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SAN JOSE, Calif., March 29 -- [Frank Shamrock \(Pictures\)](#) promised to stand and trade with [Cung Le \(Pictures\)](#).

After living up to his word Saturday evening, the self professed No. 1 fighter in mixed martial arts will need surgery to repair his broken and displaced right wrist.

Attempting his first defense of the Strikeforce middleweight belt, Shamrock, a master game planner, engaged in an exciting -- and confounding -- toe-to-toe affair with the undefeated kickboxer, who's appeared in just six MMA contests to the venerable champion's 34.

Testing the allegiance of 16,326 frenzied onlookers inside the HP Pavilion, the former sparring partners exchanged strikes and taunts during their 15 minutes together in the cage.

Le, supported by his always vocal contingent of Vietnamese fans waving the Heritage and Freedom Flag of the country he fled as a young child, and Shamrock, bolstered by a red-shirt and -sign waving army, drew several thunderous reactions.

Convinced he was at least on par with Le in the striking department, Shamrock waged a questionable campaign that saw him focus on striking the striker.

With Shamrock seemingly unwilling to attempt takedowns, his 35-year-old former sparring partner kept up the pressure from the outside. Continuous movement to the right was key for Le in maintaining his distance.

"Frank wanted to go on the inside and fight with me," said Le, now 6-0 in MMA. "But I know he was frustrated with the straight kicks."

Using his arms to buffer the blows, Shamrock (24-9-1) shook off the burn of Le's powerful attacks at different points in the fight. With time winding down in the third period, however, a left high kick snapped Shamrock's arm and made Le Strikeforce champion.

"I can feel the bones clicking," Shamrock said in the cage. "I just kept trying to fight through it, but, anybody who says Cung Le doesn't know submissions -- he put one on my arm tonight -- he's the better man. He's the champion man. He took me out. He's a good man."

A tight opening round gave way to a solid second period for the challenger. Having seen Shamrock promise to put him to sleep, Le connected with a straight left to the body followed by a right hook to the head that stunned the former UFC champion. But it was Le's kicks, some of the most dangerous in the sport, which were the difference in the fight.

"I just said I'm going to keep kicking at his head," said Le, his mouth noticeably swollen from Shamrock's punches. "Usually I teach my students to block with both hands. He kept blocking with one hand like he was rolling with a punch. I just stayed on it. I knew he was dipping and I kept my rhythm in the second round."

Early in the third, yet another kick caused Shamrock to shake off the sting like he'd fouled a heavy fastball off his hands. Le, now in control, unloaded much of his arsenal save spinning-back kicks. He'd been warned off those by his corner at the end of the first. Javier Mendez, who oversaw much of Shamrock's career, demanded Le dispense with the fancy stuff -- it gave "The Legend" an opportunity to swarm if his charge made a mistake.

"A lot of people aren't giving Frank the credit he deserves," Mendez said. "He's a great fighter."

Shamrock showed his championship grit midway through the decisive round.

Countering a kick that was stopped by both arms this time, Shamrock connected with his best punch of the fight, a right hand to the face that sent a jolt down Le's tree-trunk legs. Shamrock, also 35, rushed forward with a volley of strikes and battered Le along the cage fencing.

The crowd's roar intensified when Le responded with strikes of his own.

"I told Cung if Frank does something to you, you do it right back to him," Mendez said post-fight. "You don't want Frank on a roll. Cung listened."

Then came the kick that fractured Shamrock's distal ulna and forced him to the hospital.

"I caught him in the head first and then I was going to kick him again," said Le, whose attacks opened a cut along Shamrock's jaw near his left ear. "He pulled up his arm and I caught him with a kick. I heard his arm break. He kind of staggered back and I just chased him down with punches."

Le's round-ending salvo damaged Shamrock to the point that he could not make it back to his corner. Helped onto his stool, a grimacing Shamrock repositioned himself on the canvas, where a commission doctor examined the injury.

At the time of the stoppage, judges at ringside had Le in control. Richard Bertrand scored it a commanding 30-27, while Cecil Peoples and Nelson "Doc" Hamilton each had it 29-28 for the new champ (Peoples giving Shamrock the third, and Hamilton the first).

"It was not easy," Le said. "Frank, every time he dipped, I thought he was going to shoot in. So I couldn't move my head. He caught me with some hard punches, rocked me a few times. You know what? It's all about that champion in my heart. I came back, I fought hard. And I pushed back. I was rocked. I saw some stars."

Though he hadn't asked for it, Le was hailed as King of San Jose.

"He said he owned San Jose. For me, I did say I'll be the gatekeeper; let Frank come through me," said the new champion. "This time he didn't make it through. If there is a next time, it'll be another great fight."

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