

The Voice Versus Wanderlei Silva; A Look at the Axe Murderer

Written by Dave Walsh

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There are very few MMA fighters that I consider an all-time favorite of mine, as I tend to prefer the exciting, intelligent striker who can handle himself on the ground. There are a lot of good strikers who have made the move to MMA, but a lot tend to play it safe or have no real ground game to speak of, but then there is **Wanderlei Silva**. Wanderlei did not make a huge impression on me at first in his UFC fights, he was pretty good at the time, but the

Tito Ortiz

fight was enough to make me forget about him for a while.

So you can only imagine how I felt in 2001, yeah over a year later, when I saw him again in **PRI
DE**

and saw the absolutely path of carnage and destruction that lay in his path; I was hooked. The wrist roll, the stare of a madman, the crazy, brawling

Chute Boxe

Muay Thai and the ability to defend himself on the ground and work his way back to his feet to continue to symphony of violence. From 2000 until 2005 Wanderlei Silva was an absolute machine. If there ever was a fighter that I could get behind it was Wanderlei Silva.

As I'm sure you can imagine, since he moved over to a much more local fight scene in the United States, it has been a lot more difficult to be a Wanderlei Silva fan. Since his return to the **UFC**

Wanderlei has a 2 - 3 record with only one knockout under his belt and doesn't seem to be moving as fast or hitting as hard. Lot's of people will say that Wanderlei was simply not that great, as he is a mere 34 years old right now, but to that I argue the man started his fighting

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career training at age 13 and was fighting within the next year of his life and has not slowed down since. He peaked before moving to the UFC and you have to be comfortable with that.

Enter the Voice Versus Wanderlei Silva. The latest in **HDnet's** interview series with **Michael Schiavello**

Unlike

Fighting Words with Mike Straka

, which tends to err on the side of serious journalism, the Voice Versus is a more friendly sit-down interview style that feels like a conversation between old friends. It doesn't matter if Schiavello has only met each fighter in passing or is good friends with him, his demeanor, tone and candor makes it so fighters can feel at home with him, as does his knowledge of each fighter's history and of tall tales. There is nothing different when it comes to the Wanderlei Silva episode as he discusses coming up in Brazil, the origins of his name, that Jiu-Jitsu photo of him being lovingly embraced by Shogun Rua and Wanderlei customizing Schiavello's head with a Team WS tattoo.

What really comes through loud and clear is how nice of a guy Wanderlei is, he talks about how he has to build up a rage inside of him when he fights and how the adrenaline changes him, but the man himself is gentle, quiet and very funny. Seeing "the Axe Murderer" in a setting like this is refreshing, as you get to see just how much he enjoys laughing and telling stories about the legendary Chute Boxe gym and how he considers most of the fighters he has faced and knocked out or been knocked out by as good friends now. Did you know that Kazushi Sakuraba calls Wanderlei up at 2am to discuss fights? Because he does. We also see that Wand has no desire to do kickboxing post-UFC, as he understands they are entirely different sports and he is not prepared to fight high level strikers.

So do yourself a favor and tune in on Friday Night at 8pm Eastern for the Voice Versus Wanderlei Silva on [HDnet](#).