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fan mail

Brendan Schaub: UFC heavyweight from Denver talks MMA super fights

By The Denver Post

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Ever wanted to ask a sports personality a question? Now's your chance. They will answer readers' questions in The Denver Post's "Fan Mail" feature.

In this week's installment, UFC heavyweight Brendan Schaub of Denver talks about UFC 135 last week, the super-fight he would schedule as matchmaker, and the opponent he's most looking forward to knocking out.

Keep an eye out for next week's installment. Email questions or submit an idea for the next participant. Send your Qs in an email to fanmail@denverpost.com.

Brendan, heard you on the radio before the fights last weekend. Now that it's done, what are your opinions of UFC 135? What was the best fight of the night? Who looked the best? Is Jon Jones everything he's hyped to be?
---D., Denver

Brendan Schaub: I think the numbers showed, like I've always said, Denver is a hotbed for M

MA. I think it was their third-biggest gate. It was a great turnout, as I expected.

The heavyweight fights were not good, though. I liked Nate Diaz. He had a great fight, beating (Takanori) Gomi. Jon Jones, I'd say his main event was the best. Diaz or Jon Jones were the best fights. Diaz looked exceptionally good.

Jon Jones showed he's on a different level. People haven't seen what he can do yet. He's everything he's hyped up to be, and more.

If there's one thing we learned from UFC 135, it seems that youth wins over experience. Do you think that's true?

---Jimmie, Arvada

Brendan: I'd like to say yes, but according to my last fight, it's not the case. On Saturday night for UFC 135, yes. That's how it worked out. But in general, that's not always the case.

Sometimes experience can definitely beat youth - I know that from experience.

If Dana

---Jason, Aurora

Brendan: That's a great question. I have two.

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Anderson Silva vs. Jon Jones. And Shane Carwin and Alistair Overeem.

There's not much left for Anderson at 185 pounds. There's nothing left for them to build up for him. Even in Strike Force. Jon Jones would be great. But we're at least a year away from that.

Anderson Silva has been the reigning champ for so long, and he's not had a challenge in more than a year. That's why that fight should happen.

But I think Dana White will wait to do it until there's nothing left.

Anderson Silva is like Georges St. Pierre. They've both cleared out their divisions. So super-fights make sense.

For Shane and Overeem, they're the biggest guys in the heavyweight division. And it would be a short fight, because they're both so powerful. They matched up Brock Lesnar and Overeem for December (UFC 141 in Las Vegas), but Lesnar is a wrestler. They'll ground a lot. But Shane's not like that. He wants to knock people out with his power.

If Carwin and Overeem matched up, you don't want to get up and go to the bathroom during that fight.

Hey Brendan, what do you see as your next fight after the loss to Big Nog? And what did you take away from that experience in Brazil?

---Gabe, Pueblo

Brendan: My next fight, I have

no idea. The division is changing so fast with Strike Force coming over. I think it'll be early 2012 when I go next. I could see me getting one of the big Strike Force guys. Or maybe Cheick Kongo.



Alexander from Aurora, here with Brendan Schaub, is looking for a future in MMA. (Special to The Denver Post)

I take it as it comes. But I want a big name, a tough opponent, a Top 10 guy. I'm definitely a Top 10 fighter, so I want a big name. But I could care less who they give me. I'm just working hard to keep moving forward.

What I learned in Brazil was, I'm an aggressive guy, but I have to learn to control it. In 14 fights (including amateur), 12 have gone my way with that aggression. Now I need to get back to the drawing board and control the aggression.

It's like, live by the sword, die by the sword. I got hit behind the ear by

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Sports Fan Mail

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Nogueira and that was it. I have enough wrestling skills to ride guys out. But, man, I'm a fan favorite for a reason. It's because I like to knock guys out. It's just my style. It's all I know. And it got the best of me.

After that, I didn't take any time off. I got right back to work. I'm young. I'm glad it happened now rather than in a title fight. It just might take a little longer to get there.

Hi Brendan, I am a huge fan and definitely believe you'll keep on doing great things in the UFC. My question is, if you were given an opportunity for a rematch with Roy Nelson, would you take it? And what are your thoughts on that possibility?

---Reuven G., Waltham, Mass.

Brendan: If he were to beat Cro Cop (Mirko Filipovic), it would make sense. If he loses that fight, it doesn't. That's a tough fight for Roy. He won't be able to control Cro Cop on the ground. But if he beats him, then yeah, let's do it.

I know people want to see that fight, me and Roy. I hear that all the time. But our fight was six fights ago. That's a long time. That's an eternity for a fighter.

Hey if you could fight any one in the UFC, who

would it be?

---Jordan

Brendan: If I could fight one guy, it would be Junior Dos Santos or Brock Lesnar. Dos Santos because he beat up my boy, he beat up Shane Carwin and he's like my brother.

Me against Dos Santos is gonna happen. I guarantee it's gonna happen some time in my career. And it's gonna be a big one. It's gonna be a blockbuster when it happens. But first, I need to go on a win streak. Junior Dos Santos against Cain Velasquez coming up is a big fight for Dos Santos.

But us fighting, that happens in the next two years - guaranteed. And it'll be big. It's just my style. My nickname is "The Hybrid." But all the guys at gyms I train at, they call me "Showtime." I go in to put on a show. Against Cro Cop, my coach is yelling "Control it! Control!" But I let him up so I could knock him out. It's just what went through my head. It's good and bad I guess.

If you could coach in TUF (The Ultimate Fighter TV show), would you? Who would you like to go against? What weight division would you like to coach?

---Myke, North Denver

Brendan: Oh (heck) yeah. I'd love to. You gotta

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coach against somebody for good ratings. So it would have to beat a (trash)-talker. Maybe Frank Mir. He's good at hyping up fights. That would be entertaining. And I'd definitely like to coach heavyweights or 205s. Because I know them.

But for those poeple who want more lighter weight fights, I don't blame them. People complaining about the heavyweight fights last weekends, even I was embarrassed.

I like watching the lighter weights. They're more technical. The bigger guys in UFC are so good, if you make even one mistake, it's over. But the lower weights work their butts off. And you can see all their training in the ring. They can outlast each other more, so you really get to see them fight.

I worked the hardest in my life agains Cro Cop, and I hit him behind the ear once and it was done. One mistake from him. But the lighter guys just keep going. I love watching the lighter guys. **How's it goin' Brendan? I know you see a million faces a day but I was that kid with the shoulder injury from football as a LG on the line. Could I get a good recommendation on what I should be workin' first in MMA? I was thinking boxing and wrestling base for a few years, then moving up to BJJ and maybe Muay Thai for another few years? Lemme know if that sounds pretty good man. When my shoulder heals up I'm going to start training hope to see you in the UFC in 5 or 6 years man.**

---Alexander, Aurora

Brendan: Yeah, first of all, heal your shoulder. After that, try to pick up one discipline at a time and focus on that. Whether it's ju-jitsu or wrestling, however.

But the best advice I can give you is: Don't rush into it. You need to work one step at a time. Make sure you have the skills first for each step, then move forward. Good luck.

Rarely does an athlete stop playing football in exchange for something less soft. But Denver's Brendan Schaub, a former University of Colorado fullback under coach Gary Barnett, ended up a mixed martial arts fighter. And a good one.

Schaub, 28, is 8-2 in the UFC's heavyweight division. He has statement victories over Mirko "Cro Cop" Filipovic at UFC 128 in New Jersey in March - one that earned him knockout of the night honors - and a TKO of Chris Tuchscherer at UFC 116 in Las Vegas in 2010. He's coming off a loss to Antônio Rodrigo Nogueira at UFC 134 in Brazil in August.

He's also a veteran of the Spike TV reality show "The Ultimate Fighter: Heavyweights."

A member of the Easton's Brazilian Ju Jitsu in Denver and Grudge Training Center in Wheat Ridge, Schaub answered fans questions this week after a workout in Denver, addressing his career and the UFC 135 fights last week in Denver.

Follow Brendan on Twitter: @BrendanSchaub.

White made you matchmaker for one night, who would you pick to fight each other? What's your ideal card?



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Brendan Schaub, right, connects with a right to the face that knocked out Chris Tuchscherer at UFC 116 in Las Vegas in 2010. (Josh Hedges, Zuffa LLC)

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Jimmy Smith "on track" to return after bye week

Rookie cornerback has ditched boot designed to protect left ankle injury

By Edward Lee

2:58 PM EDT, September 28, 2011

With the news that Domonique Foxworth's season had ended after being placed on injured reserve Wednesday morning, the Ravens cornerback group got a bit of good news in the form of rookie Jimmy Smith.

The organization's first-round pick in April, Smith is no longer wearing a clunky boot on his left foot to help him bounce back from a high ankle sprain. Smith walked through the team's locker room on Wednesday without a limp in his gait or a grimace on his face.

"That's a sign that the ankle is getting better, getting stronger," he said. "There are still some mobility problems, but I've still got a little bit of time left. ... It's coming along good. It's on track with the time and schedule that they have."

Smith said prior to missing the team's past two contests, he had never sat out a game due to injury. But Smith said he's happy that the injury occurred earlier in the season rather than later when the team could be in the midst of making a run to the postseason.

"I'm frustrated in the sense that I wish I was out there playing," he said. "But at the same time, I'm not sitting here, down on myself. It's part of football. You get hurt. You come back."

Smith said the target return date is Oct. 16 when the Ravens come back from the bye week to meet the Houston Texans.

"That's not being too optimistic," he said. "That's what I'm gearing for, and that's what I'm hoping for. That's the Texans game. So I'm doing everything I can to get back."

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