

Contender Recap: Banks Struts Home

Written by Michael Woods

Tuesday, 09 October 2007 19:00

David Banks and Paul Smith have co-existed in the Contender crib like Lindsay Lohan and sobriety. Contentiously.

Banks, who is prone to strutting around the house like a Chippendale dancer who is crashing on a friend's coach because he lost his lease, didn't mesh with the tart tongued Smith.

The reality show God has decreed that the two personalities would do the right thing, and battle it out in the ring.

First, the gang reminisces about the Bika/McCrory fight from last week. It was a good go, they agree.

There are fewer episodes than before, in previous seasons, so the fight tournament has been streamlined. To that end, there will be five fighters remaining at the end of the show, and only four slots in the semis. Fighters gain more points for kayoes, and UDs, so all are gunning for impressive wins. Which winner will be on the outside looking in, the fifth best Contender when only four will fight on?

We see Banks' little boy, three-year old David III and his fiancée, in the dressing room. Banks explained that he needed something to humble him when his baby was enroute, and he found boxing. For only three years in the ring, the kid ain't too shabby. "My little man, I missed you so much," he coos at the boy, in goo-goo gah-gah voice. Boxers are people too, people. They even use ghastly babytalk voices on occasion...

Banks' dad was shot and killed before he was born and this experience has helped him see how adult men act, he says.

In the Smith dressing room, Pepe shows up. "It's your turn to burn man," Correa tells him. Almost as good as "Make it happen, Cap'n."

He tells us the 20-0 Brit can punch like a mule too. Hmm, he only has 12 knocks coming in. "I want to break his face up, I wanna smash his ribs in," Smith states, so maybe he's found his punch here in California.

Buddy tells Banks that he can't give Smith time to get off. Banks thinks Smith will fight PO'd. "If I have to hurt this pretty little face, then that's what I'm gonna have to do," Narcissus Banks says.

Smith works the mitts with Pepe. "If you don't go on to be a world champion, I'll kiss your behind," the trainer tells him. Pucker up, Pepe. I'm just jokin', hey now...

Banks brings a 14-2 mark to the ring, with one smudge being a loss to Peter Manfredo, a

Contender Recap: Banks Struts Home

Written by Michael Woods

Tuesday, 09 October 2007 19:00

Contender alum.

Banks comes to the ring with a US flag, and waves it in Smith's face. He also nearly headbutts Smith in the staredown. He could've had a point deducted then and there.

In the first, both fighters show better handspeed than we've seen from many of the Cons. Banks digs a straight right to the body, a vet move McGirt must dig. The two of a one-two then stuns Banks, who quickly gains his wits. It was a close one, but Banks raises his hands, proclaiming his superiority. Pepe tells Smith to jab more.

In the second, Banks is backing up too much, looking to counter. His in ring style mirrors his persona; with his dad being tragically taken from this world, he has trust and anger issues, and doesn't let people in. That hesitance to trust and take risks shows up in the ring, too. Banks does deliver a stiff counter right that hurts Smith. Banks again raises his hands. Pepe is angry at Smith.

In the third, Smith lands a nice left hook. Banks then delivers an uppercut from outside, which registers. Smith lands a taut right. Lot's of scoring, telling blows being landed here. Buddy after the round tells Banks to focus, as his mind is wondering. "This fight is your if you listen," Buddy says.

In the fourth round, Smith hurts Banks with a mean left hook. The Oregon fighter holds on. Banks regains his senses, and Buddy tells him to come forward. He does, and connects with a sharp right. Another tight round. What will the judges say? "You're getting caught backing up," Buddy tells Banks. "You need this round."

The fifth round is up. Banks' jab is a half measure, while Smith commits. But Banks sets down on his power shots well, and Smith didn't land an obviously vicious shot.

The judges get the last decision---Caiz 48-47, Smith; DeLuca 49-46, Banks; Werner 48-47, Smith. Smith takes a split win.

The two, who have jabbed each other in the house, hug after. Smith says he respects Banks as a family man.

"I feel a little cheated and a little robbed but I should have stepped it up and thrown a couple more punches," Banks says. "I thought I outboxed him, but I think I hesitated a little bit too long."

Banks loved having his lady and baby there. They were never at one of his fights. "I tried I tried I tried," Banks told the boy. "From my experience here, I learned how to be a man. A little more experience and there's nothing that can stop me."

Baby Smitty is in the winner's dressing room. Sugar Ray told him he made the fight harder than he had to. He said the fight would help him be better. Then the doc came in, and looked at his two cuts. He glued them shut. Who knew they do such things with SuperGlue?

Contender Recap: Banks Struts Home

Written by Michael Woods

Tuesday, 09 October 2007 19:00

The remaining fighters, Bika, Johnsen, Solimon, Codrington and Smith, get together the next day. SRL tells Smitty that he has the fewest points, so he's booted and would've been anyway, because of his cuts. He's chill about the process.

The gang goes home and the house is revamped, with photos of them in action. Then they all hit the Palm, for some chow, and bonding. Then, Tommy Gallagher shows up and starts throwing stuff. He hits SRL with a blooming onion, and it's on!

Joking, joking..that would've happened if I was scripting this thing.

The next day, it's choosing time. Jaid wants to fight first. He doesn't get to choose who he'll fight, strangely enough. Sakio chooses to fight in the second fight, later than Jaid's. The Aussie Sam can choose either man, and he taps the African Bika. They've fought before, in 2002, and Sam got the best of it. That leaves NY's Jaid against Johnsen, of New Jersey. The fights will be eight rounders.

Next week, Alfonso Gomez meets Ben Tackie in place of a tournament offering. The following week, the semis will go down. Then, the finale will be Nov. 6, in Boston.