

# John Ortolani, Boston Cannon, Boston Blazer and Pro Fighter. A true warrior.

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John Ortolani is a story in of himself. Having grown up in Billerica Massachusetts he is a local boy who is Boston through and through. He played his NCAA Lacrosse at Endicott College here in Massachusetts and was drafted by not one but both of the professional lacrosse teams in Boston. When asked about it Ortolani said *"It is just like a local baseball player being signed to the Red Sox. I am playing for my hometown team at the highest level possible in my sport. It is a great accomplishment for me personally and I feel it also gives a lot of younger players hope that they can do the same thing if they work hard enough."*

Always a competitor, Ortolani was a stand out in High School. He played varsity as a sophomore for Billerica and carried it over in to his college career. In his final two years at Endicott College, Ortolani went 498 of 715 a near 70% of his attempts were successful. One of the things he credits for his success is his Martial Arts training. Training in Kung Fu since the age of seven, Ortolani is a black belt now as well as former wrestler and current professional Mixed Martial Artist. With a professional record of 5-3 John is a purple belt in Jiu Jitsu under Dr. John Fain, training out of Gracie Barra NH in Nashua he has thrived as a two sport athlete. *"The mix of MMA and lacrosse really isn't that difficult"* said John. *"Each sport actually helps me train for the other. I am able to stay in great shape year round always ready for a fight or for a lacrosse game. My wrestling and jiu-jitsu absolutely help me with my faceoff techniques. The training allows me to stay really low when taking face offs and still utilize my athleticism and agility. The jiu-jitsu helps me analyze exactly what my opponent is trying to do and counter it."*

Since making the jump to the professional level in both sports, Ortolani has faced some serious competition in both. In MMA he has faced the likes of UFC alumni Dan Lauzon and in lacrosse players the caliber of Alex Smith and Geoff Snider. John enjoys the challenge of the competition. *"My first experience in the MLL was actually last season. I played against one of the best guys in the world in Alex Smith. He didn't really know much about me and I was able to use that to my advantage and catch him off guard. I ended up playing really well in that game. My last game against Geoff snider was fun. I have played against him before on the Blazers. Hamilton used two guys in the face off, but my rhythm doesn't really get thrown off having two different guys against me. I just go out every time like it's the first faceoff before an overtime. I do everything i can to get my team the ball, no matter who it is in front of me."*

The MLL and The NLL are both drastically different then the college game. Yet Ortolani has been able to adapt and be successful in both testifying to his competitive nature again. He touched on both the NLL and MLL differences. *"With the MLL, their new rule doesn't affect my game much at all. I've never been one to trap an opponent's stick to slow him down. I work and counter their moves to win the ball back. My goal is to get the ball out and to the offense as quick as possible not giving my opponent the chance to hold me or counter what I'm doing. In The NLL the biggest difference is how much time you have to get the ball off the ground and into your stick. The wing guys are a lot closer in the indoor game and all of the other players can jump in right off the whistle to try to check you*

*while you fight for possession. I need to get the ball up and out of my stick to the offense as quick as possible to ensure a solid possession and chance for my team.”*

Between the professional box lacrosse, professional field lacrosse and mixed martial arts, you could almost call Ortolani a three sport player. When you talk to him he is just another Boston area kid who is living the dreams that he had growing up. As a young athlete in his mid-twenties he has all the skills and potential in the world, he is dynamic to watch no matter which team or sport you're watching him compete in and he always gives 110%. This young man has a bright future as a Cannon, a Blazer and a fighter, keep an eye on him Boston.

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