

UFC Champ Jon Jones Talks Mayweather, Klitschko, Upcoming Fight

Written by David A. Avila

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LOS ANGELES-Jon Jones is considered the best mixed martial arts fighter in the world today. The UFC light heavyweight champion just had to salute Floyd “Money” Mayweather’s victory over Saul “Canelo” Alvarez after watching the fight.

“I thought it was phenomenal,” said Jones on Monday. “He showed swagger.”

Jones (18-1) met with about a dozen journalists at Flemings in L.A. Live to discuss his upcoming title defense against Sweden’s Alexander Gustafsson (15-1) in Toronto on Saturday, Sept. 21. UFC 165 will be televised on pay-per-view.

The tall 205-pounder was practically spellbound with Mayweather’s fighting feat this past Saturday at the MGM Grand in Las Vegas. Jones talked about Mayweather, boxing, competition and how he’s perceived in the fight world today.

A slightly amused Jones tapped on the current offer that Gustafsson may pose a dangerous threat because of his height advantage at six-foot, five-inches. Jones is one inch shorter and has always enjoyed a height advantage in previous fights.

“If it was my height that gave me an advantage half of the NBA would be in UFC,” joked Jones about the height references. “I think they’re having a hard time to legitimize having a hard fight.”

Lately, Jones has experienced negative feedback from fans, fighters and some of the media. It’s

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been a slight surprise to the New York-based prizefighter who has a gentleman's cordialness and sincerity.

"I realize a lot of great athletes and fighters are hated," Jones said. "I don't understand why. I just have to continue being me. Basically the New York Yankees are hated for a reason."

Sometimes candidness can read like arrogance in print.

Jones doesn't foresee moving into the heavyweight division very soon. He realizes that though MMA fighters in the bigger weight class are slower, it's not a division laden with a lot of talent such as the 205-pound light heavyweights.

If anything, Jones would like to challenge the heavyweight champion of boxing Wladimir Klitschko sometime in the near future. The MMA fighter has been working on his boxing and would like to test the waters in the near future.

"I've been thinking about challenging the Klitschkos," said Jones, 26. "If I dedicate myself in two or three years I'll feel competent...when there's a will there's a way."

Jones is an avid tape watcher and studies fights like a mathematician studies formulas. Whether it's his own weight class, or other weight divisions, he looks for styles, tendencies and combinations used by other prizefighters. Whether in boxing or MMA he watches intently.

"My job is to find something human in a fighter. I find a solution in everybody. I study, study, study," said Jones. "One guy I like watching his Anthony "Showtime" Pettis. The activity he brings to the ring is a breath of fresh air."

And when asked what separates Jones from the rest of the light heavyweights he was quick to answer: "Confidence."

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He also referenced Mayweather and how the pound for pound best boxer has maintained perfection throughout his pro boxing career.

“What Mayweather shows is that it really doesn’t have to end,” said Jones citing Mayweather’s 17-year career of perfection. “The biggest thing I respect about Floyd is he doesn’t drink alcohol or do drugs. What Mayweather shows is that greatness is not luck, it’s an attitude. It’s a mentality. If you treat your body right it can last forever.”

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