

Lucha Underground – June 17, 2015: Yo That's Different

Lucha Underground

Date: June 17, 2015

Location: Lucha Underground Arena, Los Angeles, California

Commentators: Matt Striker, Vampiro

This is a special show as the entire episode is one match. Tonight Prince Puma is defending the title against Johnny Mundo in an all night long Iron Man match as ordered by Dario Cueto as we come closer and closer to Ultima Lucha. The last time there was a one match card things went very well so let's get to it.

We open with a recap of Mundo's heel turn, which earned him a spot in tonight's title match.

Lucha Underground Title: Prince Puma vs. Johnny Mundo

Prince Puma is defending and this is an Iron Man match with TV time remaining. However, it's only pins or submissions. Both guys are in the ring to save time which is always appreciated. No Konnan here either, at least to start. Striker does a good job of running down their history as they circle each other to start. You don't want to burn yourselves out in something like this.

Mundo takes the champ to the mat to start but Puma gets to the apron for a breather. That's not something you often see from a face. Back in and they lock up again with Johnny grabbing a headlock but getting rolled up for a few near falls. They start the flipping and Puma backflips into a headscissors, only to get kicked in the head to put him on the floor. Mundo misses a dive and lands on his feet, allowing Puma to slide back in and hit a big corkscrew dive of his own.

We take a break (I believe the third time ever during a match) and come back with a clock saying 33:45 remaining. That's a nice touch as I can't stand it when a match going until the end of the show suddenly ends with

five minutes left. Puma grabs a rollup out of nowhere for the first fall and Johnny is looking frustrated. A neckbreaker gets some near falls for Johnny and it's off to an armbar.

Puma comes back with a shot to the head and a standing moonsault for two as they're still not going full speed. The champ gets dropkicked out of the air for two and it's back to the arm. The fans chant JOHNNY ZERO, which isn't quite on the NXT crowds' level but it's a nice try. A quick cutter stops Johnny cold, though he's still able to avoid a high cross body.

The End of the World is broken up but Puma lays back on him for a quick pin to tie things up, of course with a grab of the ropes like a villain should be using. Back from another break with Mundo chilling on the floor 28:20 to go. Vampiro: "I am so happy that he cheated." Back in and Mundo hits a big knee to the face for two but his superplex attempt turns into a slugout on the top rope.

That's fine with Puma who jumps from one side of the apron to the other for a hurricanrana down to the floor. It's time to pull out a tool box (meaning we get a Hornswoggle reference from Striker) and Puma is the first to get violent with a Mickinoku Driver through the crate. That's fine with Mundo who comes up with a crowbar to the head (remember No DQ) for a pin to make it 2-1. A quick Moonlight Drive makes it 3-1 and the Flying Chuck followed by the End of the World makes it 4-1 in Mundo's favor. Now we're getting somewhere.

Mundo stops for a water as Puma can barely move. Puma pulls himself into the corner and rolls into a DDT but can't cover. Johnny is smart enough to put his foot on the ropes just in case in a very nice show of intelligence. Back up again and Johnny hits a neckbreaker onto the apron to knock Puma silly again as we go to a third break.

We come back and Mundo blasts Puma in the face with a big metal ladder. Mundo puts the ladder next to the balcony and takes his sweet time setting up two tables. With Johnny on the balcony, Puma pulls himself off the tables and slugs Mundo into the crowd before jumping down to set up a third table on top of the other two. Vampiro is starting to have fun

here, despite over twenty minutes of good stuff so far. We make it four tables as I'm guessing we're at about fifteen minutes to go in the show (put the clock up more often people).

Mundo blocks a superplex through the tables and superkicks Puma off the balcony for a crash which isn't treated as that big of a deal. Then again he got hit in the head with a crowbar earlier in the night and isn't dead so you have to give it some slack. Johnny climbs up to the bandstand and cuts a promo about the score about the moment, demanding that we get a song. The band plays and we're at 13 minutes to go.

Ever the cocky heel, Johnny turns his back, allowing Puma to climb the ladder. Johnny's swing of a 2x4 is blocked and Puma gets to the bandstand. A BIG guitar shot knocks Johnny silly and they go crashing through the four tables as we go to a break, thankfully skipping over the three minutes of laying around on broken wood.

Back again with 11:20 to go, meaning we're not missing much if anything between the breaks. Puma drags Mundo back to the ring and gets the easy pin to make it 4-2. Striker: "Prince Puma has cut the lead in half." No Matt, he hasn't. They slug it out until Mundo misses a spinning forearm, allowing Puma to nail an enziguri and a tombstone to make it 4-3.

Now we get some extra psychology as Johnny bails to the floor and runs into the crowd to kill some clock. Mundo has some blood on his nose as the chase goes over to the announcers' desk. Puma finally catches up with him for a kick to the head but he misses the Phoenix Splash. Mundo runs to the entrance but here's Alberto to blast him in the back of the head and kick Johnny down the steps. Alberto is all ticked off and looks like a killer for one of the only times in his career. I'm digging what I'm seeing there, but then again I've always thought he was better as a face. Johnny is thrown back in and a 450 ties things up.

With 4:00 to go, Alberto throws out a challenge to Mundo, whether it's for the title or not. He'll take a title shot at Puma too, but of course you already knew that. It's tied up with about 3:00 to go as Johnny drives him into the corner and hammers away but has to elbow out of a fireman's carry. A quick C4 gives Mundo two with under 2:00 to go. Mundo

misses a top rope hurricanrana as Puma slides away, leaving Mundo to just crash onto the ropes and then the mat. Puma kicks him into the corner and nails the 630 for the 5-4 lead to retain as time expires.

Rating: A-. Well that worked. It dragged a little bit in the middle and the comebacks were a bit of a stretch (crowbar to the head!) but the key here was the logical flow. This felt like one long match instead of a bunch of different acts thrown together. That makes a long match so much easier to watch and the lack of any extended resting (which would have been understandable) helped a lot too. I had a good time here and while it was a bit of a stretch to have Puma pin Mundo four times in about twelve minutes, at least it made sense in context. Really good stuff.

Overall Rating: A. This is a great example of what Lucha Underground does so well. This show was completely out of the ordinary for normal wrestling promotions and that makes Lucha Underground feel like an actual alternative. You hear that term thrown around for TNA and ROH all the time, but there really isn't much different between those shows and WWE. Dedicating an entire hour to one match IS different and makes me want to come back instead of just say "yeah that was different but I've seen better." I'm not saying this is better than WWE or anything, but they're excelling at what they do and that's a very good sign.

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