

On This Day: September 21, 1995 – AWF Warriors of Wrestling (Debut Episode): What Else Is On?

AWF Warriors of Wrestling

Date: September 21, 1995

Location: Studio City, Chicago, Illinois

Commentators: Mick Karch, Terry Taylor

Now here's one I'd bet that most of you have never heard of. This is from the mid-90s and it's an attempt at making a third national promotion. Their big stars: Bob Orton, Tito Santana, Greg Valentine. The twist is that it's based on European rules, meaning there non-title matches consist of three four minute rounds. Title matches are twelve four minute rounds. That's quite a jump isn't it? There's a judging aspect too if the time runs out. Anyway, this show was basically a compilation of shows taped the previous year. There are 18 episodes in total and I plan on doing a total of this one only. Let's get to it.

Sgt. Slaughter opens us up and says we should choose the AWF.

The opening video features guys like Koko B. Ware and the Warlord, plus A LOT of Slaughter. Oh geez Nailz is here.

They have red white and blue ropes ala the old WWF.

Tony Atlas is on the show too. Oh what have I gotten myself into?

Tito Santana vs. Ultimate Destroyer

Destroyer is an average sized guy in a silver mask with a white t-shirt under a gray striped singlet. I'd hate to see

the standard model Destroyer. Actually scratch that as the Destroyer was awesome. Tito comes out to generic rock music. The production values aren't awful but they're nothing great. Terry runs down the rules, but with the following exchange beforehand. Mick: "Tell us about the rules in case we're not clear here Terry." Terry: "I'd be glad to Mick and I'll do it like turtle soup: I'll make it snappy." This show is 45 minutes long not counting commercials and I'm about to cry after 3.

A few more rules: touching the referee or throwing your opponent over the top is an automatic DQ. Also the referee has final judgment. The rules are simple enough. Destroyer takes him to the mat but Tito sits out and it's a standoff. Tito takes him to the mat now and we get a rope break. Destroyer breaks out with an elbow to the face but Tito hooks an armdrag (called an aerial wingover by Terry for some reason) and an armbar.

Destroyer pops out with a headbut but walks into an atomic drop which sends Destroyer over the top. That's not a DQ though because it wasn't intentional. I'm having WCW flashbacks now. This isn't helping my issues with the match so far. Tito works on another armbar but Destroyer sends him into the buckle and misses a splash. Tito dropkicks him down and that's the end of round 1.

We stop for a minute between rounds and Destroyer wants more time. That's about the extent of his heel tactics so far. Oh wait he rakes Tito's eyes. That's the ticket! Tito comes back but gets draped over the top rope. That gets Destroyer nowhere and Tito slams him a few times. Flying Burrito (forearm) gets the pin.

Rating: D. This was a really bad choice for the opener. Flash back with me to 1987 and the first Survivor Series. The first match ever in the history of the Survivor Series was Team Savage vs. Team Honky Tonk and the final score before the end

was 5-3. In that match we saw regular pins, a double countout, and a 3-1 beating. In other words, we got a great taste of what could happen with this concept. This match here on the TV show basically showed us that Tito could beat up Ultimate Destroyer, stop for a minute, then beat him up some more. Horrible choice for an opener.

Tito says this is about wrestling. He shakes his head a lot for some reason during the promo.

Billy Joe Eaton vs. Greg Valentine

Valentine has a manager named Rico Suave who is fat and mostly bald. Terry is the heel commentator I think. Billy works on the arm a bit but gets clotheslined down. Valentine works on the ribs a bit and Chris Adams pops up saying he's in the AWF too. Eaton gets some shoulders into the ribs in the corner but Valentine takes him back down with ease. Elbow drop and Figure Four end the squash.

Sonny Rodgers vs. Tony Atlas

Rodgers jumps on Atlas to start and hits a double ax off the middle rope to put Atlas down. A few shots to the head put Atlas in trouble but Rodgers bounces off of him. Rodgers gets knocked to the floor and this show needs to end. Now. Put on a Matlock rerun or something, but get this show off the air. Sonny pokes him in the eye and dropkicks Atlas down for two with a power kickout.

Atlas Hulks Up (allegedly that was his push to have if not for Hogan) and destroys Sonny for a bit before hooking the bearhug...and the round runs out a big later. You know, BECAUSE WE NEED THIS TO CONTINUE! Johnny Gunn pops up to say that he's here too and debuts next week. He's Tom Brandi if you remember him. Gorilla press and splash finally end this.

Rating: D-. So far the only thing I can tell that the rounds add is making these boring matches last about a minute longer.

There was nothing here for the most part with neither guy being interesting at all. The announcers were ripping on Sonny for poking eyes too much. This was really dull, much like the rest of this show.

The president of the company (and legit owner) explains the rules (apparently you have until TEN to break something. Either that or he misspoke) again. He promises touring is coming.

Rick Thunder vs. Nails

Oh geez it's this guy. They even changed his name to the regular spelling. The idea here is that Nails doesn't follow rules, making him probably the top heel in the company. He chokes Thunder in the corner a lot and we head to the floor. Nails throws a stool at Thunder and hits him with a chair for the quick DQ. This is the first character development and we're about 80% done with the show.

Nails chokes him over the top rope post match.

Oliver Humperdink says that his tag team, Killer and Psycho, the Texas Hangmen (WHOA! They were featured on the show I did JUST before this. That's weird) are here and awesome.

Ken McGuire vs. Sgt. Slaughter

McGuire is in pink trunks so you know he's evil. Sheik Adnan Al-Kahassie is coming with someone to take out Slaughter. Sarge shrugs off a brief attack, hits the Slaughter Cannon and hooks the Cobra clutch for the quick win.

Slaughter says exactly what you would expect him to say.

Koko B. Ware vs. Bobby Bradley

Koko is in the High Energy attire and the fans chant Whomp There It Is. Koko shoves him down and dances a bit. He dropkicks Bradley down but Bradley comes back with very basic

heel offense. Off to a chinlock for awhile but Koko comes back with a sleeper. Bradley escapes but the clock runs out in round 1 anyway. He jumps Koko between rounds and we hear from Mr. Hughes who says he'll debut next week. Koko's cross body misses and Bradley gets two. Ware goes up and hits an AWFUL looking missile dropkick for a close two. Ghostbuster gets the pin.

Rating: F. Koko looked old and fat here which is the exact opposite of what you're looking for in a guy like him. Thankfully this show is almost over, because I don't think I could take any more of this. The round system didn't do anything here either as Bradley was out of the hold before the bell rang, so it didn't mean anything.

Suave says he's going to bring two more people here to take over. Valentine says he's awesome and we're done, thank goodness.

Overall Rating: F. I would usually try to come up with some catchy name or word for this, but this show was so boring that it drained the thinking out of me. The round system may sound interesting, but the problem is it doesn't add or change anything. The matches are comprised of old guys that you knew at one point, but who now just look their age.

Also, most of these matches aren't any good. The round idea just makes them last a minute longer which doesn't make them interesting. The biggest problem though is the roster, as this is during the days of Nitro with a roster that would have been old in 1989. Nothing to see here and stay FAR away from this.

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