UFC 97 Chuck Liddell vs Mauricio Rua Prediction

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UFC legend and former UFC light heavyweight Champion Chuck "The Iceman" Liddell squares off against Brazilian superstar Mauricio "Shogun" Rua, April 18, at UFC 97 in Montreal, Canada. This bout promises to be one of the most explosive bouts of 2009, but if it’s a loss for the Iceman his UFC career is over. UFC oddsmakers at BetUS.com have Chuck Liddell as -200 moneyline fav over Mauricio Rua who is listed as +150 underdogChuck Liddell vs Mauricio Rua Prediction in now at BetUS.com

Chuck "The Iceman" Liddell has lost three of his last four fights as one of the most prolific strikers, and fan favs, has to put up or shut up. Dana White said recently “If Chuck doesn’t win, I will force him to retire.” Dana and Chuck have been friends since the start of UFC and Dana doesn’t want to see Chuck get hurt. Liddell fought "Sugar" Rashad Evans at UFC 88. At 1:51 of the second round, Evans connected with an overhand right, Liddell's trademark punch, resulting in the former champion unconscious on his stomach. Chuck had simultaneously thrown a right uppercut, missing Evans' face and instead making contact with the armpit. The knockout was dubbed "knockout of the year." His only win in his last four fights was at UFC 79 against Wanderlei Silva. Liddell defeated Silva via unanimous decision to what many fans and MMA critics called the best fight of the year. Both fighters were awarded "fight of the night" honors. His next loss was at the hands of Keith Jardine at UFC 76. Liddell lost a split decision to Jardine, for his first consecutive losses of his career. Following the fight, UFC president Dana White stated, "The Chuck Liddell that I saw fight didn't look like the Chuck Liddell that loves to fight". Chuck lost his belt after seven consecutive wins at UFC 71 against Clinton Jackson. Liddell was knocked down by a Right Hook less than two minutes into round 1 and was subsequently unable to defend himself against Jackson's strikes on the ground, resulting in a TKO victory for Rampage. Chuck’s getting old and he has a weak chin, it’s not looking good.

Mauricio Rua is known for his aggressive fighting style, for his extreme versatility and his black belt in Brazilian Jiu-Jitsu. He has one loss in his last six fights with his most recent win over Mark Coleman at UFC 93. Shogun defeated Coleman via TKO with 24 seconds left in the 3rd round. In the fight both fighters were tired and fought most of the fight with their hands down and finally Shogun was able to take advantage and finish the fight. After the fight he was criticized for not destroying the 44 year old, who hadn’t fought in two years, quicker. His only loss in six fights came from Forrest Griffin at UFC 76. Shogun was considered a heavy favorite to win. Rua and Griffin battled in a close fight, with Rua having trouble with the larger Griffin. However, after Rua became exhausted during the second round, he was unable to keep pace against Griffin and repeatedly gave up his back while scrambling on the ground. With only 15 seconds remaining in the fight Griffin locked in a rear naked choke, forcing Rua to tap out. It seems Rua is out of shape and can’t go the distance. This might be good for Chuck!

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When: Sat, April 18, 2009 10:00 PM ET
Line: BetUS.com
Pick: Liddell -200

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The Bottom Line: I want Chuck to win, his best bet is to let I go deep into the third before going for the knockout blow. Go Chuck! Be sure to get your UFC 97 Chuck Liddell vs Mauricio Rua Prediction in now at BetUS.com and receive a 10% sign-up bonus on your initial deposit!