DUBLIN, Ireland -- The harsh Irish wind and subzero temperatures greet Dan Henderson as he leaves his hotel en route to a nearby gym to put the finishing touches to his preparation for Saturday's showdown with Rich Franklin at the O2 Arena Dublin.

The training facility for the Tuesday night workout is far removed from the plush gymnasiums that populate the MMA hotbed of Henderson's home in Southern California. The Kokoro gym in Dublin has no ring or cage, is devoid of changing rooms and is situated adjacent to a construction site.

The surroundings make an instant impression on Henderson.

"It's old school," he remarks. "But I like it."

Dan Henderson speaks his mind and is unaffected by the trappings that come with being one of the premier fighters of the last decade. He appears at ease in the low-key gym, free from the distractions presented by the rabid Irish MMA fans who bought all 10,000 tickets for this weekend's UFC 93 event in less than two weeks.

Yet fighting in foreign surroundings presents numerous challenges for the Temecula native.

"It's so cold here," says Henderson, a two-time Greco-Roman wrestling Olympian. "I have to be careful in these temperatures because it's easy to catch something and get sick."

The time difference is also a factor. Henderson arrived in Dublin last Friday to allow his body clock to gradually adjust to the eight hour differential. But his first few days in Ireland were frantic as within 24 hours of arrival he was whisked off by the UFC to Manchester, England to watch the U.K. team tryouts for The Ultimate Fighter reality series.

"It's hectic, but it's been the same for Rich Franklin too," admits Henderson.

The busy travel schedule will continue for whoever wins Saturday's 205-pound contest, since the victor will act as a coach to the U.S. team on the TUF television show which begins filming in Las Vegas on Monday.

Henderson has prepared himself for that scenario, fully convinced that he will defeat Franklin, the 26-3 former UFC 185-pound champion.

"I think I can beat him in every department," he predicts. "I've got more power than him, I'm a better wrestler and better in the clinches."

Henderson's skills have been honed over a 23-7 MMA career that has seen him capture two titles in the PRIDE Fighting Championship. His battle-hardened face attests to the tough

struggles that have encapsulated his career; his ears roughed into rock-like bubbles, while his profile is smoothed by a nose curved where it should be straight and flat where it should be curved.

He has travelled to Dublin with three other fighters from the Team Quest gym and has been sparring primarily with TUF 8 alumnus Krzysztof Soszynski. The bulky Polish born fighter is a natural southpaw, ideal for mimicking Franklin, who also likes to strike from the portsider stance.

The chilly Irish climate means Henderson must wear extra layers of clothing while warming up for his training session. A heavy hooded sweatshirt and thick hunting cap provide protection from the cold air in the gym.

He begins moving around the mats slowly, his limbs turning in a restricted, almost creaky motion.

As the minutes progress the movements become more fluid, the layers of clothing are steadily removed and the punches are snapped out with forceful torque.

Just as the sparring is about to begin, one of Henderson's team realize they are short a pair of MMA gloves. A member of the Kokoro gym grabs a packet containing a fresh pair.

"No, no," shouts Henderson. "You don't need to open new gloves for us. An old pair will do fine."

When the round begins, Henderson wastes little time imposing himself on the 225-pound Soszynski. Despite appearing to be relatively small for a light heavyweight fighter, Henderson displays immense strength in controlling his opponent in the clinches and effortlessly implementing takedowns.

A range of elbows and punches stifle opponents on the ground, while a heavy right hand is used to control the stand-up action.

That right hand, which felled Wanderlei Silva in 2007, will be used regularly against Franklin, who as a southpaw is considered vulnerable to the straight right.

While Henderson, who has battled Vitor Belfort and Anderson Silva, is no stranger to lefties, Franklin holds some key advantages. The 34-year-old Ohio native is regarded as the fresher fighter, while his rangy strikes move with greater fluency than Henderson's cruder blows.

And despite the fact he has only recently began campaigning at light heavyweight, Franklin figures to be the naturally bigger fighter, as he is still a few pounds above the limit, while Henderson has been virtually at the weight for a week.

But Henderson feels his experience and extensive preparation can help him overcome any challenge.

“I’ve felt great here the last two days,” he says after the workout. “My body is getting used to the time change now and I’m ready to go.”

“Dan was amazing tonight,” adds Soszynski. “He was taking me down with ease.”

But Henderson has one body part that isn’t supremely tuned.

“My feet feel numb from the cold,” he quips. “I’ll never complain of being cold in California again.”

 Tickets for UFC 93 are sold out but the event can viewed on pay-per-view at 10pm ET / 7pm PT or live at 3pm ET / 12pm PT / 8pm GMT.