



By EARL WATT

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When DaKeitha West enters the cage Saturday in the Seward County Ag Building, he plans to make sure the crowd feels like they have been to a three-ring circus.

The Showman has taken a year off from activity in the cage, but he has been training for his return, and he will enter the cage at a healthy 185 pounds.

"I've been out for a while," West said. "I'm trying to get back in there. Right now I want to stay fresh."

To make sure he has what it takes Saturday, West has been perfecting his technique both on the ground and in the stand-up, but most importantly he has been pushing himself to be able to go the distance.

"Conditioning is where I got in trouble before," he said. "I was good at takedowns and wrestling, and now I am working on my stand-up."

West feeds off the crowd which is expected to be at a fevered pitch for one of Liberal's better known fighters.

"I love the crowd, the noise and the music," West said. "I want to go out there and have fun. I'm excited."

West won't rush into a bad move. He plans on playing it smart in the cage and picking his moments. But when he sees an opening he plans to "pick the perfect moment and hit them with a big one."

And he doesn't expect to let up.

"I'll just keep punching until he quits," he said. "I'll keep my distance, if it starts to get messy on the ground I'll stand it back up and reset."

But he plans on using the crowd to his advantage.

"I will keep the crowd involved," he said. "I always give them a little feedback."

Doors to the Battle for the Belt open at 5 p.m. with Pankration fights to start at 6 p.m. and adult fights at 7 p.m.

Tickets are available at Rine's American Freestyle Karate or by calling 626-KICK. Tickets can also be purchased online at cagetix.com.