UFC 98: Matt Hughes 5 to 13 Betting Odds

Contributed by Matt Foust
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UFC 98 will take place this Saturday, May 23rd at the MGM Grand Garden Arena in Las Vegas, Nevada. Former welterweight champion Matt Hughes will be taking on his arch nemesis, Matt Serra, at the event. Online bookmaker Bodog.com has listed Hughes as a 5 to 13 betting odds favorite to win the long anticipated battle.

Most of the talk around Saturday night's UFC 98 fight between Matt Hughes and Matt Serra has centered on the mutual dislike that the two combatants have for one another. And although Hughes has addressed that point many times, he may have bigger things to worry about than how much he despises Serra.

The once unbeatable champion has lost three of his last four forays into the Octagon and he suffered a major knee injury in his last bout, a June 7th, 2008 loss to Thiago Alves in London. Hughes tore his medial collateral ligament and partially tore his posterior cruciate ligament in the defeat.

Hughes believes his injury has healed properly, and that his long stint away from the cage was more of a blessing than a setback.

"I'm getting older now, so the time off was actually pretty nice," Hughes said.

However, the Hillsboro, Illinois native acknowledged that that he has not had the fire that he once had and that it has taken his dislike of Matt Serra to get him to really put his heart into training.

"It's to the point where I need something like this (anger) to get motivated for fights," Hughes said. "It's good for me in that there's plenty of motivation to get me to train properly and be 100 percent prepared."

Despite the age and injury factors, Hughes longtime trainer, Marc Fiore, thinks the former champ still has all the tools he needs to get Serra to the ground and administer old-fashioned beating. According to Fiore, Hughes camp has been focused on doing just that.

"Going with the statistics, it's in our advantage if we get Serra on his back," Fiore said. "I mean, if you look at a lot of Matt's wins; they're from that position, where Matt's on top of his opponent and he grinds 'em out, or he goes for a submission or goes for a ground-and-pound. That's where Matt is strong."

Bodog.com UFC 98: Matt Hughes 5 to 13 Betting Odds

Matt Hughes (5/13) vs Matt Serra (2/1)

Visit Bodog.com today to get the latest UFC 98 odds and to place your bet on Saturday night's Matt Hughes vs Matt Serra grudge match.