UFC 97: Chuck Liddell vs Mauricio Rua Fight Odds

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UFC 97: Redemption takes place tonight at the Bell Centre in Montreal, Canada. The live TV, Pay-Per-View portion of the event starts at 10:00pm ET. Headlining the 12 fight card is a middleweight championship bout between Anderson "The Spider" Silva and Thales Leites. However, the matchup gathering the most interest is the light heavyweight battle between Chuck "The Iceman" Liddell and Mauricio "Shogun" Rua.

UFC 97: Chuck Liddell vs Mauricio Rua Fight Odds at BetUS.com have the former champion Liddell favored at -200 moneyline odds.

Chuck "The Iceman" Liddell comes into this fight in desperate need of a victory. The once invincible striker has lost three of his last four fights and he looked his age (39) in his last appearance in the Octagon. Liddell was knocked out cold by Rashad Evans at 1:51 into the second round. He seemed to be a step behind the younger Evans, despite stalking him for most of the fight, and repeatedly dropped his left hand, which "Sugar" eventually capitalized on with a devastating right hook.

Liddell, who lost his belt back in May of 2007 after being TKO'd by Quinton "Rampage" Jackson, is said to have worked on his defense more intently in preparation for this fight. If his training does indeed help him shore up a few things, he could be a tough out for Rua. The California native proved he still has plenty of power when he pummeled Wanderlei Silva in their December, 2007 skirmish.

The 6'2" Liddell has a professional MMA record of 21-6; 13 of his 21 wins have come by KO or TKO.

Mauricio Rua, once one of the most feared fighter in MMA, has suffered some hits to his reputation since joining the UFC in September of 2007. The Brazilian was submitted by Forrest Griffin in the third round in his first trip inside the Octagon and he looked to be winded early in his second UFC fight, a less than spectacular victory over former champion Mark Coleman. Nonetheless, his 17-3 MMA record speaks for itself, and he will not be a push-over for any fighter.

Rua, whose martial arts background is primarily in Muay Thai and Jiu-Jitsu, is most well known for his victorious march to the PRIDE Grand Prix title back in 2005. The 27 year old beat such notable fighters as Quinton Jackson, Rogerio Nogueira, and Ricardo Arona in winning the prestigious event.

This fight should be interesting from a style stand point as Liddell is the more accomphlished striker while Rua is, perhaps, the more well rounded fighter. "The Iceman" does not venture to the ground very often, but his skills there are largely underestimated. Should Rua chose to go that route, which he might given Liddell's heavy hands, he could expend a great deal of energy trying to get the former champ to the mat. Liddell has some of the best take down defense in mixed martial arts.

UFC 97: Chuck Liddell vs Mauricio Rua Fight Odds at BetUS.com

Chuck Liddell (-200) vs Mauricio Rua (+150)

Anderson Silva (-600) vs Thales Leites (+350)

Krzysztof Soszynski (-155) vs Brian Stann (+115)

Luiz Cane (-275) vs Steve Cantwell (+190)

Nate Quarry (-120) vs Jason MacDonald (-110)

David Loiseau (-125) vs Ed Herman (-115)

Mark Bocek (-300) vs David Bielkheden (+200)

Sam Stout (-150) vs Matt Wiman (+110)

Cheick Kongo (-300) vs Antoni Hardonk (+200)

Denis Kang (-350) vs Xavier Foupa Pokam (+225)

TJ Grant (+170) vs Ryo Chonan (-220)