

Preview: UFC 77

Written by {ga=fightdr}

Friday, October 19 2007 7:00 PM -

Live from the US Bank Arena in Cincinnati, Ohio ... the Ultimate Fighting Championship brings fight fans "UFC 77: Hostile Territory". The card is loaded from top to bottom and our resident Fight Doctor Scott Swerbinsky will be covering the event cageside for us. The main event is a good one, Anderson Silva vs. Rich Franklin. And Scott previews that fight, as well as the rest of the card for us here today at TCF.



Live from the US Bank Arena in Cincinnati, Ohio ... the Ultimate Fighting Championship brings fight fans "UFC 77: Hostile Territory". The card is loaded from top to bottom and I will be lucky enough to be covering this event in person. I couldn't be more excited.

Cincinnati is the home of former UFC Middleweight champion Rich "Ace" Franklin. He will be looking to get his belt back against the fighter that made him look terrible at UFC 64 one year ago in October of 2006, Anderson "The Spider" Silva.

The first fight was a complete mismatch. Silva dominated from start to finish in what ended in a brutal TKO. It was one of the most lopsided matches in recent UFC history. Franklin suffered a broken nose in the loss and plans on avenging the loss in front of his hometown fans.

There is no secret that Rich Franklin is one of the most popular fighters in the sport today. He is also considered one of the best. The training he puts himself through to get prepared is crazy as seen on SpikeTV. If he wants to still be mentioned as an elite fighter, he'll have to get redemption. The task ahead is a very tall one in Anderson Silva.

"The Spider" to me is the best striker in all of mma. He uses both

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hands ,elbows, knees, and feet with such accuracy it's scary. All you have to do is watch the earlier matchup to see for yourself. The book on Silva is that if you can get him on the ground, your chances get better to win. I have yet to see any evidence of this. He choked Travis Lutter out and he is mainly a ground fighter. His striking from the ground is just as brutal.

I am a big Rich Franklin fan but I don't know if this fight will be any different. Silva is very dominant and on top of his game. Franklin will be ready to fight, that I don't doubt. If he can land some good shots early on and establish his pace, he has a good chance to get the belt back. The home crowd should have a huge impact on this fight.

Brandon Vera is finally back. "The Truth" has been away from the octagon for nearly a year. His last fight was a victory over former Heavyweight champ Frank Mir in November of 2006 at UFC 65.

Vera is easily one of the most talented fighters in world. He is a young, athletic , and aggressive fighter that has no fear. He has an 8-0 record with 4 of those victories coming in the UFC. He has a great chance to get a title shot if he can beat another former title holder in Tim Sylvia.

I look for Vera to make a huge splash in his first fight back after management problems. By huge I mean beating 6 foot 8 Sylvia. Vera will be too quick and athletic for Sylvia to handle.

Two of my favorite fighters will face off in what has the potential to be fight of the night. Forrest "The Meat Cleaver" Petz steps in with Josh "The People's Warrior" Burkman in a Welterweight showdown.

Petz has an opportunity of a lifetime. If he can beat a big name like Burkman, it could skyrocket his career. Burkman on the other hand, needs a win after losing his last fight. Add that in with the fact that both of these guys love to stand and bang. That adds up to a great mix and should be an extremely exciting fight. I wouldn't want to miss this one.

Full fight card:

Champion Anderson Silva vs. Rich Franklin (for middleweight title)

Tim Sylvia vs. Brandon Vera

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Stephan Bonnar vs. Eric Schafer
Alan Belcher vs. Kalib Starnes
Jason MacDonald vs. Yushin Okami
Josh Burkman vs. Forrest Petz
Jorge Gurgel vs. Alvin Robinson
Ryan Jensen vs. Demian Maia
Jason Black vs. Matt Grice

UFC 77 might be the best card from top to bottom in awhile. Every fight has the makings of a classic. I can't wait to be cageside and take it all in. I would expect everyone else to tune in also.