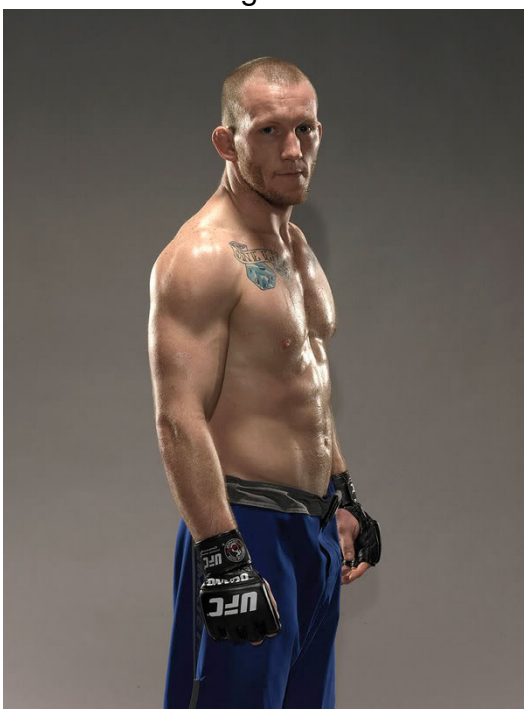
Gray "The Bully" Maynard is one of the rising stars in the UFC lightweight division, and is a guy with local ties, earning All-State and All-American honors as a wrestler for St. Ed's in the late nineties before going on to star at Michigan State. He's got a big beef coming up on UFC Fight Night this Wednesday, and was nice enough to set aside some time to talk to our Scott Swerbinsky before the event.



Gray "The Bully" Maynard is a UFC fighter who has ties to the Cleveland area. He was one of the best lightweight fighters to compete on The Ultimate Fighter Season 5. His current pro mixed martial arts record is 4-0-1 and 1-0-1 in the UFC. His next fight will be taking place this Wednesday, the 23rd at UFC Fight Night.

His training for Dennis Siver is winding down and he found a few minutes to sit down with me for a interview.

SS: First off Gray, thanks for taking the time to speak with me. You having ties to the Cleveland area, I have been following your career closely, tell our readers a little bit about your background:

GM: I was born in Arizona and haven been wrestling almost my whole life. I went to high in Las Vegas for two years before enrolling at St.

Edward High School in Lakewood. At Ed's I was All-State and All-American while going undefeated and earning a national championship. After that I attended Michigan State.

SS: Growing up out west, how did you go about getting into Ed's?

GM: The sports out here weren't as good and the schools are overcrowded. I was hoping to get college paid for and knew about the wrestling program there. They easily have the best coaches and it was a great school so I decided to go there. I had an aunt that lived in the area.

SS: How did you end up getting involved in mma?

GM: I came home after trying out for the 2004 Olympics and there were a few jiu-jitsu schools in the area. I started to get a little heavy and some buddies were getting on me. I knew I needed to start training again so I started thinking about taking it up.

SS: You helped BJ Penn train a few years back for a fight that kind of pushed you along also correct?

GM: Yeah, BJ was training for a fight in Hawaii so I went out there for 2 or 3 weeks to help him out. That was cool.

SS: How did you get hooked up with Randy Couture and his Xtreme Couture camp?

GM: I was still kicking around the idea of doing mma full time when I got together with Randy while he was preparing for one of his fights with Chuck Liddell.

SS: Who are some of the main fighters that you're training with there?

GM: A lot of guys. Forrest Griffin, Tyson Griffin, Mike Pyle, Sam Stout, Joe Stevenson and a bunch of other great guys.

SS: Is there any part of your game you think needs to improve?

GM: My jiu-jitsu could use a little more work. I try to just have a complete style.

SS: Your last fight in the UFC was amazing, what's your thoughts on the nine second KO of Joe Veres?

GM: One word, crazy.

SS: Now your next fight on the 23rd is with Dennis Siver. He's 1-1 in the UFC and 11-4 as a pro. What do you know about him?

GM: He's a tough kid. He can strike and has real good jiu-jitsu and judo. I'm going to have to bring it to him.

SS: Who do you see as some of the top contenders in the lightweight division?

GM: The division is stacked. There are a ton of tough guys. Tyson Griffin, Frankie Edgar, Roger Huerta, and Clay Guida and that's just a few that come to mind.

SS: Anybody that you would really like to fight?

GM: I think me and Frankie Edgar would be a good scrap. Anyone in the top ten works.

SS: Well, Gray, thank a lot for taking the time to speak with me. I'm a big fan of yours and have been. I'm expecting big things from you so don't let your Cleveland fans down.

GM: It's been cool and thanks for the support.