

Cruiserweight Classic – July 13, 2016: Wrestling Matters

Cruiserweight Classic

Date: July 13, 2016

Location: Full Sail University, Winter Park, Florida

Commentators: Mauro Ranallo, Daniel Bryan

This is something very different as it's all about the actual wrestling. What we have here is a thirty two man international tournament with a bunch of wrestlers coming in from outside the company to compete. From what I understand there won't be any storylines here, though that could change as we go along. Let's get to it.

The opening video, narrated by HHH, shows clips of various great cruiserweight matches over the years. HHH talks about how this has always been the most exciting style of wrestling and tonight it's time to start the new generation with people trying to blaze a new trail.

Opening sequence.

Corey Graves shows us the four matches we'll be seeing tonight.

Gran Metalik (Mascara Dorado) from Mexico and Alejandro Saez from Chile say they're here to represent their countries.

The set is very similar to NXT's though there's no ramp and the aisle comes from the corner instead of to the side of the ring.

First Round: Alejandro Saez vs. Gran Metalik

According to their quick bios, Saez is a striker while Metalik is a luchador. Charles Robinson brings them to the middle of the ring for a handshake and we're ready to go. Saez starts things fast with a shoulder and basement dropkick, followed by a springboard missile dropkick for two.

A quick argument with the referee allows Metalik to knock him outside for

an ACH middle rope springboard flip dive. Back in and a top rope (as in from the middle of the rope instead of the corner) gets two on Saez but Gran gets kicked out to the floor. Saez hits a shooting star off the apron, only to get caught in a Samoan Driver to give Metalik the pin at 4:05.

Rating: B-. Oh yeah this was the perfect choice for an opener. They kept it short and to the point here with fast paced high flying and a quick finish. Metalik seems like a big deal and a potential favorite here, though it's probably way too early to predict something like that when we've only seen two people so far. This was a good opener though and that's so important for something like this tournament.

Metalik is announced as the official winner ala a UFC fight.

Ariya Daivari (the brother of the better known Daivari) knows what it takes to win and he'll do whatever it takes.

Hoho Lun is here to show that this is his job.

First Round: Ariya Daivar vs. Hoho Lun

Lun is a regular in a very small Chinese promotion I watch so this is kind of bizarre. Daivari won't shake hands to give us our first heel. A dropkick puts Daivari down to start and a second one to the back gets two as the fans are a lot more quiet this time around. Daivari comes back with a neckbreaker and a good looking jumping knee to the face for two of his own.

We hit the chinlock as the fans chant H0H0 to the OLE tune. Daivari kicks him in the head but a slap to the face just sets Hoho off and earns Daivari a spinwheel kick to the face. A running knee to the back of Daivari's head and a low superkick set up a German suplex to put Daivari away at 5:07.

Rating: C. Lun is a small guy and I'm surprised that he went over the brother of a name like Daivari. If nothing else you would think they would go with Daivari for the sake of having a heel going forward. Lun doesn't seem to have much of a future in this but it's cool to see him

get a win, if nothing else due to him being from a small promotion that not a lot of people have heard of.

Clement Petiot is a Lance Storm student from France and seems to be one of the bigger guys in the field.

Cedric Alexander is from Charlotte and used to be in Ring of Honor.

First Round: Clement Petiot vs. Cedric Alexander

They almost get in a fight before the bell rings and it's time to hit the mat with Cedric quickly escaping a front facelock. Clement is sent outside and Alexander teases a big dive to the floor but moonsaults back to the middle instead. Back in and a great looking dropkick puts Petiot down for two but Clement sends him hard into the corner.

We hit the chinlock before a running knee to the face gets two in the corner. Cedric comes right back with a perfect springboard clothesline but Clement flips him inside out with a discus clothesline. Not that it matters as Cedric comes right back with the Lumbar Check (belly to back suplex into a Backstabber) for the pin at 6:01.

Rating: C. Three matches in and we have three faces going forward but there's a lot of time left to get some villains. Alexander looked great here with that springboard clothesline being as smooth as any I've seen in a long time. Petiot was fine but clearly needs some ring time and a bit more of a character to make him stand out.

Kota Ibushi is ready to prove himself.

Sean Maluta is Afa's nephew and another part of the Anoa'i Family.

First Round: Sean Maluta vs. Kota Ibushi

Ibushi is a big crowd favorite. Feeling out process to start with Maluta taking him down to the mat, only to have Ibushi come back with a kick to the chest. A t-bone suplex sends Maluta flying but Sean gets in a middle rope Codebreaker to knock Ibushi silly. Maluta sends him to the floor and tries a running flip dive, which may or may not have been botched as he landed on the apron but it might have been intentional as he immediately

flipped over again to take Ibushi down.

Back in and Kota hits a very high dropkick before some very fast strikes have Sean in trouble. A standing moonsault gets two on Sean but he blocks a superplex, only to get kicked hard out to the floor. Ibushi keeps things fast with a running springboard moonsault to take Sean down. Back in and a superkick knocks Kota silly for two but he pops up and hits a sitout Last Ride for the pin at 9:40.

Rating: B. Best match of the night here and a lot of that is due to the time. Ibushi is definitely one of the big favorites and it's clear that he's a big star as they put him in the main event slot on the debut episode. Maluta looked good and could probably get a developmental deal very soon. Ibushi is going to be a big deal if he signs with WWE though and his match with Alexander should be awesome.

Overall Rating: B. This was a strong start to the show and the key was they kept the matches fast. With no stories and a lot of wrestlers that fans probably haven't seen before, it's very important to not let them get bored. Keeping the matches quick with fast paced offense and simple stories is going to allow the fans to stick with this and prevents the audience from losing interest in people who aren't the most interesting in the first place. It's a good show concept but the first few weeks are going to be a bit more rough with a lot of first round matches before we get to the bigger stuff down the line. Good start though.

Results

Gran Metalik b. Alejandro Saez – Samoan Driver

Hoho Lun b. Ariya Daivari – German Suplex

Cedric Alexander b. Clement Petiot – Lumbar Check

Kota Ibushi b. Sean Maluta – Sitout Powerbomb

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