

The Unnatural Return of JD “The Natural” Chapman

June 4, 2021, Fort Smith, Arkansas–In a year of surprising boxing returns, nothing is more surprising than the return of retired heavyweight contender JD “The Natural” Chapman (29-0).

Born John David Chapman in March of 1983, Chapman did not fight as an amateur. Instead, he started fighting in Toughman Contest competitions before he turned pro in 2002. He chose the name “The Natural” as Chapman hails from Arkansas, “The Natural State”.

JD did many of his early professional fights close to home, namely as part of the Slugout Series promoted by Stacy “Goodnight” Goodson. Goodson and Scott Hirsch, who were managing Chapman, built Chapman into a heavyweight contender.

In the process, Chapman accumulated 29 wins and 26 knockouts. He beat several notable contenders and gatekeepers. His most notable opponents were Chicago-based Edward Gutierrez who was 15-0-1 coming into the bout, New York veteran John Carlo who possessed a 14-1 record, and fellow undefeated Mid-West prospect Matt Hicks 7-0.

Chapman also captured several regional heavyweight titles including the IBF Southern Regional title, the North American Boxing Council title, the WBC Latino title and the Arkansas State title. Just when it seemed that Chapman was at the cusp of stardom, he hung it all up and rode into the sunset.

At the time of his retirement Chapman was an up and coming contender, and a darling of the boxing press. He received tremendous coverage and exposure in the boxing press as a heavyweight prospect, and was featured on national television. Further, Chapman was rated by just about every major sanctioning body including the lineal sanction body, the WBC,

which gave him a World Rating of 14.

Chapman will return on an untelevised club show this Saturday, June 5, 2021, and in a fight close to where it all begun in his home state of Arkansas. Chapman was called in as a last minute replacement opponent to fight Tony "Kryptonite" Lopez at the Springdale Convention Center.

It will be a clash of big men. Chapman weighed in at 294 lbs, while his opponent Lopez weighed in at 259. It will be a battle of big men as Chapman is 6'5" while Lopez is 6'6".

Although he has had only two professional boxing fights, Lopez is a veteran pugilist with nearly a 100 fights under his belt, spanning multiple combat sports disciplines, Mixed Martial Arts, kickboxing and bare knuckle fighting.

Said JD, "I was only offered the fight on Thursday but decided to take it anyway. Even though I've been off for so long, I was already training for a July event, and I think I'm ready enough. I accepted the fight with such short notice because I just could not pass on the opportunity to get back in the ring. I did not realize how much I missed fighting."

In his prime, Chapman had some high profile trainers, including Michael Moorer, Jeff Mayweather and Norman Wilson. Currently, he is trained by former MMA fighter Brian Foster and Chapman's return is being guided by Edward Mendy of Lion Heart Boxing Productions.