

# MMA: Berube and Murphy know where they want to go with it

By EDDIE DANIELS | The Tampa Tribune

Cut the sound to Friday night's press conference and the looks alone would have been cause for concern.

Inside the Crave Entertainment Complex, Allen "Monstah Lobstah" Berube and Jack "Mafia" Murphy met during a press conference touting their July 24 bout in RFC 18 Pride.

Had the occasional stern look and the bevy of tattoos between the two MMA fighters been the lone barometer, one would suspect boiling blood, things getting heated and parties being separated at some point.

Not so much.

"I have nothing personal against Allen," Murphy admitted, sitting next to his trainer Ralph Garcia. "After the fight, win, lose or draw, I will shake his hand, go have a beer. If I lose, I'll even buy some lobster."

In fact, Berube's trainer, Matt Arroyo, said this was a new Berube. One who was willing to enjoy his fights and keep the unneeded intensity away.

"If you guys notice a little difference in Allen, he's not as confrontational as maybe in the past," said Arroyo, a participant in Season 6 of "The Ultimate Fighter" and head instructor at Gracie Tampa South. "He's more professional, but he's also being a little more humble."

One thing that is certain, neither fighter will stray from what they do best at — at least that's what they say. Berube has a reputation for wanting to take the action to the mat, while Murphy has been known as a standup fighter.

"Jack's wrestled me before, so he knows where he doesn't want to go with it, I know where he wants to go with it," said Berube, who grew up boxing and is trained in Brazilian Jiu-Jitsu. "He's probably going to be a better standup fighter than me. There's no mystery. He knows what I do. I didn't look at any tapes. I don't need to look at any tapes and he probably doesn't either."

This is Berube's return to the cage after taking nearly a year off. The draw to return to the cage was simple for Berube, who admitted: "I don't want to be on the sidelines" anymore.

During that time away, Berube continued to train and also applied a laser-like focus to his restaurant Monstah Lobstah.

The bout will be the co-featured event during RFC 18 Pride, which will be held July 24 at the A La Carte Pavilion in Tampa. The main event will feature Winter Haven's Edson Berto, brother of WBC welterweight champ Andre Berto, against Jason Ball. Doors open at 7 and fighting begins at 8.

The card also includes: Mike Joiner vs. Edems Celiscar at 205 pounds; Dave Gomez vs. Jim Alers (145); Roger Medal vs. Daniel Gurzenda (145); Ryan Seals vs. Johnny Arango (125) and Paul Barrow vs. Jamie Quackenbush (155).

For Berube and Murphy, next week's bout represents a shift in weight classes when they square off at 145 pounds. It's a 10-pound jump for Murphy and a 10-pound drop for Berube.

"I've gotten a lot stronger. I'm not getting tired," Murphy said of his training and putting on weight. "Karl Kotch is one of the biggest, if not the biggest, submission wrestlers the world's ever seen and luckily Karl and my trainer trained together for a long time. The training regimen is for condition strength. It's not, as Karl would say, it's not maximum strength that counts, it's conditioning."

According to RFC co-founder Jason Freyre, this bout has gotten a lot of talk amongsts and he expects the two to deliver.

"This is going to be a fight to remember because you have two guys, as Monstah said, he's going to try and take you down, Jack's going to standup," Freyre said. "Tremendous, tremendous fight."