

UFC 83: Rich Franklin vs Travis Lutter

Contributed by Scott Burgess
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Rich Franklin (22-3) vs Travis Lutter (9-4)

After two big loses to Anderson Silva, Rich Franklin is ready to stake his claim in the UFC as the next great contender. Franklin was the last UFC middleweight champion before Anderson Silva and Travis Lutter was a previous #1 contender. This will be a very important fight for both fighters' futures in the UFC. Oddsmakers at BetUS.com have Rich Franklin as 400-moneyline fav over Travis Lutter who is listed as +300 underdog. Get your UFC 83 Prediction in now at BetUS.com

Since the first loss to Silva in UFC 64, Franklin beat Jason MacDonald in UFC 68 by TKO in the second after MacDonald's corner threw in the towel. His next fight was UFC 72 in which he defeated Yushin Okami by unanimous decision in a three round yawning match. This win made him the # 1 contender for the UFC Middleweight Championship. Something he owned before losing to Silva in UFC 64. He tested his luck again against Silva in UFC 77 and he was pummeled beyond belief. He lost by TKO in the second round, just 1:07 in. His stock in the UFC is fading fast if he can't beat some quality fighters. His last two fights before Silva were set up fights so he could challenge for the Title. The UFC sees him as a fan favorite, which means big ratings. He has notable wins over Travis Fulton, Marvin Eastman, Jorge Rivera, Evan Tanner (twice), Ken Shamrock, Edwin Dewees, Nathan Quarry, David Loiseau, Jason MacDonald and Yushin Okami. Rich is a well rounded fighter with excellent striking capabilities.

Thoughts on Opponent: Travis has a very solid ground game, and I believe he will look to take the fight to the ground. He is a patient fighter, so I will have to be careful not to make mistakes in the later rounds.

Travis Lutter is an American born fighter steeped in BBJ who got his start in the UFC by winning the reality show The Ultimate Fighter. On the semi-final episode, Travis Lutter defeated Pete Sell to move on to the finals set for November 11, 2006. At the finale of The Ultimate Fighter 4, Lutter defeated Patrick Côté with an armbar in the first round. With this victory, Lutter became the challenger for Anderson Silva's Middleweight title. On the day of the weigh-in, one day before the fight at UFC 67, Lutter failed to make weight. He weighed-in at 187 pounds on the first attempt, and 186.5 two hours later on his second attempt. Because of his failure to meet the required 185 pounds, his match with Silva was changed to a three-round, non-title bout. Regardless, Lutter lost the bout to Silva via submission due to triangle choke and elbow strikes in the second round. He's not a very dissaplined fighter but he has great submission skills.

Thoughts on Opponent: It is an honor to fight Rich. He is a former UFC champion and it is a great privilege to fight him.

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When: April 19, 2008 10:00 PM ET
Line: BetUS.com
Pick: Rich Franklin -400

The Bottom Line: Both fighters will come out swinging as the winner still has a career in the UFC, while the other might as well retire. Should be all Franklin, they keep giving him easy fighters to fight. Get your UFC 83 Prediction in now at BetUS.com and receive a 10% sign-up bonus on your initial deposit.