [Andy Lee](#) for his good performance.

I am, however, disappointed by what [Andy Lee](#) said in newspapers back home about our show being canceled. I had a choice of losing \$50,000 by canceling when we did, or to potentially lose \$250,000 to go ahead. I was not under any contractual obligation to any of the fighters and chose to take the lesser hit.

The poor economy in [New York](#) and back in [Ireland](#) played a part in poor advance ticket sales, but the real reason for it was Team Lee. Let's review the situation leading up to the cancellation. My first call to [Manny Steward](#) was for Lee to fight [Walid Smichet](#). He agreed and it was even listed on [Boxrec.com](#). [Damien McCann](#), who is in charge of making deals for Lee, said they would take the fight but not for \$30,000. Negotiations went back and forth for a few weeks and we finally agreed on \$50,000, \$4000 in comps (tickets), plus another \$10,000 if the gross gate receipts were more than \$425,000.

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Andy Lee added to Bernard Dunne undercard

By Declan O'Kelly, IrishCentral Staff Writer

Published Wednesday, March 11, 2009, 4:32 PM
Updated Thursday, July 23, 2009, 5:28 PM

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Though middleweight **Andy Lee** (16-1) lost his chance to top the bill at the **WaMu Theater** in **Madison Square Garden** on March 16 after **Irish Ropes** cancelled **Erin Go Brawl II**, promoter **Brian Peters** wasted no time in adding him to the undercard of super bantamweight **Bernard Dunne's** world title challenge against WBA champion **Ricardo Cordoba** on March 21 at the **O2 Arena** in **Dublin**.

As of this writing, no opponent has been finalized. For now, **Lee** is happy to be getting back in the ring after the longest layoff of his career.

"Right now I don't know who I will be fighting," Lee told the **Irish Voice** Tuesday morning. "I am grateful that Brian put me on the card as he saved the day, or else I would have had no fight after all this training."

Lee will leave **Detroit** on Friday and arrive in **Dublin** on Saturday a week ahead of the fight. **Peters'** matchmaker **Tomas Rohan** is working on finding an opponent for the southpaw.

Events in **New York** have left Lee somewhat annoyed and the 24-year-old was unhappy with how things transpired. "It was unbelievable, I was so angry," he said of the cancellation.

"What can you do, you don't know what is really behind it," he says. "They (Promoters **Irish Ropes**) say it is ticket sales, but I know they are in a lot of hassle with **John Duddy** in court and they got a lot of bad publicity over that."

"Maybe that had an effect on sales. You never really know what is going on behind the scenes."

Lee also feels that the cancellation could be damaging to his own reputation as a box office attraction. "They messed me around the last time I fought on the **John Duddy** undercard in 2007 when they tried to cancel my fight at the last minute after my family had come over and now it is the same again. I hope they get what they deserve," Lee says.

Andy Lee
Photo by Ed Mulholland/FightWireImages.co

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Oisín Fagan wins in Mayo

By DECLAN O'KELLY, IrishCentral.com Staff Writer

Published Thursday, May 28, 2009, 11:02 AM
Updated Thursday, July 23, 2009, 5:29 PM

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Lightweight **Oisín Fagan** stopped **Assen Vassilev** in the fifth round of their fight at the Royal Theatre in **Castlebar, CO.** Mayo on Saturday night.

"It was good to get the rounds in and I would not have been happy with a blowout," Fagan told the *Irish Voice* Tuesday.

"It was a tough enough fight and he was no walkover. He was a little soft around the belly and I targeted that," continued Fagan, who added that he almost had his opponent down in the first, and that Vassilev was "gassed" as the bell saved him at the end of the opening stanza.

Vassilev felt the pain again in the second when a body shot crumpled the Bulgarian. "It was a straight right to the body," offered Fagan as to how the first knockdown happened.

Fagan dominated the third and admitted that the fourth round was more even, simply because he decided to save his energy for a big finish.

That finale came in the fifth, when a right hook to the body put Vassilev down for a second time. Though the Bulgarian got up and came back to fight, the contest was now one-way traffic, and Fagan's constant pressure forced referee Mickey Vann to step between the two fighters halfway through the fifth to end proceedings. With this win Fagan moves to 23-6, 14 KOs, while Vassilev falls to 12-18.

When the 35-year-old fighter spoke to the *Irish Voice* last week, he promised that he would rid himself of the frustration he felt after the fight with **Amir Khan** in December. This win will go some ways to venting that emotion, but the Dubliner needs to stay busy to capitalize on the rebound victory.

Fagan hopes to be in action at the end of June in a card in **Tallaght** featuring the Hyland brothers, and all going well, would like to challenge **Eddie Hyland** for his Irish super-featherweight title belt or **Andy Murray** for his EBU lightweight title after that.

In the meantime, Fagan has gone straight back to the gym training, and though a slightly bruised right hand will stop him working the bag and sparring for about a week, he is readying himself for what he hopes will be a busy summer of action.

Speaking of Eddie Hyland, the Tallaght man outclassed his opponent, **Latvia's Juris Ivanovs**, on the same card, and ended the fight in the first round. In doing so he now moves to 12-1.

Super middleweight **Darren Sutherland** (2-0) continues his professional journey this Friday night when he fights **Vepkhia Tchilaia** (9-9) in a contest scheduled for six rounds at the Fenton Manor Sports Complex, Stoke, **Staffordshire, United Kingdom.**



Oisín Fagan

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Fagan On Road to Recovery

By DECLAN O'KELLY, IrishCentral.com Staff Writer

Published Tuesday, March 10, 2009, 1:20 AM
Updated Thursday, July 23, 2009, 5:56 PM

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Lightweight Oisín Fagan (22-6) is on the slow road to recovery but is in no way down or depressed after breaking his leg in the first round of his fight against Amir Khan in December. Indeed, the whole experience seems to have lit a fire in the 34-year-old fighter to rebound an even better boxer. "The recovery is coming along well. Obviously, it was a tough Christmas. I'm just terribly disappointed about how the way things transpired. When you think that I played football (soccer) for 30 years and never broke any bones, but just seconds into the biggest opportunity of my career and my leg snaps in two. How do you make sense out of something like that?" Fagan told the *Irish Voice* by e-mail. "It's worse that I'm normally known for my toughness and fitness, but I wasn't given the chance to show either." Though fiancée Alissa's visit from the U.S. brightened up his Christmas somewhat, fitness fanatic Fagan could not cope with being inactive. "A couple of days after surgery and after they put me in a cast, I got sick of doing nothing, so I bought myself a little 'office chair' on wheels and was able to shadowbox for an hour a day and get up a good sweat to keep me ticking over," said Fagan. "Then I started going out for runs on my crutches. Everyone thinks I'm nuts when they see me passing by, crutching at high speed, but that's how bad I want to get back into it and want to show the world what I can really do." What burns in Fagan is the desire to show the public what he is capable of. "I don't want the last memory of me, slumped in a corner with a broken leg, after losing a fight, which would have changed my life. Instead, I want to get back stronger than ever before and win some really big fights and show the critics the real Gael Force Oisín Fagan. The sooner, the better. "Hopefully, when this cast comes off at the end of the month, I'll make a speedy recovery and be back with a bang in 2009!" Matthew Macklin will have his own St. Patrick's bash in Birmingham when he takes fellow Brummie Wayne Elcock on March 14 for the British Middleweight Title at the Aston Events Center. Macklin has changed trainer again, and the man responsible for directing him in this fight will be Joe Gallagher. Macklin has changed trainer three times since leaving Billy Graham, and the bout on March 14 will be the biggest since his loss to Jamie Moore for the British Light Middleweight title in September 2006. Elcock, who stopped Howard Eastman to win the British title, was himself stopped by IBF Champion Arthur Abraham in December 2007 in his world title tilt. Finally, super middleweight Darren Sutherland (1-0) is slated to fight next on March 6 in Wigan on the same card as light middleweight Jamie Moore (who won the Irish Light middleweight title last July), who fights Michele Piccirillo for the vacant European light middleweight title.

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Irish boxer Steve Ormond moves to 5-0 after New York win

By DECLAN O'KELLY, IrishCentral.com Staff Writer

Published Wednesday, July 22, 2009, 8:55 AM
Updated Monday, July 27, 2009, 6:13 PM

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Dublin lightweight **Steve Ormond** (5-0, 1 KO) beat **Puerto Rican Israel Suarez** (1-2) by unanimous decision in a six round fight outdoors at Plattduetsche Park Restaurant, Franklin Square, Long Island on Saturday afternoon.

Ormond, who weighed in at 134 pounds, started out tentatively as it turned out that he was not expecting his opponent to be a southpaw.

In a close opening round, the busier Ormond took the fight to Suarez, whose long reach and guile proved difficult for the Dubliner to penetrate.

Nonetheless, Ormond pressurized Suarez onto the ropes and the more meaningful exchanges seemed to go his way, even if a couple of right hand body shots from Suarez did find their mark.

The second stanza saw a lot of defensive movement from Suarez, but Ormond was beginning to impose himself on proceedings in a round that ebbed and flowed.

However, with 15 seconds left Ormond landed a big left hook and made a strong finish that edged the round in his favor.

In the third, Ormond's conditioning and strength started to show and he began to wear down his opponent. Two sharp left hooks during this round highlighted the Irishman's upper hand in this stanza.

Suarez' output diminished rapidly, and he had the weary look of a fighter who wanted to stay out of trouble as much as anything else, though he still proved an elusive target and his right hand to the body was still scoring sporadically.

The later rounds saw Ormond dominate the exchanges and do most of the fighting. While it may not have been his most explosive performance, Ormond did more than enough over the second half of the fight to leave the result in no doubt.

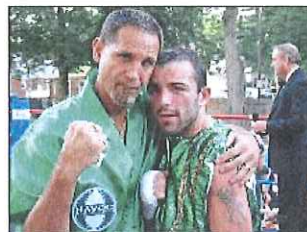
When the final bell rang all three judges found in Ormond's favor. Judge **Carlos Ortiz** scored it 60-54, while judges **Tony Paolillo** and **Luis Rivera** scored it 58-56.

"I thought he was a rightie but he was a southie and he was a tough guy. I hurt him in the body and knew he was gone but I couldn't get in," said Ormond after the fight.

"He was like a good amateur fighter; he would make you miss and hold you and turn you. I am happy with the win but not happy with the fight but that is the way it goes, you learn from these fights."

Ormond will not stay idle for too long and will have one more fight before the summer is out. Then he will head home for short break.

"I might have another fight in four or five weeks and then home for a few weeks and then back again," said the **Clondalkin** native.



Trainer Pete Brodsky and Steve Ormond after Saturday's win.

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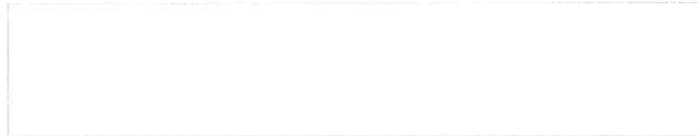
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Irish sport is popular and widespread. Levels of participation and spectating are high on the island of Ireland. Throughout the country a wide variety of Irish sports are played, the most popular being Gaelic games (such as Gaelic football, hurling and camogie), soccer, rugby union and boxing. By attendance figures Gaelic football and hurling are by far the most popular sports in Ireland. (34% of total attendances at sports events being to football and 23% to hurling), while golf and soccer (including 5-a-side) are the most played at 17% of the population each. Many Irish sports, such as boxing, cricket, rugby union, Gaelic football and hurling, are organized in an all-island basis, with a single team representing Ireland in international competitions. Other Irish sports, such as Association Football, have separate organizing bodies in Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland. At the Olympics, a person from Northern Ireland can choose to represent either Ireland or Great Britain. The various GAA discipline finals are easily the largest sporting events regularly held in Ireland, in both terms of attendance and media coverage. The biggest national sporting event in Ireland is the final of the All-Ireland Senior Football Championship, held annually in Croke Park in September. It usually attracts a sell out crowd of 82,500 to Croke Park. Many of the matches in the championship attract crowds of 50,000, depending on who is playing. Aside from the GAA, the biggest multi-sport event held in Ireland regularly is the Community Games. The games are organized every year from a local level, where hundreds of thousands of young people compete in different disciplines such as athletics, swimming, cycling etc., in the first half of the year. Winners progress to county level, and then to the Community Games finals. One of the biggest international Irish sport events is international Association Football. The Republic's national team has punched above its weight in recent years, qualifying for the 2002 World Cup, and performed well against such teams as Brazil and Portugal. In rugby union, Ireland's national team has been ranked in the top five teams regularly over the last few years, and has produced major stars such as Keith Wood and Brian O'Driscoll. In golf, Ireland is home to several top golfers such as Padraig Harrington.

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"Irish Tornado" wins Friday night fight in Long Island

Published Wednesday, June 10, 2009, 2:39 PM
Updated Thursday, July 23, 2009, 5:29 PM

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Dublin lightweight [Stephen Ormond](#) (4-0, 1 KO) beat [Sergi Ganjelashvili](#) (4-3-1) by unanimous decision at the [Capital One Bank Theater](#) in Westbury, [Long Island](#) on Friday night.

Washington Hago (4-4, 2 KOs) was scheduled to fight the Dubliner, but a left shoulder injury suffered in training last Tuesday forced him to pull out of the fight. Drafted in as a late replacement was Ganjelashvili, a 26-year-old Georgian based in [Miami, Florida](#).

The diminutive Ormond entered the ring to the sounds of [Black Sabbath](#) and flew out of the traps in the first round, showing his faster hand speed and throwing four and five punch combinations with intensity and accuracy.

The [Clondalkin](#) native was having repeated success with his left hook and lead overhand right, catching his opponent flush on numerous occasions. Ormond often pummeled the body of his opponent with thunderous shots, but the wily Georgian took the punches well and fought back sporadically.

The second round saw more of the same pressure, with stinging left hooks and overhand rights finding their target for the Dub. Ormond had his opponent hurt at least three times in the second stanza, and it was down to Ganjelashvili's conditioning and strong chin that he somehow stayed on his feet.

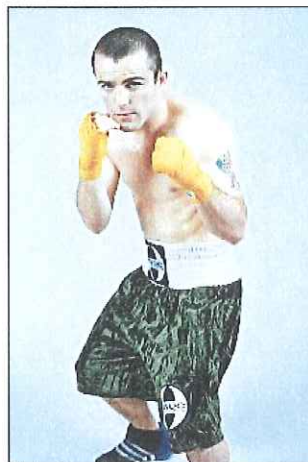
Ormond was so enthusiastic that a four-punch combination delivered as the bell rang for the end of the stanza cost him the round, as referee [Benji Estevez](#) rather harshly deducted a point from the Irishman for the late hits.

The third was more one-way traffic, but credit to Ganjelashvili, he made a fight of it and was able to absorb a lot of punishment. In the second half of the fight, Ormond chose to work the ring and pick his opponent off sporadically. The 26-year-old Dubliner was caught with one overhand in the fifth, but apart from that he cruised to victory.

All three judges scored the fight 59-54, indicating that the only round that Ormond did not win was the second, which was a draw because of the point deduction.

"I think the other guy was just an extremely tough guy, some guys can take a really a punch, because four of five times in that fight the guy was out on his feet and he got hit again and he came back," trainer [Pete Brodsky](#) told the [Irish Voice](#) after the fight.

The late change of opponent (Hago was smaller than Ormond) actually worked in Ormond's favor. "The Irish Tornado" had done most of his sparring with [Chris Algieri](#), a six-foot light welterweight (who also won well on the night), and this work stood to him against his taller opponent.



Stephen Ormond

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