

"ShoBox" Alums Represent on Saturday Show

Written by The Sweet Science
Friday, 22 February 2013 12:58

SHOBOX ALUMS IN THE SPOTLIGHT WHEN CORNELIUS "K9" BUNDRAGE DEFENDS AGAINST ISHE SMITH TOMORROW/SATURDAY, FEB. 23

Live on SHOWTIME® (9:00 p.m. ET/PT)
From The Masonic Temple Theatre in Detroit

NEW YORK (Feb. 22, 2013) — Since its inception in July 2001, 47 fighters who've appeared on *ShoBox: The New Generation* have gone on to capture a world title.

One of them, **Cornelius "K9" Bundrage** (32-4, 19 KO's), of Detroit, will defend his IBF Junior Middleweight World Championship against fellow *Sho*

Box

alum,

Ishe "Sugar Shay" Smith

(24-5, 11 KO's), of Las Vegas,

tomorrow/Saturday

Feb. 23

, live on

SHOWTIME

®

(9:00 p.m. ET/PT, delayed on the West Coast) from the

Masonic Temple Theatre

in

Detroit

.

Bundrage fought twice on *ShoBox*, and in his most recent start, on a Special Edition of the critically acclaimed series, he retained the 154-pound world title with a seventh-round knockout win over former titleholder **Cory Spinks** in a rematch on June 30, 2012.

But it was his "double-knockdown" fight against southpaw **Sechew Powell** in his *ShoBox* debut

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on May 6, 2005 that will be forever etched in fans' memories. Both fighters were knocked down simultaneously in the bout's opening seconds. They each got up immediately, then Powell scored another knockdown with a left hand. Bundrage got up, but stumbled across the ring and fell. He got up again, but stumbled across the ring and fell again. The official time of the fight was 0:22.

"The premise on *ShoBox* has always been to match prospects tough and when 'K9' fought Powell, both were unbeaten," *ShoBox* Executive Producer **Gordon Hall** said. "Bundrage was 21-0 going in, Powell 15-0 at the time. Because of the double knockdown, their fight was one of the most memorable in *ShoBox* history."

"That 'K9' is defending against Ishe Smith on Saturday is a great thing. It's always neat to have a *ShoBox* fighter who's gone on to win a title come back to the network and defend it."

A resilient Bundrage has gone 8-3-1 since the "double-knockdown" fight, including fighting four times during his stint on *The Contender* reality show in 2006 and capturing the IBF Junior Middleweight Title with a fifth-round technical knockout win over Spinks in their first fight on Aug. 7, 2010. In his outing before last, in his first defense, "K9" avenged the loss to Powell by winning a dominant 12-round decision on June 25, 2011.

"We could do *ShoBox* for 100 years and that 22-second double knockdown between Powell and 'K9' will always be front and center in terms of memories," said boxing historian and *ShoBox* expert analyst

Steve Farhood

. "Given that K-9 suffered that type of loss, and then went on to lose in the semis of Season Two of *The Contender*

, it tells you a lot about his character that he still advanced to become a world champion."

The double-knockdown loss taught "K9" an invaluable lesson, one that served him well in his career since. "I learned that I have to exercise patience," he said. "I just try and get better and compete, but the whole key is patience and not getting overly anxious."

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"When I fought Powell the first time, I had an associate tell me that he would give me 10 grand for a first-round knockout, so I went for it, but became too anxious and it cost me," Bundrage said. "At that time, I'd been very active, the most active in my career, so it seemed like a good idea. Turns out it was a terrible decision on my part, but I learned, the hardest way, that I had to fight with a little more patience, that no matter where I am fighting or who it's against, anything can happen and that no one is invincible.

"That was the first loss of my life. I came up from the streets. I grew up in the streets but I'd never lost a fight on the streets, so the loss to Powell really took a lot out of me. It humbled me, but my faith got me through. I grew up in the church. I prayed that I could get back on TV again and God granted my wish to be on TV again. The whole thing is, I'd taken the fight with Powell because I wanted to get on TV, and God granted my wish. Right after the Powell fight, I was on *The Contender* and I've had nothing but big fights since.

"Looking back, I see now that it just wasn't time for me to be where I'm at now, on God's time and a champion of the world. Now I'm back on SHOWTIME where it all began for me. Thanks to God, and I give all glory to Him. I've come full circle."

Smith, who is seeking to become the first Las Vegas-born boxing world champion, is 4-1 on *ShoBox* and 1-0 on SHOWTIME EXTREME.

"Ishe was one of many top up and coming prospects who passed their early tests on *ShoBox*," Hall recalls. "First, he defeated

Sam Garr

and

David Estrada

and then he beat future World Champion

Randall Bailey

. That got him on

The Contender

in 2004. Four years later, he came back to

ShoBox

not as a prospect but as a veteran playing the spoiler role and resurrected his career by upsetting the undefeated favorite

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Pawel Wolak

(21-0 going in) in Wolak's backyard (Brooklyn, N.Y.)."

Smith credits *ShoBox* for keeping his topsy-turvy career relevant.

"If not for *ShoBox* I wouldn't be where I am today," he said. "Since my first fight on *ShoBox* in early 2003, they have always had my back, they have always backed me even when other networks would not approve me for certain opponents, when no one else would give me a chance.

"Really, the entire *ShoBox* family has been great to me; **Nick Charles** rest in peace, Steve Farhood, everybody. They have always treated me like family and I feel the same way about them. When Nick, a loveable guy who always showed me so much respect, died, it was as hard on me as it was on them.

ShoBox

has really been a staple of my career and I thank them for that. It's awesome getting my first title shot on SHOWTIME. It will almost be 10 years to the day from my first fight on *ShoBox*

."

Smith is coming off of a lopsided 10-round decision victory over **Irving Garcia** on SHOWTIME EXTREME on Sept. 8, 2012. His lone loss on

ShoBox

came in a close decision to then-undefeated southpaw and now world title challenger

Fernando Guerrero

on July 16, 2010, a result Smith disputes to this day. "I should be unbeaten on

ShoBox

," he said. "I definitely felt I did enough to win against Guerrero."

Regarding Saturday's matchup, Farhood, who has called every *ShoBox* fight, said, "Given how long ago both of these fighters debuted on

ShoBox,

it says tons about both of them that we find them at this level in 2013 fighting in a world title fight.

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"I'm so happy Ishe is getting his first title shot because whether he's won or lost, he's always given such a great effort on SHOWTIME. He has said many times that he defines himself as a SHOWTIME fighter. He could easily be unbeaten on *ShoBox*. I scored the Guerrero fight in his favor."

Fans can expect both veterans to lay it on the line on Saturday.

"I'm really looking forward to Saturday and I thank everyone involved for making the fight happen," Bundrage said. "I've been around this game a long time. This is a great opportunity. Tell Ishe, he'd better be ready. The Dog is coming."

Smith says he'll be prepared for anything. "I have no expectations on what to expect," he said. "Our motto in camp has been to get the win by any means necessary. It's been a long road, but it's just awesome and only fitting that I am getting this world title shot on SHOWTIME. I plan to make the most of it and bring the title back to Las Vegas."

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deepwater says:

I got ishe winning. K9 is an older dog now, mayweather backing smith will sway the judges. Detroit is broke and just won award for most miserable city. those judges will lean towards smith. K9 has some fans but they are broke also. Follow the money put some money on smith

Radam G says:

Hehehe! Deepwater is just too real! Hahaha! Holla!