

An early look at UFC 240 in Edmonton

After a disappointing debut card, the Ultimate Fighting Championship (UFC) will return to Edmonton for UFC 240 on July 27 at Rogers Place.

The full fight lineup has not been made official, but there have been a few fights announced, including the main event, which features Canada's adopted son Max Holloway defending his featherweight belt against former lightweight champion Frankie Edgar.

While the card is slowly coming together, there are a few important things to look at as we approach another fight night here in oil country.

A lacklustre UFC 215

The UFC's first foray into Edmonton did not go off quite as planned, as two of the top three bouts on the card were cancelled heading into fight night.

A highly anticipated (and since rebooked) matchup between heavyweight contenders Junior dos Santos and Francis Ngannou was scheduled to take place, but dos Santos was pulled from the card after being flagged for a USADA violation.

Without a suitable replacement, Ngannou was removed from the card, dealing a huge blow to the firepower that was packed into the middle of the pay-per-view (PPV).

What was even more devastating was the loss of the main event just one day before the fight.

Ray Borg was deemed unfit to fight due to illness by UFC doctors and therefore flyweight champion Demetrious Johnson was left without a fight.

There were some highlights from the card, including a masterclass in leg kicks from Jeremy Stephens in his bout against Gilbert Melendez and the start of Henry Cejudo's climb to becoming a two-weight world champion.

However, the absence of a solid mid-card bout and the loss of a title fight took its toll on the card overall and hopefully UFC 240 will erase the woes of Edmonton's first event.

Oh, Canada!

In a [previous piece](#) I had discussed the lack of Canadian fighters on UFC cards in Canada, but UFC 240 is already slated to showcase a plethora of Canadian talent.

Felicia Spencer, Alexis Davis and Olivier Aubin-Mercier are among the seven Canadian fighters scheduled to compete, and one or two more could be added as we approach the event.

A shot for Unified MMA talent

Speaking of Canadian talent that would be available to compete, Unified MMA has been grooming some of Canada's finest young prospects including Teddy "Bear" Ash, Neal Anderson, Tanner Boser and KB "Bengal" Bhullar.

While all of these fighters will likely get a crack at the UFC or another major promotion, Ash is probably the most UFC-ready fighter.

Ash is currently the Unified MMA middleweight and light heavyweight champion and he holds wins over former UFC fighters in Dominique Steele and Seth Baczynski.

Similar to Marc-André Barriault, who climbed the ranks in TKO en route to his shot with the UFC, Ash has climbed the ranks in his regional fight scene and is calling for his shot in the big show.

What better time than now to get Ash a fight, and feature some local talent?

The missing link

One of the most underrated slots on a UFC event is the middle fight on the main card.

Booking an exciting match-up or having a fighter with star power in this slot can bolster the overall complexion for fans looking to buy tickets or PPVs.

Look no further than UFC 238 last weekend, when Tony Ferguson and Donald Cerrone occupied this position.

Not only was this an exciting bout, but they both added star power that helped elevate the card from good to great.

UFC 240 is lacking this mid-card umph as of right now and booking a fight like Zabit Magomedsharipov vs. Brian Ortega would add both some additional star power and an exciting match-up to the card.

Third time's the charm

Max Holloway and Frankie Edgar have been scheduled to fight twice before, but the fight has yet to come to fruition.

<https://twitter.com/EdmontonEsks/status/1134156396876914688>

Knowing the history of this fight and Edmonton's bad luck at UFC 215, it is hard not to be cautious about whether or not this fight will actually happen.

However, if it does, it will be worth the wait as Frankie Edgar does not quit and will continue to force his wrestling, grappling and pressure on the champion.

On the other hand, Max Holloway will have something to prove coming off a loss at lightweight.

Like Edgar his pace is incredible and Holloway's output is among the best in the UFC.

He has established himself as one of the best featherweights of all-time and an impressive win over Edgar could surely end the debate.

Expect an instant classic as the two battle for the fans in Edmonton, who are ready for fireworks on July 27.