Jiu Jitsu Injuries, Leg Locks, and Longevity with UFC Fighter Jonathan Webb Transcript

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Podcast Intro and Guest Introduction

Do you train combat sports? Have you ever been injured? Dr. Megan Jimenez is an Army Orthopedic Sports Surgeon and Jiu Jitsu Brown Bell. This is Dr Jujitsu, your go-to podcast for combat sport, military performance, injury prevention and treatment.

New episodes drop the first Friday of each month. Hey, guys, I'm Megan Jimenez. I am an orthopedic surgeon and military U. S. Army major. Joined today by my good friend and mentor, Jonavan Webb, third degree black belt.

He is a UFC and CFFC veteran. he owns the gym that we're at right now, Webb Fitness. And just a good friends of mine, he was where I started my journey from white belt to purple belt until I starting moving with schooling.

all over the world. Yeah, but never stopped it and always came back and thanks for taking the time out today. I know, I'm happy to be on it. So we're going to talk a lot about injuries, about owning a school, coaching, your fight career, how you got to where you are, a little bit about how we know each other and what we went through for a long time together.

And I appreciate you because you're the reason I started Jiu Jitsu and stuck with it! I don't know. I'm just happy that you kept doing it. You know, so many people come in throughout the years and you know some people have it, some don' but some who have just don stick with it and it's one of the saddest things to see as a coach and I am just very happy you keep your journey going because I knew you had it early on but you know again some people just don't see it out and commit to what they started and you've done it and now you're here as a black belt sitting next to me.

That's right. You were one of the first people I texted after. Yeah. And I mean I competed what two years ago and I completed here and then I said hey I'm competing in New Jersey can you coach me?

And you were like sure. Yeah, they're at the drop of a hat in there. Was that open division? Yeah I think my first support. Oh, she like one need me to be nice She's big.

She was big if my parent my mom was like what yeah said well It's open and I took it on like three days notice. You gotta be a backpack on people like that was fun Well, he was very she was so nice to rule with like she could have crushed me and really her hammered me, but she didn't.

She was super nice to train with, to compete with and technique, you know, versus just using her weight. Yeah, it's always good. You don't want a spazzy big person.

No, no, yeah. But I did turn my ACL that competition and I remember texting you like, I think I turned my acl. Like, No way. Yeah, because it didn't even look bad when it happened.

No, but the video did. Yeah. You saw it on the videos, it made me a better surgeon and better athlete. One unfortunate thing about the sport, and I tell everyone who walks through the doors, you go play a pickup game of basketball right now, there's a good shot that you're going to get hurt, leave a bloody nose, a twisted ankle, something like that.

And we're doing a sport where we are literally trying to go for submissions and different arm locks and leg locks, and all that stuff. It's just an unfortunate part of a contact sport, but I feel like for what we do do, we don't get injured that much.

Injury Prevention in Jiu Jitsu Training

You know, it's going to happen, and I tell people it will happen. It's just, how do we mitigate? Exactly. So we can start here. What do you do at your facility as a coach to mitigate injuries with your students?

So one, I am not nice. to spazzy people anymore. Before it was always like, you know, just try to be, maybe that's just the way they are and just let it go.

And now I just don't accept it. If you can't be a good training partner, then this isn't the place for you. There's plenty of other gyms you could go find and maybe they'll let you in there.

But our number one thing is just keeping everyone safe. Almost everyone in here has to go to work the next day, has go go school, have to figure out ways to pay their bills.

risking an injury off of something like that is just not worth it. Again, now accidents happen, anything can happen. You can walk out the door and twist your ankle.

But if we can try to stop it any way that we came in here, we do. And I mean, I'm very vocal with, you know, while rounds are going like, hey, slow down, Hey, do this, and I feel like it's helped a lot.

I'm the same way and people get upset with me because I don't jump on that person's knee that way. You are in training and that's a dad. He's going to work tomorrow and you think you can walk outside and your knee would explode.

I was like, well you could but that is not the point. We are not walking outside. And our knees can explode and they do. So I am pretty crazy about that too.

The part that I struggle with is when you're trying to train for competition, how do you keep it safe-ish while still trying get to that 100% training?

So even today, we have a lot of people competing this weekend on a big grappling card. And I was telling them, today I want you guys thinking about pace.

Have high pace, push each other, but the intensity shouldn't be there. So it sounds like it's, you know, their opposite things, but I can go at a high speed and a good flow without having to try to smash you, or if I grab something and crank it, there's just a difference that you have to learn, and you're gonna learn that with experience, that's why I always like, when new people come in, I put them with experienced people, because the experienced can kinda Show them how it's supposed to be instead of two like Tasmanian devils with each other and then with the two competitors going with Each other, you know, it can you check your ego at the door or not, right?

You're not going to win every single Round every second every every minute of training You know I'd rather you not win Second of training. I rather you put yourself in weird positions Figure out ways out if you can't figure your way out tap reset and then try it again, you know Not to go off topic But even for me like when I came up in jiu-jitsu, it was totally different There was no leg locks allowed at my gym like all these other things and I started competing a lot and Then all of a sudden people were hitting me with leglocks and it's like I don't know how to stop this.

So then in the gym, I would just put myself in these situations and be like, Hey, just squeeze my leg and see if you can finish. And I'll try it from a bunch of spots and then I will try to get my way out.

Then if it hurt, tap and we will reset and I try again. That's why I tried to keep on people. Again, the competition is under the lights when the cameras are there or you're at a tournament, whatever.

That's competition mode. And that's when we got to like, you know, I'm on your shield or with your shields kind of guy. But in the room, you shouldn't have that same mentality.

It's all a learning process. And again, your ego is going to be your biggest killer in here. So if you can just check that ego and not be afraid to tap, even in a bad position, like sometimes Certain positions and maybe not a

submission, but my ankles in a weird spot or my arms in weird spots I hey, let's just reset and I'll just adjust it and go but again, it's it still battle that we're fighting with everyone.

I still fight it. It's hard. That's what I've been trying to do. So how do you think that the athletes can just switch like just Switch it on when they compete on a Saturday if they haven't like you haven you don't really finish heel hooks on your partners, right?

But in competition you kind of have to put that on so how you make that switch? Well, I mean, there's different things. You're out there, it's kill or be killed.

I think you understand it. If you ever competed before, you know that it's different and the intensity is different. Even the way someone just collar ties you is just different than being in here.

So if that doesn't wake you up, that's like your own issue that you gotta figure out. But even like, so heel hooks is probably the scariest thing in the entire sport, right?

Injury wise. Because you don't feel it, having gone through it you really, your adrenaline's rushing, running and you until it's too late. And so what I like to do with any leg entanglement really is Your first thing should be like collecting the leg and then the second thing, should, be controlling the, leg so like everything from the hip all the way to the ankle if i can Control that and get you stuck now it's my job to use finishing mechanics to get it so a lot of times again Maybe, some people aren't as educated on the positioning of the.

Leg locks and stuff but like A lot of times we think about a heel hook, so we go for the heel and then we just try to rip it as quick as we can. But if I can figure out a way to isolate your hip, your knee and your ankle, get you stuck where you can't go right, you cant go left, and you cannot pull out.

And now I grab your heel, it should be a slow movement to finish. I shouldn't have to do these big twists and turns and big athletic movements if i'm doing the technique right.

Usually the problem is that people are getting hurt because people aren't doing the techniques right. I agree. And I'm of the mentality that even white belt should be starting to learn these things.

Obviously, if they're uncontrolled, then we need to have a sit down. But if you're not learning it early on, to your point, what were you like a purple belt?

The funniest thing, so the first one, I was a purple belt. I had a few stripes on my purple bell. One purple-belt division in the tournament I in, and then they were like, hey, there's no black belts in this black belt division.

Do you want to go against this, uh, black bell? And the guy was like a second-degree black-bell already. And I'm like yeah, yeah I'll go in there. and I go and remember I looked at the score and like beating the guys.

Competing Safely and Learning Leg Locks

using wrestling, and I was just scoring, passing his guard, taking his back, all these things. And then there was a few seconds left and he sat on the heel hook on me and just ripped it.

I remember, I as young, younger, when I probably was 19 years old, And I heard like a pop and pulled my leg out. and didn't think anything of it, but then he sat and went for the other leg.

And as soon as he grabbed it I was just like, that's it. I don't want to do that again. That's when it started. Then I got kneebarred by Keenan Cornelius.

the grappling industries and then that's when I really just went full blown into trying to figure out defensively how to stop it but as I was learning the defenses for is when i like started saying like oh wait in this position i can try this or i could do this to to try to get it offensively and that that is really how i learned leg locks i didn't learn it from a like

someone coaching me on it.

I just learned it from trying to stop the leg lock. And sadly I think sometimes you need to get injured to learn. Not that you NEED to, it's just that it was more beneficial in my case.

When I tore my ACL, I thought I had a decent understanding of leg locks, but I hadn't even touched the surface. So ever since two years ago, Literally, I went full send on defense, different positions, mechanics of finishing inside versus outside.

And I teach Tuesday, Friday at my gym, and we do leg locks now because otherwise my students aren't going to know. I mean, a lot of competitions don't allow heel hooks, right?

So especially the local ones where I am in Washington, here they might be a little bit more aggressive with it. So like nagas and stuff? you can do heel hooks and everything out of white belt which in no gi.

Oh my god. So it's a little scary but I start my students with leg locks right away now and again that's it just crazy to say because I just remember it being such like a no go.

Years ago we had a samba guy come into the gym and he was like grabbing legs and I just remember everyone in the Gym yelling at him and like telling that that wasn't okay and then now that's the game.

But the scarier part with leg locks now is that it's not just grab and go. It's people are just like the leg lock games its own martial art now, right?

It changed the game so much, just all the different entries and controls. I'm fascinated by it. I like seeing it and I liked using it, but then there's guys who are just a whole other level.

Even one of my black belts, Kevin Dantzler, the kid, he'll do stuff and call names of certain moves and i'm just looking at him. what is that you know but it's a whole different game it is and ever since i started going more down the no-gi rabbit hole yeah the gi stuff is so different now right remember i think when we were younger and when i first started with you you could just do both yeah and it felt like you I mean, we would go to competitions.

And I was like, okay, if I could do, I can do Nogi, it's just without grips. Yeah. Because if you start doing stuff from Nogy, does not translate, you get smashed, right?

And it just, people are becoming experts in it. And it's just different. And people are learning no-gi at a faster rate than gi now. So like, gi you gotta think like traditionally you go to a gi school and it is slower and you're starting from the knees and then there's a lot of rules and maybe you only do pass sweeps in it for like the first couple years or whatever and these no gi guys are just getting thrown into like Like oh you're a white belt, but we're just gonna throw you in this open division and you gonna Yeah, so I mean I know blue and purple belts.

We have a blue belt at the gym now that I would put my money on to beat most Brown and and black belts that are under 135 pounds right now and the kid is a he was a elite wrestler and and he doesn't even try to wrestle.

He'll play on his back, he'll do all these things. I'm the coach and I don't understand how he learned so fast. It's just, I dunno what it is now. information is more accessible now like You know they go on YouTube they're going BJJ fanatics they can you know watch every instructional whatever or just you go and flow grappling or on UFC fight pass and there's hundreds and thousands of matches that you can just watch the techniques and you just pick up on it and I mean again This sport is gonna be even scarier in five, 10 years from now, but right now it's like, I love seeing what these kids are doing, and I'm just excited to be a part of it.

So you came from a wrestling background, and you're talking about this student who, or athlete who came form a wresting background as well. Do you think that that is super helpful for the entire longevity?

Do think it's more helpful when you start? Yeah, I mean, so years ago, again, wrestlers were like so against doing

grappling and now it's not like that.

It's like, so their eyes are open to it. Like, hey, after wrestling I should get into this or I start getting into it early so that when I'm done my wrestling career, like I've already, you know, like ready to learn some technique.

Like we just had this year's national champion at 125. He was in here this morning. Uh, he's in from out of town and he was just, rolling jujitsu. And you know, it's, really cool to see that level of guy coming in, but it like, You know, wrestling, I think, is a really strong base.

I don't think you need it. Like, there's guys who are really good, like Kevin, who can get through, you know a lot of people in this sport without any wrestling.

And it works for them. But yeah, it's really cool to see people transitioning into it and then using their wrestling but learning Jiu-Jitsu too. Sometimes, even when I started, you know, white belt, I've wrestled everyone.

I didn't do Jiu-Jitsu, but I won Jitsu matches, not by using Jui-jitsu techniques. But there's some kids that can just come in and be humble enough to start like they never grappled ever in their life.

That's hard. It's very hard because your body takes over. Like I said, this kid, Nick, that we have, I literally see him on his back most of the practice.

He's just pulling, and the kid's a really good New Jersey wrestler. This whole area, New jersey, Pennsylvania, Ohio, it's some of just the most elite wrestling there is.

I just think, again, the next five, 10 years, this sport's going to change even more when all the wrestlers are coming in. So let's go back to when you and I first met.

That was like 2014 or probably like about 11 years. Yeah. You had been doing it for longer. Obviously, you were a black belt by that time. And talk to me about how you decided you are going to go from more being the athlete to a coach and then to gym owner and how did all of that.

So the funny thing is like I started coaching very early. My coach, Brian McPherson, he was a major in the state police when I start doing Jiu Jitsu. He was on this government detail and He had this work phone that he would sit on the mat and he'll be teaching a class and all of a sudden that phone goes off and He would have to run out and and You know, he would just be like, and to go back, like I started at his gym the first week it was open.

So my cousin is the one who got me into Jiu Jitsu. He asked me if I wanted to a grappling class and I didn't know what grappling was.

From Wrestler to Coach and Gym Owner

I thought wrestling was grappling. It's another funny thing, but my screen name on AOL, on aim, was njgrappler89. While you were a wrestler? While I was a wrestler.

Never did Jiu Jitsu ever in my life. So like, I just thought wrestling was grappling. I packed my bag, had my headgear in there, my wrestling shoes on, and I showed up to this gym and there's like a bunch of old guys in their wearing gees.

And I'm like… what the hell are we, what are doing here? And he's like, no, go wrestle them. And these guys are just submit me and beat me. I just remember thinking like whatever these guy just did to me, I want to be able to do to someone else.

and I went full blown into Jiu Jitsu after that day.and I was there every single day and, and was one of the only guys that had wrestling so I had like somewhat of grappling compared to the other new guys.

My coach, his friends would come from his school that he trained at, Ever Cardo Almeidas. And so like those upper belts would coming in and help me, but when they weren't there, I was like the next highest person.

So when I got my blue belt in six months, and probably right at that time is when he would just be like, hey John, finish class for me. He'd have to go.

You know, again, I'm 17, 16 or 17 years old, and I am teaching 40-year-old men how to do a move. And I was a very shy kid. I played sports my entire life, but I never was someone who would just talk.

Like, it was just, I was quiet. Unless you'd talk to me, then I would, you know, talk you. But other than that, like, just a really quiet kid. So now I gotta stand up in front of a class and tell these guys what to do.

And, uh, y'know, It was scary doing it, but I just started falling in love with it. Even when I fighting, when, fighting for cage fury when i fought in the ufc like i always knew i wanted to own a gym but i just never knew when it was going to happen i thought it would be later on i felt my i was gonna keep fighting and then when we had our first when, we, had, our daughter me and my wife had her our, daughter aldrina i, was, going back and forth from new mexico to here in New Jersey and I was like, you know, I need to settle down home instead of like doing all this traveling.

And I, not that I fell out of love with competing in the sport, but it was, like am I going to choose my family or am going choose being the athlete? Because some people can balance it.

I'm not, was a psycho when I fighting. Like I am an all in or nothing kind of guy. So it's, when I was in, nothing else in the world mattered. You know, how am I gonna train?

How am gonna eat? how I'm gonna rest, How I am going to recover? I would go get massages multiple times a week, I'd go to physical therapy, do all these things, because that's all I cared about.

I wouldn't go weddings, birthday parties, anything for anyone because I was just so locked in. One day I just woke up and I think I should have a gym and be more settled and then I get a phone call that my employer from the UFC gym wanted to sell the gym.

Because we were UFC originally. We were a UFC Gym and he calls me and was like, do you have any interest in buying the Gym? And I was, like man, I don't have money.

I was fighting and I doing okay, but I wasn't making money like that. Didn't had savings. Like I didn't all these things. And one of my sponsors was like, I'll pay for the whole thing.

And then he's like, we'll go in and we will make it work. And it changed my life after that. So it was a lot of hard work, I had to do a to put it all together and then to keep it rolling and grow it and stuff.

But I got really lucky with just the position I was in. the guy wanted to get out because his daughter was a singer. She was in middle school and she wanted sing and had to travel all over the country and he wanted be her manager.

And that was the only reason he got out of it. That's what brought it, yeah. It's still a while to look back and think that's how it all started. But it led me here and now I coach women, children, men, people who have never competed a day in their life to people compete at the highest level.

And I get so much fulfillment out of it. I thought I would never be able to fill the void of standing at The Tunnel, hearing the crowd. Being the gladiator in there right in the arena and now I get it like tenfold like I literally I'm at fights every weekend and When they win it's like It's the best feeling like it feels like i won you know and uh when they lose, it hurts.

And it hurt just like when I lost. I just love experiencing and seeing these guys and girls just put everything out there. So many people have probably been in their lives that told them, your goals are just, they'll never happen.

you know, why don't you just get a steady job or do the more traditional thing and all that kind of stuff. And all of them were in the position I was in before where I don t want to do that.

I want try what I want to try and see if it works for me. And again, I'm proud of everybody that even has the guts to go out and put it all on the line.

But I am just fortunate to be a part of a team that we do very well. I think it just comes from everyone coming in and trying to work towards similar goals.

We try to push each other. Again, anytime you get a bunch of people, especially a lot of alphas, there's always going to be some tension or problems or some people don't get along or whatever, but I feel like we do a good job on the team just setting everything aside and just when we show up here, we train the way that we need to train and then we go on about our day.

You have some amazing coaches, too, around you. That's probably huge, because you can't do it all yourself. No, I definitely can. When I first started the gym, it was like I wanted my hands on everything.

And it's just something that's impossible to do. So now we've got a great coaching staff, and when I can make the certain things, they go. I make certain classes, there here.

With the sport, it's a good thing that I get to travel all the time, but it hurts sometimes. I don't get the be here for certain practices or get see certain things, and it hard for me sometimes to understand that still, because I wish I could be in more places at once.

But again, I got such a team under me. Unable to be somewhere like they they're gonna have a really good person in my spot nice So changing gears a little bit.

This is a doctor jujitsu podcast So it's we talk about injuries and you've had a couple Yeah, let's if you don't mind talk a bit of your injuries in how you got back and what you did Yeah so I mean My biggest injuries have always been my shoulders.

I remember hurting it the first time in wrestling when I was in high school. When I first heard it, it was just like dislocations, right?

Shoulder and ACL Injuries, Recovery, and Mental Health

It would happen all the time. So you're having a lot over and over again. Yeah, they would just happen. And then I got to a point where I just popping them in by myself.

Like, and I thought it as normal. You know, I mean, as a kid, you know. this joint comes out and I just put it back in, then it's going to be fine once it is back there.

So I would do it when I started fighting. I remember it happening a couple of times at practice and it would hurt for a little bit and then go back to normal.

The one day I show up to practice, we warm up. First round, first punch, I throw a jab and didn't even hit the person yet. Shoulder pops out and when I want to like put it back in it was like a numb pain like uh It just felt different than it ever did before like down into your fingers.

Yeah, and I just remember like it one of the coaches was on the side and he's staring at me and i'm staring to him and He's like you okay, I was Yeah.

And he's like, you don't look okay. He said I just looked like I went pale and whatever. So that happened on a Thursday. at sparring, like a 9 a.m. sparing, I always remember what time it was.

Which session? It was like, a nine a sparrer session, and I met with one of the doctors at Rothman that same day they got me in, And I had surgery on Monday.

Oh, wow. I don't know how that all worked out. What day was the injury? Thursday. Yeah. Good insurance. I was almost my parents' assurance back. But yeah, I remember his name was Dr.

Salvo. He used to work on a bunch of Phillies and Sixers players and stuff. And he was like, if you want to keep your career and keep doing what you're doing, he's like you have to listen to me on the recovery.

I'm like yeah yeah. And he's like, no, I'm telling you, if I am doing your surgery, like I don't want to waste your time, and I want waste my time. Smart man.

You're going to do it right. And I did. I went through seven months no training at all. What surgery did you have? I had a labrum. repair. Oh, with the camera?

Yeah, or the arthroscopic. And so he repaired it, I took off, and I didn't train for seven months. I've never done that in my entire life. When I was a kid, when I played football and baseball, all year round, this was the first time I ever took and mentally it was like one of the hardest things I ever did.

And that's like a big thing that I have with my students now is like, physically, I know you're gonna be okay. The doctors are good now, the procedures are like, I know you're going to be okay in the long run, physically.

I'm always more worried about the mental part because I've been there. Like that depression is like insane. Just seeing all your friends and all of your teammates being able to like do stuff and you are just sitting there like you know.

It's just hard. You're not jealous, but it's like… You are sad. Yeah, you're just sad and you just want to be a part of it. I've gone through it now a couple of times and now that I have gone though it with my patients, I appreciate the mental side so much more.

Before I went through, it I was like, get over it! I didn't realize how strong it was because I had never gone thru that. I had gone through periods where I was on a trauma rotation when I here.

I remember when signed up here I said, hey, I'm probably going to be gone for a couple of months. Can't really afford to pay the freeze fee. You were like, come when you can.

Thank God. Because I would be three months on trauma, not leaving the hospital. That would have been sad, but I've had so much going on in my life. It wasn't so mental, just trying to survive in trauma.

and taking care of patients. And then I would come back and be like, great, let's go. When you're injured and you are sitting here watching people. Yeah.

But what do you think? Do you thinks it's better to come in when you injured or do think it is better stay away? Yeah, so it kind of matters how your life is.

I feel like if you busy like you were saying, then good. Be busy if can get through it. For me, it was, I didn't have anything else. The gym was my life.

So like If I don't train, that means I'm just sitting at home doing nothing. And I was never a video gamer ever, no offense to anyone else. No, not either.

But I've never been a videogame person. That's all I did when I was hurt for the first couple months, because I didn't want to be in the gym around everyone.

And then my coach kind of talked me into just like, hey, just come and watch. Come see the techniques and all that

stuff. I just made it so much better.

It was just a really hard, hard thing to get through. But once I got through it, I literally got clearance. on a day and two months later I fought. So our fight camps are eight weeks.

But that's usually you're in shape already, then you do an eight week camp for the fight and then go, but I was like, nope, I'm fighting in eight-weeks.

And I got myself together and it was a hard weight cut, because this is my first time ever being really injured, so my weight, like… skyrocket for the first time.

And, uh, so I had to get the weight down. Then I to the cardio back. Cause when I did the labrum tear that they didn't even want me running because of the jostling.

Yeah. It hurts. Go too quickly. So, cause that's in my mind when they first did it, I was like, all right, like I can't use my arm like this and grabbing, but I'll be able to do everything else.

No, it usually takes like six to eight weeks for people to run, depending on the severity. And you had a big labrum tear. I recently had biceps procedure done and I was running it like three to four weeks.

But not crazy, like 12 minute pace, walk, run. You know, its hard. They had me. Stairmaster, bike. On the little hand. That thing's hard! Bike thing. The thing is hard That's all.

It would be that. Like stretches. Again, this is 2000. 11 and They had me on like doing the little Like on the door. It was like a little wheelie. Yeah pulley and I'll do that and And I just wanted more and they were like, nope Yeah, and now we're lucky too.

There's a lot more equipment and a little more social media I know it tends to be the devil sometimes and I think there's A lot of benefit like we can have talks like this.

Oh, yeah, you can go online You can on chat your beauty and say hey, I had this shoulder surgery. What's safe for me to do? Yeah And they'll give you a plan.

They'll get you like a day-to-day hour to hour plan, right? So I mean and Now that I've gone through shoulder knee surgeries, i think shoulders a, lot easier to recover from granted Rotator cuff tears are a different beast.

Those are typically in older patients, and they're very hard to recover from. But I think younger patients with shoulder injuries are easier than these because you can still walk.

You can get on the StairMaster. I was biking like a lunatic five days out on a stationary, but I always putting that resistance up because your just here in a sling.

Knees are really tough, especially right side. You can't drive for like six weeks, potentially. I didn't think you'd have to go left foot. Well, I just tell my patients you can drive.

People will do what they're going to do. It's just you get it. Not only can you take it, you could hurt somebody because your reaction time's not there.

So I usually wait to clear my patient's if they have a brace on, if it's a bigger surgery. Little meniscus cleanup, 20 minute procedure. probably in two to three weeks.

But when you're having these bigger knee surgeries after my ACL, that was hard. It was my right knee. So I was paying my physical therapist's kids to drive me to Jiu Jitsu.

And I said, you drive to the gym, I'll pay for your gym single day fee to go lift. I just crutch around lifting. Then I say,

take me Jui Jutsu after. And I'd pay them money to go drive me around like my taxi with my leg elevated in the back of the truck.

And because of love of it. If I wasn't there, I felt like I was missing out on my community, missing on learning, and I just wasn' fulfilled. I'm just sitting at home at night.

So I still was getting there. I get it. That's a tough road. But we just had one of our guys, he's out right now. He didn't have the surgery yet, but I think he was getting it this week for a rotator cuff.

And he is young. Only 21. It's tough. Yeah, 21 How did he do that? He doesn't even… He was just wrestling and then it hurt. he had labrum issues before.

Um, He's like a high school football player. What's the one you throw the ball? Shot put. And so he had some injuries there like years ago. But now he's going to be out for a little bit.

Again, just like we talked about, the day I found out that he was going be, his young kid and his dad was actually an NFL player and was a principal at a high school not too far from here.

I was talking to him, like, hey, again, I know he's gonna be good physically, but just make sure you check on him mentally and also call me if anything.

Because again I around his age when I did mine and again that's, that I think that is the scariest part of the whole thing. The community is tremendous too, right?

People are checking up on you, people are like hey what can I do? Do you wanna go out? You wanna still hang out, do you want to work out because it's the community.

And I that helped me keep my head on straight and you have to have goals. It's like, what is my goal this week? It is to walk. And it's different goals, but it is still goals.

That's the way you have to wrap your mind around that. People that don't really struggle, because they're like I was dead lifting 300 pounds last week.

I'm like guess what? Not this. We have different rules. It will come back. If you don' t follow the rules, we're going to have problems. Yeah. Was this the same shoulder that we treated when I was a resident?

Yeah, so I got that surgery in 2000. It was either 11 or 12, and then my shoulder was fine. After I did the rehab, my shoulders felt strong, never gave me issues.

The only thing that would hurt is if I tried to do a flat bench or something like that. I don't know if it was more of a mental thing than anything, but I was just scared of using it.

But fighting wise, I'm fine. And then right at the end of my fighting career, toured again, but it wasn't a complete tear this time. I think, didn't you have a slap tear?

It was like, so the biceps comes into the labrum. Yeah. Which is like one of the most common things. That's what I had when I was younger, when i first started.

So, I have had a fight lined up and they're trying to get me to pull out of a fighting and I'm like no. Who tried to you get you to put out? My coaches and everything and i was Nah, it's just the way I was.

If I signed up for something, if you got to push me in a wheelchair out to the cage, I would go out and give it my all. It's not a good thing, but it was just how my brain was wired back then.

You know, that's when you were in residence. I was in residency, yeah. Because I started here like my intern year.

Yeah, and then it was right around the corner.

It was a street away. And I called you and I said, is there anything that we can do? And you know I forget exactly what we did. Well, you got the MRI.

Yeah, and I looked at that to make sure that wasn't another like complete labrum tear and we had risks of dislocation because you didn't dislocate Yeah.

It was more just like a chronic thing at this point. Yeah And I was like, okay, it's safe till we can consider an injection Yeah therapy and get you to your fight, but that's not the same for everyone.

You were dislocating I would have been yeah, I do remember you telling me that that cortisone is not for Everyone and you don't want to repeat it. Maybe I shouldn't I should think about it and then I was like I want to do it so so you know again because it was either I Was gonna go out there with it hurting and injured or I was going to go out there where it's not hurting.

And so, so it was, I guess it. Was like, not hurt and you did well. Yeah. So, you know, it, was just one of those decisions I made.

Lessons from Failure, Coaching, and Women in Jiu Jitsu

But, honestly, since then, my shoulder hasn't given me You know any issues start injections have their role and I think for people in sports This is the perfect application of it a couple weeks out We could let it settle down You could take a day or two off to let the court do its thing and not flare on you Yeah, and i think that was perfect for you for that situation but people are trying to get steroid injections when they have like an ACL tear or there's something is unstable.

That's a mechanical problem, right? We were treating a symptomatic small tear that most of the time you don't get surgery for. And we needed to get you okay and you did some therapy too because it's not just steroidal injection and move along.

Yeah, I think that's what helped is that I started doing all the band work and all that kind of stuff. And you had PT here, right? I had a PT. I used to sublet to a physical therapy company.

So I would do PT and I mean, it's again, Oh yeah, is that for that? You just got the wood out there for knocking? I feel like anytime you talk about injuries, like, oh, I've never injured my knee before.

And then it's like bam, there goes your knee. It always happens that way, so. That's tough too, right? you injure something and then afterwards you're like well I hope that never happens again.

and guess what? With what we do? Freaking good. It easily could. Tomorrow, right? After my ACL, people were like, oh my god, I hope that never happens.

And yeah, of course I hoped that. If I just say it's not gonna happen, it could, and so I think that I have a healthy, sometimes a little too extra with injuries, but I've had enough where I'm like I need to be careful if I wanna be in this sport forever.

I thing it comes with experience and with age too, because I feel like when you're young, you just feel Superman or Superwoman, You know, you feel like nothing can keep you down like that, and as you get older, it's like, yeah.

It is gonna take a little time to recover, or I gotta watch what I'm doing. Yeah, also being the smallest person in the room has really been a struggle.

When I was younger, I could take anyone on and I would. But then, at what cost? I'd be sore for a couple of days. I also was in my 20s. I'll get over it, put some ice on it.

Now I'm kind of paying, I was paying for those injuries, so I am way more selective. I say no a lot more than I said yes to roll with people. Because being 125, the kids are this small.

The only ones I can roll safely with are the kid. So that's something that I changed in my gym as well. Before it was like, Everyone should be able to train with everyone.

We're all the same team, whatever. And it's just not the case. So if you ever need to say no, it is a no. I say, no to people. Yeah, you're too crazy.

You don't want to get hurt. Maybe I'm just saying no today because today I don' t feel that great or I just don t want whatever you got to get, whatever your bringing to the table here.

The way I tell people things is I say, if I'm willing to roll with you and you're a big guy, that means you are a good training partner. Like my fiance is 205 pounds and I roll him all the time.

Sometimes he throws me across the room because he gets frustrated with me. I am like, baby you can't do that. Don't be a bully. And so if if i'm training with, you it's because I think youre safe and your not going to hurt me I just, again we try to bring down the risk of injury.

And I remember one time, one of my other old MMA coaches wanted me to do an extra round where I knew I was done that day. You're already coolin' down on the side.

All the guys that I normally train with were done. He's like, no, you're gonna do one more round. Then pointed at this guy. that one wasn't even on our team.

He was like in from out of town. And from what I saw, he was a little spazzy. I was, like, no. and he's like yes. Oh God. Of course I go in, I just take a knee right to the mouth while grappling.

Then I got up and I'm done. They thought it was just that. It could have been a lot worse. Ever since that day, I was a black belt at the time, but in my classes, I just made it where it was, you don't have to say yes to everyone.

Sometimes you just sense things, too. I can look at you and be like, today's not the day. It's going to work out. So I've got a cool question for you.

What is a lesson that you've learned on the mats that has helped you off of the mat? On the mats? The main thing is being okay at failing at stuff, right?

Like before it was, that looks a little scary, so let me just stay away from it. But what I've found made great athletes, great athletes and I try to make it where it makes great people as well is being able to get through failure and use it to try and succeed.

And again, in my basic classes, I tell them the same talk almost every day and it's like, listen, you embrace the suck. It's gonna suck, jiu-jitsu's hard, you're gonna get bumps and bruises and all these things.

I was like, but the only difference between me and you is that I've had more chances to fail at it so far and it made me who I am now. Learning from it, what do people do when they fail?

Do they quit or do they go home? Be like, where do I get better? Yeah. So and that's what it is. It's like you just got to give yourself those opportunities to fail and That's how you're going to succeed.

You learn more from failing, right? It is a hard concept to figure out in anything. Yeah, but just can't be scared of it. Even, you know, I've run fury grappling and, that started as a conversation at lunch with my two partners.

And it was like, should we think about doing these events? And we held it off for a whole year. But it kept coming back. It came back, and then things happened, then COVID happened.

All these different things. We were like you know what, let's just take a chance. Then we took the chance, we did We put this show together. We didn't have a broadcasting deal.

we didn' have anything. I took the mats up from my gym and just took them there and we did it. A week before the event, we started doing our posts and everything.

Fight Pass hits us up and they're like, We want you on the platform. I won't say what other company, but the other big one, they wanted in first and we were like, no, like we just want to test it out and see how it goes.

And we're like no we'll hold off. Then we got a call from them and they're, we want you guys on. All right, I guess we gotta send it. I'm happy you changed that one, because I have that membership.

That's why you can watch it! Yeah, so we were like, you know, it was just crazy how it all just happened, but then just because we decided to take a chance, we could have failed that.

We could've lost money doing it, and we couldn't… And that's the worst that would happen, right? I mean, losing money sucks. And you tried it? Yeah.

It's like check, i did it… I tried. Yeah and you would have tried again. You would've kept trying until it worked. Now we're 13 shows in. Those shows are so fun too.

Oh yeah, its awesome. Already when I'm done with all my stuff. Yeah my military Yeah, so one more kind of interesting question What do you think makes people the most coachable aside for like skill kind?

Of putting skill aside what when do? You see somebody that's like yes, you are coach able what's this? What's the characteristics? I mean humbles the best one I So if you can just come in without that ego of wanting to win right away, that's my favorite kind of person.

And it's who can put themselves in the most bad positions and be okay with it. They're not panicking. Like they're just there like, all right, this was it, I tap and I reset and we go again.

Again, it is my favourite thing. Not a common characteristic for fighters. No, not one, yeah. So, honestly I love getting people who never trained a day in their life.

Who aren't fighters. Yeah. And then sometimes, so what I found in here and one of my favorite things is like gives me a lot of fulfillment is We get a lot of people come in who don't even though it's an MMA gym like they don' they expect to do Fighting right?

They're coming to get in shape or do all these things but I think they've realized that they're not made of glass and that's like the most empowering thing ever because a Lot of times you just think oh you get this touched or moved and you break Yeah, right and then when you realize that that we're more resilient than than that.

It's it just gives you like a superpower i feel like and uh… you know it uh I just love seeing it. And I've had so many people who would just do our fitness classes.

So, you know, they can't see the gym, but the gyms kind of separate it into the big mat space and then like a fitness side of it, and a lot of people come in just for the fitness site and I can see them looking over while these classes are going on, like, man, what are these crazy people doing over there?

they'll start inching their way over and asking questions and doing all that. And then all of a sudden they're in the class and they are trying it. Then years later they…

That's what I did. Because I was boxing first and then I would do Muay Thai. But it wasn't too much contact. We were doing like a cardio style. I'm like, why are these people in these pajamas over here?

What are they doing? I had done karate as a kid. They have karate uniforms on. That is not karate. It's our first female black belts. are Yara and Nancy, they're sisters.

So years ago they were just fitness members before I owned the gym and they did boxing and kickboxing only, fitness classes. Then they started doing Jiu Jitsu and then they became our first female black.

Now we have a good amount of them. And they are truly, truly like them and Chrissy and Tara and you are a very big part of why our women's program is the way it is now.

It just makes it easier for those girls to come over Because of that like before it was like they look over and there's a bunch of these big hairy Sweaty men and you know, like there I don't think I want to go train with them.

But now I mean you'll come to a class and There's 12 girls in a cloud and some and they're teaching and their teaching we're eating and so it's incredible Yeah, and I'm a I love it.

So like it again what when I started training I knew one girl that trained that's it and then now it's like you go to any gym in America and you know there's so many girls there and it is just awesome and even with Fury I try to we always have women, we had women's main events.

Our first event ever had a women main event. We're doing a tournament, it's our first cash prize tournament that we're doin'. It's a woman's tournament.

That's like 125. Yeah, so it like, these girls are like good on this one and it, you know, I'm just, Obviously I'm not a woman, so I can only do so much.

You girls are, again, you gotta show the girls that they can do it too and just empower each other and all that kind of stuff. And I just happen to be any way that I could be a part of it, but you guys are really changing the sport.

Again, I talk like I'm really old, but I've been in it for a long time, and I just seen where it was and where is today. I know it's going to continue to grow.

Like we were talking about earlier, wrestling is big, now women's wrestling. That was never a thing. Even a couple years ago I would wrestle with a local high school in Georgia.

And the girls were competing with the men. They were like, yeah, we just compete with guys because there's not enough women. Yeah, that's how it was. And they could choose now.

But even, this was four years ago. So now they've separated. Now it's just going to keep growing the sport. Well, thank you because I've always had tremendous male role models and men that have embraced me coming in versus the opposite where women were like shunned or you hear bad stories about women being sometimes on the mats.

And I have never had that experience. So without you guys, like the men, that are helping the women jujitsu wouldn't be where it is either. Yeah. I'm happy we can do any kind of part, but again, you guys are just going to keep taking this thing off.

Cool. So where can people find you? Where's your gym? If people want to come in and train? Yeah, I mean, on social media, it's just at Jonovan Webb. And then my gym's in Washington Township, New Jersey, about 15 minutes from Philadelphia.

So, you know, anytime anyone's is in town, come on in. Awesome. Well, thanks again. It was awesome having you. I know. Great to be on. Thank you