

Lamon Brewster Wants Action Now

Written by Robert Ecksel

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Former WBO heavyweight champion Lamon Brewster, who won the crown with a TKO5 over Wladimir Klitschko in 2004, has been the invisible man since he lost his title to Sergei Liakhovich in Cleveland in April. That bout was another typical blood and guts, edge of your seat, Lamon Brewster performance, and even though he didn't win, he left no doubt in the minds of even the most jaded fight fans that the warrior from Indianapolis, while sometimes lacking finesse, cedes nothing to no one when it comes to fighting heart.

I spoke with Lamon Brewster last week to get a medical update and a sense of where he goes from here.

"I had a detached retina," Brewster told TSS, "and I had to follow the doctor's orders until I got better. And now I'm better, so I want to get my title back."

Brewster was promoted by Don King, but all things must pass and now he is a free agent. I asked Brewster how he goes about getting the world's attention back again, especially without DK cheerleading in his corner.

"You gotta understand," said Brewster. "Don doesn't throw the punches. I throw the punches. People like what they see? That was Lamon Brewster."

Brewster is back in the gym and will be training with Buddy McGirt. I asked if there is a timetable for his return, and Brewster said, "I'm looking to crawl back in the ring in February or March the latest."

Maybe a tune-up isn't in the cards, but getting it on with one of the titleholders right out of the gate might not be the wisest first move to make.

"I would," Brewster asserted, "however it comes. I just want to fight and regain the title. Being a champion and having lost my title, it's the hunger that's insatiable, I have to eat. So a tune-up is only gonna anger me, for whoever I fight."

I remember seeing Brewster here and there in the glory days, which feels both like yesterday and a long ago time ago. I saw him in Canastota where was an honored guest at the International Boxing Hall of Fame, feted as only the heavyweight champion of the world deserves to be. I also saw Brewster riding shotgun, so to speak, alongside Don King when the maestro was roasted by the Friars here in New York City. That was some show. It was emceed by Donald Trump and attended by a gaggle of luminaries. And Lamon Brewster, at least to these prying eyes, looked like the happiest man on earth (which is saying something since he was standing next to Don King). Happy though he may have appeared, Brewster also looked puffy, overweight, slightly tired, maybe even a little wired by the nonstop flashbulb of celebrity glitz. I shared these impressions with Brewster, and told him, "I was watching all this and kept thinking: I've seen this somewhere before." Brewster got it and laughed. "Don being Don," I

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said, "and all things being equal, I spotted trouble a mile ahead in advance."

Brewster laughed again. "The one thing I have to say is, I'm a believer in God, and I just believe that everything I'm going to go through in life, for better or for worse, I believe it's already been done, according to God. I'm just living through it," Brewster testified. "They said God makes everything for bad He makes for good, and my mother always used to say, 'no struggle, no progress,' so it was a nice ride that I had with Don, and I'm grateful to be able to fight and gain my title the way I did, and now I'm looking for bigger and better things. I plan on giving everybody exactly what they want. I had to come to terms with a few things about myself, my transition from a boxer into a fighter, and now that I buried the boxer, I'm 100 percent fighter, and if the crowd really thought they liked me then, wait till they see me now."

It sounds like Brewster is hungry, but not necessarily for food.

"I'm bringing something new to the table," he said. "It's going to be a whole new day."

Before letting Brewster go, I asked if he'd had a chance to see Liakhovich-Briggs, in which I figured he had more than a passing interest.

"I did not get to see it because I was at the Floyd fight unfortunately, but I heard he won the fight in the last round, in the last few seconds of the round. But you know, that's why they say it's boxing: it ain't over till it's over, it's one of the things that happens. I think Liakhovich is a good fighter, and that was the reason why I fought him, but he doesn't have anything to be ashamed of. This is boxing and he fought Shannon Briggs and anything could have happened, and it did, and he is still a terrific fighter. He can't get down on his self," Brewster said. "He can only pick the pieces up and try to get back on the warpath."