

VAN STADEN AND SANCHEZ SET FOR DEFINING EFC 136 TITLE UNIFICATION

THE NEXT STEP IN AFRICA'S GLOBAL MMA JOURNEY



Johannesburg, South Africa – 9 June 2026

EFC 136 will be headlined by a championship fight carrying far more than gold when Martin “The Punisher” van Staden faces Adrian Sanchez on August 6 in Johannesburg.

Van Staden, the reigning EFC lightweight champion, will meet interim champion Sanchez in a title unification bout presented by World Sports Betting at the World Sports Betting EFC Arena.

For Van Staden, this is another major chapter in one of the most important careers in EFC history.

For Sanchez, it may be the fight that changes everything.

Van Staden has spent years standing at the centre of African MMA. He has fought elite opponents, shared the Hexagon with future global stars, carried championship expectations, and remained one of the most recognisable names the organisation has ever produced. His career has been defined by longevity, power, experience, and a willingness to face the toughest available opposition.

There were moments where Van Staden appeared close to breaking through onto the biggest international stages. As with many great fighters, timing, injuries, results, and opportunity all played their part. Yet through every setback, he remained relevant. He remained dangerous. And he remained a champion.

Now he stands in front of Sanchez.

Sanchez enters EFC 136 on the strongest run of his career. After a difficult and inconsistent early journey, he has made the adjustments required to become a legitimate championship threat,

capturing interim gold and building a four fight winning streak that has forced the division to pay attention.

His victory over Jeferson Pereira at the Knox Series in Cape Town proved he could win a hard, disciplined fight under pressure. Now he gets the opportunity every rising athlete in EFC is chasing.

A win over Van Staden would not simply make Sanchez the undisputed champion. It would place him among the next generation of African athletes pushing toward the world stage.

That is what makes this fight so important.

EFC has long served as the proving ground for African mixed martial artists with global ambitions. From the early days of the organisation to the rise of athletes who went on to compete internationally, EFC has become the pathway where African fighters are tested, built, and prepared for the highest levels of the sport.

The success of African athletes on the global stage has already proven what the continent can produce. Now the question is who comes next.

On August 6, Sanchez has the chance to take a major step toward becoming that next name.

But to do it, he must defeat one of the most formidable champions EFC has ever seen.

Can Sanchez complete his rise and claim the undisputed championship?

Or will “The Punisher” stop another contender and remind everyone why the road to the top still runs through Martin van Staden?

EFC 136 Van Staden vs Sanchez Lightweight championship unification takes place on August 6 presented by World Sports Betting at the WSB EFC Arena in Johannesburg, South Africa.

Broadcast and ticket details at efcworldwide.com