If you'll remember way back, way back to a few weeks ago, we ran a poll on LiverKick.com to determine who you, the fans believed to be the kickboxer of the year in 2010. There really was not much of a gamble involved in this, as it was going to come down to one of the two K-1 World Grand Prix Champions, either heavyweight or MAX. Even then, it seemed like a no-brainer as to who the fans were going to vote for, due to his popularity in Mixed Martial Arts and now holding three combat sports world championships, affording him a spot in the Guiness Book of World Records.

That's right, Alistair Overeem.

Alistair Overeem ended 2008 by knocking out Badr Hari, which many conceived to be insanity at the time. Overeem was a MMA fighter with a losing kickboxing record from when he was just a kid. We all knew that Alistair Overeem was a good, not great MMA fighter and was best known for making Cro Cop's testicles hurt, a lot. For the rest of 2009 he had dedicated himself to a K-1 career, which incited Western fans who just wanted the absurdity that was the Strikeforce title situation to come to an end. Alistair Overeem was living out a dream in 2009, which was competing with the best kickboxers in the world and holding his own, while fighting MMA fights to keep himself active in between. If anything, people should have taken a step back and looked at the sheer brilliance of what his manager, Bas Boon was doing. Bas Boon was creating the next big international breakout star, something the world of fighting had not seen since the days of PRIDE.

Of course Overeem's dedication to his training, his diet and keeping a sound mind are things he himself has to accomplish, but Bas Boon's role in the whole thing is that of a mastermind. Fans cried out that Overeem was ducking fighters, but Bas Boon was signing the contracts and negotiating for different fights. In a way, it follows the old professional wrestling rules where you build a monster up through public slaughterings of lesser opponents while still placing him in real competition. The real competition in 2009 for Overeem was the K-1 World Grand Prix. He did better than anyone really expected of him and built up a big enough name for himself to where 2010 he had another shot at K-1 glory.

2010 was the year of "the Reem." 2009 ended with a strategic slaughtering of Kazuyuki Fujita,

which Western fans once again complained was not elite competition, but was a solid name who was once a very competitive gatekeeper in the heavyweight division. The Yokohama GP show in April was meant to be sort of a "Feature" show for certain fighters going into the Final 16, and Overeem was one of them, being given an opponent of a tough, but outmatched Dzevad Poturak. Contrary to popular belief, this was very real competition and Overeem proved a lot in a dominant victory. Overeem defended his Strikeforce title, while was enough to calm some of the rabid Western fans (not all, you can never please them all), and then finished out 2010 with a flawless K-1 record, ripping Ben Edwards to shreds at the Final 16, scoring a tough decision over Tyrone Spong in the quarterfinals, stopping an injured Gokhan Saki in the semis and putting an exhausted and injured Peter Aerts down like Old Yeller in the finals.

All throughout this, Overeem's name was kept fresh in everyone's minds. How? Brilliance and marketing. Overeem was in attendance when Fedor Emelianenko was submitted by Fabricio Werdum to challenge the winner, and express his disappointment with Fedor's loss but loved the idea of avenging a previous loss to Werdum later on. Then throughout the year, the viral documentary that followed Alistair Overeem's career, "The Reem" was a hit, making headlines on every website the day a new episode was launched. Marketing, as well as top performances against tough competition made Alistair Overeem a superstar.

In 2011 he looks to defend his K-1 World Grand Prix Championship, his DREAM Heavyweight Championship and enter the Strikeforce Heavyweight GP to defend his title three times in MMA competition. At this point, the line between kickboxer and MMA fighter is blurred, as Alistair Overeem is just The Reem.