



Casey Olson: The Underdog Speaks

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SUTURE MAGAZINE: Tell me a little bit about your martial arts background, and what made you choose to become a professional fighter.

CASEY OLSON: Well, I've wrestled for about 15 years. I started in junior high school with my Dad as my coach. Then I wrestled through high school, junior college and Fresno State. During junior college, Antonio Banuelos and I became very good friends and he introduced me to Chuck Liddell. Chuck was a wrestling fan, so he started coming to my tournaments and I started going to his fights. Whenever I had a break in my schedule, I'd go to SLO and help Antonio train for his fights. In turn, I started learning standup fighting and jujitsu. So after [leaving] Fresno state, I managed the Old Spaghetti Factory. Every week on my two days off, I'd go back down to San Luis Obispo (SLO) to train and hang out with Chuck and Antonio. About six months into my [restaurant] managing career, I sat down with Chuck and told him I'd like to fight. He said "Well, you can't fight just training two days a week. It has to be full time." So, I went back home, talked to my dad, my sister, prayed about it, and decided I wanted to do it. So, I quit my job and went down to SLO for a month and a half and started training. That was February of '05. I had my first fight on August 16th of '05. Haven't looked back since.

SM: What camp are you currently training with?

CS: I fight for The Pit Fight Team in SLO. That's where I try to do most of my training. But, I live in Fresno, so I also train at Pacific Martial Arts and with Team Buhawe. I will *always* fight for The Pit. When finances allow me to, I'd like training other places during time off to train with different styles and different people. I think that's a big thing.

SM: What does your training regimen consist of?

CO: Depends on how far out my fight is. At least three days of sparring and rolling. I try doing some type of circuit training five days a week and cardio five days a week.

SM: You've lost only one fight— that was the fight against Isaiah Hill at Warrior Cup 2. I actually didn't get to see that event. Tell me how that fight unfolded and if you feel the decision went the right way.

CO: Well, he came out and landed a big right, which I took him down off of. But, I laid on his guard for a while, because it stunned me pretty good. While lying there, he almost got a triangle, but I fought my way out and finished on top throwing him punches. The rounds were only three minutes, so by the time I had my composure and started throwing punches, the round was over. So, I knew I'd lost that round. Second round, I took him down about four times, but this being my first fight in a ring [as opposed to a cage] every time I'd put him in the corner, we would end up outside the ropes and we would have to start all over again. It was pretty frustrating. At the end of the second, we got into about a 30-second scramble, but I ended on top again, so I thought I won that round. Third round, I came out and landed an overhand right that cuts his eye open and then take him down off of it. I took him down another two-to-three times and finished in the mount at the end of the round. So, all in all, I thought I'd done enough to win the fight. But, they gave him the split-decision. I will never make any excuses for any loss. Do I think I did enough to win this fight? Yeah. Could I have done more to get the judges on my side? Yeah, Isaiah did a great job containing my ground-and-pound. I didn't do as much damage on top as I usually do. But, that's the name of the game. Chuck has always told me "You can't leave it in the judges' hands." And that's what I did.

SM: Your last few fights have taken place in the Palace Fighting Championships, including your fight just three days ago which we'll talk about in a moment. Are you currently under contract with PFC or are these one fight deals?



CO: Yes, I have one more fight on my contract, which was a three-fight deal. But, it's not exclusive, So I could fight other places if I wanted.

SM: Onto the fight with Scott Brommage. I take it training went pretty well given the result. How prepared for the fight were you? Did you focus on one specific game plan for Scott?

CO: Well, after having the worst year of my life in '07 with the blood clot in January and then my torn tendon in July, I knew I had to make '08 start with a bang. I was mentally ready, physically probably the best shape I've been in since I started fighting. My game plan was to win, anyway I could. Now, I did know he was a standup fighter, so Antonio, my buddy Nick [Quenga] and I worked a lot on my timing, with my opponents throwing kicks. But, either way, I was prepared to stand or be on the ground.

SM: Do you plan on taking some time off before your next fight, or will you be looking to get back in as soon as possible?

CO: No, I didn't get hurt. I'm healthy. Going to fight hopefully in February back in Lemoore. I'm waiting to see if it's gonna work out, so I can't tell you about it just yet, sorry.

SM: Anyone in the light weight division that you'd really like to fight?

CO: I don't really ever think about that. I just want to fight. That's what I need to do to get better. I've had such a roller coaster of a career so far that, this year, if God allows it, I just want to fight as many times as I can. Just like growing up, you have to shoot free throws to be a good free throw shooter. You have to get mat time to be a good wrestler. And you have to fight to be a good fighter.

SM: I notice you usually come into a fight in great shape and weight never seems to be an issue for you. Do you think a drop to 145 would be a help or a hindrance? Have you given that any thought?

CO: Um, I don't think it would hinder me at all, because of the day before [the fight] weigh ins. I've been cutting weight for a long time and to have 24 hours to replenish your body, heck, you can cut cut some major weight if you wanted to. But, as for right now, 45s isn't a concern yet. I get that question a lot. Like the answer before, I just want to fight. If it comes to the point where I need to choose between 45s and 55s, then I will cross that path when it comes. For me, people don't realize, I'm still very new to this sport. There are a lot of things I need to improve on. There are so many people to fight now that this sport has exploded to the mainstream. So to answer that, 'Do I think about it?' Yes. 'Do I worry about it right now?' No.

SM: Anything you'd liked to say to your fans or sponsors?

CO: You know, I always forget to thank my sponsors after my fights, I I appreciate the time here. I'd like to thank my family, friends and fans for all your support through my rocky times. All the emails, MySpace messages, phone calls, etc. They all meant a lot. I'd like to thank the Pit Fight Team for making me a part of the family. Thanks to Pacific Martial Arts and Team Buhawe for the help when I'm in town. I'd like to thank my newest sponsor, TOE2TOE, Christian [Printup] and everyone at the PFC. I can't thank you enough for all that you have done for me. My Dad, well I think we both know what we have been through. Thanks to Zinkin Entertainment for all our help. I really appreciated it. The City of Fresno for all your support. TEAM UNDERDOG, you all know who you are, but last but not least, SUTURE MAG— I appreciate the time. Thanks so much.

SM: Thanks, Casey!