

Lucha Underground – January 7, 2015: WAR

Lucha Underground

Date: January 7, 2015

Location: Lucha Underground Arena, Los Angeles, California

Commentators: Vampiro, Matt Striker

After taking the holidays off, we're back for the biggest match in Lucha Underground history: Aztec Warfare, which sounds like a battle royal/Royal Rumble style match with the winner becoming the first Lucha Underground Champion. A title is a good idea and they couldn't go much longer without having a belt around here. Let's get to it.

We open with shots of people walking through the hills to reach the Lucha Underground temple. This turns into Cueto recapping the previous show where Mil Muertes earned the last spot in Aztec Warfare by defeating Fenix, meaning Fenix enters first.

Aztec dancers and drummers bless the temple.

Cueto is in the ring to talk about how this will be a blessed year for Lucha Underground. The fans chant for AZTEC WARFARE as Cueto explains the rules: it's basically a twenty man Royal Rumble with 90 second intervals but eliminations can only occur by pinfall or submission and anything goes. This could be a long one.

Lucha Underground Title: Aztec Warfare

Fenix is in at #1 and Johnny Mundo is in at #2. Cueto makes sure to emphasize that Mundo is number TWO. Johnny blocks an early kick and sweeps out the leg, only to miss a standing Shooting Star. Back up and a superkick sends Johnny to the floor but he runs back in to clothesline Fenix over the top as Cisco is in at #3 (the intervals aren't quite ninety seconds but close enough). Cisco hammers on both guys because he's a fairly basic lackey. Mundo gets kicked to the floor so Fenix picks Cisco up and hits a kind of running Death Valley Driver into the corner,

setting up the End of the World to eliminate Cisco.

Back from a break with nothing changed and King Cuerno coming in at #4. Fenix goes right at Cuerno but superkicks Mundo by mistake, only to get monkey flipped back by the King. A huge suicide dive takes Mundo down again and the fans are way into this. Fenix enziguris Cuerno off the apron and hits a big flip dive as Son of Havoc is in at #5 in WAY less than 90 seconds. Mundo grabs him by the beard and pops Havoc in the jaw, only to have Son of send him to the floor for an even bigger flip dive.

Maybe 30 seconds after Havoc, Pimpinela Escarlata is in at #6. They're not even trying on the times. Escarlata dropkicks Havoc down and does a flashy rope walk as Striker gets on a soapbox to talk about tolerance for people like Pimpinela. Yes we get it: he's different. Let it go already. The referee gets acosted in the corner but Cuerno saves him from Escarlata. Prince Puma is in at #7 and goes right after Mundo with a Lionsault getting two. Fenix drops a top rope legdro as the mystery woman is shown watching from the entrance. Speaking of women in the entrance, Ivelisse is in at #8.

She plants Fenix with a tornado DDT but gets choked by Escarlata. Striker: "This is kind of hot too!" Ivelisse kicks Escarlata in the head and Havoc pins Pimpinela with a Shooting Star to clear the ring out a bit. Ivelisse kicks Cuerno down and Drago is in at #9. The ring is starting to get full but it's really helping that they can go outside. Drago fires kicks at Fenix and DDTs him for two. The King is watching in the corner as Drago cleans house, only to sneak up on Drago with an enziguri to the back of the head. The Thrill of the Hunt eliminates Ivelisse and Bael is in at #10, giving us Fenix, Mundo, Cuerno, Puma, Drago and Bael.

Drago sends Fenix and Cuerno outside before taking them both out with a big dive. Puma Superman Punches Havoc down and a superkick is good enough to eliminate the biker. Things keep going as Puma dives over the top to take Mundo down and Cortez Castro is in at #11. He suplexes Puma down as the Crew starts taking over. This is going by so fast that it's hard to do anything other than play by play. Cuerno dropkicks someone we can't see on the floor (presumably Drago) and Ricky Mandel is in at #12. Puma

kicks Bael in the head and something like a Jackhammer sets up a standing Shooting Star for the elimination.

Mundo leg lariats Cortez and a running knee to the head takes out another member of the Crew. Big Ryck is in at #13 and we take a break. Back with Ryck getting in and running over Puma and Mundo before a Rock Bottom eliminates Mandel. Drago comes in to try his luck but Ryck gorilla presses him into the Thrill of the Hunt from Cuerno for the elimination. Cool spot there. Cuerno poses too long though and gets crucified by Mundo for the pinfall.

Pentagon Jr. is in at #14 and unleashes the clotheslines before getting caught in Ryck's full nelson. Mundo and Puma superkick Ryck though, only to have Pentagon powerbomb Puma onto his knee. A HUGE powerbomb plants Fenix for two but Ryck makes the save. Even the announcers aren't sure why he did that and for once I can't argue with them. Well I could but they're right so why bother. Pentagon kicks at Ryck and Super Fly is in at #15. Mundo enziguris (WAY too common of a move in this match) Puma by mistake and Super Fly dives over the top rope to take Pentagon out.

Ryck clears the ring and blasts Mundo in the face, only to have Puma make the save. It's Chavo Guerrero Jr. in at #16 with a chair in hand, which knocks Super Fly silly for an elimination. Pentagon gets the same treatment to clear the ring out a bit more. Mundo chases Chavo to the floor and gets nailed in the ribs with the chair for his efforts. Mascarita Sagrada is in at #17 and we take another break. I know they're trying to get everyone in there but they really could have left out Sagrada and Escarlata. They're comedy/fun characters and that's not something I need to see in this match.

Back with Sagrada dropping Chavo with a pair of cross bodies until Fenix chops him against the ropes. A hurricanrana puts Fenix on the floor but he dropkicks Sagrada out of the air to block a dive from the apron. Sexy Star (unfortunately without the entrance) is in at #18 and kicks Chavo off the apron. We get Big Ryck and Sagrada in the ring because it's funny or something. The masked man's sunset flip attempt goes as well as you would expect it to and Ryck just crushes him for the elimination.

El Mariachi Loco is in at #19 and nails a nice springboard missile dropkick to stagger Ryck. Loco, Fenix and Mundo have a quick three way sequence with Loco climbing the ropes into a wristdrag on Mundo. Now Loco hammers on Puma but stops to dance, allowing Ryck to take Loco's head off. Mil Muertes is in at #20, giving us a final grouping of Fenix, Mundo, Puma, Big Ryck, Chavo, Sexy Star, Mariachi Loco and Muertes. That's not bad actually.

Muertes cleans house to start and the Flatliner drops Loco for the elimination to get us down to seven. We get the big showdown with Ryck vs. Muertes, allowing Striker to imitate Gorilla Monsoon talking about the immovable object. All seven get back in to break up the brawl though and Johnny hits a quick End of the World on Ryck but Chavo throws him to the floor. Puma adds a standing Shooting Star but Chavo throws Puma outside as well and covers, only to have Fenix hit a 450 onto Guerrero's back, setting up a double pin on Ryck. Chavo pops up and blasts Fenix in the head with the chair with the pin.

With five left, Sexy Star gets in Chavo's face and dropkicks him down, only to have Chavo slam her onto the chair. He puts the chair over her face and goes up but Blue Demon comes in for the save, allowing Star to chair Chavo in the head for the elimination. The final four are Sexy Star, Johnny Mundo, Mil Muertes and Prince Puma and we take a break.

Back with all four in the ring and Muertes going after Star but Mundo and Puma make a quick save. Star headscissors the heroes down but eats a spear for the elimination. Mundo charges at Mil in the corner, which Striker calls ironic because I don't think Striker knows what ironic means. Puma takes Johnny down with a Zig Zag but Mundo hits a cross body to send Puma to the floor.

It's Johnny taking it to Muertes in the corner but Puma comes in for a double superplex on the big man. Catrina trips Puma and gets pulled to the apron. Muertes intervenes and ducks the Flying Chuck, which knocks Catrina out cold. Mundo drops Muertes and the heroes hit back to back springboard 450 splashes for a double pin to get us down to one on one. This is one of the best possible options they could have.

Puma draws first blood with a dropkick. Vampiro says he can't call the match because he's too busy watching. Thanks for showing up Vamp. Mundo slides through the legs and grabs a half crab. Vampiro, ever the sage, says Puma's experience will help him escape, not two minutes after calling Puma a rookie.

Johnny is sent to the apron and they both head to the top with Puma planting him with a C4 (top rope flip downward spiral) for two. If Puma wins, there's no reason that shouldn't be the finish. They head back up top with Mundo hitting a reverse hurricanrana (zero reaction from the announcers), followed by the End of the World for two. Mundo loads up his own C4 but gets crotched down, allowing Puma to hit the 630 for the pin and the title at 53:45.

Rating: B+. Well that rocked. I can't emphasize enough how important it was for this to be pinfall or submission. Instead of having just a normal battle royal, it feels like Puma actually defeated everyone else and is the last man standing. The other thing I liked about this was how you really felt a lot of people could win. I could easily have seen Mundo, Puma, Ryck, Muertes or even Cuerno winning this, and that's the most important thing you can have in a free for all like this.

Mundo and Puma shake hands as Konnan comes out to end the show.

Overall Rating: A-. I'm really, really digging this company as they're going with a niche style show but knocking it (mostly) out of the park. The stories are there and the feuds can intertwine very well. It also helps that you have stories that all seem important rather than all of the stuff being there to fill time until we can get to the big stuff. They rolled the dice here and it really, really worked. Great match and a great show.

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