

RATTLING THE CAGE

Tony Reid- From winning the WEC Lightweight Championship, going down in history as the last lightweight champ to the transition to the UFC and immediate lightweight title contention, how much of a whirlwind has your life been over the last 6-8 weeks?

Anthony Pettis- Its crazy, man, after winning the title, that's the thing, nobody even remembers that I won the title. I think everybody talks about the kick more than the actual winning of the title and winning the last fight. My life has changed a lot. I'm a lot busier and just all over the place. I've been across the country in two days and just trying to take it all in.

Tony Reid- Is there any one thing that has happened that just made you say "Oh my God, this is crazy."?

Anthony Pettis- The travel, I have been everywhere in the last month. I think I have been everywhere in the United States. There have been a lot of business opportunities, a lot of sponsorships that are coming my way. I'm just grateful to be where I'm at.

Tony Reid- You have a real entrepreneurial spirit, from opening your own dojo when you were younger to creating the Showtime Bars, where does that business savvy mindset come from, especially at such a young age?

Anthony Pettis- I have always liked nice things and I knew I wanted nice things in my life. Working for someone else and working an 8 hour a day job doesn't get that for you very quickly. I never really wanted to work for anybody. I have been doing Tae Kwon Do my whole life, it's a really business oriented martial art and I knew I could run my own school and make my own money. Doing it at a young age, I just realized that anybody can do this. It just takes that drive and that belief that you can do it and make money and be your own boss.

Tony Reid- Is there a next move in the works as far as the business side of things?

Anthony Pettis- I'm just expanding my gyms right now. We currently have three locations in Wisconsin and I would like to move to Chicago by next year and my next goal after that is New York.

Tony Reid- Duke Roufus has been quoted as saying you are the "Latin GSP". That's high praise on many levels. What are your thoughts on that statement?

Anthony Pettis- Its an honor. That's what we all want to do. We all want to be champions and want to be in that position for a long time. GSP has proved himself to be a champion and has held that position for a long time. I'm striving to, not be GSP per se, but Anthony Pettis, a champion, with that respectful attitude.

Tony Reid- There is a very cool image of you as the WEC belt was being strapped around your waist. You have your hands on your head and a huge smile on your face as you are looking up to the sky. What were you thinking at that moment?

Anthony Pettis- I thought I definitely won the fight but after the Bart Palaszewski fight I know anything can happen when it goes to the judges. I was grateful that they gave me what was rightfully mine. With all my fights I bring my dad into the cage with me, so I was looking up and hopefully put a smile on his face up there.

Tony Reid- How much did your life change on November 12, 2003 with the tragic passing of your father?

Anthony Pettis- Everything just stopped. I was a junior in high school and I think I went to school about one month my entire junior year. I probably shouldn't even have graduated high school. Life just stopped, I stopped doing martial arts, I stopped caring about everything. I was just going through the motions and just trying to figure out what happened. At that young of an age for something like that to happen to you, its just hard to take in.

Art by Justin McAllister

Tony Reid- If you could fight anyone in any weight class, who would you choose to fight and why?

Anthony Pettis- Yeah I'd probably fight Pat Barry. He's my teammate, we are in the gym all the time and I think I can take him.

Tony Reid- (Laughing) What would he have to say about that?

Anthony Pettis- That would be a funny fight. I don't know, you'd have to ask him yourself. Here's Pat Barry right now.

(Pat gets on the phone)

Pat Barry- I can guarantee I can lose that much weight and make it.

Tony Reid- Dude, I met you in Boston, you are a pretty big guy, and I don't think you can make that big of a cut.

Pat Barry- I'm telling you, if I cut off both of my legs not only would we be the same weight but we would be the same height, too.

Tony Reid- Speaking of teammates, what is the craziest or most memorable thing that has happened in the gym that people on the outside would never hear about?

Anthony Pettis- I was sparring and I hit a guy with a right cross and I broke his nose so bad that, I swear, his nose was under his right eye. He looks at me and I said "Bro, I broke your nose" he looks in the mirror and makes the funniest noise ever, something that you would only see in a movie.

Tony Reid- Speaking of Pat Barry, he has become a main topic here, so what is the funniest Pat Barry story that you can share with us?

Anthony Pettis- I don't even know where to start with this guy. We just had something funny happen right now. We went to see the new Green Hornet movie...Me, Pat Barry, his brother, his cousin, Matt Mitrione and two of his big old guys. Were driving a little Saab sports car and all seven of us fit into that little car. I had to sit on Pat's lap in the front seat. It was just a funny drive. Imagine getting pulled over like that, seven people deep in that car.

Tony Reid- Cool, well is there anything you want to say before we sign off?

Anthony Pettis- I want to say thanks to Justin for doing an amazing piece like that. It's definitely going in my house! And thanks to TapouT for all the support they give MMA fighters.

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