

# WHO LEAVES EFC 137 AT THE FRONT OF THE MIDDLEWEIGHT QUEUE?

Two pivotal fights, a former two-time champion and an undefeated prospect could reshape the road to Diego Bandu's title



**Johannesburg, South Africa - 27 August 2026**

While Faez Jacobs and Chadrack Yemba prepare to battle for interim featherweight gold in the EFC 137 main event, another championship story will be unfolding beneath them.

The EFC middleweight division arrives at EFC 137 with Diego Bandu sitting at the top, but plenty still to be decided below the reigning champion.

Former two-time champion Luke Michael wants his way back.

Michael lost the championship to Bandu earlier this year and now faces JT Botha in a pivotal matchup between a former champion looking to re-establish himself and an opponent presented with the biggest opportunity of his professional career.

For Michael, the equation is straightforward. If another championship run is to materialise, beating Botha would be an important first step.

For Botha, victory would mean defeating one of the most accomplished middleweights in EFC history and immediately strengthening his position within the division. There is an added dynamic in

that Botha trains at Team CIT alongside reigning champion Bandu, meaning a victory could create an interesting situation at the top of the middleweight ranks.

But Michael vs Botha is only half of the middleweight story at EFC 137.

Undefeated Josiah Obasi enters only his second EFC appearance with a 4-0 professional record and a considerable step up in opposition awaiting him.

Across the Hexagon will be Russian newcomer German Kokaev, who arrives with an 8-4 professional record and 12 fights of experience. It is an opportunity for Kokaev to make an immediate impact on his EFC debut, while for Obasi it represents the biggest test of his professional career to date.

Then there is Siyakudumisa Nomvemve.

The current number-one contender has previously challenged Michael for the EFC middleweight championship but has not recently been active in competition, leaving an opportunity for others in the division to strengthen their claims.

That makes September 10 particularly significant.

Michael could remind the division why he has already held the championship twice. Botha could record the biggest victory of his career. Obasi could remain undefeated while proving himself against vastly more experienced opposition. Or Kokaev could announce his arrival by immediately defeating one of EFC's unbeaten middleweight prospects.

None of the four has been promised a championship opportunity.

But after two important middleweight fights on the same night, the picture beneath Diego Bandu could look very different.

The developing middleweight story features in the newly released first episode of EFC 137 Engaged, taking viewers inside preparations for EFC 137 with Michael and Botha, alongside appearances from reigning champion Bandu and the athletes contesting the interim featherweight championship in the main event.

**WATCH EFC 137 ENGAGED – EPISODE 1:**  
[INSERT LINK]

## **EFC 137 FIGHT CARD**

**Interim Featherweight Championship**  
Faeez Jacobs vs Chadrack Yemba

**Middleweight**  
Luke Michael vs JT Botha

**Middleweight**  
Josiah Obasi vs German Kokaev

**Lightweight**  
Jason Mackay vs Guide Moyo

**Flyweight**

Tebatso Molele vs Sisa Jungula

**Flyweight**

Godknows Ndlovu vs Lihle Ngamntwini

**Featherweight**

Ayanda Zwane vs Lewis Mataya

**Featherweight**

Roberto Miyaba vs Sibusiso Sovendle

**Featherweight**

Bruce Mayasi vs Ash Zola

**Lightweight**

Takunda Gorimbo vs Philani Mbuyazi

**Flyweight**

Tryford Mwanga vs Lukhmaan Jhazbhay

**Welterweight**

Alex Suzuki vs Trevor Mutsila

**Lightweight**

Stefan Diedericks vs Johnny Koen

*Fight card subject to change.*

The EFC 137 preliminary card will broadcast live globally on Discover Sport, with the main card live on SuperSport, SABC Sport, Discover Sport, DAZN and other international broadcast partners.

EFC 137 is presented by World Sports Betting and takes place live from the World Sports Betting EFC Arena in Johannesburg, South Africa, on Thursday, 10 September.

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Headquartered in Johannesburg, South Africa, EFC is a world leading mixed martial arts organisation. EFC produces 10 live events annually at sold out arenas. With over 200 athletes exclusively contracted to the organisation, EFC showcases the greatest warriors on the planet. EFC events are broadcast in over 120 countries around the world on numerous television networks in multiple languages. EFC programming is available weekly in more than 600 million television households globally, making it one of the most recognisable MMA brands in the world.

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