

UFC 142 Preview and Results: Aldo Vs. Mendes



UFC 142 MAIN CARD

145#: **Jose Aldo** (21-1) vs. Chad Mendes (11-1) wins by K0 in RD1!

185#: **Vitor Belfort** (21-9) vs. Anthony Johnson (10-4) wins by Rear Naked Choke in RD1!

185#: **Rousamir Palhares** (23-3) vs. Mike Massenzio (13-6) wins by Heelhook in RD1!

170#: Erick Silva (13-2) vs. **Carlo Prater** (30-10-1) wins by Disqualification (Punches to the back of the head)!

155#: **Edson Barboza** (10-0) vs. Terry Etim (15-4) wins by spinning wheel kick in RD3!

PRELIMINARY BOUTS (On FX @ 8 P.M. EST)

155#: **Thiago Tavares** (21-4-1) vs. Sam Stout (18-7-1) wins by Unanimous Decision!

265#: **Gabriel Gonzaga** (13-6) vs. Ednaldo Oliveira (13-1-1) wins by Rear Naked Choke in RD1!

145#: **Yuri Alcantara** (26-3) vs. Michihiro Omigawa (13-11-1) wins by Unanimous Decision!

170#: Ricardo Funch (8-3) vs. **Mike Pyle** (22-8-1) wins by TKO

in RD1!

PRELIMINARY BOUTS (On Facebook @ 6 P.M. EST)

145#: **Felipe Arantes** (14-4) vs. Antonio Carvalho (13-5) wins by Unanimous Decision!



by Joe Silvia

Jose Aldo vs. Chad Mendes

In the main event, undefeated “wrestler” Chad Mendes is facing Featherweight champ Jose Aldo in what is sure to be a classic striker versus grappler match-up. The Brazilian Aldo, who is a WEC alumni, has been terrorizing the division with his lethal striking.

Twelve of his twenty wins have been by KO or TKO. Since moving to the UFC early in 2011, he has had two bouts, both of which went by way of decision. Many critics are wondering if the step up in competition has dulled his striking prowess. He will certainly be compelled to make a statement by working strenuously for a finish Saturday night. Having the characteristically raucous Brazilian crowd backing him up will certainly help motivate him in that direction.

The American Chad Mendes has won all eleven of his bouts by imposing his wrestling excellence on his opponents. He uses just enough striking to set up his takedowns and grinds out wins. Many critics find his style similar to Jon Fitch who has a grinding, outworking, decision style of fight. Mendes’ wrestling career began in high school and culminated in garnering All-American status in 2006 and being voted 2008’s Pac-10 wrestler of the year. He is certainly the best wrestler that Aldo has faced and inversely Aldo is the best striker that Mendes has faced..

This battle should come down to which person executes his game plan. Aldo in the early stages of the fight needs to strike Mendes' legs causing enough damage that it interferes with Mendes' ability to shoot single and double legs. He also must not plant and throw combos early on, which will only assist Mendes in his take-down attempts. He needs to take potshots, while executing the kicks to Mendes' thighs. When Mendes shoots for take-downs Aldo must make him pay in the transitions. In the middle rounds with Mendes' legs in pain and weakened, and psychologically fatigued from failed take-down attempts, Aldo can then take more risks, plant his base and begin to fire combinations and work towards his desired finish.

Mendes' game plan is to have early success with his grappling. Getting a take-down early on would be an excellent indicator of how the fight will unfold. Mendes success will hinge on making Aldo grapple and fatigue his arms in the process. So if a take-down fails, as long as Mendes' can get to the clinch or against the cage where he can pummel and burn Aldo's arms out in the process, weakening his punching power, it will contribute to his Mendes' game plan. As Aldo pulls away from the clinches, Mendes needs to strike in combination in the transitions as he has had success with in the past. This transition strategy is where Mendes' needs to be to win the fight. In the middle to later rounds, Mendes' will have increasingly more success with his take-downs and can work his ground and pound en route to a decision or finish.

Anthony Johnson vs. Vitor Belfort

In the Anthony Johnson vs Vitor Belfort fight, you have a young, athletic, and huge Anthony Johnson against the older, heavy-handed veteran Vitor Belfort. 2004 NCJAA Champ, Johnson who has spent his UFC career campaigning at Welterweight (170 lbs) with much success has decided that his typical weight cut of approximately 50 lbs is too much so is debuting at Middleweight (185 lbs) for the first time. He has failed to

make weight twice by 5 lbs, and as a Facebook follower, the last week of extreme weight cutting is a frightening thing to behold someone go through. Though a “wrestler” Johnson spends his time in the octagon striking. 70% of his wins have come by way of KO/TKO. His size, speed, and athleticism are his best weapons. Having to cut less weight should on paper, be a boost for him psychologically and physically.

Vitor Belfort made his UFC debut in 1997 at UFC 12 and is famous for his highlight KOs. However, his criticism is that if the fight doesn't go his way, he wilts and wilts fast. Like Johnson, most of his wins (14 of 20) have come by way of KO/TKO and he has very heavy, fast hands. Vitor is incredibly dangerous in the first minutes of the fight, but fades as the fight goes on as is evidenced by the majority of his KOs coming in the first round, only 2 in the second round, and none in the third. Expect some fireworks in the first round as both men battle for control.

Don't be surprised if Vitor gets a fast, quick KO or if Johnson gets a TKO in the second or third.

Rousimar Palhares vs Mike Massenzio

Big strong, slightly unstable, leg lock master Rousimar Palhares is facing veteran, tough as nails Mike Massenzio. Massenzio seems to be stricken with the big fight “curse” losing every fight against top opponents. He can't let his nervousness get the best of him. In the past, Palhares has continued to crank a leg lock, even after his opponent has tapped and even after a referee has told him to relent. He has even continued when referees have physically gotten involved and prying at his hands to get him to release. Massenzio is 2-3 in the UFC and unfortunately with his nerves is under a lot of pressure to win and win big. Massenzio will need to put on the best performance of his life to win.

Erick Silva vs. Carlo Prater

Brazilian submission specialist Erick Silva exploded on the

scene with his UFC debut with his brutal 40-second KO of Luis Ramos at UFC 134 in August 2011. He was the topic of discussion all over the chat boards. 13-1, Silva has 10 finishes and has the style that fans like to watch. All eyes are on him for another highlight performance as he takes on fellow Brazilian and salty dog Carlo Prater. Prater is on a four fight win streak, all finishes. He has the experience, is more well-rounded and will present a lot of problems for Silva. This fight has all the makings of an upset. Of course, Prater and his fans won't see it as an upset since he has all the tools to win. However, it remains to be seen how Prater performs as he took this fight on short notice. This fight is the dark horse fight of the night, and could very well come away with Fight of the Night, KO of the Night, or Submission of the Night honors.

Edson Barboza vs. Terry Etim

In a Brazilian vs Brit match-up, we have the very heavy handed Brazilian Edson Barboza against the more well rounded Brit Terry Etim. Barboza, who was a kick boxer before transitioning to MMA, has had 22 of his 25 wins come by way of KO/TKO. Six of his nine wins in MMA have come by KO, but he has yet to finish a high-level opponent since coming to the UFC. While Etim has dangerous, and in my opinion, underrated striking, it is Barboza that has the far more dangerous power. Either man can finish with strikes in a "stand in the middle and bang it out" type of fight. However, Etim's ace up his sleeves is his submission game, winning 3 submission of the night bonuses in his last 3 wins in the UFC. Etim will need to strike to set up his take-downs, but strategically even though he can win a stand up battle, it would be more prudent for him to get the fight to the ground at some point.

Expect this fight not to last and vie for KO/Sub of the night honors.

Come back to this article to get live updates on the results. I will also answer any questions during the broadcast for

those who have them.