

Preview: UFC 82

Written by {ga=fightdr}

Thursday, February 28 2008 7:00 PM -

Tonight. Columbus, Ohio. UFC 82. An event many people (including our own Scott Swerbinsky) are calling one of the greatest cards ever assembled in mixed martial arts history. The main event is a superb one, as Anderson "Spider" Silva takes on Dan "Hollywood" Henderson. Silva, unbeaten, and considered by most to be the top pound for pound fighter in the sport. Just behind him? Henderson, who has never been knocked out in 28 fights. Something's gotta give ...



This Saturday night in Columbus, Ohio mixed martial fans are going to get to see one of the best cards ever assembled. The main event alone is worth the price of admission or enough to buy the pay per view.

Current UFC Middleweight Champion Anderson "Spider" Silva is considered the best pound for pound fighter in the world today. Not far behind him on those rankings would be Dan "Hollywood" Henderson, the now discarded Pride Middleweight Champion. Talk about a dream matchup, this is it.

Anderson Silva is currently 5-0 in UFC. He has dominated everyone he has stepped in with. Many observers think he is unbeatable. The standup game of this guy is simply scary. Silva possesses knockout power in both hands as well as both feet. The accuracy that every shot is thrown with is amazing. He picks people apart and goes in for the kill better than any fighter I have seen, ever. The so called way to beat Silva was to get him on the ground. Submission expert Travis Lutter was able to do that in their meeting and all he got for his troubles was submitted while in a dominant position. I can't recall seeing a fighter as complete as Anderson Silva.

If there is a fighter out there that has the style and skill to beat Silva, it's Dan Henderson. He was the first fighter ever to hold both the Middleweight and Light Heavyweight belts in Pride. In 28 career fights, he has never been knocked out. His chin will be put to a severe test Saturday night. The key to the matchup will be Henderson's outstanding wrestling ability and conditioning. The former Olympic Greco Roman Wrestler has the clinch game to stay out of harm's way. The pace

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of the fight will be fast and furious and whoever can impose their will has a great shot at taking home the title.

I expect it to be fight of the year, possibly even better than that. It might go down as one of the greatest fights ever. That's how good these two fighters are.

The undercard is loaded. There are former champions and future champion all over this card. UFC fans that won't be there have a right to be upset as all of the talent will not make it onto the pay per card.

Welterweight sensation Jon Fitch puts his 7-0 UFC record on the line against newcomer Chris Wilson. With a win here, Fitch should be in line for a title shot. He owns wins over top tier fighters Diego Sanchez and Josh Burkman. Wilson is a member of Team Quest, one of the best camps around so you know he'll be in shape and ready to fight.

Former Middleweight Champion Evan Tanner makes a highly anticipated return to the octagon. Yushin Okami will be waiting for him when the cage closes. Tanner fought in the UFC from 1999 to 2006. Over that span he compiled an impressive 11-4 record. He took time off and looks to get back on the winning track against an always tough Yushin Okami. Look for this one to be a crowd pleaser.

Up and coming star Josh Koscheck looks to regain his winning formula when he takes on Ohio native Dustin Hazelett. To me this could be the show stealing fight. Two young and hungry guys looking to prove they are legit.

Full fight card:

Champ Anderson Silva vs. Dan Henderson (for middleweight title)

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Heath Herring vs. Cheick Kongo

Chris Leben vs. Alessio Sakara

Yushin Okami vs. Evan Tanner

Jon Fitch vs. Chris Wilson

Andrei Arlovski vs. Jake O'Brien

Luke Cummo vs. Luigi Fioravanti

Dustin Hazelett vs. Josh Koscheck

David Bielkheden vs. Diego Sanchez

Jorge Gurgel vs. John Halverson

From top to bottom, UFC 82 has more talent than I can remember. Half of the fights could be main events type fights. Every matchup should be fast paced and full of excitement. To any fight fan, casual or hard core, this is the event to see. I am going to have the pleasure of seeing it live and I haven't been this excited about an event in a long long time.