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JOSEPH R. SAVERI

SAVERI LAW FIRM, LLP

SAN FRANCISCO

LITIGATION

Joseph Saveri traces his path to the law back to his grandparents' journey from Italy to San Francisco around 1918. His father and his father's uncle, Guido, were both born in the city and eventually launched Saveri & Saveri, a firm where antitrust work defined the practice. On childhood visits, Saveri watched them in three-piece suits, drafting briefs in longhand pencil.

"They both worked on major antitrust cases and inspired me to pursue the legal profession," he said. More than 35 years

into his own career, he has built a practice around antitrust and class action litigation.

One of the firm's recent marquee matters involved a decade-long fight against the UFC on behalf of professional fighters, including Cung Le, Nathan Quarry and Jon Fitch. Filed more than a decade ago, the suit alleged that the promotion company had pushed out competitors and depressed fighter pay. *Cung Le v. Zuffa, LLC*, 2:15-cv-01045 (D. Nev., filed June 3, 2015).

The case settled for \$335 million shortly before a scheduled 2024 trial, with the court granting final approval of a \$375 million settlement in February 2025.

"This case is a good example of how the threat of a trial can force a resolution to a case," Saveri said. Three related suits against the UFC remain pending, covering fighters who competed during different date ranges.

The UFC litigation presented a series of compounding challenges. Antitrust claims targeting employer conduct in labor markets are less common and harder to prosecute than other antitrust theories. The firm also moved forward without the benefit of any government action — the Federal Trade Commission had twice opened and closed inquiries into the UFC's conduct without result.

"Undertaking the risk of this difficult and expensive litigation without the benefit of a public governmental proceeding — and indeed in the face of the government's decision not to act — was no small task," Saveri said. The firm also had to counter UFC's argument that rising fighter compensation reflected the promotion's own skill in growing a nascent sport, rather than any anticompetitive harm.

Beyond combat sports, the firm's recent settlements include a \$10.8 million resolution in 2024 of a lawsuit against Jackson Hewitt over illegal anti-poaching policies, and an \$82.5 million settlement on behalf of parents of cheerleaders in a dispute with Varsity Brands, which received final approval in December 2024.

Saveri sees algorithms as a force reshaping the litigation landscape. "Algorithms also play a significant role in our society and, increasingly, in litigation," he said. His firm serves on the plaintiffs' steering committee in the RealPage rental software antitrust litigation, which alleges that the company's pricing algorithm facilitates illegal coordination among competing landlords on rents. The firm is also pursuing cases alleging that tech companies used copyrighted works from artists and writers without authorization to train generative AI systems.