

UFC

Moderator: Jennifer Wenk
December 16, 2008
12:00 pm CT

Operator: Good day, ladies and gentlemen, and welcome to the UFC 92 Conference. One note, today's call is being recorded.

At this time, I'd like to turn the conference over to Ms. Jennifer Wenk. Please go ahead.

Jennifer Wenk: Hi. Good morning everyone. Thanks a lot for calling into the UFC 92 Conference Call.

We've got the main and one of the special features fights for you here today.

We've got our light heavyweight champion, Forrest Griffin; former light heavyweight champion, Rampage Jackson; prior champion, Wanderlei Silva and number one contender to the light heavyweight crown, Rashad Evans on the line.

We're obviously very excited about this fight. This is our last big fight of the year. It's a completely stacked card and we're delivering this on December 27 next week. We're again really excited. We have phenomenal fighters lined up for you and we have four of them here on the call for you today.

So just a couple of notes about the press conference for next week. We've moved the press conference to Tuesday, December 23 instead of our normal Thursday because of the Christmas

holiday. And that will be taking place in the MGM Grand Hotel and Casino down in the media center and the studio rooms.

It'll start at 12:00 and the press conference will begin at 1:00. The lunch will be from 12:00 to 1:00. And weigh ins are usual on Friday. Doors open at 3:00, on scale at 4:00. And the fight will start on Saturday and the doors will open at 4:30. First start begins at 5:15 and the card will go live at 7:00 pm Pacific, 10:00 pm Eastern.

So with that being said, let's go ahead and open this up for questions.

Operator: Once again, ladies and gentlemen, star 1 please if you'd like to ask a question at this time.

We'll go first to AOL Sports Michael David Smith.

Michael David Smith: Hi. Thanks for having me. This question is for Rashad. Can you talk about how a background in wrestling sort of was a good foundation for you as an MMA fighter?

And then which skills do you think you still most want to develop after several years in this sport? Do you still need to work on Jujitsu or Moi Tai or is there anything specific that you're still trying to improve in now?

Rashad Evans: Wrestling is a good foundation for me because I think in every fight there is a point where you're going to lock up with somebody. So having that advantage with a wrestling background gave me a big edge over a lot of the competition early on.

But now I think it's at a point where the fighters are more well rounded and I'm going to need more than just wrestling to bring me on to the next level. So I think one area that I'd still like to improve on is my striking where it's just simply outstanding and nobody can really deal with it.

Michael David Smith: Great. Thanks Rashad.

Operator: And next we'll go to Myron Medcalf with ESPN.com.

Myron Medcalf: This is a question really for all four guys. But Rashad, you were just talking about striking and it seems like, especially in recent years, that the level of striking in the UFC has really just continued to grow and escalate. Can you talk about striking and significance, its place recently in the UFC and just for you all as fighters?

Jennifer Wenk: Rashad, do you want to answer that first?

Rashad Evans: I'm sorry. I kind of missed the question and didn't really understand it.

Myron Medcalf: You were talking about striking. And could you just talk about - you know, you talked about you wanted to improve your striking. How important is that at this point for an MMA fighter to have highly developed striking skills?

Rashad Evans: It's very important because as an MMA fighter we not only have to worry, you know, we have all different kinds of tactical response from different angles.

You have to worry about the elbows; you have to worry about the knees and along with the leg kicks. So to be well rounded in all of those areas is very hard to develop. And to be able to flow through each of those elements smoothly and seamlessly is the biggest part and biggest challenge because you can go from one boxing technique and then throw maybe an elbow or (send a bow kick) or throw a leg kick. And if it doesn't fit together seamlessly then you'll get caught and probably knocked out.

Myron Medcalf: And Rampage?

Quinton Jackson: Yo.

Myron Medcalf: Same question for you - the striking. I mean how important has it been for you the fighter and how has it changed in recent years in terms of the way that fighters pay attention to striking?

Quinton Jackson: I think striking is probably one of the most important elements of an MMA fight because when we get in the octagon we don't start on our knees like when people do in Jujitsu practice.

You know what I'm saying? We start on our feet with the other guy in front of you. You know what I'm saying? He does know how to strike but you can't take down everybody. I don't care how good your record is. Some people out there say you have to do the (breast defense).

And it's exciting. It's fun. It's always nice to try to knock somebody out, you know what I'm saying? So striking is really important; it's really exciting for the fans to see the strikes. You know, I like striking. I'm a wrestler but I like striking more than I like wrestling sometimes, you know?

Myron Medcalf: And Forrest?

Forrest Griffin: Yeah. I think people really like to see striking so of course it's going to be important.

Myron Medcalf: And then final question, same thing for Wanderlei.

Wanderlei Silva: Yeah. I think it's very, very important to do striking because the show is head of main promotion and the first one is to see the action in the fight. I love it to fight in the stand up and this

is so important for the show because the little of the fighters is much more high and you need to train in all techniques but the striking is more better for the show.

Operator: Moving on to our next question from the Los Angeles Times' Lance Pugmire.

Lance Pugmire: Hi guys. How are you doing? Rampage, for a lot of people who haven't seen you off and on for quite a while I'm sure everyone wants to know how you're doing. How is everything going for you and how is your training going in preparation for this fight?

Quinton Jackson: My training went really well. Actually I trained harder than I actually trained in a long time. It was pretty good. I had some really excellent sparring partners and stuff like that. So I was really happy about that. But you know, sometimes it's hard to get good sparring partners to mimic the guy you fight. You know, a lot of people don't want to do that because there's a good chance they'll get their ass kicked when they step out of their element.

So I got some guys who fight like my opponent and training went very well this time and it was kind of like a cold area so I had to man up and really work my ass and train hard because I really wasn't happy with my last performance. So for this fight right here it's so important for me. So I had to get down and get nasty and get dirty and get ugly.

Lance Pugmire: You were over in England, right?

Quinton Jackson: Yeah. I was in England so it worked out perfectly.

Lance Pugmire: Great. And Forrest, I just wanted to ask you real quick; I wanted to spend some time on your importance to the UFC. I mean your Ultimate Fighter One fighting against Stefan Bonner has given a lot of credit for being a real launching point for UFC's popularity and as a mainstream sport.

And I know Dana White has referred to it enabled some business deals to be finalized. Can you talk about that fight and looking back on it how you view it as such an important thing for the UFC as to where it stands now?

Forrest Griffin: You know, I don't know. I guess like Dana said, she'd kind of be better to speak on that. I don't know. It's just a fight for me. It was obviously a very hard fight. I was very fortunate to win. And you know, there's no point in me analyzing it any further, you know?

Lance Pugmire: Was that - I mean would you consider that your best performance yet given how grueling and taxing that fight appeared to be? It seemed as if both of you had been pushed to the brink.

Forrest Griffin: Sure.

Lance Pugmire: Is that true?

Forrest Griffin: Well, yeah. Yeah. Sure.

Lance Pugmire: Was it your toughest fight that you've ever had or how would you rank it?

Forrest Griffin: I don't know. It was (simply out there). You know, whatever fight you're in always seems like the toughest fight you've ever had, you know?

Lance Pugmire: Yeah. Okay. Okay. Thank you guys.

Operator: And from the New York Post we'll go to George Willis.

George Willis: Hello gentlemen. This one is first for Rashad. Rashad, at MMA right now, UFC is seen mainly as a sport that attracts the Caucasian fan and I wanted to get your thoughts on ways that the UFC could just increase and market towards the African American fan base?

Rashad Evans: I don't know. You know, that's a pretty difficult question. I mean I don't - to be honest I really don't know what they could do besides just go after that demographic by going in areas that the demographic would be into.

You know what I'm saying? Get more into the hip hop world or things like that. But I mean that's a hard question to answer because I'm not a - that's not my specialty. I wouldn't really know.

George Willis: And as you go around day to day life, how many African American fans recognize you as a prominent fighter in the UFC?

Rashad Evans: Not many. But I've stayed in Brooklyn for about two weeks and I could count everybody on one hand that recognized I was a fighter. Not that I look for that but usually if I was like somewhere where there was a lot more white people it would have been a lot more people.

George Willis: Rampage, I wanted to get your thoughts as well. It seems to me that the African American fan base is something that the UFC can tap into. Would you agree with that?

Quinton Jackson: Yes. I think if the UFC is out to make more money, which most businesses are, you know what I'm saying, I think to get more fans of any nationality is a good idea because all the European Americans, they know about it.

They do martial arts and stuff like that but most African Americans, they're mostly into say football or basketball or something like that. So if they can somehow tap into those people - yeah, it would be more revenue for them. Yeah. It's a good idea.

George Willis: Do you somewhat see yourself as a little bit of a pioneer in that regard because this card, you know, you and Rashad are probably the two most prominent African Americans in UFC?

And you're both on this card. Do you somewhat see yourself as a pioneer in that regard?

Quinton Jackson: Well, I really haven't thought about it too much but I haven't really thought about it too much about being a pioneer. That really doesn't cross my mind when I'm fighting.

What's in my mind is being focused on knocking out my opponent. I don't care about being a pioneer or something like that. But I'm cool with any nationality watching me. Hell, I'd be happy if I get some alien fans. As long as they buy the Pay per View and put more money in my pocket I'm good.

George Willis: And Forrest, I didn't want to leave you out. MMA, UFC - diversity in the sport in the fans - is that something that is attractive to you in the sport? Having fans of all colors, of all nationalities?

Forrest Griffin: Of course it is. I mean and I think that's one of the cool things about the UFC is that you've got every nationality, country, you've got people from all over the world and of every race, mixture and I don't know about religion but probably that too. So it only seems to me that the fan base would be kind of a make up of the fighters themselves.

George Willis: All right gentlemen, thank you very much.

Operator: Next we'll hear from Beau Dure with USA Today.

Beau Dure: Hello everyone. Rampage, I was wondering how you were able to get back on track and get back in training after the summer's incidents with you wrestling and so forth?

Who has helped you get through it and do you consider it behind you or do you have more to deal with legally?

Quinton Jackson: Well, actually I really don't even like to talk about that.

Beau Dure: Okay. And how - I know your training is going well and how have you been? What have you been up to really since the Forrest fight as far as training?

Quinton Jackson: I've been training my ass off.

Beau Dure: All right. And Rashad, I was wondering - you know, we keep seeing all these wrestlers come in to MMA and really make their statements with their fists. We saw it with - I mean you've one it and of course Chuck has that reputation, which we saw this past weekend with Ryan Bader.

What is that transformation like and why do you suppose college wrestlers turn into such good strikers in MMA?

Rashad Evans: Well, when you've got the wrestling as your background you learn to use it as a defense. So you know you're not going to be taken down by somebody. So you can take a little more chances on your feet and slug it out.

But the hard part is just getting yourself to be comfortable enough to stand up and throw the blows. And sometimes you're just sitting there and you throw a couple of shots and then somebody catches you at one and the next thing is you want to wrap them up. But you've just got to ignore that instinct and just kind of fight through it.

Beau Dure: All right. Thank you all very much.

Operator: Next from Fox Twin City's Leif Knutson.

Leif Knutson: Yeah. This is a question for both Wanderlei and Rampage. It appears that your fight is a number one contendership fight. You guys haven't fought in four years. Of course, the two previous wins with Wanderlei. Has anything been discussed behind closed doors about the winner going for either a fight with Forrest or Rashad? Wanderlei first.

Wanderlei Silva: For I'm going to fight?

Jennifer Wenk: Rampage, why don't you answer that first and then we'll go to Wanderlei?

Quinton Jackson: Well, he asked for Wanderlei first.

Jennifer Wenk: Rampage, did you hear the question?

Quinton Jackson: I heard it but he asked for Wanderlei.

Jennifer Wenk: Oh yeah. I'm sorry. I had to repeat the question to him on this end.

Quinton Jackson: Okay.

Jennifer Wenk: We'll go ahead and let Wanderlei go first. Go ahead.

Wanderlei Silva: I think in terms of future, I fighting one fight at a time. I have a great match now. It's very, very important for me too. I'm going to know about the future after this fight because I don't

know who is the plans Dana wants for me or for Rampage but I am fighting with everybody. No problem.

Leif Knutson: All right. Thanks Wanderlei. Rampage, what do you think? Do you think - there has been talk that you should have a rematch with Forrest because that was such a close fight.

Do you think you'll beat Wanderlei this time around? Do you think you have a shot at the winner of the Rashad and Forrest match?

Quinton Jackson: Yeah. Well, you know, I haven't really even thought about it. I didn't even know Forrest and Rashad were fighting on this card as everyone here knows. Fighting on whatever card but I mean it doesn't matter.

My job is to fight but me as the (intervene), I would love to get back in there with Forrest. Good luck with Rashad and them. I like both of the guys. They're good guys. But I have to keep it real. I would love to get back in there with Forrest and go ahead because I think about that fight almost every day.

I would love to get back in there with Forrest and go ahead and knock him the fuck out, you know what I'm saying, and get my belt back. But I've got Wanderlei in front of me and that's a whole other opponent. And I'm so focused on this fight that I've got now. So that's not even in my mind.

So good luck to both of those guys. I don't really care who wins. Really I just care about my fight.

Leif Knutson: Thanks a lot Rampage. Good luck to everybody.

Quinton Jackson: Thanks.

Operator: We'll move on to Neil Davidson with the Canadian Press.

Neil Davidson: Yes. Thank you. I just wanted to ask a couple of you, maybe we could start with Rashad. I know this is business for you but it's also Christmas, there's family and friends.

Is it difficult - does it make it extra difficult preparing and disciplining yourself while around you everybody is kind of celebrating? Is the December 27 date a little more difficult?

Rashad Evans: It was at first when I first thought about it. But I've been at camp for about seven weeks now and it kind of just faded away and I guess kind of all the holidays lost their significance and it's just going to be another day for me.

It's going to be sad that I'm not going to be able to be there with my kids and everything because I really look forward to that. But it's just going to be another day. And then we'll celebrate later on.

Neil Davidson: Rampage, you have lots of kids. Is it difficult for you?

Quinton Jackson: Well, you know what? All my kids know what daddy do. They know I'm a fighter. That's the job that God gave me. So they understand.

They're going to come see me on the 25 and everything and we'll celebrate Christmas afterwards and all that good stuff. So it's all good. That's my job.

Neil Davidson: And Rampage, if I could just ask a follow up, every fighter wants to avenge a loss obviously. With Wanderlei, did you think that - was this a fight that you always - obviously it's the fight you hoped for.

Did you think it was always going to come? Was it one that was always in the back of your memory or did you think it might not happen?

Quinton Jackson: Well, honestly I knew that I'd see Wanderlei again, especially as soon as he signed with the UFC. It was inevitable. And I don't see this as revenge.

Revenge is a dangerous motive. This is my job. This is my fight. This is my career. This is my life. And I see it as something - it's not revenge. It's me trying to know in my mind - like this fight when I fight Wanderlei this time I know the first two times, I feel like you know what?

Those first two times happened. It didn't have the outcome that I wanted to have but this is my time to make it right in my mind. Fighting when I'm a little bit better. I'm a little bit older and more mature now. I'm a lot better with my skills and everything.

So I feel like this time right here, this is the time where I can go and give it my all, my 100 percent. This is my time right here to go and do it. So I was really jazzed when I learned that we signed to fight with him. I was really - like, you know, I can finally do it.

So what he beat me back in the past. That's what that was. That's the past. This is a whole new Rampage, whole new beginning. So this is the time. So I'm happy for it.

Neil Davidson: Thanks Rampage. And just finally from me, Forrest, if I could just ask you the original question - I know you don't have kids but is having to buckle down and not eating and stuff during the festive season, is that difficult for you?

Forrest Griffin: No man. I don't really like the holidays any way.

Neil Davidson: Okay. Thank you. Good luck gentlemen.

Operator: We'll now move on to Doug Jeffrey with the Ultimate Grappling Magazine.

Doug Jeffrey: Okay. Thanks for your time you guys. I wanted to start with Quinton and ask you to describe your best moment in the cage as well as your worst moment in the cage.

Quinton Jackson: Well, actually you asked me some bad questions at the wrong time because that's the kind of stuff I don't think about. You're only as good as your last fight. So I'm moving forward. I don't think about my first, my best and my last moments in the cage and I really don't like to think about that type of stuff.

Doug Jeffrey: Okay. How about your best moment then?

Quinton Jackson: Like I just told you - my best moment hasn't come yet.

Doug Jeffrey: Okay. Same question for Rashad.

Rashad Evans: What was the question?

Jennifer Wenk: He wants to know what your best moment and what your worst moment was in the cage.

Rashad Evans: My worst moment is every time I get tired. That's definitely my worst moment. My best moment is every time I win.

Doug Jeffrey: Okay. Good deal. Thank you.

Operator: And now we'll hear from Percy Crawford with Hype.com.

Percy Crawford: Hey. My first question is for Rampage and Wanderlei. You guys fought twice in Prize. Of course they had different rules and it was in the ring as opposed to a cage.

What do both of you guys feel are the benefits and the setbacks of having UFC rules in a cage opposed to the Prize rules and what do you feel would be the difference in this fight opposed to the first two fights? Either one first.

Jennifer Wenk: Rampage, why don't you go first?

Quinton Jackson: All right. Well, you know what? Wanderlei is a warrior. People are saying that about his skills in the octagon and the cage and then they found the UFC before he found Prize.

And me, I don't think there's a difference. A fight is a fight. I'll fight Wanderlei in a phone booth if I had to. It don't matter what the rules are or what the advantages or disadvantages are. I think a fight is a fight. And I do like the Prize rules and I like some of the UFC rules.

I wish if there was a perfect world for me I wish we could mix kind of both of them up and have both rules and stuff like that. That would be cool but that's a perfect world and the world ain't perfect. So I'm just thinking about staying within the rules and having a good fight. You know what I'm saying?

Percy Crawford: Thanks.

Quinton Jackson: Yeah.

Wanderlei Silva: I think it's a different moment for me and for him. And the rules don't matter because fighting is fighting. And I'm so excited for fighting with him here. The whole world want to watch us

fighting and I know he's going to give the best fight of the night because I'm going to give my best.

I know he's going to give his best and I want to give a good show for all world.

Percy Crawford: Thanks Wanderlei. And my last question is for Forrest Griffin. Forrest, you know, it seems like Team Jackson wants to get the blueprint on an opponent beginning with (Key Jardin), (Chuck Wardell) and then Rashad kind of using his signature moves actually to do the same before knocking him out.

Did they kind of recycle the - do you expect Rashad to try and use his takedowns or are you expecting the same tactical stand up fight that you had with (Jardin) in your fight with him?

Forrest Griffin: I don't know. I mean they always come up with a real good strategy. You know, (Key's) spot before knocking him out before. So that's got to help, having a guy tell you, well, this is how I got him.

That's at least one thing. So it helps. It helps to have a good game plan. It helps to have a trainer but I think me and (Keith) are actually stylistically pretty similar too. So he's a good guy to have around if you're fighting me I figure.

Percy Crawford: Okay. Well, thanks gentlemen. Good luck now.

Operator: And from the Albuquerque Journal, Tristen Critchfield.

Tristen Critchfield: Hey guys. How's it going? I wanted to pose this question to both Rashad and Forrest. Since you guys are both Ultimate Fighter alums, when the show first came out a lot of people said that the people that won the show weren't really earning their way into the UFC.

And gradually different fighters from that show have been proving that wrong. But I just want you to comment on this is the biggest Pay per View UFC holds every year and this is kind of the premier belt and the premier division. And what does it mean for you guys to have gotten to that point as Ultimate Fighter alums?

Jennifer Wenk: Forrest, you want to go first?

Forrest Griffin: Me go first? Okay. You know, obviously I think it's a good form of validation, two guys from the show fighting for the title is pretty impressive.

And I think now they make the guys on the show fight like ten times before they're ever done with the show. So if you win that or you even come out of that and do well, you've got to think this guy has been fighting every other week for - he's had four or five fights the way they're doing the show now. So I think they're earning it now.

Tristen Critchfield: Okay. And Rashad, what do you have to say about just making it into the premier? Making a title shot coming from maybe the criticism of Ultimate Fighter and coming to this point now?

Rashad Evans: I think it's a great accomplishment for Forrest and myself. Ever since I came off the show I've been trying to keep up with Forrest because he set the tone coming off the show.

He did excellent and I was like I've got to show everybody I can do my thing as well. And it just wasn't a reality show and I've actually got skills. So for us to be in the position that we are right now, it really shows that the show works.

If you get the best talent out there then these fighters are going to be the fighters of the future. We're going to the (Chuck Wadell) and the (Randy Coutures) and those guys because we're going to have those followings because of fans watching us from the ground up.

Tristen Critchfield: Okay. And before I get off I just wanted to ask Forrest, I guess you were watching Rashad's fight with (Chuck Wadell) but could you just kind tell me what went through your mind when you saw how that fight ended?

Forrest Griffin: Damn. It was just damn. There might have been some more expletives too but mostly it was damn.

Tristen Critchfield: All right. Well, thanks a lot and good luck guys.

Operator: And from Excelsior we'll go to Richard Ibarra.

Ricardo Ibarra: ((inaudible)).

Wanderlei Silva: ((inaudible)).

Ricardo Ibarra: ((inaudible)).

Wanderlei Silva: ((inaudible)).

Ricardo Ibarra: And Rampage, this is something for you. You have a kind of strategy that you see in Wanderlei Silva that you can defeat in a fight?

Quinton Jackson: You said what? Say it one more time.

Ricardo Ibarra: You have a different kind of strategy for this fight that you can defeat Wanderlei?

Quinton Jackson: Oh yeah. I have to have a different strategy, right? The first two times it didn't work, right? I'd be an idiot to try to have the same strategy as the first two times, right?

You think I'm that stupid? I know I look stupid but I ain't that damn dumb.

Ricardo Ibarra: Thanks guys and good luck.

Quinton Jackson: Dumb ass.

Operator: And from ESPN.com, Franklin McNeil.

Franklin McNeil: My first question is for Rashad. What's going on man? I don't know how you can come to Brooklyn and not give me a call but that's okay.

But I want to talk to you about your adjustment in camp always coming up with a blueprint. Is that something that - do you guys keep that within your skill set and is it just that having a solid stand up in wrestling such a foundation that allows you to make adjustments for each opponent?

Rashad Evans: Yeah. I mean as far as with the blueprint, (Keith) does things that he does well and I do things that I do well. And the way he moves and everything is a lot different from the way I move and everything.

So when you set up a game plan that's basically around what we do best. They're not going to try to have me doing something that's just totally out of my range. And they keep everything just pretty much within my paradigm and just not have me reaching too far and doing too many things, exposing myself too much.

Franklin McNeil: Okay. My next question is for Forrest. You know, obviously being champion people obviously want a lot of your time and your attention. Have you been able to adjust to all of that and not allow it to impact what you do training-wise and especially in preparation for this fight?

Forrest Griffin: Yeah. You know, it's crazy. People do want a lot of your time. I don't leave the house if I can help it. I don't do a whole lot. I go to the gym and the grocery store and that's about it.

So I don't think if you do anything it's hard for people to bother you.

Franklin McNeil: Okay. And my last question is for Rampage. How are you doing first of all?

Quinton Jackson: I'm doing pretty good. How are you doing?

Franklin McNeil: I'm all right man. And I want to talk to - you mentioned earlier about wanting the title back. Having been to the top and having and no longer being there, has that increased your motivation as a fighter?

Quinton Jackson: Well, yeah because I'd say that my last fight probably was the best thing that happened to me.

I got really some old baggage and it actually made me more hungrier, right? So I started back. I trained as hard as I've ever trained before and right now to make me train really hungry and make me train really hard. And like my cardio is the best it's ever been.

And it just made me really think about my career. Like, look, I'm a professional fighter, you know what I'm saying? I'm a professional athlete. I've got to start eating like one. And I never did that type of stuff. Not even for my whole career, not even protein shakes.

I'd eat mostly vitamins and nothing, you know? And I've been doing that now and I've got a good nutritionist and good people behind me and telling me all the good things to do and stuff I've never done before. And this has paid off. It's showing in my work ethic and my training.

And I'm messing around with weights a little bit and getting stronger and faster and stuff like that. And I feel it. I should have been doing this type of stuff years ago. I just didn't have the right people around me. But now since last August and stuff like that I got rid of all the baggage around me and got a bunch of good people around me and good things. And it's actually working out pretty well. You know, so I'm pretty happy with how everything is turning out.

Franklin McNeil: That sounds great man. I can't leave Wanderlei out. Wanderlei, you come into this fight having two wins over Rampage. How do you avoid or are you avoiding being overconfident?

Is that something that's not an issue for you, being overconfident? Knowing that you have already won twice against Rampage?

Wanderlei Silva: This is best. I need to know it's a different time. And for this I'm prepared a lot. I'm training every day, every time. This is my great opportunity for fighting him here.

He's the last champion and has a great name here. And I want to - I'm coming for to see if I can fight with the best guys. And for me, the great moment in my career again. This is a great opportunity to fight until we see the belt in the future. But first I need to beat Rampage again.

Franklin McNeil: Great. Thank you guys and good luck to all of you.

Operator: And from Yahoo Sports, Dave Melezer.

Dave Melezer: Yeah. This is for Quinton and it's similar but what do you think you need to avoid coming back from those two fights that you had before? I mean is there one thing of Wanderlei that you saw in those fights that you don't want to see again?

Quinton Jackson: Say what now?

Dave Melezer: Is there anything like in strategy that you're going to try to avoid from those first two fights that you had, that happened in those first two fights that you're going to do differently in this fight?

Quinton Jackson: I'm going to sit here on the phone right now in front of Wanderlei and tell you my strategy. I'm going to tell you exactly what I'm going to do and tell their team what I'm doing. Exactly while he's listening. I'm going to tell you. I'm going to tell you right now.

Dave Melezer: Okay. How is training in England as compared to training in the United States?

Quinton Jackson: Training in England was really good. You've got a different mind frame of people out there. People out there just train different from some people in LA or where I'm living.

I'm not putting anybody down but in California I know a lot of fighters are all in the glory of being a fighter and stuff like that. They don't put in a lot of the hard work sometimes or the training part. They're out at night partying and stuff like that - so much to do.

Then they come in and half ass it in the gym. While over there in the UK, it's cold in the gym. You've got to get moving to stay warm and keep going. So people train hard and they push you hard. They don't care whether you get mad at them or you try to knock them out.

They don't care. They train hard. It's go hard or go home and that the type of training that I need. I like it. I love it. It's good for me.

Dave Melezer: You mentioned the nutrition - that you've changed your nutrition. Is there anything specific that you avoided that you did before that you've kind of come to this realization that I can't be doing this stuff before a fight any more?

Quinton Jackson: Yeah. You know, I just started eating a lot better and taking supplements like some good supplements. I found one of the best nutritionists in the world; I hooked up with Kerry Cage, Ricky Hadden's nutritionist out of the UK.

And I got my boy (Mike Dochej) with me, doing everything and helping me out doing these little sessions and making sure I'm taking my nutrition and my supplements on time and breaking everything down to me. So they'll basically tell me why I'm eating this way and what to eat and change everything up.

And you know what? I feel it. I was always wondering why I sucked at training because I didn't have the nourishment and my body didn't have the nourishment that it should have. I was training with people like Tito and (Tiki) and even sometimes I'd go train with (Randy) and see how those guys train.

I was wondering how these guys train so hard and give 100 percent and stuff like that in the gym and not know why because those guys are probably eating real good and taking their supplements. But I would go to a fast food place and eat some hamburgers and French fries and coke and then go train for 30 minutes.

And there wasn't the proper fuel for my body. I was doing that all those years and still fighting. I had a pretty good record but I really feel like this new style of taking care of my body is really going to work for my career because you know I'm 30 now. I've still got a good three to five more years in me especially if I'm eating real good so I can put a strong foot forward.

So now I really see the difference and I can't stop talking about it. You know, when you're trying to do something new and you really feel it - I'm very excited about it. Like when I spar and stuff now and when I run and when I train, you know what I'm saying, I can feel myself giving 100 percent like I always wanted to back in the day. I feel it.

So I'm glad everything happened. It happened for a reason. I'm glad it happened. Like I'm glad that I lost. Too much weight and too soon and at the wrong time and just came in weighing 225 pounds for my fight. I'd never done it before. But I'm an athlete. I should act like one.

Dave Melezer: What weight are you at right now and how hard is the cut going to be?

Quinton Jackson: Well, you know, my weight is actually pretty good. I'm right in the 220 area - 220, 221 as Rashad did Day 22 up in there. But my weight cut should be really good and there are some real good supplements that are going to help me out really good. So I'm (cuspy) homey. I'm good.

Dave Melezer: And from an injury standpoint it's been a pretty clean camp?

Quinton Jackson: Actually I'm pretty good because the nutritionist kind of broke it down for me some of the types of stuff and then stuff that I take and I'm feeding my muscles and stuff like that and be excellent for my muscles to avoid injuries and stuff like that.

And he was right. Normally I always have like little aches and pains just here and there but I feel very strong and no injuries. It's really good. I'm a believer in supplements and stuff now. At first, people told me as long as you eat right and stuff like that you don't need to take supplements. But I'm putting in a lot of work. You need some kind of extra stuff. So I'm a believer now.

Dave Melezer: Cool. Thanks.

Quinton Jackson: Yeah.

Operator: From ESPN.com Ben Cohen.

Ben Cohen: Hey guys. First of all a question for Rashad. How much confidence did your victory over Chuck give you going into this fight?

Jennifer Wenk: Hey Ben. This is Jennifer. Rashad - unless he's still on the line, I think he just jumped off. So if you have a question for one of the other fighters go ahead and ask.

Ben Cohen: Okay. So I'll give a question to Quinton. Quinton, do you feel that you deserve the shot at Forrest more than Rashad did?

Quinton Jackson: Well, you know what? I think boxing is a little bit different from MMA. A lot of boxers feel like if they're the champion and they lose their belt they can have an instant rematch clause and stuff like that.

But MMA is different. I thought the fight was very controversial and sometimes the UFC puts fights that are controversial right back. But you know what? I really wanted to fight Wanderlei and I don't know what the UFC has in store and stuff like that.

If I was still champion and stuff like that Wanderlei - he's also wanting and looking to win one so I don't know how long it took for him to get to being a number one contender. So everything happens for a reason.

So I'm happy with the fight that I've got. It's my job to fight. I get paid. I'm not going to sit around and make crap about oh, I should be fighting Forrest for the belt and stuff like that. Let Forrest and Rashad take care of their business. I'm going to take care of mine.

Ben Cohen: You've been in the ring with Forrest. What kind of problems do you think he'll give Rashad?

Quinton Jackson: I don't know. I think he's reach probably will be tricky for Rashad. But I'll tell you what, Rashad will rise to the occasion if you know what I'm saying. So I don't know. I think if Rashad has any problems with - he'll probably go to his base - wrestling.

He'll probably try to take him down and do it that way. But hell, I don't know. I don't know Rashad. I don't know.

Ben Cohen: Who would you give the edge then in that fight?

Quinton Jackson: I don't say. I don't give edges. I don't know.

Ben Cohen: Okay. Thanks and then a question for Wanderlei. Wanderlei, could you give me your thoughts on the match? Obviously you're going to be gunning for the champion. And I wonder who you think has the edge, Rashad or Forrest?

Wanderlei Silva: I'm thinking - I'm thinking Forrest is going to win. He has good boxing, good distance on the takedowns. He is more tall. And he has the best sparring here in Vegas, no? I think he's going to win this match by knock out in the second round.

Ben Cohen: In the second round? And how do you prepare to fight a guy like Forrest?

Wanderlei Silva: I prepare a lot because I'm training two months sparring now and I have a very, very good condition. I think too much cardio and for the final time I want to give for training with us in my gym.

And he's so strong and so tall, true. I trained too much rest for the fight. And I'm going to have a very, very good surprise for Quinton on December 27.

Ben Cohen: Okay. Thank you very much guys.

Operator: Anthony Springer from FightNews.com has the next question.

Anthony Springer: This first question is for Rampage. Were there any other camps that you were looking at before deciding to go out to Wolf's Lair in England?

Quinton Jackson: Nope. I didn't check one thing about any other place because I was going out there where (Evan Michal Byzantine) trained for his fights and stuff like that. I liked it. I like the way they did everything and the ((inaudible)) I loved it.

Anthony Springer: And the follow up on that too, you had talked before about your disappointment in a lot of your previous fights before. Was that due to your mentality in training or your performance in the ring or a little bit of both?

Quinton Jackson: Well, everybody knows I hate training but when it comes to my fight, I work hard. I train hard. If you notice, most of my fights I have good cardio. I've gone the distance a couple of times. And I can go and I can do it. I train. But a fight is a fight. You win, you lose. You train hard, you come back. So I have no excuses. Wanderlei says the last two fights he was right - I made excuses for my losses. And he was right. I give him that.

I made excuses. I'm a grown man now. I'm 30 years old. I'm not making any more excuses any more. Who wants to hear excuses? I'm a whole new man. I'm putting my best foot forward.

Anthony Springer: And the follow up on that - the new motivation training, has that come from the trainers motivating you or you motivating you or a combination of both?

Quinton Jackson: What, do my trainers motivate me?

Anthony Springer: As far as the difference in then and now.

Quinton Jackson: Yeah. My sparring partners, my training partners motivate me and I'm motivated. I'm very motivated myself because in my mind I'm still champion. So I'm not going to let some judges tell me whether I win or lose a fight. Sometimes I felt like a I lost a fight that I won. In my mind that was a loss. But people give it to me and it's on my record as a win but in my mind it's a loss.

And the same thing vice versa. If I win and some judges say I lost then it goes on my record that I lost but in my mind I won. So in my mind I feel like I'm still the champion. And so this time I trained like I'm a champion and I'm acting like a champion.

A champion is not always the way you fight. If you're a champion you'll be a champion on the inside and the outside all the time. So I'm motivating myself because I want my belt back. And I'm going to get my belt back. I'm going to do what I say I'm going to do.

Anthony Springer: Definitely. And one final question on the match up. In Prize there was a lot of - it seemed like there was a lot of bad blood between yourself and Wanderlei. Has that kind of subsided in the years past? I haven't seen a lot of trash talk from either side coming into this match up.

Quinton Jackson: Are you talking to me?

Anthony Springer: Yeah.

Quinton Jackson: Well, it ain't not secret that Wanderlei and I see things differently but I'm the type of person that I don't hate nobody. But I like some people more than I like other people. But I'm a professional. And so this is my job. So I'm not here to be friends with everybody. I'm in my own little world. I'm the type of person that stays on top.

Jennifer Wenk: Hello?

Operator: His line is still established.

Jennifer Wenk: Okay. Did it just cut out?

Operator: He might have hit the mute function by chance?

Jennifer Wenk: Possibly. Well, let's move on to the next question and we'll see if he comes back on.

Operator: And Thomas Gerbasi from UFC.

Thomas Gerbasi: Hey guys. Question for Forrest. Forrest, now that you've had a couple of months to sit on the win over Rampage, what's your post mortem on that fight now?

Quinton Jackson: Say what?

Thomas Gerbasi: What are your thoughts on the fight with Rampage now that you've had a couple of months to sit on it now?

Quinton Jackson: What's my thoughts on the fight with who?

Jennifer Wenk: Rampage, your line cut out for a second so we move on to a question for Forrest. So just hang on.

Quinton Jackson: My line cut out?

Jennifer Wenk: Yeah it did for a minute. So go ahead Tom.

Thomas Gerbasi: Forrest, did you get that question?

Forrest Griffin: Yeah. I got it. You know, it doesn't really matter. Not to dodge your question and next time me and Quinton fight that's something I'll actually put a little thought into and I'll actually watch that fight and see what was what from a standpoint of what I need to do better. But I'm not fighting Quinton. I'm fighting Rashad.

Thomas Gerbasi: I guess the question was geared more towards you actually do you have to now change your expectations? A lot of guys once they hit the title and get the title they say okay, I'm here and then they fade off. How do you change your expectations moving forward?

Forrest Griffin: You know, I don't know. It just depends on how you kind of establish and define your expectations. My expectation and my goal is always to win but the next fight, the fight in front of me - I like that.

It keeps things very simple. And it allows you kind of to focus on one thing. If you kind of say, hey, my goal is to do this or do that, you know, one, you sound kind of dumb or you sound either ridiculous or egocentric.

And two, you're not focused on what you need to do, which is just if I can just win this fight, you know?

Thomas Gerbasi: Are you comfortable in the role of now being the hunted as opposed to the hunter?

Forrest Griffin: No not really. Not really. Looks like we're in the target round man.

Thomas Gerbasi: So as far as now - you obviously see something different when you're looking at a fighter than we may from the outside. So what do you see when you look at Rashad?

Forrest Griffin: I see he's explosive, athletic, got the great wrestling background and he's got some really powerful striking. You know, he's knocked people out with hand speed and standing on the ground. So he's knocked people out in every way with different things.

Thomas Gerbasi: I'll end it with this, Forrest. You're a guy who is known for leaving it all in the gym, going all out, being one of the hardest workers in this game. How do you walk the line between going that hard and leaving your fight in the gym. How do you avoid getting burned out before a fight?

Forrest Griffin: I try to take a couple of things I've learned from (Randy) just about tapering down. I don't - it's a hard thing to do. You get in the gym and you start thinking about the fight and you want to go really hard and you have flat days you want to make sure that you just don't have - you time it. You schedule your body right so that you don't have a flat day on fight day.

Thomas Gerbasi: Right. Right. Okay. Thanks Forrest.

Operator: And from Fightticker.com, Bryan Levick.

Jennifer Wenk: And Sarah, let's make this our - we'll take one final question after this one.

Operator: Thank you.

Bryan Levick: Yeah. My question is for Rampage. Is he still on the line?

Jennifer Wenk: Yes he is.

Bryan Levick: Hey Rampage. I just wanted to know what it feels like to finally get back into the cage.

Operator: I'm sorry. His line has disconnected.

Bryan Levick: Okay. What about for Forrest?

Operator: Forrest is on the line.

Bryan Levick: Okay. Forrest, how are you doing?

Forrest Griffin: Good.

Bryan Levick: You've been asked all the questions already so I just have one simple question for you.

Being you were on season one of the Ultimate Fighter and you've been through what all these other guys have been through.

What is your reaction to some of the hijinks and the pranks that some of these guys were pulling this year?

Forrest Griffin: You know, it's become accepted and expected. And the guys watch the show. And each time you kind of want to top the guys that came before you. So I think it's almost a sense of pushing the envelope or trying to raise the bar.

That guy did this and he got away with that. Well, let me. It's a pretty rare - they have kicked people off the show but it's a rarity, you know?

Bryan Levick: All right. Thank you and good luck.

Operator: And we'll go back to Leif.

Leif Knutson: Okay. This question is for Wanderlei. Wanderlei, you guys - you and Rampage - have clearly had a fierce rivalry in the ring. I'm just wondering, it seems almost impossible that you guys could have a friendship.

But how do you feel about him like on a personal level? I mean do you respect Rampage or is there out and out dislike towards him?

Wanderlei Silva: Of course I respect everybody. And he's a great fighter. He's a very, very tough guy and I know because now he's a tough (tree) you know? The last champion and of course.

Fighting is fighting and he's my opponent. He's a challenger too. And it's my job too. And it's normal, no? And professional too. No problem.

Leif Knutson: And how do you feel - I mean you have beat him twice. Do you feel that - I mean how big of a psychological edge is that for you? I mean do you feel like you have successfully broken his spirit or how do you feel about that?

Wanderlei Silva: It's a good question for him, no? I don't know. I'm feeling very well because I won two times, no? But this is past. Now it's a different time. I know he's a tough guy and he's training too hard every day and every time.

I'm living for this match. I'm working 24 hours per day and I know that on the day I'm going to have my best condition.

Leif Knutson: Great. Thank you very much guys. I appreciate your time.

Wanderlei Silva: Thank you.

Jennifer Wenk: Okay Sarah. Let's wrap this up.

Operator: Thank you ladies and gentlemen. That does conclude today's conference.

END