This Saturday marks the start of the 2011 **It's Showtime** season, and in many ways, the start of the major international 2011 season. There have been a few notable fights already this year (Giorgio Petrosyan vs. Sudsakorn and Andy Souwer's upset loss both come to mind), but this will be the first major top-to-bottom event. So, why should you care about this show? Well…

1. It's Showtime might very well be the future of kickboxing. This coming year is going to be a big one in determining the future of our sport. With K-1 in serious trouble and the European hotbed of Amsterdam causing headaches for promoters, we could see a drastic reduction in the international scope of professional kickboxing. It's Showtime is doing everything they can to fight against that tide. By running more and more shows in an increasingly diverse market, they are continuing the steady expansion plan that has brought them success so far. Of course, with expansion there is always a fear that you will overextend yourself, creating a company too large for the resources in hand. So far, It's Showtime has been very strategic in their expansion, and I think that will continue this year – but there's no doubt 2011 represents a key moment in the history of kickboxing.

2. The main event is a beautifully matched top 10 showdown. It's rare in any combat sport that we get two fighters so closely matched, but Daniel Ghita vs. Hesdy Gerges is a perfect match-up. Both men are young fighters who look to be the future of the sport. Both are in the top 10, with Ghita just one spot ahead of Gerges. Both had break-out years in 2009 and 2010, but neither man has yet scored that one major win that propels them to the next level. Most are favoring Ghita here (including a massive 70% of LK readers), which is understandable, but this is a very close fight that Gerges has every opportunity to win. One tough hurdle for the It's

Showtime champ could be his recent arrest for suspected drug trafficking. That case seems to be dropped, but the interruption to his training and the mental stress of being incarcerated can't be good for a fighter heading into such a serious challenge.

3. Both men in the semi-main event need to win. Andy Souwer vs. L'houcine Ouzgni could easily headline a show. Two technical marvels, this is a fight that will be pure candy for fans of the precise art of stand-up. That's reason enough to be excited for this one, but there's an extra element to this fight given where each man stands in his career. Souwer's last year was not exactly a career highlight for the decorated veteran. After suffering an eye injury and finding himself inexplicably on the outs with K-1 MAX, Souwer has since lost 2 of his last 3 fights – both against unranked opponents. He really needs to win here, but he has a tough task ahead of him. Ouzgni meanwhile had a tremendous 2010... almost. He made huge waves in his It's Showtime debut, and looked poised to win the company's 77kg title and start a dominant run as champion. Instead, in the year's last show, Ouzgni was stopped by Artem Levin. In that fight, Ouzgni seemed to give up both size and strength to his opponent. Now, he's dropping down to 70kg. He'll have a massive size advantage here, but will it come at the expense of a too severe weight cut? Hopefully not, as Ouzgni could end up a man lost between two divisions.

4. Gago Drago vs. Artur Kyshenko. Not too much to say here, except that this match will be fun. Drago always brings the excitement, and I expect Kyshenko will match him. This one has kind of been lost in the shuffle, but it's another excellent, very evenly matched fight that could steal the show. Along those same lines, look for exciting fights from William Diender vs, Rachid Belaini and Chahid Oulad El Hadj vs. Robin van Roosmalen.

5. The return of the 95kg title. Former champ Tyrone Spong has kept this division on ice for the last few years as he has made the move up to Heavyweight. Now, with Spong out of the picture, It's Showtime looks to crown a new champ between Wendell Roche and Danyo Ilunga. Their inclusion of different weight classes is one of the things that makes IS unique, and it will be exciting to see how this division grows in 2011. Last year, Cosmo Alexandre's title run brought the 77kg division to the spotlight – can either Roche or Ilunga do the same for 95?

Don't forget, the show is tomorrow and is available for purchase at showtimefights.com for 10 euro. Start time is 2:00 p.m. Eastern.