

SHAKA MEETS SAMURAI

Itumeleng Mabilo and Thembani Mhlanga clash at EFC 138



Johannesburg, South Africa - 29 July 2026

Two developing lightweights will look to secure a breakthrough victory when Itumeleng "Shaka" Mabilo takes on Thembani "Samurai" Mhlanga at EFC 138 on Thursday, 8 October.

Both athletes remain at the beginning of their professional careers, but each arrives with a strong combat sports background and the ambition to establish themselves on Africa's most watched MMA stage.

Representing Coalition Grappling Academy under Vlad Koulikov, Potchefstroom's Mabilo earned his opportunity in the EFC after progressing through South Africa's amateur ranks. Competing in promotions including Versus Promotions and Gauteng Fighting Championship, he demonstrated both toughness and finishing ability before making his professional debut at EFC 130. Known for his Brazilian Jiu-Jitsu foundation, fight IQ and submission threat, the 25 year old continues to develop into a complete mixed martial artist.

Standing opposite him is Zimbabwean born Johannesburg athlete Thembani "Samurai" Mhlanga. Training under Mohammed Bhyat at Kingdom Muaythai Gym, Mhlanga enters the EFC with a solid boxing pedigree that has shaped his crisp combinations, timing and aggressive stand up style. While continuing to expand his grappling and wrestling, the 27 year old has embraced the challenge of testing himself against quality opposition as he begins his professional MMA journey.

With both athletes eager to register their first EFC victory, the contest offers an important opportunity to gain momentum in one of the promotion's most competitive divisions.

EFC 138 takes place on Thursday, 8 October at the World Sports Betting EFC Arena in Johannesburg. Tickets and broadcast information are available at:

<https://efcworldwide.com>

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