

Written by David A. Avila

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As fight cards go, the heavyweight collision between UFC champion Cain Velasquez and Brazil's Junior Dos Santos has star quality written all over it.

But more is at stake as Ultimate Fighting Championship stages its first title fight on regular national television on Saturday. One fight, no pay-per-view fee, for all the marbles.

Velasquez (9-0) defends the title against the number one challenger, the heavy-handed Dos Santos (13-1) at the Honda Center in Anaheim. Though numerous other fights will also take place though only the main event will be televised on Fox at 6 p.m. (Pacific Time).

"There's only going to be one fight," White said recently. "Even if it goes 10 seconds."

Fans can watch the other fights on Facebook.com or on Fox.com.

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The last time we saw Velasquez in the Octagon he was removing the championship from Brock Lesnar with a combination of flashing punches and brutal strength after withstanding a quick assault from the former champion. Now the California-bred prizefighter will face a different kind of opponent.

“This is a great style fight. We both hit hard,” said Velasquez while in Las Vegas in September. “He’s definitely the best boxer in MMA.”

Despite a fierce attacking style in the Octagon, Dos Santos is actually a very amiable and funny guy outside of combat. He joked about his training and his English language expertise while chomping on every ounce of food he could grab.

“It’s a big step. I’ll get more famous so it’s good,” joked Dos Santos about his pending title fight. “It’s great for me because I’m fighting against the champion Cain Velasquez.”

It’s also a big step for UFC as it attempts to gain mainstream notoriety in North America. It’s been a long dream of Dana White and brothers Lorenzo and Frank Fertitta for their organization and for MMA to reach the regular television audience.

“We’re not mainstream yet,” said White, who had sought the proper television deal for his organization for many years. “But we’re getting there.”

Velasquez returns to the scene of his heavyweight victory that garnered the title for him a year ago. Injuries deterred him from defending the title until now. Once again there is a major obstacle to overcome in Dos Santos.

“It was hard. I had no activity for one month,” said Velasquez about being injured. “I expect a long fight that goes the distance.”

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Both fighters are glad that they were picked to showcase MMA on a major television network.

“I’m very proud to be on this Fox card,” Velasquez said. “I just want to do a great fight for the people...it’s a big thing.”

Fights on television

Sat. Fox, 6 p.m., Cain Velasquez (9-0) vs. Junior Dos Santos (13-1).

Sat. HBO pay-per-view, 6 p.m., Manny Pacquiao (53-3-2) vs. Juan Manuel Marquez (53-5-1); Tim Bradley (27-0) vs. Joel Casamayor (38-5-1); Mike Alvarado (31-0) vs. Bredis Prescott (24-3).

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