Bellator Fighting Championships finally brings its great mixed martial arts to our back yard. Bellator 66 will take place at the IX Center tonight and the card is simply loaded. If you're a fan of top notch local fighters then you're going to see the best of the best. Add in an additional top crop of fighters at 155lbs that aren't from the Cleveland area and you have a fight fan's dream.

The main event is a rematch of Eddie Alvarez, the former Bellator lightweight champion, and Japanese sensation Shinya Aoki. They fought on New Year's Eve back in 2008 and Aoki was victorious via heel hook.

Since that loss, Alvarez has won seven out of eight fights. The lone loss was to Michael Chandler is the fight of the year in 2011 back at Bellator 58. Alvarez was widely regarded as the best fighter at 155 that currently isn't on the UFC roster until the loss to Chandler.

Aoki is a wizard on the ground. He is currently 30-5 with 19 of those wins coming by submission. This fight will be a contrast in styles and the fighter who can impose their will is going to have a serious advantage. Alvarez needs to keep the fight standing if he is going to avenge his earlier loss. Aoki wants the fight on the mat as soon as possible.

The fact that Alvarez is coming off of a loss and looking to get revenge, I like him to be hungrier than ever. I expect to see to best Eddie Alvarez and for him to have his hand raised in victory tonight.

Brian Rogers looks to take another huge leap is his MMA career. He can do so with another win the middleweight tournament against Andreas Spang who is a late injury replacement for Bruno Santos. Rogers, who trains out of Strongstyle MMA in Independence, Ohio currently sits at 9 and 3 overall while Spang is 7-1 and has competed for Strikeforce.

The last time we saw Rogers in the cage he was landing a flying knee knockout of the year candidate on Vitor Vianna. If you haven't seen the KO, and I'm stealing a line from Brian here, Google him. That win came in the first round of the middleweight tournament. Rogers is one of those fighters that improves every time we seem him. His standup is very crisp and explosive and he has knockout power in both hands as well as his knees and kicks. The reason his submission game seems to be a question mark is due to the fact that we really haven't had a chance to see it. That will probably change when he steps in with Spang.

Brian Rogers is a guy I will never pick against. I expect him to thrive off of the attention of fighting in his backyard as well as the exposure that came from his picture perfect knockout. If he keeps the fight on the feet, it will be a long night for Santos. Look for "The Predator" to advance and fight the winner of Maiquel Falcao versus Vyacheslav Vasilevsky.

Also on the card fighting out of Strongstyle is Joe Heiland. We haven't seen Joe in the cage since the end of 2010. Heiland is 6-1-1 is his career and was one of the fastest risers in the Cleveland area. He will be welcomed back by Julian Lane who is now 3-0 with all victories by

stoppages. This is the fight that will kick of the evening and will set the tone. I expect a fireworks display.

Jessica Eye, also out of StrongStyle MMA, will take on Anita Rodriguez in the night's only women's fight. Eye is currently on a three fight winning streak that upped her record to 6-1. Rodriguez is 5-2 and has been in with some top notch competition.

GriffonRawl MMA Academy is also represented with Donny Walker in action. Walker is of the most exciting crowd pleasing fighters you will see. I don't think it's possible for him to be in a boring fight.

Jason Dent,team leader of GriffonRawl was supposed to take on Tyler Combs but it was a late scratch as Combs was injured. Donny Walker steps in with Frank Carabello. Look for these two guys to possibly steal the show.

Full fight card:

MAIN CARD (MTV2)

- Eddie Alvarez vs. Shinya Aoki
- Rick Hawn vs. Lloyd Woodard - lightweight-tourney semifinal
- Thiago Michel vs. Brent Weedman - lightweight-tourney semifinal
- Brian Rogers vs. Andreas Spang - middleweight-tourney semifinal
- Maiquel Falcao vs. Vyacheslav Vasilevsky - middleweight-tourney semifinal

PRELIMINARY CARD (Spike.com)

- Jessica Eye vs. Anita Rodriguez
- Dan Spohn vs. Attila Vegh
- John Hawk vs. Marcus Vanttinen
- Frank Carabello vs. Donny Walker
- Joe Heiland vs. Julian Lane

Damn, that's a loaded card. TheClevelandFan.com will be live at the IX Center taking in all of the action. I would suggest you do the same either in person or on television if you can't be there. You can thank me later.