The first fight card from the UFC in 2009 has come and gone. It took place in Ireland, the first trip ever there for the top organization in the mixed martial arts world. The lineup of fights was entertaining but not up to standards that we have grown accustomed to. A handful of contenders were in action tonight, and my cousin Scott checks in with a recap of went down inside the octagon.

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A handful of contenders were in action tonight, here is a recap of went down inside the octagon.

*Rich Franklin vs Dan Henderson*

The main event produced a very good fight between two of the best fighters in the world. It was a tactical standup battle won by Dan Henderson via split decision. No huge shots were landed and I had Franklin winning due to his body kicks and aggressive style. Henderson also landed some nice punches and scored a takedown or two. While in dominant position, Henderson worked his ground and pound which could have been the deciding factor in the match. With the victory, Henderson gets a chance to coach on the Ultimate Fighter reality show and face Michael Bisping.

*Mark Coleman vs Mauricio "Shogun" Rua*

In his first bout back in the octagon since 1999, Coleman looked his age of 44. He was gassed at the end of the first round but showed a ton of heart. Rua got a TKO win when the ref stopped the fight with just over 30 seconds left. I disagree with the ref's decision to stop it but his best interest is the fighter's health. Rua didn't do anything to impress me yet again as both fighters were huffing and puffing just into the second round. Coleman was able to get takedowns very easily and Rua couldn't mount much of an attack. He was able to rock Coleman with a great uppercut that led to the fight being stopped. Mark Coleman said he wants to do it again but we might have seen the last of "The Hammer."

*Denis Kang vs Alan Belcher*

Kang made his much anticipated UFC debut but left as the loser. Belcher sunk a great choke in the second round after being dominated for the full five minutes of the first round. Kang showed excellent overall skills and just made a bad mistake that was taken advantage of by a very solid fighter. Both fighters have solid futures in the UFC.

*Chris Lytle vs Marcus Davis*

The fight of the night. It had the makings of a classic and was a back and forth battle between two fast paced exciting fighters. Marcus Davis came out on top winning two of the three rounds. Lytle landed the bigger shots but neither guy was ever in trouble. The standup battle we expected didn't let anyone down.

**Full results:**

Dan Henderson def. Rich Franklin via split decision (29-28, 27-30, 29-28)

Mauricio "Shogun" Rua def. Mark Coleman via TKO (strikes) -- Round 3, 4:36

Rousimar Palhares def. Jeremy Horn via unanimous decision (30-27, 30-27, 30-27)

Alan Belcher def. Denis Kang via submission (guillotine choke) -- Round 2, 4:36

Marcus Davis def. Chris Lytle via split decision (29-28, 28-29, 29-28)

John Hathway def. Tom Egan via TKO (strikes) -- Round 1, 4:36

Martin Kampmann def. Alexandre Barros via TKO (strikes) -- Round 2, 3:09

Eric Schafer def. Antonio Mendes via TKO (punches) -- Round 1, 3:35

Thomasz Drwal def. Ivan Serati via TKO (punches) -- Round 1, 2:02

Dennis Siver def. Nate Mohr via TKO (strikes) -- Round 3, 3:47

All in all, a pretty good show from the UFC to get 2009 off and running. It sure wasn't a great card but entertaining.

The biggest event in UFC history is just now two weeks away, January 31st. That event is headlined by the two best fighters in the world, Georges St. Pierre and BJ Penn. Enough said.