

## Couture Back With UFC, Will Meet Lesnar

Written by Michael Woods

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After depositions in his breach of contract suit against the UFC went poorly, Randy Couture has come back to the UFC, hat in hand. Dana White on a Tuesday conference call announced that "The Natural," who bolted from the UFC last fall, complaining that he hadn't been treated fairly, mostly from a financial standpoint, will fight ex WWE Hercules Brock Lesnar on Nov.15 at the MGM Grand.

White told the press that the 45-year-old Couture is still the UFC heavyweight champion, and that he expects the bout to be the biggest bout (read: highest grossing) in UFC history.

Lesnar (2-1) will be the underdog coming in, as he only has three bouts under his belt, while Couture turned pro in 1997, and has a 16-8 record. He last fought on Aug. 25, 2007, when he beat Gabriel Gonzaga at UFC 74 (TKO3 win). "The Lesnar fight is a big fight, he's a big guy, and UFC is working dilligently to making a Fedor fight possible," Couture said. "I'd rather fight in the Octagon than anywhere else. I can't sit around in courtrooms for very long."

He expressed relief to be out of the legal maze, which consumed money, time and energy. "I feel like I've been walking on a black cloud for the last year," Couture said.

Fedor (29-1), the Russian destroyer, is under contract to Affliction, and fought on their first card, winning over Tim Sylvia on July 19. White said he would need Fedor to be free from Affliction for him to face Couture. "These guys are dying on the vine," said White of the rival organization, which is rumored to be in financial dire straits.

"I never hated Randy," White said. "I never said anything really bad about Randy. I called him confused I think, which is pretty mild for me."

Market research told White that there is a high level of interest in Lesnar, but not as much in potential opponents. Thus, it made landing Couture that much more necessary.

Couture said he weighed 224 1/2 pounds, and expects to weigh 225 on fight night. How will he deal with Lesnar, the immense specimen who weighs slightly under 300 pounds come fight night. "I haven't looked at tape yet," Couture said. "But I've been off before, and I've been very active the last nine, ten months."

Lesnar went off after 45 minutes, ranting that he was tired hearing about Fedor, who isn't under contract. He didn't sound at all cowed that he'll be taking on such an experienced veteran.

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