**Mbombela brawler banned from several pubs**

Cowboys don’t cry!

And then we started drinking again.

This was how Chris Richter, described in many a bar in the city as a ‘*skobbejak*’ (Afrikaans for ‘scoundrel’ or ‘ruffian’), told the story of how he and one of his best friends, Johan Fick, had pummelled each other in a fistfight last weekend.

A 34-year-old farmer from Brondal, Richter’s quick fists have already caused him to be banned from various drinking spots in the city.

Rudi Schoeman, owner of the Vintage Lapa behind Canary Walk Mall, confirmed that he had already banned Richter from his premises a good while ago.

“I promise you I won’t cause any trouble, Oom. I’m just here to have a few drinks.”

This was how Schoeman described Richter’s promises during a conversation they had on Friday evening when he saw Richter arriving at his bar. The punches started raining barely an hour later.

“Ja, you know. It seems like the sh\*t keeps on coming my way. You always get these laaities testing you,” said Richter. In an open and frank conversation with Lowvelder, Richter said the fight between him and Fick had actually started ‘by accident’. “We were in the bar drinking. At one stage, I saw Johan and another laaitie having some words. I am not sure why or about what they were arguing. I jumped up to get in between them, but was probably five seconds too late. The fight was already going. I tried separating Johan and the laaitie. But Johan hit me too. He was under the impression I wanted to thump him as well.”

The next few minutes were a free-for-all as some of the men got involved in the punch-up, said an eyewitness who wanted to remain anonymous. “I sat in a dark corner, drinking. The fighters took their barney outside to the parking lot. What time this was, I couldn’t say. By then, I was already deep in my cups!”

“One of the women there that night even hit me over the head with a jam jar! I was bleeding,” says Richter.

According to him, he and Fick made peace after their fighting and shook hands, and went back inside to continue their drinking. “He kept on apologising to me, but I told him it was all over now. We are still pals.”

Fick is now nursing two black eyes. “I’m never going to another drinking place in this town again. This wasn’t something I or Chris asked for,” Fick told Lowvelder.

He did not want to comment any further.

***Richter has been banned from these establishments:***

**• Mustangs - The Dancing Place:** Jaco Swart, the owner, confirmed he banned Richter from the establishment.

**• Bahati Amakiti, White River:** About three of four months ago, Richter was banned after another incident here. However, Boela van den Bergh, the owner, said Richter was not banned from his other bar, Lions Pub & Grill.

**• Marlin Pub & Grill:** Chris Naudé, the owner, said the rumours that he had banned Richter are untrue. “There was one incident, but I immediately warned him. Since then, I have had no troubles with him.”