

## Amateur career inspires "Shorty" Torres to pursue historic BRAVE CF victory in enemy territory

● Torres is scheduled to face Ali Bagautinov in the last semi-final bout of the Flyweight World Title Tournament at BRAVE CF 55

TDT | Manama

The writing has been on the wall in a positive way for Jose "Shorty" Torres ever since he first stepped inside the cage as a mixed martial artist.

The Chicago, Illinois native embraced the winning culture during his run in the amateur ranks, where he amassed an impressive 25-1 standing - lost only his first amateur fight. He capped off his stint in the amateurs by winning the 135-pound category at the 2015 IMMAF World Championships.

"Shorty" carried over the same kind of success at the professional level, compiling a 10-1 record with four victories by knockout and two via submission. He won 8 of his first professional fights building a winning streak of 33 fights.

Torres also captured belts in both the flyweight and bantamweight divisions of a North American promotion before getting a chance to strut his wares on the global stage of the sport.

Now, he has the opportunity to become BRAVE Combat Federation's first-ever Flyweight



Jose "Shorty" Torres

World Champion. To move an inch closer to that historic moment, he will have to enter enemy territory.

Torres is scheduled to face Ali "The King Puncher" Bagautinov in the last semi-final bout of the Flyweight World Title Tournament at BRAVE CF 55, which emanates from Rostov-on-Don, Russia on November 6 in association with Pro FC.

If he overcomes a stern test in the form of Bagautinov, Torres will earn a seat in the tournament finals to square off with the highly-touted Velimurad Alkhasov at a yet-to-be-announced event.

Having an intricately-crafted belt draped over his shoulder will certainly elevate his name closer to greatness, and Torres surely knows what to do when he stands opposite Bagautinov on November 6.

# Lukaku is 'mentally tired', says Chelsea boss Tuchel

Thomas Tuchel said his players were still adjusting to having Romelu Lukaku in the team

● Romelu Lukaku rejoined Chelsea from Inter Milan in August

AFP | London

Romelu Lukaku is mentally tired after being "overplayed", Chelsea boss Thomas Tuchel said yesterday, as the club's record signing seeks to end his frustrating goal drought.

The Belgium forward rejoined Chelsea from Inter Milan in August for a fee of around £97 million (\$134 million), seven years after his first spell at Stamford Bridge ended.

The 28-year-old impressed in the early weeks of the season but his form has dipped and he has not scored for Chelsea since mid-September.

Tuchel, speaking ahead of Wednesday's Champions League match against Swedish side Malmo, said his players were still adjusting to having Lukaku in the team.

"This will increase every day because we are in the process of adapting to each other," he said. "In the moment, in my opinion, I feel Romelu is a bit overplayed.



Thomas Tuchel and Romelu Lukaku during a training session (file photo)

"I think he played too many competitions over the summer, too many competitions with the national team. Now he plays the Nations League (Belgium finished fourth at the finals earlier this month)."

"It means a lot for him to play for his country so he takes it really seriously," he added.

"If that does not work well he always puts it on his shoulders, he thinks about it, he reflects about it and I feel he is a bit mentally tired, not like hugely that we have a concern."

### Player workload

Tuchel said other players in his squad also had a tough schedule for club and country, including England's Mason

Mount and Jorginho, who won Euro 2020 with Italy.

"They struggle," he said. "They have a lot of weight to carry for their countries. They take it and they love it and they are competitors and if you like it or not if you play 1,000 matches a year it can feel heavy."

Chelsea, the defending European champions, are second in Group H of the Champions League after two games following defeat to Juventus last month.

They remain top of the Premier League after eight matches but Tuchel admitted their form had dipped, with one major reason being a surfeit of games for top players.

"There's still room to improve

**”** I think he played too many competitions over the summer, too many competitions with the national team. Now he plays the Nations League (Belgium finished fourth at the finals earlier this month). It means a lot for him to play for his country so he takes it really seriously

THOMAS TUCHEL

but we lack a bit of form, we lack a bit of freshness, we lack a bit of joy," he said.

The German boss also admitted that Kai Havertz, who scored Chelsea's winner in the Champions League final against Manchester City in May, had not shown his peak form this season.

"The story has not changed but he lacks the statistics of decisive things, of goals and assists and he needs to fight his way back into the team when he gets minutes and this can happen any time," he said.

## Five fights that could steal the show at BRAVE CF 55

TDT | Manama

With a ticket to the finals of the prestigious Flyweight World Title Tournament up for grabs in the main event, BRAVE CF 55 on November 6 has plenty of prestige and excitement in store at the top of the bill.

The Bahrain-based promotion's return trip to Russia is bannered by the tourney's semi-final duel between hometown favorite Ali "The King Puncher" Bagautinov and Jose "Shorty" Torres of the United States—with the winner moving on to face the highly-touted Velimurad Alkhasov.

However, the supporting card is also plenty capable of providing fireworks. From fearless strikers to crafty submission specialists, here are five bouts that could end up stealing the spotlight from the headlining showdown.

### Mochamed Machaev vs. Kasum Kasumov

Mochamed "The Beast" Machaev of Austria seeks vindication at 135 pounds when he faces Russia's very own Kasum Kasumov at BRAVE CF 55.

Machaev fell short in his bantamweight debut at BRAVE CF 52: Bad Blood this past August, succumbing to a jaw-dropping 54-second knockout defeat at the hands of Kasumov's compatriot Gamzat Magomedov.

Prior to the heartbreaking setback, "The Beast" was riding high on a ten-fight unbeaten streak. Now, he looks to redeem himself by going up against Kasumov, a grappling maestro who owns an impressive 13-1 win-loss



Sam Patterson in action

slate with seven victories by way of submission.

Kasumov turned heads in his first two assignments under the organization's banner, forcing Rany Saadeh to tap with the rare Von Flue choke in the second round of their November 2019 clash before strangling Dimitar Kostov with a first-round arm-triangle choke in October 2020.

A decisive win by either man could land a shot at the vacant BRAVE CF Bantamweight World Championship.

### Rustam Chsiev vs. Daniel Pereira

Mohammad "The Latest" Fakhreddine could meet the next challenger for his BRAVE CF Middleweight World Title at the organization's next extravaganza in Rostov-on-Don as Rustam "The Russian Bear" Chsiev battles former division kingpin Daniel "Gaucho" Pereira.

Chsiev has firmly established himself as one of the top-tier athletes at 185 pounds, possess-

ing a superb wrestling pedigree that he honed in his hometown of North Ossetia, Russia.

His bread-and-butter has produced three consecutive victories inside the cage, prevailing over the likes of Tarek Suleiman, Brendan Lesar and Enrico Cortese.

Meanwhile, Pereira is one of the top middleweights to emerge from Brazil in recent history. He has steamrolled through the competition in his home country, with a knack for winning by stoppage.

The 30-year-old is equally adept in finishing his opponents by strikes or by submission. He looks to showcase his multifaceted skill set in Rostov-on-Don and will face a tough challenge when he takes on a hometown hero like Chsiev.

### Kamal Magomedov vs. Luis Felipe Dias

Undeclared Russian stalwart Kamal Magomedov will make his maiden appearance under the Bahrain-based outfit's banner against fellow debutant Luis



**Mochamed Machaev and Kasum Kasumov will aim for a shot at the vacant BRAVE CF Bantamweight World Championship**

Felipe Dias of Brazil at BRAVE CF 55.

Magomedov owns a perfect professional record of 8-0 and has gone the distance in his career, winning five fights by way of submission and three via knockout.

The 30-year-old Russian knows how to have gold fastened around his waist, submitting his opponent with a rear-naked choke in the first round.

Like Magomedov, Dias has won a couple of hardware during his stint at the regional level, amassing a win-loss slate of 14-3.

With an impressive victory,



Kasum Kasumov

either man could find himself a step closer to the available BRAVE CF Super Welterweight World Championship.

### Gadzhimusa Gaziev vs. Issa Isakov

Another Russian who will be proudly donning the nation's colors on November 6th is Gadzhimusa "Deadshot" Gadzhiev, who locks horns with Belgian standout Issa Isakov.

Gadzhiev has been part of the organization's roster since its inaugural event in 2016, winning four of his last eight outings—with all victories coming by way of stoppage.

Fresh from a third-round knockout triumph against Gerardo Neto at BRAVE CF 49: Super Fights, another victory could put him in line for a shot at Eldar Eldarov's BRAVE CF Super Lightweight World Championship.

However, it will not be a walk in the park as Isakov presents a stern test for the Russian hard-hitter. The Belgian—who holds a professional record 8-3, possesses an 88-percent finishing rate.



Mochamed Machaev

### Kamil Magomedov vs. Sam Patterson

Sam "The Future" Patterson looks to sustain his winning groove that he established since 2018 by taking on Kamil Magomedov at BRAVE CF 55.

Patterson is riding high on a six-fight win streak--three of those victories took place inside the BRAVE CF cage.

Most recently, the Englishman elevated himself to a potential contender by outpointing Ylies "Tupek" Djiroun at BRAVE CF 51 last June.

Patterson believes that he has a business to settle with BRAVE CF Lightweight World Champion Ahmed "The Butcher" Amir as their first encounter in April 2019 ended in an anticlimactic draw.

However, Patterson must get past Magomedov first. The Russian possesses a 14-1 slate and has not tasted defeat since 2017.

Magomedov poses to be a tall order for Patterson, and a victory over the red-hot English fighter could put him in pole position to face Amir.



Gadzhimusa Gaziev