

## The Blade's Back: Iran Barkley Fights In Aruba

Written by Michael Woods

Wednesday, 07 June 2006 19:00

---

So the bout, his first since 1999, hasn't showed up yet on Boxrec.

But it happened.

The swelling over his left eye tells me that.

Not that I wouldn't believe Iran Barkley if he told me that he fought, for pay, as a heavyweight, in Aruba, against a 'young guy' whose name he couldn't recall, on Saturday.

I would, and do believe, The Blade, who told me at ESPN Zone on Tuesday that he gloved up for pay on Saturday, and earned a second round KO when his opponent, who we'll call "Ali Foreman," was removed from the ring by his father, who wanted Barkley to stop whaling away at his son.

Let's backtrack, shall we?

Barkley was at the Garden a few years ago for a big fight. The 46-year-old couldn't recall the promotion, but said that he saw an acquaintance who told The Blade that he was getting into the promotion biz.

You and me should hook up, Barkley said.

About four months ago, the promoter, a guy from Long Island, called Barkley and said it's a go. So the Bronx-born brawler, whose Boxrec record stands as 43-19-1 before Aruba, signed on. He trimmed down, got down to around 230, and flew to Aruba on Friday. On Saturday, fought a kid, around 22, in a scheduled eight.

The first round, Blade said, "Ali Foreman" stung him with a shot that puffed his eye.

In the second round, Blade got busy after "Foreman" jabbed him in the belly and the shoulder. Blade got to work and soon, "Foreman's" pop stepped in and said no mas.

So, Blade was asked, to what do we owe the pleasure of this comeback?

Fighting to pay child support, Blade answered, with admirable forthrightness.

His purse was solid, he said, so his kid will see some fruits from his painful labors.

Also, The Blade assured me, he took a full battery of tests (MRI, CatScan, blood pressure) that showed his body and mind were in good working order to step into the ring.

The six year rest – his last fight came against Keith McKnight on 7-31-99 (loss, TKO 6) – did

## The Blade's Back: Iran Barkley Fights In Aruba

Written by Michael Woods

Wednesday, 07 June 2006 19:00

---

him good, Blade said. The McKnight fight was his sixth straight loss fighting as a heavyweight.

I'm not going to let anyone push me out of the game I love, something that pays the bills, Blade said.

And what's the grand plan, I asked? One at a time? Make a few bucks, get in, get out?

Rahman, he said. Or Toney. We have a history, said the former middleweight, super middleweight and light heavyweight titlist.

And who am I to say otherwise? Everyone, but the luckiest few, does things they don't particularly want to do in order to pay the bills, put food in the belly. Do I wish people didn't have to put their bodies on the line to make ends meet? Damn straight I do. I wish The Blade hadn't parted with the funds amassed during his heyday. But he did, and since our fair sport doesn't see fit to have an effective pension system in place for the poor souls who actually put their bodies on the line for our viewing pleasure, comebacks of this ilk will continue. Don't hate, or look down on the player. Hate the state of the game that makes it necessary...