UFC-251

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“Nobody is giving you fights right now, only I am so appreciate that”~ Dana White, President of the UFC Those were the words spoken by UFC boss Dana White in a press conference when asked about the upcoming fights. Dana almost always follows through on his statements and did so on his promise to bring all fight fans an amazing card for July.

UFC-251 took place on the 12 th of July in the Yas Islands in Abu Dhabi at the Flash Forum. The card consisting 3 title fights in the Bantamweight, Featherweight and Welterweight on the main card as well as the long awaited meeting of the two former Strawweight champions in the womens division. This was one of the first times one fight card consisted of 3 title fights and hence gained a lot of traction with the addition of Florida’s Jorge “Gamebred” Masvidal, UFC 251 recorded the second most PPV buys, since UFC-229 in which Conor “The Notorious” McGregor faced off against current lightweight champ Khabib Nurmagomedov.

Petr “No Mercy” Yan and the former featherweight champion Jose Aldo, who came down a weight, fought for the vacant Bantamweight Title in the first fight on the champion studded main card. It was a round 5 TKO for the young Russian Petr Yan. It was “No Mercy” Yan who had controlled the entirety of the fight keeping it at his pace, the Brazilian veteran Aldo did exhibit class and experience in his striking especially his leg kicks which evoked nostalgia of a prime Edson Barboza. Neither fighter made a submission attempt with Yan looking to finish the fight with old-school ground and pound after his successful knockdown. The referee, Leon Edwards too evoked nostalgia of the man the myth Steve “Mustache” Mazzagatti, widely renowned as one of the worst referees to ever had officiated a professional fight, after making a very poor stoppage to the fight leaving Jose Aldo heavily damaged. Yan was truly letting the world know why he is called “No Mercy” after brutally knocking Aldo down and hitting the Brazilian with hammerfists and heavy ground and pound, leaving the viewers in awe and rightly being crowned the undisputed Bantamweight champion of the world in Bruce Buffer’s veteran voice.

Alexander “The Great” Volkanovski fought Max “Blessed” Holloway for his first Featherweight title defense and rematch on the co-main event. The fight was truly a joy to watch with two wonderfully talented fighters in Volkanovski and Holloway and a nail biting finish with Volkanovski successfully defending his title and defeating Holloway for the second time. The controversial split decision victory in favor of the Australian Volkanovski received a decent amount of criticism with several believing the Hawaiian Holloway was robbed of a victory. In my personal opinion, Holloway was the winner, controlling the first two to three rounds with ease and only evidently loosing the last round which showed Volkanovski find a second wind and successfully taking down Holloway. The Hawaiian had the faster hands and better takedown defense successfully defending himself against 6 of Volkanovski’s 9 takedown attempts. A third bout seems inevitable and extremely exciting for fight fans.

Kamaru “The Nigerian Nightmare” Usman was set to fight his teammate Gilbert Burns for the main event of UFC-251 for his second title defense. Unfortunately for the Brazilian Burns, he contracted the coronavirus and had to pull out. Fortunately for all fight fans, Jorge “Gamebred” Masvidal agreed to fight the 170- pound champ Usman on 6 days notice. Drama between both had been stirring for almost a year with Gamebred publically calling out Usman after his 5 second KO against Ben Askren. Gamebred made championship weight in 6 days and the fight was officially announced to take place. It was a unanimous decision victory and title defense for Kamaru Usman. It was evident that Masvidal was in no way prepared to tackle the challenge that is Usman. The Nigerian Nightmare wrestled the Florida native throughout the fight, foot stamping and digging through Jorge’s body. In my honest opinion, Kamaru Usman is the only man who could have made a Jorge Masvidal fight boring, with that being said I would like to say that a rematch would be much appreciated but I cannot see it going in Masvidal’s favor.

UFC-251 was anroller coaster of emotions and an amazing experience, throughout all the controversial decisions, exciting knockdowns and whatnot. Dana White, the UFC and all fighters showed up, put on a show and entertained the fans.