

Rampage Jackson Vows To Down Liddell In 3

Written by Michael Woods
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"He thinks he's invincible now. He's not invincible."

Chuck Liddell is on top of the world right now. He's in full mount position on top of his vocation, and his visibility, and approval ratings, are massive.

But Quinton "Rampage" Jackson has seen Liddell on the other side, on his back, being battered, absorbing a sickening level of punishment. Rampage was the deliverer of the beating, Liddell's last loss, and that was from another era. That was back on Nov. 9, 2003.

Ordinarily, a fighter coming up to a rematch with a person who whupped them will be in a state of mental flux. Even if they are on a superlative win-streak, even if their skills have blossomed since the loss, in the back recesses of their brain, there is the nagging thought: this dude has my number.

This guy knows how to beat me.

But Liddell is known for being the MMA avenger of defeats, as he's turned the tables on conquerors Randy Couture and Jeremy Horn.

Rampage, though, vows that Liddell won't turn the proverbial table on him. The born again battler, who wears a tattoo that says "Rampage God's Street Soldier," vows that it will be more of the same come Saturday in Vegas for Liddell.

"Chuck has confidence," Rampage told TSS. "He thinks he can do anything he wants. He thinks he's invincible. He's not invincible."

Prediction, please, Rampage...

"I'm feeling real confident," says the 28-year-old who lives in Orange County, California. "Chuck may be going down in the third."

I asked Jackson for his recollection of the 2003 victory in Japan, and his reply was unexpected.

"I beat Chuck? I thought he beat me. I had two fights that night...his corner threw in the towel? I took some punishment that night..."

I'm presuming Jackson was goofing a bit, as on other occasions he has better recall of the ground 'n pound ending. Regardless, he says that in the present day, he has grown as an artist, while Liddell, to him, has stayed stagnant.

"I got better as a fighter," he says. "My footwork, my punching has gotten better. He looks the same to me."

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Jackson's mental state, he says, should be solid, as he is working to repair relations with his wife, after the two separated. He is serene, he says, and holds no personal animus towards Liddell.

"It's not personal, there's no dislike," he says. "I don't care about him being on the magazine cover of ESPN. Nobody knows who I am, he deserves all that stuff."

SPEEDBAG Jackson has four kids, "four beautiful kids," he makes certain to mention.

He has three boys, two of whom have been graced with the middle name Rampage. His middle son, who Jackson says will be in his custody soon, will also be given the same middle name. Oh, and his dog is named Rampage, too, for the record.

Why not name 'em all the first-name Rampage, like George Foreman, who named his sons George? Jackson agreed with me that course might be a bit too egotistical.

--The nickname Rampage was given to Quinton at age 8, by his cousin. The reason? He had a ferocious temper. "It was the worst temper on earth," he said. Now, Jackson says, there is no room for temper tantrums, inside the ring, or out.

---thanks to Jim Byrne, for setting up this interview