

## Preview: UFC 76

Written by {ga=fightdr}

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Chuck "The Iceman" Liddell, probably the most recognized name in MMA, finally gets back into action tonight following his much publicized loss to Quentin "Rampage" Jackson four months ago. The Iceman looks to get back on track in the main event against Keith "The Dean of Mean" Jardine, also coming off a tough loss. Also, tonight, another one of the dominant fighters from Pride fighting makes his UFC debut. And the Spoon Man is here to tell us about those bouts and the rest of the UFC 76 card, which airs tonight on PPV.



Live from the Honda Center in California, two of the top fighters in the world will look to make a splash in a sport they have dominated over the years.

The main event features former Light Heavyweight and UFC poster boy Chuck Liddell taking on Keith Jardine. Liddell is coming off a loss to Rampage Jackson and will look to regain his winning ways.

“The Iceman” is the most recognizable fighter in the world today. His 15-3 UFC record is simply amazing. There are fans around the world that think his time is up and that a new generation of fighters will be taking over. One of those up and comers is Keith “The Dean of Mean” Jardine.

Both fighters are coming off knockout loses but Jardine’s was unexpected. He was on a high after a destruction of another UFC favorite Forrest Griffin and ran into a buzzsaw known as Houston Alexander. That fight lasted just 48 seconds and was a brutal beatdown.

How does Jardine go from getting destroyed to getting a match with former title holder Liddell? I feel that the UFC wants him to be a sacrificial lamb to get Liddell back in the win column. The name of UFC 76 is “Knockout” because that’s what everyone is expecting to see in this main event. A quick Liddell KO is not out of the question as Jardine might be out of his league here. His heart and chin will be tested but Jardine is one tough dude. If he can make it thru the first few minutes,

he may have a shot at the upset.

The true highlight of the night is the UFC debut of possibly the best fighter in the world, Mauricio "Shogun" Rua. The former Pride standout holds a 16-2 MMA record and has beaten the likes of Rampage Jackson and Minotoro Nogueira. He's fighting Forrest Griffin, another guy the UFC fans love to watch fight. He pours his heart out everytime he steps into the octagon. He has a very tough task ahead of him in this battle with Shogun.

I look for this fight to be a standup slug fest as Griffin doesn't want to go to the ground. If it gets to that, he could be in for a very short evening. I look for Rua to dominate another fighter that will be out of his league this evening. That being said, he is taking on a guy who has one of the biggest set of marbles in the fight game. Forrest Griffin, win or lose, always makes it exciting to watch.

Two middleweight contenders that could be heading in opposite direction meet in what just might be the best fight of the night. Jon Fitch looks to keep his undefeated UFC record alive when he takes on Diego Sanchez.

With a win, Fitch will likely get a title shot in his next fight. Sanchez, who recently lost his first fight will look to rebound in a big way. He was very unimpressive in his last fight and should have a fire like we have seen from him in past. On paper, this has the making of a classic. Two great fighters that love to ground and pound and that are excellent wrestlers. The standup should be the difference and I'm excited to see which warrior can land the better shots.

### **Full fight card:**

Keith Jardine vs. Chuck Liddell  
Mauricio "Shogun" Rua vs. Forrest Griffin  
Jon Fitch vs. Diego Sanchez  
Lyoto Machida vs. Kazuhiro Nakamura  
Tyson Griffin vs. Thiago Tavares  
Rich Clementi vs. Anthony Johnson  
Diego Saraiva vs. Jeremy Stephens  
Scott Junk vs. Christian Wellisch  
Michihiro Omigawa vs. Matt Wiman

All and all, it should be a very exciting night of fights yet again in the UFC. The

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debut of “Shogun” Rua and the Sanchez vs Fitch battle are well worth the price of admission. I can’t wait to tune in and see what goes down.