UFC 98: Matt Hughes vs Matt Serra

Contributed by Scott Burgess
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Two UFC fighters who truly hate each other get ready to settle their differences in the Octagon, Saturday May 23, as Matt Hughes and Matt Serra duke it out. This bout has been in the making for years, but injuries to both fighters has prevented it from happening. UFC oddsmakers at SBGglobal.com has Matt Hughes as -270 moneyline fav over Matt Serra who is listed as +220 underdog. Be sure to get your UFC 98: Matt Hughes vs Matt Serra Prediction in now at SBGglobal.com

Matt Hughes was the former 2-time UFC Welterweight Champion. He is considered to be the most dominant Welterweight in UFC history so far. Hughes put together two separate six-fight winning streaks in the UFC, won the welterweight title on two occasions and defended the belt seven times. But he has lost his last two fights, three of last four, and is considering retiring after this fight. His last fight was at UFC 85 against Thiago Alves, almost one year ago. Matt lost the fight to Thiago Alves due to referee stoppage (TKO strikes) at 1:02 in round 2. After receiving a powerful flying knee from Alves he dropped to the ground with his own left knee pinned behind his hips. He indicated during post-fight interviews that the landing did injure his knee. His other loss before Alves was at UFC 79 against George St.Pierre, whom he beat at UFC 50. Despite his best efforts, Hughes was unable to mount any serious offense on St. Pierre, who easily avoided all of Hughes' takedown attempts while also taking Hughes down at will and using Hughes' own ground-and-pound style against him. Near the end of the second round, St. Pierre attempted a kimura on Matt's right arm that he escaped, but in a reversal of their first fight, St. Pierre was able to twist it into a straight armbar with fifteen seconds remaining in the round. Hughes fought the extension, but with his left hand trapped between the mat and St. Pierre's legs, was forced to verbally submit at 4:54 of the second round. Matt is great at takedowns, he has superb wrestling skills and has immense physical strength.

Thoughts on his opponent Matt Hughes - I've been training hard and I'm going to have to focus a lot on my wrestling. I think it's going to be a good fight.

Matt Serra has won three of his last five fights, but hasn’t fought in nearly a year and has been riddled with injuries. His greatest fight to date was at UFC 69 against UFC Welterweight Champ George St.Pierre. He won the title via TKO at 3:25 of the first round. Prior to the fight, Serra was considered a substantial underdog. His next fight would at UFC 83 again against St.Pierre to determine the undisputed welterweight championship, but this time it didn’t go his way. Instead of striking, St-Pierre pressed the action early with a takedown and kept mixing up his attack, never allowing Serra the chance to mount a significant offense. In the second round, St-Pierre continued his previous actions, forcing Serra into the turtle position and delivering repeated knees to Serra's midsection. When Serra was unable to improve his position or defend against the strikes, referee Yves Lavigne stopped the fight. That was Serra’s last fight, a little over a year ago. Matt Serra's known for his submissions as well as his aggressive style of fighting.

Thoughts on his opponent Matt Hughes - I’m lucky to get back in there with a guy like Matt Hughes; there’s nobody in the world I’d rather fight right now.

UFC 98: Matt Hughes vs Matt Serra
When: Sat, May 23, 2009 10:00 PM ET
Line: SBGglobal.com
Pick: Matt Hughes -270

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The Bottom Line: You have to go with Matt Hughes based on his strength and tremendous workout regime. Go Hughes! Be sure to get your UFC 98: Matt Hughes vs Matt Serra Prediction in now at SBGglobal.com and receive a 60% sign-up bonus