

Lucha Underground – July 6, 2016: How Unique

Lucha Underground

Date: July 6, 2016

Location: Lucha Underground Temple, Boyle Heights, California

Commentators: Vampiro, Matt Striker

We've finally arrived at Ultima Lucha Dos with the first of three weeks of shows. It's hard to say what part of the card we'll get first but one of the good things about this promotion is how well each individual story is built up. This really does feel like a special event and this has the potential to top last year's excellent show. Let's get to it.

The opening recap looks at Dario Cueto announcing the Unique Opportunity Tournament between Cage, Son of Havoc, the Mack and Texano.

Unique Opportunity Tournament Semifinals; The Mack vs. Cage

We're not ready yet as Dario, in a tuxedo, comes out to say these two started off Ultima Lucha last year. That falls count anywhere match might have been Dario's favorite of the show so let's make this one falls count anywhere as well. Cage dropkicks Mack and hits a standing moonsault for two because he can do moves like that. Mack comes back with some hard shots of his own to knock him outside and Striker is getting way too excited.

A hiptoss sends Mack onto the steps as this starts picking up in a hurry. Mack knocks a trashcan (with trash included for a change) out of Cage's hand and powerslams him down onto it for two. They fight into Dario's office and see Black Lotus (I love that kind of attention to detail. You just do not see it anywhere else.) before Cage steals a framed poster and breaks the glass over Mack's head.

We get even more violent with a powerbomb through an open chair (that always looks sick) for two on Mack as this has almost been all Cage. Mack comes back with a stop sign shot before breaking a guitar over Cage's

head (Striker: "The sweet sounds of E minor!") for two of his own.

With Cage down, Mack goes to the back and finds....pinatas. Quick sidebar: does anyone else find the concept of pinatas really disturbing? "Hey kids! Here's your favorite cartoon! Now beat him with a stick and eat whatever falls out of its broken body!" Anyway Mack steals some candy and grabs some beer but the Stunner is broken up. Cage is busted open and it's table time but Mack comes back with a chain shot to the ribs instead.

More beer sets up the Stunner and a horrible Austin impression from Striker. Mack drops a frog splash out of the crowd to put Cage through the table, giving Striker another reason to shout THIS IS ULTIMA LUCHA! That only gets two so Cage finds a well placed cinder block but he slips on the beer, allowing Mack to roll him up for the pin at 10:15.

Rating: B. Now that's how you start off a big show. They didn't even bother with the wrestling here and just turned the whole thing into a wild brawl in the time they had. I was getting worried about the finish there as Cage had basically been destroyed and then just grabbed the block but Mack won anyway, even off a screwy finish. These guys have chemistry together and that's always worth an opening match.

Unique Opportunity Tournament Semifinals: Son of Havoc vs. Texano

Dario points out the bar outside and makes this a Boyle Heights Bar Fight. They actually wrestle a bit to start with Texano hitting a shoulder but eating an elbow before they head outside after a full minute in the ring. Havoc hits an Asai Moonsault but Texano sends him into the barricade. Texano is thrown through a storage closet door, only to have Havoc go in after him and come out with a fire extinguisher. A shot of vodka lets Texano come back with a bottle shot to the head but it only hits helmet.

Let's throw the bar stools, a chair and a keg in the ring, drawing a WE WANT BEER chant. Texano hits him in the head with the bullrope for two but he gets sent into the keg in the corner. Havoc breaks up a bar stool and hurricanranas Texano onto the pile of wood. Apparently it's cheap wood though as he gets up and hits Havoc low with a chair. Havoc one ups

Texano though by sending him through the bar, followed by a bicycle kick onto a pile of broken bottles for the pin at 7:32.

Rating: C+. Still good but nowhere near as strong as the opener. Texano is another guy that I like more and more every time I see him and I'd really be interested in seeing him do something with an actual story that doesn't involve Chavo Guerrero. Son of Havoc going solo is interesting as well and it's a good sign that he can have a good match like this on his own.

And now, a word from the guest band.

We run down the rest of the Ultima Lucha card.

Unique Opportunity Tournament Finals: The Mack vs. Son of Havoc

The stipulation here: falls count anywhere. Again. Mack knocks him down in the corner to start but misses a ridiculous corkscrew splash. They head outside with Havoc going into the barricade before taking it back inside for a spinning Downward Spiral out of the corner for two. Havoc sends him outside for a big flip dive but the shooting star hits Mack's raised knees. Mack loads up....something in the corner but gets caught by a handspring elbow, setting up the shooting star to give Havoc the pin at 5:32.

Rating: C. These matches got weaker as they went along but the problem is starting with the violence and then ending with a mostly clean match. It feels like a downgrade every time (albeit not a steep one) and the matches getting shorter every time didn't help things. Mack came off looking a bit better here though, especially after the polar opposite style in the first match.

Post match, Dario and Black Lotus come in with a briefcase. The offer is \$250,000 in the briefcase or.....a spot in the main event of Ultima Lucha III. Havoc takes the title shot (which of course comes with another briefcase) but Dario says we're not done yet. Since Havoc turned down the money, it's up for grabs against Havoc's third opponent. If Havoc wins he gets the title shot but if he loses, the opponent gets the money. This brings out Famous B. to introduce his new client, who is already famous.

Son of Havoc vs. Dr. Wagner Jr.

Wagner is a big deal from Mexico and a former AAA Mega Champion. Wagner starts fast with a Samoan Drop and Havoc is already in big trouble. Havoc ducks a clothesline and hits a springboard crossbody. The shooting star misses though and the Dr. Driver (Michinoku Driver) puts Havoc away at 2:10.

Overall Rating: C+. Well that happened. Really, that's the only thing you can say here as the idea debuted and then went away in the span of an hour with Wagner winning the money in his debut that didn't even break two and a half minutes. The opener was worth checking out and the next two matches were fine but it's a completely skippable show because nothing here really meant anything. Still though, it's a good appetizer for the real three hours and I'm glad they got through the tournament stuff in one night instead of having to drag it out over the duration of the show.

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