



Episode 481 — Fight Scene Analysis: Dragons Forever | whistlekickMartialArtsRadio.com



Jeremy Lesniak:

Hey what's up everybody, this is whistlekick martial arts radio episode 481. Today, we're doing another fight scene analysis. Josh Blum is back and today, we're talking about the fight between Jackie Chan and Benny The Jet Urquidez in the classic film, Dragons Forever. I'm Jeremy Lesniak, I'm your host for the show, I'm the founder here at whistlekick and I love the martial arts. I love all the things about the martial arts including, as you might have guessed, martial arts movies. If you want to see everything that I love, you can go to whistlekick.com. You can see everything that we're doing here but if you want to see what we're doing for the show, that's a separate website, whistlekickmartialartsradio.com is the place to go and that's where you'll find every single episode we've ever done all for free. No paywalls, nothing like that and we also drop in links and photos and video and a bunch more. If you want to support what we're doing, you can make a purchase at whistlekick.com, use the code `PODCAST15` or you can support our Patreon, Patreon.com/whistlekick and if you contribute \$5 or more per month, we're going to give you even more stuff, more content because that's what we do. We make stuff, we make uniforms, we make sparring gear, we make podcasts, we make videos, we make blogs, we make books. We like to make things all about martial arts. Why? Because the goal is to connect, educate and entertain traditional martial artists to give you the stuff that you want and the stuff that you need for your martial arts lifestyle. Now, a few weeks ago, Josh Blum and I chatted and we talked about the fight scene in Wheels on Meals and yes, that still hits my tongue weird but it was great! We had a lot of fun. We slowed the video on YouTube and we were able to pick it apart, talk about the fun stuff and the



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good technique and we thought we would do it again so that's what we're doing. Now, you can certainly listen to us but to get the full experience, you're going to want to do this at a time when you can watch as well and we got the link for the YouTube video at whistlekickmartialartsradio.com. Again, this is episode 481, check that out and see what you think. Now, we're wondering, do you want us to keep doing these? Josh and I are happy to keep doing them but we want to know, we want you to let us know. Should we keep doing these or should we move on to finding another way to collaborate? Let me know, keremy@whistlekick.com. Instead of gabbing at you more, I'll step out of the way and here is our conversation and our analysis of that great fight scene. Hey everybody, welcome! You've already listened to some manner of intro from Josh or I, we're back and we're talking about another movie. We're going to go through and review another movie fight scene. We did this a month ago with Meals on Wheels, right? Wheels on Meals?

Joshua Blum:

You know, I've heard it both ways

Jeremy Lesniak:

Meals on Wheels is the program that delivers food to seniors in their homes. Wheels on Meals is somehow Jackie Chan and Benny the Jet fighting and we're back again for another Benny and Jackie fight scene. Is this a sequel?

Joshua Blum:

Yeah, I believe so and I actually saw this one first so I always get them confused chronologically when they're coming out but Jackie has shorter hair here and he is wearing a suit. Actually, they're both wearing kind of like formal clothes.

Jeremy Lesniak:

And Benny has a ponytail and I'm pretty sure mascara if you look closely and pause it. Crazy but of course, we're not picking apart the costumes or the makeup or the titles. We're here to talk about the fight scene because that's the best part about these movies.

Joshua Blum:

It was a different time. You know, Depeche Mode and all this.

Jeremy Lesniak:

Yeah, you could almost expect prints to pop out and do it up but if you haven't checked out what you recorded last time, you don't have to, it's not anything that's going to build on that so much but you might not be familiar with the format so here's what's going to happen. If you go to the shownotes for



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either of our show notes because we do different shows; I do martial arts radio and Josh would do the 13th Hour. That's the full title? 13th Hour Podcast?

Joshua Blum:

Yeah!

Jeremy Lesniak:

And so, in our respective show notes, we've got a link to this video that we're going to go over. We're going to set it at half speed. There's a gear icon down at the bottom of all YouTube videos, you can slow it down. We're going to watch it at half speed and we're going to talk about it. We're going to pick it apart, we're going to critique it and we suggest that you follow along with us. You don't have to but it's going to make a heck of a lot more sense if you do so without further ado, I've got my cursor over the play button and I'm going to hit, oh, I've got to rewind it, there we go, and I'm going to hit play in 3, 2, 1.

Joshua Blum:

The guy all the way...

Jeremy Lesniak:

The guy smoking the cigar. I couldn't figure this guy out.

Joshua Blum:

He's been in a ton of things and he always wears big, huge glasses like that.

Jeremy Lesniak:

Kind of crazy because he pops in and out periodically.

Joshua Blum:

Yeah. There's Benny taking off his clothes. They actually both take off their jackets. There's some eye shadow. He definitely had some mascara going on.

Jeremy Lesniak:

Very androgynous. Now, I'm not going to bring that up next time I see him. Pretty sure I'd get punched in the mouth but he looks pretty jacked here. It would be interesting to kind of overlay his fight career with where he was at when he filmed this.

Joshua Blum:

I got to have to look that up. Maybe after the clip stops rolling, we'll check out what year it was.



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Jeremy Lesniak:

The loosening of the tie.

Joshua Blum:

He leads off with a back kick, interestingly.

Jeremy Lesniak:

But you've got that guy smoking his cigar, he throws one kick and he goes and hides behind a pillar and smokes his cigar and does this very Rodney Dangerfield kind of popping around, looking at what's going on. I've watched this a few times and I still don't understand why but what I like about this, what I like about the style they've got going on is that they are doing things very differently. Obviously, Jackie is much more circular in his motions but they're making it work and it comes together really well and I thought better than the last one that we did.

Joshua Blum:

Yeah, I think it's a little bit more evenly, I don't know, I guess, I don't want to say, repartee is a little bit more even, I think. There's a lot more blocking and striking that misses and makes the fight more interesting.

Jeremy Lesniak:

And that, we just saw that fake from Benny, that was something that I noticed throughout the fight scene is that he does that quite a few times. That great roll to get out of there.

Joshua Blum:

Jackie's taking a little bit of a beating on this one as a reverse of the other one where it's a little bit more even, I thought. Oh! He does a nice kick.

Jeremy Lesniak:

Nice kick and then, smash! And some of the shots that they take, I've got to say, and there's the friend with a scar out of nowhere for seemingly no reason.

Joshua Blum:

He sort of does a random kick in midair.

Jeremy Lesniak:

It's a great comparison and then I'm going to jump over the railing on the stairs, hang out, show you that I still got the cigar in my mouth. I like that kick sequence from Jackie. Pretty good flurry.



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Joshua Blum:

Two hit for Benny.

Jeremy Lesniak:

And that was a beautiful, beautiful spinning backside kick, whatever you choose to call it but lets talk about how obviously empty those boxes are.

Joshua Blum:

Oh, actually, you know what? What is that that's falling out of there?

Jeremy Lesniak:

I thought it was foam, some kind of packing foam but I'm also wondering now, is it drugs because we do see a scale later on. Are those bricks of heroin?

Joshua Blum:

I think it can be cocaine, yeah, because I think Benny plays a drug lord in this. There's a scene before this where he cuts open one of these and in a very, very creepy scene, licks the knife to taste the cocaine.

Jeremy Lesniak:

It probably is. Pulling shirt buttons, takes the shirt off and sort of uses it as a weapon.

Joshua Blum:

Yeah, I actually thought that that was what they're going to do with the ties, initially.

Jeremy Lesniak:

I was hopeful.

Joshua Blum:

When they both pull off their tie, yeah, I thought they were going to use those...

Jeremy Lesniak:

And that part right there, I thought, was the oddest part. Jackie jumps up, kicks him, he falls over, rolls but what hurts is when he bumps the table standing up.

Joshua Blum:

Right, right. Kicks him with 2 feet, no less, and I think falls down in the process.

Jeremy Lesniak:



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It's quite the commitment. Not the movement I can recommend to any of my students.

Joshua Blum:

That's another thing that we do here when we join the 13th Hour, whistlekick podcast but yet, another service we offer. Some public service announcements.

Jeremy Lesniak:

If you kick, keep one foot on the ground or at least, know where the ground is and put your feet in. That was funny, I enjoyed that piece. Not quite as much comedy as the previous scene we did but I thought there was a lot more technique and skillful choreography.

Joshua Blum:

Yeah. Oh wow, look at that! I wonder how many times it took for that guy to get that right without getting stuck in the bottom.

Jeremy Lesniak:

it's just so random and I don't know if he's meant to provide a comedic element or maybe the fact that I haven't watched the movie puts me in a loss therefore why he's involved but I like this. That's as traditional Jackie Chan as you get moving the gate back and forth and using it as a defensive weapon.

Joshua Blum:

There's definitely a lot more, I think, in this one, use of the environments because I don't know, some kind of like facility. So, I guess, a lot more stuff to use. I don't know what they used before. It was like a castle or chateau something but there's a lot more back and forth, I think, with this one.

Jeremy Lesniak:

And there's some good, I think, that choke there is applied really well. There's some good technique here. It's not just about the speed. You can see that the choreography was done by someone who actually has some skill in a variety of martial arts.

Joshua Blum:

Right. Oh! Saving it on the way down with his legs.

Jeremy Lesniak:

Concrete floors don't feel good. That's another lesson, kids. Don't get in a fight on a concrete floor. It hurts when you fall.

Joshua Blum:



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Ouch. Shin block. I think, I don't know. I want to say that they take a little bit more of a beating in this one. There's benny. He's got the sweat.

Jeremy Lesniak:

That's a great kick right here, boom! They show it twice. Really well executed. I would imagine this is Jackie at the height of his physical skills. Not to say that he's not a force still but watching at the height that he has as he comes around. I thought this was really well done kicking him into the glass case.

Joshua Blum:

Hopefully not real glass, hopefully they used candy glass or something like that for it.

Jeremy Lesniak:

But then we get the close up with the glass embedded in Benny's face.

Joshua Blum:

Right, this movie had a lot of that, if I recall. Oh, he's like Benny's like oh god.

Jeremy Lesniak:

Now, I've got to fight that other guy. Where'd he go?

Joshua Blum:

Yeah, what did you think?

Jeremy Lesniak:

This makes me want to watch the movie because I feel, if nothing else, to find out who the Asian pink panther is and what he's got going on and why he's popping in and out like I'm going to kick you and run away and do some parkour on the stairs. Doesn't make any sense!

Joshua Blum:

I love that random thing where he stands there holding his cigar and he just randomly, he doesn't really move his upper body, just does a random kick in midair. I don't know what the purpose of that was.

Jeremy Lesniak:

I've got to pause it back at the beginning, possibly the greatest collection of shoulder pads that I've ever seen on 3 suits because you've got random creepy guy who's got some pretty big shoulder pads. Benny's already a pretty buff dude so he looks like he has some shoulder pads that are just completely unnecessary and Jackie's neck goes straight out to the sides; clearly, we've got some shoulder pads on there.



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Joshua Blum:

Let me look up Dragons Forever, when did this come out, Jackie Chan, probably you can check in there, excuse me while I look this up. Oh, 1988.

Jeremy Lesniak:

So, that makes sense. That's the height of shoulder pads.

Joshua Blum:

Yeah, this was 4 years after the other one we just did so that makes sense. The mascara, the fashions, everything like that and the drugs, of course, totally make sense. Actually, when did Benny stop? I believe he had his last fight in '93 or something like that.

Jeremy Lesniak:

I'm not sure but that seems about right.

Joshua Blum:

I remember, I have the issue of black belt magazine somewhere.

Jeremy Lesniak:

I have to say, I think, just based on watching these 2 fight scenes, I suspect that the 2 of them get along. I think they enjoyed working together. There's just something about that comes through for me.

Joshua Blum:

It would have taken a long time to film that. I mean, it had a lot of fights.

Jeremy Lesniak:

Yes, he was rather prolific in the ring.

Joshua Blum:

1993, yeah, Tagami. So, 1988, he took some time off, I think around, he had one more fight in 1989. He was fighting a lot of the Japanese folks and I think he would go to Japan, actually.

Jeremy Lesniak:

Which could explain why he was doing some of these movies that were destined for that market.

Joshua Blum:

Maybe, maybe he was already there or something like that.



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Jeremy Lesniak:

I would imagine, culturally, that having an American play a bad guy kind of fit with the cultural narrative at that time, still and if he was known a bit for being in the ring, then he's an obvious choice.

Joshua Blum:

I feel like he has a little, I think he still have a little following in Japan, probably a big following.

Jeremy Lesniak:

Really? that, I didn't know. I want to see if I can find that.

Joshua Blum:

Yeah, he has the Benny Urquidez comic, anime style drawings. Some old issue from Blackbelt from that time. He talks about it. I'll see if I can find that. There's an interview where he's talking to someone with Blackbelt magazine. He's talking about, I think, working with Jackie Chan. I'll see if I can find that but I have to say, the dude with the big glasses and the cigar, he's actually not bad. If I remember right in the actual movie and I haven't seen it in 20 years, he actually is, I don't know who he is, he gets in some kicks and he doesn't, he's totally an accomplished martial artist himself, that looks like it.

Jeremy Lesniak:

Yeah, his kicks looks great from what I just saw.

Joshua Blum:

I do want to watch the movie again. The last time I saw it, I remember, this film has a lot of the same people that were on the other one that we talked about from 1984. It had Sammo Hung, and has like Yuen Biao and of course, the two main. It's a good one. I definitely remember this for some great acrobatics that Yuen Biao does on, I don't know what you want to call it, it's like an elevated platform where he'll do a backflip, land somehow without falling off the edge, diving through plates of glass like there's little opening from the dais where he somehow managed to dive through. There's some great stuff that they do for this particular film.

Jeremy Lesniak:

Alright, cool!

Joshua Blum:

We'll have to do that.

Jeremy Lesniak:



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We'll have to talk about where we go from here but I know there are some stuff that you and I had talked about that maybe you can share with the audience about our questions of them.

Joshua Blum:

Yeah, absolutely. I will say, if one thing, watching these things, I always find it quite motivating.

Jeremy Lesniak:

I agree with that. Yeah, this definitely makes me want to go choreograph something in the other room.

Joshua Blum:

For this particular thing, if you enjoyed this format, this episode, let us know. Comments, send us an email, those kind of things and let us know. There are future episodes or other movies where a similar type of thing that you'd like us to delve into and we will do that.

Jeremy Lesniak:

Give us some feedback. We need feedback because we want to cater this to what people want. You and I are having fun but we want other people to have fun too.

Joshua Blum:

And I think, the other thing is, lets face it, 1988, this is an old movie. There's a whole generation of folks that probably hasn't seen this movie or ones like this so a lot of these folks in this film are no longer doing films that are doing much different kinds of films. They can keep up with the physicality anymore and movies are different now and so, it's an interesting kind of time capsule into what things were like at the time and where martial arts were like in the mid-80s. Alright, that's all I got. Thanks always for listening to us and we will catch you guys in the future!

Jeremy Lesniak:

Well, that was fun and I want to again thank Josh for coming on and working with me again. I have a really good time working with this guy. He's fun and he's got some great knowledge in martial art films, certainly makes me step my game up. Again, if you want us to keep doing this, let us know, email me, Jeremy@whistlekick.com. If you want to check out other episodes, go to whistlekickmartialartsradio.com and if you want to check out the stuff that we're making, whistlekick.com. Use the code PODCAST15 and if you're so inclined, help us out with the Patreon, Patreon.com/whistlekick. It goes a long way to covering the expenses for all these stuff that we're doing. It's expensive to do this show. Of course, there are plenty of other ways to help us out. You can share an episode, buy a book on Amazon, tell a friend or simply just follow us on social media. Give us a like, maybe a funny comment, let us know you like what we're doing. That's all I've got for you today. Until next time, train hard, smile and have a great day!



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