

UFC 72 Prediction: Franklin vs. Okami

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UFC 72: Victory is scheduled to start at 12:00 Noon EST from Northern Ireland and features the marquee fight between Rich Franklin vs. Yushin Okami.

Some mixed martial arts fighters fly under the radar. For whatever reason some really tough MMA fighters, no matter what amount of talent they possess will be undervalued. On the other hand the public usually falls in love with marketable fighters who can knock people out. Chuck Liddell was a prime example, a media darling who was dubbed an 8 to 5 favorite by the bookmakers, only to get waxed in the opening stanza to the surprise of many.

Rich Franklin, 32, is a very popular UFC battler. Yushin Okami, 25 is a young streaking middleweight who is thirsty to claim the #1 UFC middleweight spot at stake. Not many, outside of hardcore UFC fans know about Okami, 20-3. Point-Spreads.com believes Okami is flying under the radar for UFC 72.

Franklin, 21-2, steps into the Octagon today a solid -205 favorite at Sportsbook.com. Rich Franklin has the aggressive crowd-pleasing style and appearance of an elite fighter. Franklin a wrestler, comes to fight. He comes out blasting with both fists at the opening bell.

Yushin Okami is an all-around MMA fighter. Okami's bread and butter is his Greco-Roman technique which can be lightning quick and explosive. Okami is a counter puncher, who likes to think and pick his spots. While not a devastating puncher like Franklin, Okami is a sharpshooter who likes to hammer hard accurate shots down the middle.

Franklin, with his wide looping punches, could be vulnerable to these type of shots against Okami.. Franklin is at his best when he can bring the heat to his opponents and smother them. Against Okami, I think Franklin will be less likely to rush in recklessly, especially after the shellacking he took against Anderson Silva not long ago.

If he does, I think Okami's deceptive power KO's him. If he doesn't, I see Okami executing a smart gameplan and winning a decision. Either way, Okami has more wrinkles to his style; more versatility in all aspects. At +165 or higher, Okami is a great value for MMA bettors.

Sportsbook.com has posted MMA betting odds on UCF 72:

Rich Franklin (-205) vs. Yushin Okami (+165)

Forrest Griffin (-200) vs. Hector Ramirez (+160)

Jason MacDonald (-240) vs. Rory Singer (+190)

Tyson Griffin (-200) vs. Clay Guida (+160)

Jason Tan (+300) vs. Marcus Davis (-450)

Eddie Sanchez (-185) vs. Colin Robinson (+155)

Scott Smith (+120) vs. Ed Herman (-150)