

All right.

Quick break to tell you about another podcast that we're interested in right now, HubSpot just launched a Shark Tank rewatch podcast called Another Bite.

Every week, the hosts relive the latest and greatest pitches from Shark Tank, from Squatty Potty to the Mench on a Bench to Ring Doorbell, and they break down why these pitches were winners or losers, and each company's go-to-market strategy, branding, pricing, valuation, everything.

Basically all the things you want to know about how to survive the tank and scale your company on your own.

If you want to give it a listen, you can find Another Bite on whatever podcast app you listen to, like Apple or Spotify or whatever you're using right now.

All right.

Back to the show.

What's up, everyone?

This is a special episode with Ben Askren.

If you don't know who Ben Askren is, he is one of the most famous MMA fighters in the world.

He was an Olympic wrestler.

He was in the UFC.

He's got his own podcast, his own doing a whole bunch of stuff, not launching a course, doing some cool stuff.

He's one of the more interesting guys to talk to, he got famous because he was great in kind of his interviews during the UFC.

So me and Sam were big MMA and UFC nerds, and we love this stuff.

So we were pumped.

You can probably hear it in our voice during the interview.

We were pumped for this one.

I got up early.

I did some research.

I showered.

I was excited for this.

We've had billionaires on here, but I was way more excited to talk to Ben Askren.

So hope you guys enjoy.

We talk a little bit about dealing with fear.

These guys, they walk out in their underwear to fight another person who they've been talking trash to for the last two months with millions of dollars on the line, millions of people watching and a stadium full of people just watching them sort of hand-to-hand combat.

So it's an incredibly intense pressure that very few people get to experience.

So we asked Ben about how did he deal with fear?

How did he get good at the active competition?

What is he doing post career?

What does an athlete do?

How do they leverage their brand to build a business afterwards?

And then he's also kind of active in the crypto space.

So we talked a little bit about cryptocurrencies at the very end.

But I hope you guys enjoy this interview.

Anytime we just get a cool guest on who is somebody who's their kind of world class at whatever they do, we're going to jump on that opportunity.

So this is no different.

Enjoy this episode with Ben Askren.

Guys, we have Ben Askren today.

If you're a UFC fan, which Sean and I both are, and Abreu is as well, then you absolutely know who he is.

But if you're not a fan, I'm going to give background here.

So Ben, you went to the Olympics, right?

Yeah, 2008.

So Ben was an Olympic wrestler.

He was famous in my home state of Missouri as a wrestler, even when I was in high school.

Everyone talked about the Askren family and them being wrestlers.

And he eventually went to a variety of different, I guess you could describe them to non-UFC fans, leagues in Asia, championships, I think Bellator as well.

Yeah.

Yeah.

So I fought mainly, well, so I fought my first three fights in small promotions, then I fought in Bellator for four years, and then I fought in one championship for four years.

I retired at the end of my run with one championship, and then I un-retired when I got traded at the UFC.

Yeah.

So we came to the UFC about two years ago, and it was a big deal.

Ben was on Joe Rogan, and everyone said that this was the guy that wasn't in the UFC, and he was the best guy that wasn't in the UFC, and why the hell isn't he in the UFC?

And so we came to the UFC and caused a whole bunch of ruckus, which we'll get into.

And he's also kind of like a big deal in the crypto space, and he's kind of like a big deal in like stoicism.

He's just kind of like a weird, interesting person.

And I met Ben about six or something months ago on Twitter.

We just became buddies on Twitter, and we started talking, and Ben is thinking about launching a course.

And I've just been giving him feedback, and we've just been shooting the shit, and we just said, you know, Ben, come on the podcast.

So that's kind of how we kind of got to where we are.

Yeah.

So yeah, my life has been interesting.

I've done a lot of things besides fighting.

I have a lot going on right now, podcasting.

My brother and I own five wrestling academies.

We own a couple of the buildings.

So I've got my hand in a wide variety of things.

I'm really interested in, you know, social media, content creation, that type of thing. Really, really interest me a lot.

And obviously, you know, I got interested in business land.

I took zero business classes, but obviously when I decided to start a business in 2011 with AWA, I got more interested.

Now it's become like a fascination to me.

And you know, actually, I tell my wife, so when I was younger, I would literally work out like every single day, and if I went on vacation and I didn't have my workout, I'd start getting a little nutty.

And she'd be like, bro, you need to go work out.

Like, you know, leave, go do something.

And now it's kind of the opposite, like the obsession over business and finance because I feel like I've, you know, 12 years, 15 years late to the party because I didn't do any of it in college.

And so I feel like now I'm just trying to rapidly absorb as much as I can to understand more and more about business, finance, and the ways the world really works.

So if you were like black belt level, I know there's not black belt in wrestling, but if you were like black belt level at wrestling, which is essentially your Olympic wrestler, you kind of invented your own brand of wrestling really.

Yes.

You had mastery in that.

Now with, you know, your post UFC career, I think you retired.

Was it just a year ago?

Like it's not.

It was.

Yeah.

Last November.

So yeah.

Less than a year.

Less than a year.

Where do you say you're at on the business side of things?

Well, so we started our business 2011.

My brother and I did with our high school wrestling coach.

At that point in time, I wasn't even, I didn't even have the intention of working there.

I was actually living in Arizona when we decided to open the first one.

There is a good MMA gym here called Rupasport.

And so I decided to move back in the summer of 2011, so I was like three or four months after the gym opened and you know what, it's just fun.

It's fun to be there.

I love coaching wrestling.

I love working with the kids.

And then on top of that, the business side, business side started being fun for me also.

So we opened up gym number two and 2013 and gym number three and 2017.

And then we just obviously this spring has been real by coronavirus, but we've essentially

opened up gym four and gym five this spring.

And five is coming to come online in like a month or two, but you know, it's, it's getting there.

It's been slowed down by Corona.

So yeah.

So the business side has been fun.

And then obviously I've, I've kind of mentioned in other aspects of business also.

So I don't know, we'll say purple belt, maybe blue belt, purple belt.

I think I'm learning like a really good blue belt is just, you got to put in that time to get the purple.

Yeah.

So when you went into the UFC now, this is not a knock on you, but I would say you were probably the least athletic, great MMA fighter.

Would you, would you agree with that?

Um, yeah.

I mean, for elite level wrestling or elite level mixed martial arts for your traditional athletic abilities, you know, strength, speed, et cetera, et cetera.

I think I would score very, very low compared to most of my peers.

I do think I have some, some things that are kind of a little harder to see.

You know, one of them that I've been talking about is proprioception, like understanding where your body is in space and wrestling specifically.

I think that is huge.

And whether I came out of the womb like that, or whether I learned that from being on the mat just for many, many, many hours.

That's one thing with that's something, and then I have this really weird like isometric strength.

And again, I think that's probably been developed through wrestling, but I can,

What is isometric?

That's like grip strength.

Like squeezing, holding.

Yes.

I've seen a video of you.

I don't know if this was like a, if it was a doctored, I don't know if this is a viral video, but there's a video on the internet.

If you haven't seen this, you probably haven't, but go look it up.

If you're listening to this, Ben Ashgren YouTube watermelons and just, he's squeezing a watermelon, like not with any like big buildup.

You're just holding it and you start to squeeze and then you just crush two watermelons simultaneously,

which is kind of insane.

And then most people can't do that.

Most even, even most MMA wrestlers couldn't do that.

Correct?

They can, they can know.

I actually saw it.

So what, there was a really good wrestler.

I mean, we're talking about, I think the three time national champion and he did want it.

I think it was like fourth of July or somewhere around there.

And so I saw him do one.

I said, F that I'm going to go by two, I'm going to do two and I did two and you know,

I thought obviously I had the social media following.

So, you know, my, my video went, went quite viral, but yeah, I've done it a few other times since then when people challenged me to back it up cause they, you know, they thought I was lying or being fraudulent.

So they'll bring a watermelon to squeeze it and I've popped it a few more times.

And just to give the listener even more perspective, Ben, you like in the, in shot, the world that Sean and I, in the UFC world, you're like huge deal.

So how can I give perspective to the, to the listeners?

So you have what other, maybe two million social followers.

I know, man, you're overriding me.

I have, I'm at, I'm at 325 on Twitter and I'm like a little over 600 on Instagram.

So a million.

Yeah.

Okay.

So a million.

But my, my, it's, uh, my Twitter following is fairly, fairly rabid.

I get quite a bit of interaction.

Um, I have a lot of fun.

I love the Twitter medium.

I don't really love Facebook or Instagram or I don't do Snapchat at all, uh, but I love like the wittiness and you know, the one thing I love about Twitter is the Galatarien anyone can speak.

Anyone can get into conversation and for what it's worth.

I think you can find out whether people are full of shit and whether they're smart pretty damn quickly.

Right.

Yeah.

It's better, better background check than anything else.

Let's just go scroll through the timeline and you know, I'm glad you're on the pod because there's a lot of great like, let's say athletes or especially UFC fighters that me and Sam would be big fans of, but I wouldn't necessarily want on the podcast like, okay, I'd want Dana on.

I'd want probably kind of a Gregor on, but that's a short list.

You're right there with it.

It's like, cool.

Nate Diaz is a great fighter.

Would not make for a great podcast.

And so we had, and we had Lance Armstrong on and that he, not a fighter, but he, well,

he's amazing.

He's wonderful.

He was very real.

And I think for somebody like that, you know, we're going to talk a little bit about kind of your, one of the most infamous moments for you, but like for Lance, he obviously has, you know, very polarizing personality.

And I don't know if it's just because it's been many years, but he just sat down and just shot the shit with no filter and people loved it.

And I loved it because, and I don't know if he just is tired of giving a fuck.

And he's like, okay, I don't need to like this anymore.

It's been 10 years or whatever.

But, you know, that was really great, but I'm glad you're here because you can tell us about kind of like two different worlds, right?

So there's the like, how to be a great athlete world.

There's the business world, but there's another world, which is about a year ago today.

And you know, sorry for bringing it up, but it's all good.

I did my hell water interview about it this morning.

Yes.

So I'll just put out a tweet, I'll read your tweet about it, which was, imagine the most embarrassing moment of your life getting replayed incessantly on Twitter.

So for those who don't know about a year ago, you had a big fight.

I was actually in the arena in Vegas and you were fighting this guy.

You guys had talked a bunch of shit to each other and it was a huge buildup.

And then the fight starts and he sprints at you.

You do what you do best, which is you go for a wrestling takedown.

He does this crazy flying knee knocks you out in five seconds and it looked horrible.

It looked awful.

I was like in tears when it happened.

I was like, oh my God.

Sam was like crying.

I was just in shock.

I was devastated.

I was in the arena.

And so then of course, because you were a high profile guy and because you talked a lot of shit beforehand, you know, Twitter tried to give it back to you.

So tell, tell me about like, and then I, and then I gave it back to Twitter, right?

I own those trolls.

And you did.

So, okay.

So if you were going to write, you had a very unique experience, right?

Like, yeah, if you were going to sort of write the book or give the playbook on dealing with, you know, your worst nightmare, your public public humiliation, dealing with it, what are the, what are the different steps or different stages that you went through?

Well, so funny enough, so Sam, we talked about Sam encouraged me to do a course, my course

that is coming out and I taped it last Monday.

So we're doing a new website for me and then we are the editing stages of the videos.

But I've had this passion interest in sports psychology for many years and I was thought

I would write a book.

And so it's going to come in video format, which is probably I think more 2020 than writing a book.

Right.

And I suck at writing.

So it's going to be much easier.

I'm not going to talk a lot about that failure, but you know, we can kind of circle back to

Lance and, and this is, I actually said this, I was literally talking to Ariel about this this morning.

I think it's one of the reasons that George is getting over so well.

It's authenticity is highly valued and in 2020 where everything's on social media, man, it's pretty easy to figure out really quick if someone's being authentic or if they're being a fraud.

And you know, Marty, the other guy was fighting for the title at Welta Wave.

I think, you know, I knew him before he was kind of a big deal.

And that person and the person that are, you know, who he is now is just, it's just not not the same thing at all.

And so I think with Lance, you know, he probably had all those years built up of having to kind of be inauthentic and you can tell he just like a dude that just wants to act normal.

And I think like, you know, obviously you watch the doc on ESPN 30 for 30, it's like that authenticity is just coming out and people appreciate it.

And I really thought, I love the doc.

I thought he did a great job of saying, listen, I f'd up, I was bad to this person.

I was bad to that person.

And it just felt like he was just saying it like it was and people love that.

And so, you know, that, that's for me is just like, just be authentic and one of the biggest things I talk about in the course coming up is that you don't want to tell your ego to the outcome.

And when that is the case, it leads to a whole bunch of bad things, but that's my ego was tied to the outcome where they get knocked down five seconds or whether I win and then I fight for the title next time.

I'm the same dude as before that five seconds.

And how many MMA fights have you had?

I had two.

I'm retired.

Obviously I had 21, 19 wins, two losses.

What was the most amount of live people at one of your fights and what was the most amount of viewers or, and is there any numbers?

Yeah.

People watch that.

Your second to last fight.

Well, that went on a hundred billion.

Yeah.

I, so that, that, that has probably watched, I mean, a hundred billion is probably a low estimate of how many times that, like impressions.

Yeah.

Impressions.

Yeah.

So I would say, you know, one championship did a great job of selling out arenas.

So Bellator, my, my last fight in Bellator, they were starting to do larger arenas using mechs.

I think it was 6,000 seats.

It was sold out.

One championship, every fight I fought in one championship was sold out.

And then obviously UFC has, has great crowds as well.

So many of my last 10, 11 fights were fought in front of sold out arenas.

So 10 to 20,000 maybe.

And then in the hundreds of thousands for pay per views.

And then if you add in illegal streamers, then we're talking a lot more than that.

And so, yes, a lot more.

So millions of views.

And when we talk about business a lot, I, we always say, or I always say that launching in building shit intellectually, it's not that hard, but emotionally it's quite challenging to overcome like fear.

And I remember the hustle, we launched this ideation boot camp and I was texting, I think you the day before I was like, Oh my God, I'm so fucking afraid.

Like I'm so nervous about this.

And sometimes I think like, I'm like, well, Lewis and Clark just traveled the country where they didn't even know where they were going for three years and they did it.

No idea.

Like launching this course.

It's not a big deal.

And then other times I'm like, Ben or all these other guys like go in and fight to the death potentially in front of millions of like millions of people in your underwear, in your underwear.

And I'm like, I can launch a stupid frickin thing.

Like I'm sitting at my desk and I like complained about my back hurts because I get to sit down all the time.

What's that feel like when you are preparing for something?

And what's it feel like?

Like when I ran track and field in college, I remember like 30 minutes before a race when you're just sitting down after you warmed up, you're like, I don't want to fucking do this.

God, this sucks.

What am I doing?

I'm quitting.

This is my last time.

What, like, what, what's that like 30 minutes in the backstage when you're just waiting?

Yeah.

So, I mean, I, I've been, I guess, like, I don't say fighting, but wrestling, you know, with the Wisconsin High School State tournament is 15,000 fans sold out.

So, I mean, I was doing that as a 14 year old, the end state tournament, which I made the finals all four years in, that's 20,000 fans sold out every, every single year.

And so, you know, I don't want to say it's normal to me, but, but it kind of is at the same time.

I'm doing it for all of my adult life.

And, you know, I guess I talk about this in the course too, but finding what works best for you.

And for me, I'm an overthinker and I learned that at a really early age, and I had a coach that was, you know, kind of gave me some insight into that because he was a similar way.

And that's the biggest thing that helped me is, is I, I find my zone, I take my mind off of, you know, whatever task is, is ahead because, you know, that, that 30 minutes to an hour that nothing's going to happen, you're not going to make anything better or worse.

You're not going to figure out something magical thing in that, in that period of time.

So for me, it's just about staying relaxed and enjoying the moment and getting, getting ready to compete as hard as I can compete.

So practically, how do you do that?

Like what did you, what did you listen to music?

Did you watch a TV show?

Did you just sleep?

What, what did you try to do in the back before the fights?

I always have, I always have people I enjoy with me in my corners.

I mean, I tell kids this cause I'm like, listen, dude, I put my money where my mouth is.

I'm not just telling you this and I'm trying to say some fluff bullshit.

Like I fought what, nine times in Asia, eight times, I don't know, a bunch of times in Asia.

I would fly someone there.

That was just my buddy to just bullshit with me in the locker room because I value my mental preparation so much.

So it's like, I'm not just telling you, like, this is what you should do.

Like I spent my money.

I put my money where my mouth is to fly someone to Asia, who's just my buddy who wasn't necessarily

there as a coach, but that would just, you know, get me in the right frame of mind to compete.

Your height, man, your flavor, Flav.

And do you, was there an element of fear?

I mean, like you're retired.

You don't have to be that tough anymore.

You don't have to be tough anymore.

Was it like a, like, I don't want to be here.

I don't want to do it because like I listen to other fighters and fail and Donald and the other guy, they're like, I'm going to, like they throw up ahead of time.

They're so fearful.

I don't know.

I've never had those feelings.

You know, when I listen to people talk about that, I actually think like, I can't really relate to you right now.

Like I'm telling you guys, I'm not, I'm not, I'm not retired, I'm not trying to be a tough guy.

I genuinely enjoyed it.

I really did.

I mean, like, you know, people say, what do you miss?

It's like, there's a lot of shit I don't miss.

Like I don't miss training.

But if I could like relive that preparation and walking to the cage, like, or, you know, or walking to the NCAA finals, man, big moments like that, like, dude, that's feelings that you, you only get a few times in life, you know, like, if I could wake up and every morning I went down to my podcast in the morning, there was fucking 20,000 people cheering.

I thought, oh, yeah, I'm going to get it.

You know, it would be, it would be exciting.

So for me, I always felt that way about it.

Like I always felt really positively.

I always enjoyed that.

I never had those negative feelings.

And I, you know what, I guess I could probably have a deep conversation, you know, sports psychology wise.

I don't know, I don't know necessarily what they were fearing.

You know, was it fear of being injured?

Was it fear of failure?

Like what, what was the fear of that was causing those?

Well, I think it goes, I think that we all have the same thing, it's more failure and then secondary in your sport is getting hurt.

I mean, I mean, I think it's a fear of, I remember when I, which is a smaller scale, when I used to race in university for track and field, I was like, I have just set my hopes and dreams on this outcome.

And I don't break this time, I am going to be so disappointed in myself.

Yeah.

Same thing with business.

It's like, I want to, I want to be great.

I want to be rich.

I want to prove to everyone I have what it takes.

And it's like, if this doesn't work, I'm fucked.

And did you have like rituals that you did beforehand?

So you had your buddy come shoot the show?

I think rituals are bad.

I think they're very counterproductive because they don't really provide a purpose.

The one purpose they would somehow provide is to get yourself mentally prepared to do whatever it is that you need to do.

But then what if it doesn't happen, right?

What if you saw it needs you to come pee?

What if something, you know, what if there's some way that you can't, whatever your ritual is, what if there's some way that you can't execute it, does that mean you can't actually compete?

And the answer is no, that's dumb.

Obviously you can go compete.

But some people build those rituals up or those good luck charms up so much that it actually hurts them when they're going, when, yeah.

And so it's like, you know, generally speaking, I know, I know where I want to be mentally.

So it's like, I want to have, you know, someone that I'm just going to shoot the shit with.

But having like a very specific ritual or a pair of socks or, right, you know, something like that or a specific song or something.

I just think I think those things are becomes a weakness.

It becomes a weakness.

He has a vulnerability for sure.

Connor has this phrase.

He says, superstition is a code word for fear.

I had never heard anybody knocking superstitions.

You're the second person I've ever heard sort of knocking those for that same reason.

He also did something that I don't know if you've ever done.

It sounds like you didn't really put too much practice into this, but I know before the fight with Floyd, they did several like simulation days where they would simulate fight day like at the same time we're going to arrive at your hands wrapped, sit in the back, do nothing, come out.

There's a ref who you don't know.

And there's an opponent on the other side that you don't like and they try to simulate the feelings of that.

I found that very interesting because, you know, if I'm going to give a big pitch to an investor, I'm going to go try to raise \$15 million, these are things you don't get a lot of reps at.

So you kind of have to fake those reps as best as you can and under pressure because if you just do the pitch in your head, looking at your slide deck, while you're sitting in your boxers in your bedroom, it's not the same as that.

So did you ever try to mimic competition in that way?

No, I didn't, but that doesn't value.

And so we'll go with that.

So I think competing is a skill.

Fighting in and of itself, right? So wrestling is a skill, fighting is a skill, but competing is a skill, right?

It's a separate skill.

Okay.

It's a separate skill in and of itself.

What do you want to call it?

Competing or performing?

Kind of, you know, same genre.

It's a skill.

And so it's like, you know, finding out that I compete best when I relax.

Like that's the important thing to find out about yourself.

Now one of the, you know, wrestlers are the most successful people in mixed martial art without a shadow of a doubt.

And, you know, part of that, I think is obviously the technical part where we can control what the fight happens.

But the other thing is that most wrestlers, by the time they get out of college, from their childhood up, they'll probably have a thousand plus matches.

And like I said, I was wrestling in front of 15,000 people at the Cole Center in Madison when I was in high school.

I was competing as 20,000 people are in front of 20,000 people at the NCAA tournament every single year.

Like I got those big moments.

I got a lot of them.

Right.

And so before I ever fought, before I ever stepped in the cage, I had, I had thousands of competitions and I had, we'll say hundreds of very big matches.

We're a boxing, a box, someone with a boxing base is not going to have anywhere near that volume.

Or MMA.

Yeah.

MMA.

No.

Jujitsu.

No.

Taekwondo.

You know, all that stuff.

No.

You're just not going to, you're not going to get that volume.

So yeah, I mean, yeah, I think you're totally right.

It's like, you need to figure out how you compete or how you perform well, you know, you know, like a speech.

Yeah.

You need to put yourself in as many as high pressure moments.

I mean, one thing I would, I would do, I still, I still do some times, but I would think I'm actually relatively good at it now.

When I want to start becoming a better speaker, when I started podcasting and I tell people

to do this all the time, do Instagram lives, do Facebook lives.

Why?

Because listen, you don't even do, you have to figure out, you're going to f up and you just got to keep on rolling.

You can't say, no, cut it, cut it.

No, you just got to keep going.

Right.

So you have to, you have to figure out how to deal with it.

And then also there's all the idiots on the, on the thing saying like, hey, man, you suck, you know, heckling you.

So you have to deal, you have to process all of that while you're going live.

And I think it's a really, really good tactic for people to learn how to speak.

Just kind of on the spot and roll with things.

How have you translated this?

So like I said, I messaged you before we were launching something.

I was like, oh, fuck, this is scary.

How, and, and this is my world, right?

Launching businesses.

How has this, those reps of wrestling and fighting translated into your ability to deal with this stuff for launching businesses?

So you have five, you have five gyms, you, you're a real estate guy.

Now you're launching digital stuff.

How has that fear or that, that ability to handle that translated into business?

Yeah.

I mean, so again, I think now this is going to be like one of my psychology slash sports psychology thoughts.

I think being so, I just, I said, you know, wrestling skill, I think competition slash performance, I think that, that's a skill in itself.

The other thing that I think is a skill is being successful, like literally understanding how to be good at something.

I think that is a skill.

And, you know, like I always joke with my kids about like, who you think I just teach you a single leg and you, and you're good at one time.

You know, like you have to do it many, many, many times.

So, you know, there's all these tactics that go into being successful at something.

And so like when you start wrestling, like, I know I'm going to have to put a lot of time in, period.

There's, I'm not going to go be good at real estate or content creation without putting time in.

I will have to in fact put time in, right?

I will have to overcome adversity.

I will have to be creative at time, points of time, right?

There's all these things that are falling in place to me being successful.

I think you can use a blueprint, essentially a blueprint and kind of cross it over.

And now are there certain tactics differently you might take into business?

Sure.

I think it's roughly the same from one field to another.

Being successful is a skill.

Sean, have you read the book, Mastery by Robert Green?

No.

No, but I read, I loved 48 Laws of Power.

That was, I believe I've read that on your recommendation and it was outstanding.

This guy, his name's Robert Green.

He's almost a historian slash philosopher, more so than author and he's got this wonderful book that changed my life.

It's called Mastery.

He wrote 48 Laws of Power, which is like a modern version of Art of War.

And he has this book called Mastery and it changed my life and it was just about that same thing of like, you have to get reps in and you have to master a skill set because if you master a skill set, you're not mastering that skill set.

You're mastering being great.

Yeah.

There's a, there's a great little story.

It's a little bit long, but bear with me.

It's good.

So, so average person, here's what the average person does.

Average person gets excited about racquetball and this is stolen from Tony Robbins think but it's good.

I remember it five years later because it was that good.

So average person decides they're going to play racquetball, go to the gym, check out the equipment.

They start playing.

This is a blast.

They're smashing the ball against the wall, having a great time.

They go home.

They're like, Oh my God, I love racquetball.

They start telling their friends how they play racquetball.

They go online.

They order all the gear because, you know, if you're going to do something, you better order all the best gear right away and they go back the next day and they start doing it, but they start playing against somebody who actually knows how to play racquetball.

And all of a sudden they're not smashing the ball against the wall anymore.

This person's placing the ball in spots that they can't hit sometimes and this person starts getting frustrated.

And so a week goes by, two weeks go by and they're just getting, they're not, they're not beating this person.

And so they're like, you know what, racquetball, this is a stupid fucking sport.

Like box, you know, why do I have to wear these goggles?

This racket is small.
It's like a children's racket.
I'm going to go play a real man's sport.
I'm going to go play tennis.
I'm going to get out of this box.
Everything pattern happens.
First week is awesome.
They're having blast.
They order all the gear.
They look like Roger Federer.
They start playing with somebody who knows how to play tennis and all of a sudden, you know, they're sweating, they're sliding, they're hitting into the net.
They can't get over it.
And then they're like, you know what, this is a stupid sport.
Why am I out here, you know, you know, in the sun baking around this thing and the stupid net is in my way.
I need a free range sport and they go to play golf.
And the first day they play golf, they just say, fuck, golf doesn't even give you that initial sense.
And he talks about it.
He's like, there's three people in this world.
There's a dabbler and a dabbler is going to do exactly that.
They're just going to go into each thing and they're going to get 20% of the way in and then they're going to give up when they hit adversity.
And then there's the achiever grinder and this is where a lot of people land, which is they're used to being successful and so they just try to grit their teeth and grind through everything and they try to get through the pain at all times and they sort of become a kind of masochistic about the pain and they're stressed the whole time.
They actually cause it a stressor achiever and so they're stressed the whole time.
They don't enjoy it and that's where most people, even successful people land, but they have no fulfillment, but they do have success.
And then the last group, which are the masters, the masters enjoy it.
They know this is going to take a long time, which is what you said, Ben.
They know that there's this initial hype curve and then the plateaus will come.
They always come.
Yeah.
And when the plateau comes, they are not surprised.
They're not offended.
They meet the plateau like an old friend and they're like, ah, it's you.
I expected to see you soon.
Here you are.
Okay.
Now I know how to deal with plateaus.
And one of the big things is like dealing with plateau.

So like for our podcast, we've grown this thing into millions of downloads in one year, but now it's plateaued actually.

And we have to figure out, we can't be a surprised or upset.

We got to figure out how to deal with those plateaus.

So has that applied to you in your life about dealing with those plateaus?

I think that I think the success is always like a step function, right?

It's not like everyone ever wants it to be like this.

They do one thing here and they get one thing here.

One thing here.

You know what?

It's a regular slope line, but it's more like you do a whole bunch of work and you get nothing and then all of a sudden when they boom, you're up here.

You do a whole bunch of work.

You're nothing.

Boom.

Then you're all of a sudden you're up here.

But you know, kind of what year I've never heard someone term it the way you termed it, but it actually really made me think a lot about my sales pitch, my failure course.

And I said, when you meet failure, there's really three things that you can do when I talk deeply about all of them.

Number one is dig in, right?

So you dig in and you work harder.

And then like you said, that is the option that most people choose because it's relatively easy.

You know, it's not very hard.

Number two, you could pivot and you can quit and do something else, which is what you talked about in the first part at Dabler, right?

And sometimes it is good to pivot, right?

I mean, I talk about, I actually bring up the Netflix blockbuster story and my thing and like Netflix pivoted to digital streaming at the perfect time.

Not too late, not too early, just at the right time.

And then the third thing you could do is innovate and you know, innovate and pivot can kind of be confused.

Like there's some gray area there, but for me, innovation, it doesn't mean creating something new, which, you know, I did in wrestling, right?

So innovation could mean creating something new, but it could also just mean doing something new for you, right?

And so like, I bring up a couple of stories in the course and that's like, okay, one of the times I had to create some new shit, right?

And I did, right?

But another time it was just like, there was just this one really basic skill that I wasn't doing and I was just missing it.

And so for me, innovating was bringing that basic skill and figuring out how to do it really, really well, innovating who I was as a wrestler.

And so yeah, I think that's kind of like the three tactics you can take when you see failure. And you know, obviously if you're going to be good at something, there's going to be kind of a combination of all three.

Sometimes you're going to do one, sometimes you do the other, sometimes you do the third one.

Right.

You know, obviously pivoting can't happen too frequently or you never get anywhere.

So to get to the business stuff, you told me your goal was to be like Tony Robbins, but for this niche, like your sports and Tony Robbins.

You were supposed to say that one.

Well, I don't know if I said that was my goal.

I don't remember how I said it.

Don't take it verbatim.

Verbatim, sure.

Tony Robbins is this freaking savage.

So Tony Robbins, I think, I bet you that cumulatively his business or in some, I bet you his business is probably do two or \$300 million a year in sales.

Do you think so?

Yeah.

He says at the events that he does, his businesses do over 500 million in sales.

I don't personally believe that maybe that's like some enterprise value.

Yeah, exactly.

But like clearly his core thing, which is like the workshops and then his either books or audio tapes back in the day, those have clearly grossed over \$100 million.

No doubt.

And he's the Michael Jordan of that field of self-improvement.

So Ben, what, first of all, can I clarify my statement, Sean, or what I think I said.

I mean, so we were talking about, you know, getting into this and, you know, me doing this course, which is, you know, I don't want to say you pushed me, but you pushed me in a good way.

Like I need, I needed to kick in the ass to go do it.

And I, you know, I've been, I first, I almost, I did, I wrote a book with a PhD in sports psych in 2007.

It just wasn't very good.

So right, this is kind of a long time coming.

I always thought I was going to get into this and I have all these thoughts on, you know, success and sports psych and kind of how they tie together.

And I always want to do something in this field and I just hadn't gotten there yet.

And I think I have a lot of ideas that could help people.

So yes, you gave me the kick in the butt.

And I think, I think you said something like, you know, what, what, where would you take this or what are you going to do?

And it's like, well, I'm not sure, but, but, you know, like, if I want to do something, I want to be the best at it.

If I'm going to do it, I'm going to try to be the best.
Just like everything else I've done in my life, you know, I tried to be the best wrestler.
I got pretty far.
I tried to be the best MMA fighter I got pretty far.
You know, I'm trying to have the best wrestling academy system in America.
We were probably not all that far off being number one yet, you know, right now.
So it's like, when I attack something, I attack it all the way in and I want to be the best.
And, you know, for, I don't know what you call it, the life coaching performance, coaching like Tony Robbins, he is freaking outstanding.
So that's kind of like what I think I was thinking with Sam.
Yes.
It was, I, it was an oversimplified thing though.
And so I want to ask you like what interests you're right now in the space.
Before that, even that I want to set the stage, which is as a, an MMA guy, like, is that a good living?
No, for me, it was for, for most people know, I mean, right?
I got lucky.
I won 19 fights.
I don't want to say I got lucky.
I was good.
And I, you know, sure, some breaks came my way and I, I was 19.
I didn't lose for 10 years, right?
And so I, and people enjoy my personality.
So I got to end up making quite a bit of money.
And there's a handful of people who make quite a bit of money, but then you see someone like Mike Perry, who is he, he's not a nobody.
He's a pretty damn good fighter.
He's a fairly big name and this man's got zero dollars to his name and owns the government a whole bunch of money.
Right.
So like a guy like you, so let's say you're in the top 1% where you are in the top 1%.
I don't know how many, maybe dozens or a dozen people at your level.
Can the guys in UFC, like you, can you net pre-tax a million dollars a year, seven figures a year?
Yeah.
There are some that can do that and there's not a, not a, the number's not big.
I will, you know, if I'm guessing 20, maybe, maybe there's a guess off top of my head.
And obviously you can only, you know, can only compete for so long and it does take you a while to build up.
And usually, you know, it's kind of like a step function.
Like he said, like once you get to a certain level, they're not probably not going to drop you back down.
Even like, you know, it's gross, but chocolate, L and T or T's when they fought this year, I think they made \$400,000 or something.

But they're both old and terrible now.
And that was, it was a shame to watch them still fighting.
But you know, one of the things, again, I'm going to go back to my course and talk about failure.
It's like, listen, you're only going to fight for so long.
And one of the things that rage on these fighters, they had this like burn the boat mentality.
It's like, listen, you dumbasses, if you get to 35 and you want to retire and you have nothing to do, literally you have no other skills.
You have nothing built up.
Dude, you're going to have to back in the cage.
You're going to run out of money.
You're going to get used to a certain standard of living.
You're also going to have almost zero income and you're going to end up back in the cage.
So that pivot move when you decide to retire fighting, you have to pivot into something.
You can't pivot into nothing, right?
You have to at some point decide, Hey, I'm done with this.
I'm going to do something else.
You know, the guy I bring up that's on the bad side is BJ Penn.
I love BJ Penn.
He's one of my best fighters.
See him.
He went one and nine, one and eight in his last nine.
And Dayton literally said, bro, I'm not giving you another fight.
So a guy like, well, let's use you.
For example, I mean, were you able to earn enough from fighting that you're like, I'm set for life?
No.
Heck, no.
God, no.
Okay.
I'd be set for like two years or a year maybe.
No shit.
Only two years, you think?
If I are no other money whatsoever when I'm done.
Yeah.
Yeah.
A couple of years.
I mean, I don't live ostentatiously, but I don't, I don't live like a peasant either.
You know, I live in a nice house, but I, you know, I don't say buy like designer clothes.
Right.
I would say I have, I live at a fairly high standard.
I mean, if I, if I wanted to buy like an RV and live out of RV, then yeah, maybe I probably would have been separate life that way.
Negotiating with the UFC seems damn near impossible because the fighters have pretty

much no leverage.

So to give people a sense, because most people are like, I thought athletes are rich.

It's like, yeah, if you're in the NBA or the NFL, even sure you.

But hold on, guys, hold on, like 60% of those guys go bankrupt.

Well, they go bankrupt afterwards.

We're talking about like active, not making any money, right?

The, but the guys, he made it all, he just spent it all.

Well, I guess the thing is like, you know, the, like the top level, the top level fighters

like, you know, the John Jones and the Connors, they'll, they'll make in the millions.

And then the, the sort of the middle class is way lower than the middle class of any other league.

And the reason why it's like structural, right?

So first.

Yes.

They're not independent contractors.

They're not, they're not employees or guaranteed.

They have no guaranteed deals.

They only get paid if they fight and you can get hurt, the UFC can offer you shitty fights that you want to turn down and they'll say, Hey, no problem.

Great.

I offered you my fight.

I did my tax your obligation.

You don't want to turn up fight.

You can't leave and go to another, uh, like league in most cases because they signed to these like seven, seven fight deals.

You got to finish your deal in order to, to leave.

So you have basically no leverage against the UFC unless you're such a big name that you draw pay-per-views, which I think you'd built yourself into, right?

You did.

But I never, I never got pay-per-view points ever, but you, but you had some leverage with the UFC because you were at least famous.

People wanted to watch you fight.

And so even if you didn't get the points, whatever deal you did negotiate was better than like the, even the average 19 and 0 fighter, whatever that means, like even the average great fighter won't make the type of money you made because you built a personal brand.

Yes.

That's true.

And was that intentional?

Or that just what happened?

Yeah.

And if I'm going to do this, I might as well make some money doing it, but you know, Mike Perry would be, and so obviously the reason that bottom of the barrel is like to be a pro MMA fighter, both of you guys could do it.

Here's the deal.

All you got to do is be willing to get paid to get your ass kicked, right?

And so we're talking the bottom of the barrel, the baseline salary in the UFC is 10 and 10.

If you're getting the, getting the UFC, you get 10,000 show up, you get 10,000 to win.

Now that, that is not including anything, right?

You pay your own insurance, you pay your coaches, you pay your manager, you pay everything else out of that.

Right?

You know, and then you get a two and two bump.

That's a standard base UFC contract.

So if you want all three of your fights your first year in the UFC, you go 10 and 10, 12 and 12, 14 and 14.

So you would make cumulatively \$72,000, the four paying insurance, housing, you know, food, coaching, training costs, yeah, all of that stuff, which is, and taxes, which some of these guys, some of them are freaking about taxes.

So you would, yeah, you, you would do all of, you would do all those things, you know?

And so like that's not a good living.

Think about that.

I mean, we'll just taxes alone in some states and we're 50% of that 17,000.

And then you talk about, you know, all the other stuff.

I mean, we're talking that guy is probably clearing 20 and \$25,000 and, and listen, that's the guy who had some success.

That's the guy who won his first three fights in the UFC.

And the reason that number, that 10 and 10 will never go up by that much is like, there's a thousand other dudes, maybe more who are just freaking waiting and praying that the UFC calls their phone and offers them that 10 and 10.

So that 10 and 10 can never go up because it's a supply and demand.

And the supply is, is so enormous that, that it's that base number, unless there's some type of league, it's never going to go up.

So you have five gyms.

What would be good revenue for one wrestling gym?

So let's see.

We can one gym do a million.

No, no, no, no, we can do, I think, I think a quarter million, I think, is going to be where we, where we would have hit this year without Corona and that would be kind of our first two.

And that's, that's the top line revenue.

Yeah.

That's the top line.

Yeah.

So I mean, the hard, obviously, yes, for one gym, the hard part about wrestling, the wrestling gym and just kind of youth athletic spaces, well, they're in school all day.

So really we're very limited by what we could do.

It's, you know, it's five, 30 to nine o'clock at night.

And that, that's it.

You know, so we operate at nights and, you know, maybe a Sunday, obviously we do some classes, but yeah, it's, it's going to be hard to go, you know, I think maybe a maximum is we could get around 300,000 say in sales per year.

I think we'd kind of be like at the very high end of, of what we do per gym.

And so for us, it's going to be more of like, you know, we need to open up a handful of gyms and, and buy the buildings and kind of own the whole space.

And that's going to be, you know, I mean, listen, I don't need a hundred million dollars, Sam.

You know, I said, well, I'm not judging you brother, I'm just, I know, I know, I love picking shit apart.

Yeah.

I don't live ostentatiously.

No, but if I wanted to make a lot of money, if I want to be really rich, I would probably move to New York city and try to do some type of finance crazy to me.

But let me let you could make more literally just a public speaking fees.

You could literally just say Silicon Valley.

Well, you could just say, I'm going to go to Silicon Valley or I'm going to go talk to Pepsi and Nabisco and JP Morgan.

I'm going to give inspirational talks.

I'm Ben Ashken.

I'm a Olympian.

I'll teach you about dealing with fear and I'll teach you that ego is the enemy and you could be getting paid 10, 20 K a pop.

You think so?

I don't.

I literally know people doing that.

Yeah.

Well, give me some gigs, bro.

I get five K to talk.

I could get you to come talk at our company right now and it gets you 10 K for that.

I'm in.

What am I coming?

No, literally, I have several friends who have this as their playbook and you know, they're clearing a lot of money.

And then then on top of that, they say, by the way, I have this course because hey, this was great.

This is a great session.

But obviously I'm Ben Ashken.

I can't be here all the time.

Yeah.

But if you guys want to do this leadership training that's all about blah, blah, blah, then you know, you buy the package that's the, you know, you get Ben in your, in your desktop, you know, every week for the next year.

If you pay an additional 20 K or whatever.

Yeah.

You might have to wear a shirt though, which.

No way.

I'm always me.

I'm not, you know, I'm going to wear flip flops and I'm going to wear a tank top if it's warm enough.

You know, and I kind of told you this Sam is like, um, and maybe it's short-sighted on my side, but you know, I never really thought about going to the public speaking.

I always thought like I would need to have some business success first.

You hit world-class level at something that's enough to be, to go on the circuit basically.

So like a guy to look at is Chris Voss.

I don't know.

Have you ever heard of him?

I feel like I maybe have seen him on Twitter.

So you can check him out on YouTube or whatever.

So this guy's story, he's a, he teaches negotiation.

So he's like, he worked for the FBI.

I think I've watched this guy.

Yeah.

Government job.

You don't make a lot, you know, as a government official or whatever.

So he worked at the FBI, but his, he became world-class at hostage and negotiation.

Yes.

Like for death situations.

Was that the guy who had the book, Sean?

They have a book?

I feel like I've read his book.

Never split the difference.

Never split the difference.

Yes.

I've read his book.

I mean, that's like, uh, many business nerds and myself included put that in the top book of the year in 2019.

And then he goes and he consults for companies and he teaches at Harvard Business School and other places, uh, and he just walks around and he basically says, Hey, I was a world-class negotiator.

I negotiated life or death situations, so I can teach you how to negotiate as a real estate agent.

And he'll go to, he'll go consult for real estate agencies and make, you know, hundreds of thousands of dollars just doing that.

And he doesn't have to have any physical infrastructure or anything.

Yeah.

At least no cost to that.

Now you do have to go on the road a lot, which is kind of a pain in the ass.

Yeah, that's a pain in the butt.

Who knows about the kind of COVID, after COVID, what that's going to look like.

People are doing to be a zoom for now.

Yeah.

Zoom.

Um, yeah, I know, you know what?

I, I looked this book.

I, I, I talked to someone about it and I think I'm watching videos this guy, but I've never read the book.

So I'm going to, I'm going to put it on my list now.

I actually had a goal of reading 25 books this year.

I'm already at 22.

So I'm going to get way past 25.

Um, the best one you read this year.

Oh, okay.

Let me bring up my list.

So I don't, I would say 40 laws of powers is, is relatively half there, but I'm going to get my list.

Hard to read.

It was, that was a very long read.

So I would do, I think three chapters a day or something like that, or three, three laws per day.

Let's see.

You know what's a good one?

What you do is who you are.

But Ben Horowitz, I mean, that's, he's probably a famous guy in your guys community.

He was, that was a pretty outstanding book.

I read, uh, let's see the power of moments by Chip and Dan Heath.

I think that that was a really interesting book and they have a handful of books together that are, that are all relatively good.

The greatest trade ever.

That was a lot of fun.

I was like, I bet against the housing bubble and then he made like, I remember 11 billion dollars on a trader, something totally, totally insane, um, 40 laws of power.

And uh, you know, those are probably the best ones.

Nice.

Yeah.

What, um, okay.

So you, you're, you're going to do this course, um, you're dabbling with the ideas that Sean and I are discussing.

What else, uh, where else is there opportunity in the world?

By the way, guys, have you heard of this thing, Ben and Sean?

Have you heard of this thing called, um, RomWad, range of motion workout of the day?

And so it's an app that I bought, I pay a hundred dollars for it and it, and I just

say I've got tight, tight hips or tight back and it helps me with my range of motion.

They're bringing in something like, uh, 11 million in subscription sales.

No, I have not heard of that, but let's do a brainstorm on it.

If I'm, I have a good one, I have a good one.

I'm so ready to answer your question.

So, and this is, this is actually why I originally called you, I will, I remember you connected me and then this is why I connected with you is that I, I think there's going to be like this independent media thing that comes out like in the next 10 years where everyone's kind of just their own media person.

And so my buddy who founded full of sports, he founded this company called Rockfin.

That's why I, how I connect with Sam and essentially there's this payment algorithm on the blockchain

where you get paid in tokens and so obviously you can cash those tokens in the day you get them for a U S dollar right on exchange, or you can keep them.

And the duality of that gives you the option of earning a dollar, right?

Or you can keep them and you can grow with the value of the company.

So like, you know, and so he has a bunch of patents on this process, but think about Uber, right?

It's the first Uber drivers were paid in tokens, not in dollars, right?

That day they can, they can cash out their tokens if they want for dollars, but if they say, Hey, is Uber thing, I think there's Uber thing is going to be something I'm going to, I'm going to save 20% of all my tokens because in any digital network, the first people in the network provides way more value than the millions first in the network. So those first, and you could do this with YouTube, you could do this with a whole bunch of things, right?

Airbnb, whatever you name it, he pretty much has a digital network.

And so those first drivers in Uber that maybe stored their tokens.

Now when Uber is worth many billions of billions of dollars, the value of their network is now boom, way up, right?

So now these, these are retail drivers who they were a very big part.

They were a very integral part of the value of the network.

Now they have these tokens that are worth, you know, \$5 million instead of having that \$500 that they were, would have originally gotten.

So I think my buddy Martin is really, really onto something.

And that was kind of, you know, I try to connect with Sam because I thought there might be some interest from Sam and you know, Sam's just kind of doing other things.

So it didn't really fit at that point in time, but I think that's going to be a huge business opportunity.

And so I think, I think people, so I can kind of separately, I think there will be a lot of independent media people because so many people are, are so beholden to the sponsors, the shows.

And I think regular legacy media is going down and independent non-traditional media will be going up.

Let me, let me get background on this, Ben, because you're, you're, you're an insider.

And so many people aren't.

So this guy, what was his name?

Martin.

Yes.

Martin.

He was cool dude.

He started this thing called Flow Sports.

Yeah.

Flow Sports is crazy fascinating.

I never thought it would have worked and I actually think the verdict is still out if it's going to be huge or if it's just going to be mildly big and Flow Sports owns something that I was a subscriber to called Flow Track.

They own Flow Wrestling.

I think they own Flow Gymnastics.

There's like 24, I think.

So like non-mainstream sports that have passionate fan bases like Track and Wrestling and you pay \$30 a month, pretty expensive.

Right.

They do it.

Now they only have a yearly package.

It's 150 a year.

That's the only package you can buy.

Okay, so 150 a year and they send these guys out to like high school state championships events, which again, sports nerds like me who, and Ben who like these sports and totally pay for it.

It's pretty great.

I don't know how big that business got.

If I had a guess, I would say 30 million in recurring revenue.

I have no idea.

No, I think I would guess more actually.

I had seen numbers that were bigger.

Yeah.

Wow.

Okay.

I would guess it's bigger and that is just totally a guess.

I don't know.

So they're building up like their own TV station.

Yeah, I think it's definitely bigger.

I think it's definitely bigger, Sam.

Oh, okay.

Well, it could be.

I know that they raised a lot of VC and then eventually private equity, so much of, so I don't know, but my issue is I don't know if it can be big based off of how much money they raised.

I think they raised a hundred million dollars.

I think so.

Like a very large amount.

So you got to have a billion dollar company for that to be interesting to people who gave you a hundred billion dollars.

I think it maybe could be, but the verdict's still out, and so Rockfin, R-O-K-F-I-N, it was started by the co-founder of Flow Sports.

But here's my issue with that then, is Rockfin, they only have 3,500 subscribers and it hasn't fucking grown.

The cool thing about Rockfin is rockfin.com slash dashboard, you can see all their numbers.

They had like pretty good growth when they first started.

In order to make this whole damn thing work, they got to.

It's got to grow.

Yeah.

So it looks like growth stopped in March when Corona happened.

Yeah.

And then obviously the other thing there was they had a really large wrestling base because that was kind of Martin's first connections, but they have picked up a few good people lately.

But you know what, I told you how the optionality of keeping the token or cashing out for a dollar, like I think that's very important.

I think, think about the first thousand creators of YouTube, what their tokens will be worth if they got paid in tokens versus dollars.

Yeah.

A lot.

You would be insanely rich based on the value of YouTube is so valuable that Google won't even put out the numbers on it.

They've gotten a few really good contributors lately, but most people can't yet see the issue with not getting paid in the tokens, right?

It's such a new concept that most people really struggle with that.

And they see that as a negative, not a positive.

So yeah, I mean, obviously Rockfin has some hurdles to overcome, but I think, I think when people wrap their head around, when you like really get it, you're like, Oh my God. Like when you talk about like Uber or YouTube, you're like, Oh, wait, yeah, that makes so much more sense.

Even if say every, every, every dollar you got paid, you save 10 cents of it in the token value.

If you were in one of those early companies, uh, are you early in one of those companies, you would be insanely rich.

And so people don't yet understand the value of the token versus the dollar.

Yeah.

But I get it.

And I think that that's actually quite interesting, but they need to get more freaking users.

I agree.

If I was to dumb down Rockfin, would you say that it's like only fans, but for non, like only fans, but for athletes?

I don't know only fans exact.

You pay money to get this, you pay money to, you pay \$10 a month or however many dollars a month.

But don't you, don't you just pay for that one person?

Yeah.

To that person.

Yeah.

Okay.

So like Rockfin is, it's a bundle, right?

So when you pay the \$10, you, you get everybody, everybody that's on the network, which is, you know, so then, then that will perfect this huge too, right?

It's, it's, if, if Sam and Sean and I have, uh, if I have 10 people and you have 10 people and, and Sean has 10 people and we bundle our subscription, it will get 40 people, right?

And how's the payout?

What do you mean?

Go ahead.

Do they only pay you in tokens?

Like if you want to be, what are you saying you can cash out?

You can cash out.

You can cash out.

If you want, or you can hold.

Yes.

It literally takes 10 minutes, five minutes, right?

So this idea is either going to be like the greatest thing ever or total flop.

And I, and I, I appreciate that.

So there's, so, so I got super interested in this about three years ago, not Rockfin specifically, but the same model because, uh, the biggest companies in the world are all based on this network effect principle, right?

And it's extremely hard to compete with a network when they have network established, network effects established like a YouTube or a Twitter or anywhere else.

And so for us on the outside that are the sort of insurgent, you know, startup entrepreneurs that are trying to break in, you were always thinking about how can I bootstrap the network effect?

How can I create a system of incentives so that people want to join this new platform and not be on that old platform?

And so, you know, one way to do that was this idea of, well, what if we gave the earliest people tokens and if you come a little later, you get a little less tokens.

So it incentivizes the early adoption of, of our platform and, um, the tokens are used to do things like buy ads and each other's streams or whatever it is.

So depending on what, what platform you're trying to build.

So I got super excited.

I was like, holy shit, this could be the new bootstrapping mechanism.

And if you can think of a good bootstrapping mechanism, that's like worth its weight in gold.

It's like when PayPal realized, Hey, when we do this thing where you get, you know, you get \$5 and you, if you give \$5 to your friend to invite them to PayPal, like growth exploded. They were like, that one mechanism was, was sort of what built the network out.

And so, um, so similarly here, the idea would be, um, can this, can these tokens be used to build new networks?

So then a couple of bunch of people tried it.

There was one that was like a Reddit, um, a Reddit style thing.

It's actually pretty famous.

I can't remember the name.

I'll pop my head right now.

Um, but there's, there's basically a Reddit one where every, uh, as you post, you earn tokens.

If you're supposed to get up voted, you earn more tokens and it's sort of like, Hey, what if Reddit lets you earn for putting out good content and the early people get it.

And it, it did okay.

It didn't do great.

Yeah.

Um, and then one of the things, one of the things Martin always talks about with that is like there, the stocks are starting to start, you know, like if you get a stock, you want to say, well, why don't you give stock or something like that?

That's, that's really, it's not forward looking, uh, sorry, it is only forward looking and like the, the blockchain, like, I don't really think this token thing could have been done 10 years ago because blockchain didn't exist.

And it actually lets, you know, you have some type of protocol which calculates the value of each person on your network and then reward them appropriately.

Yeah.

And so like Ethereum is the biggest example of this, right?

Ethereum basically gave you tokens for, for putting compute power on the network and, uh, whatever, I can nerd out about that, but the best example of this actually happened in New York.

Somebody tried to take on Uber, I'm, I'm forgetting their name off the top of the head. Jay.

Yeah.

Juno or something like that.

Yeah.

An Indian guy started it.

Not with tokens, but they just did it the same way where they said, Hey, come on here. So the earliest drivers, you're going to get either shares in the company or, um, you're going to get some sort of disproportionate reward for being the first drivers of the network.

And the second drivers get a little bit less, third gets a little bit less.

And then by the time it's big, you don't really earn any more share or tokens.

And they actually got pretty big.

I want to see what they exited for.

Another company that did this when they launched was jet.com.

So when they launched, yeah, the people who shared most, they got equity in the company and the guy who shared most, uh, ended up making a couple of million bucks in stock when they were acquired by, uh, Walmart.

Hmm.

Yeah.

So it kind of worked out.

So Juno got acquired for \$200 million.

Wow.

That's pretty good.

At one point in time.

That's great.

That's the biggest success story of people trying to do this exact thing.

Although this is like an old principle, like, um, I met the guys from Ben and Jerry's once and Ben and Jerry's, when they needed to raise money early on, they did a local IPO or some shit like that.

They did a direct offering or something where they offered only to other people in Vermont, like local people.

Really?

Basically, they basically raised money from the local, um, citizens and then they became owners of that shop.

And then they were incentivized to go buy ice cream from that shop because they own, they were part, customers were owners of the, of the shop.

And so this is the same idea where what if the users were owners of the platform?

That's kind of the core idea.

Sam Adams did it as well.

Sam Adams did it as well.

And they put little stock certificates in their beer six packs.

They ended up raising \$20 million in the nineties doing it this way.

Wow.

So Ben, have you heard of these athletes that are trying to tokenize their like contracts of their lifetime earnings?

I think it's fascinating.

Yeah.

Would you have considered that or done that?

Oh, I would have to think more through it.

I, you know, I haven't took a deep dive into it, but I know I think it was with Spencer DeWendy.

Din Whitty.

I think he's the one trying to do it.

Yeah.

I mean, I think, I think it's almost like buying an insurance policy on yourself, right?

Right.

You're giving away some of the potential upside, but then you, you're also, you know, capturing some rewards right away.

So yeah, I think it's fascinating.

I'd have to think more about it if I want, if I did want to give away the upside or if I did not want to.

And then the other interesting thing is like their athletic career is going to end.

So at some point that token value is going to go like this, right?

Or, or, or can you, you know, is it set up so you can capture their post career stuff? Right?

Say they get new commentating or something to that effect.

Can you capture that also?

So yeah, I think there's actually, I think there's going to be a lot of interesting stuff with blockchain that kind of allows you to do things that, that, that you weren't able to do 10 years ago about, you know, when you're talking about calculating the value of networks. Who do you look, who do you look up to as a post athlete career that's like that guy crushed it or that girl crushed it?

You know, that's what, that's the best case scenario for a post athlete career.

Nobody.

I can't figure how to be like, I don't know.

I mean, obviously it's people I like, but you know, like a magic Johnson, he crushed it.

Yeah.

I mean, I think, I think I would like to, you know, I don't really, I said to the podcasting, I don't know.

I've thought about doing the commentating by, you know, I think it's just kind of limiting myself and spending time where I'm not going to really gain a huge amount of value.

I mean, I, I think I'm going to do the business thing.

I really enjoy that.

And, you know, I'm going to do my podcasting and enjoy that and probably just continue.

You know, honestly, politics fascinates me.

Finance fascinates me.

I don't yet feel educated enough to really speak too deeply on those topics.

But you know, that's something like I would really enjoy to talking about also.

Any other businesses been that fascinate you or problems that you're seeing out there that we wouldn't know about, like even in the wrestling world or you can also put out a call to action.

There's a bunch of entrepreneurs, engineers who listen to this and you're like, dude, you know a problem I need solved and then they'll do it.

I actually pitched this on my, I have my crypto funky podcast, crypto and talking to this guy, Jason, and he's kind of a huge entrepreneur also.

And one of the things I said would be really fascinating was with these police shootings, you know, people are kind of dumbing down because they're, they're, they're making the difficulty of the police way less than it really is.

And the thing with the police, I've talked to them about hand to hand combat and that type of thing before and it's like, you can't let someone get to you because they get your gun.

If they get your gun, they can shoot you.

Right.

So it's like, you can't exchange a punch for a punch.

You can't really grapple with them because they could get your gun.

And so I always thought if there was some way to make a biometric either holster or biometric gun where, you know, the cop could not worry about that because the gun is literally not going to fire unless it's them.

Right.

Obviously you have to make it fast and you'd make it reliable because it is not reliable.

It's not fast.

It's going to get thrown out the window right away.

So you may fast reliable and some of the biometric data where it knows it's them and you know, that's not my field.

I don't know how to do that stuff, but that would be interesting because I think that would solve a lot of issues because it would alleviate a lot of the worries from cops because listen, the last thing cops have a tough people.

People are really shitting on cop play.

They have a tough job.

And the last thing you want to do is go to work as a cop and get shot.

Like you want to, you want to come home to your family every single day.

When you go to work, you want to come back to your family and it's a tough job.

People are making it like there's as much assholes and listen, I'm sure there's some really terrible cops, but there's probably a lot of really great ones too and it's tough jobs.

But if that invention was made, it would number one, make a lot of money and number two, it would make their jobs a lot easier.

I don't know anything about that space other than touch ID for the trigger.

I like that.

Yeah.

There's, what's the, did you know that you guys know that taser is a business like taser?

It's like the word Kleenex.

It's like its own thing.

It's a brand.

Yeah.

It's a brand massive thing.

I mean, billions and billions of dollars and can we do a quick speed round?

That's MMA, MMA related.

All right.

So rapid fire answers.

Then we can hop off.

All right.

So who is your favorite UFC fighter to watch?

Oh gosh.

It's just gonna be just because of our friendship, but I would say Tyrone, which has been freshened lately, or Daniel Cormier.

All right.

What, what percentage of UFC fighters do you believe are on PEDs?

Ooh.

Now, I don't think it's that high.

I would say to 20 to 25, but pre you saw that I would have said 60 to 60 to 70.

Who wins a fight with you and Khabib at 170?

You and your prime and Khabib in his prime.

My prime.

Well, I think I went in my prime, but I'm far past that.

All right.

I love it.

Sam, you got any besides DC and Tyrone Woodley, favorite UFC guy.

Well, um, yeah.

Me and me and Sean or Nate Diaz fans, I, you know, who doesn't enjoy the Diaz brothers.

So I coached Macy.

So obviously I'm cheering for her every time.

And then I, you know, another guy I was really close with because he was kind of helped me with all my training was Gerald Mears-Sharton.

He's been, he's six and three or six and four at middleweight.

So, um, but obviously those, again, those are personal relationships.

Could you and George must, must we'd all be friends you think in a couple of years?

I don't think so.

I mean, like if we say if we were in the same gym from when we were younger, we, you know, I, I got along with everyone, right?

So probably would have been friends, but you know, we're not going to have our paths cross.

Well, thank you, Ben.

This is what's the URL going to be of your course.

It's not going to be live when this goes live, but no, it will not correct.

Ben asker.com.

And that site is getting updated right now.

It redirects to AWS constant.com, but we will, um, it will, it will be updated probably within a week or so.

So follow Ben on Twitter and, uh, you'll definitely see those launches.

Yes.

Cool, man.

Thanks for coming on.

It was a lot of fun.

Thanks guys.

We appreciate it.

Thank you.