

Stardom American Dream 2024 In The Keystone State: What A Title

American Dream 2024 In The Keystone State

Date: April 4, 2024

Location: 2300 Arena, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

Commentators: Tom Lawlor, Veda Scott

So this is from Stardom, the Japanese women's promotion, who are in town for Wrestlemania Weekend. I was in town for the weekend and since I'm not likely to ever see something like this again in person, it was worth a look. I'm not sure what to expect from this and that's part of the fun. Let's get to it.

I was sitting in the corner of the arena for this show with the entrance on my right and the ring pretty much straight in front of me. Keep in mind that I do not follow Stardom whatsoever and will likely have no idea what is going on as far as characters or storylines. I apologize in advance for any errors but I'm coming in mostly blind.

The opening video runs down the card, which is only five matches.

High Speed Title: Mei Seira vs. Ram Kaichow vs. Saki Kashima

Seira is defending and from what I can tell, this is similar to the X-Division/Cruiserweight Title. The audio mix is really missing as commentary is barely audible over the entrance music and I can't make out more than a few words of what they are saying. Seira has two belts and Kaichow has one, making things all the more confusing. The fans seem to like Kaichow, who might be a bit dead.

Kashima locks up with Kaichow, who has dust flying off of her to scare Kashima away. More dust gets Kaichow out of a double wristlock before they pick up the pace with Seira hitting a running basement dropkick on Kaichow. They run the ropes until the challengers fall down, leaving Seira as the only one standing. Kaichow rolls Seira up for two and an exchange of rollups give not-Kaichow two each. Back up and Kaichow throws more dust, allowing Kashima to pin Seira for the title at 5:06.

Rating: C+. Well they weren't kidding about the HIGH SPEED part as this was rather fast paced until the ending, which came out of nowhere. I got the concept well enough and Kaichow's dust thing made her stand out, but the other two didn't do much to separate themselves from the other. Either way, it was a nice introduction to the show as it was flying by and kept me interested.

AZM/Saya Kamitani/Camron Branae vs. Stephanie Vaquer/Starlight Kid/Momo Watanabe

Saya and Kid start things off, which is apparently a big rivalry. They go to the mat and get nowhere so they both flip up for a staredown. Branae comes in for part of a triple Gory Bomb to put Kid down for two and it's back to Saya, who gets caught with a headscissors. Watanabe crushes Saya in the corner but gets cut off with a spinning kick to the face. A springboard crossbody gives Saya two and a triple dropkick takes Watanabe down again.

Back up and Watanabe kicks Saya in the head and the double tag brings in AZM and Vaquer. AZM kicks Vaquer in the head and it's back to Branae, who gets caught with Eat Defeat. Some running knees give Branae two but the villains (I think?) take her into the corner for the train of running shots. Everything breaks down and Kid dives onto the floor to take out AZM and Saya. That leaves Vaquer to headbutt Branae in the corner and go after her recently injured knee. Branae manages a

neckbreaker but walks into a package piledriver onto the knee to give Vaquer the pin at 9:11.

Rating: C+. Another fast paced match here as they had a bit more time to showcase the people involved. Six women spread over nine minutes isn't much but it's better than cramming it into even less time. Vaquer felt like a star and that makes sense as she is the New Japan Women's Strong Champion. Not a great match, but if the idea is to get as many people on the show as possible, they're doing well.

Willow Nightingale/Saki vs. Konami/Syuri

Syuri is one of the most revered names going today and I might have seen her once before. Saki and Syuri start things off with Syuri grabbing a rollup for a fast two, giving us an early standoff. Nightingale comes in for a double shoulder to Syuri but she's back up to kick Saki in the back for two. Konami comes in for a dropkick and a one kneed cover gets two. It's already back to Syuri for a kick to the back but Saki suplexes her way to freedom. Nightingale comes back in to run Syuri over, setting up a spinebuster for two.

A Cannonball misses though and Syuri gets two off a DDT. Everything breaks down and Syuri and Konami grab stereo holds, both of which are broken up just as fast. Syuri chokes Saki on the floor, leaving Konami to missile dropkick Nightingale. Saki is back in to make a save and Konami is tossed onto Syuri. Nightingale has had enough of this and hits a heck of a Pounce on Konami, setting up a DDT for two. The Babe With The Powerbomb finishes for Nightingale at 8:28.

Rating: B-. Another fun match here but they were blazing through it again. That's been a trend with this show, which isn't the best idea for a five match card. Nightingale continues to be a ball of energy no matter where she is and it's great to see her getting a win like this. Now give her a win with some gold on the line and it'll be even better.

Mayu Iwatani/Tam Nakano/Momo Kohgo vs. Mina Shirakawa/Mariah May/Xia Brookside

This is Stars vs. Club Venus, the latter of which comes off as some kind of pop band/Mean Girls deal. Venus seems to be mainly about Shirakawa, with the other two being her henchwomen. May ducks Kohgo's running dropkick to start and plans her with a very spinning side slam. Brookside comes in for the running knees to the back and we get a triple Venus pose.

The fans approve of Shirakawa coming in and grabbing a quickly released surfboard. May comes back in but gets caught with a dropkick, allowing Kohgo to hit a crossbody. Iwatani comes in and gets to pick up the pace, including a double springboard wristdrag to May and Shirakawa. May is back up with a Sling Blade and it's Shirakawa coming in for a kick to the head. Nakano comes in for the first time for a shake off (just go with it) with Shirakawa.

A hanging suplex gives Shirakawa two and it's Brookside coming in with a neckbreaker for the same. Everything breaks down and a double 619 hits Brookside to give Nakano two. Venus is back in with a double Paige Turner to give Brookside her own near fall on Nakano. There's a running Codebreaker to drop Nakano as everything breaks down again. Iwatani hits a big dive to the floor and a kick to the face gets two on Brookside, with the rest of Venus making the save. Nakano has had it with this and grabs Twilight Dream (tiger suplex) for the pin at Brookside at 12:13.

Rating: B-. This was another case where the extra time helped but the other thing here was it felt like Venus came off as a full time team rather than two people thrown together. Everyone got a chance to shine here and it felt like more of a showcase, with Brookside getting a lot of time in there. Good stuff here, and probably the best match of the show so far.

Post match the winners leave...and here is Toni Storm, with the AEW Women's Title and a bouquet of flowers. She talks about the time she has had in Philadelphia, where she started with Easter Championship Wrestling. Storm: "I'll have you know that this is the very place where I entered Sandman." She puts over Stardom and praises May, even giving her the flowers. As for Mina Shirakawa, who is standing in the ring as well, the Forbidden Door is always open. Shirakawa is game.

We recap the main event. Maika is the World Champion, Megan Bayne is a power monster, they've teamed together and fought before, title match on.

World Of Stardom Title: Maika vs. Megan Bayne

Bayne, billed as the Megasus and the much larger of the two, is challenging. Maika tries some running shoulders to no avail so she tells Bayne to come on. An armdrag works better but Bayne is back up to run her over with a real shoulder. A butterfly suplex gets two, followed by a Samoan drop for the same.

Back up and some running clotheslines in the corner give Maika two and she goes after the arm. Bayne powers up and suplexes her way to freedom, setting up a side slam for two more. Maika puts her up top for a superplex and another near fall, followed by a cutter for the same. Bayne is back with a big boot and a heck of a running clothesline to leave them both down.

Back up and they slug it out until Maika snaps off a powerslam. Maika catches her up top with a powerbomb for one but Bayne is back with a heck of a spear. An apron German suplex gives Bayne two more with an F5 getting the same. They go up again and this time it's a super Michinoku Driver to give Maika two of her own. A Michinoku Driver II gives Maika the pin at 14:24.

Rating: B. This was just starting to cook when they went home,

with Maika being a good fighting from underneath champion. Bayne is a monster with something of a Beth Phoenix look/style so there was an obvious story to be told here. Good match and the best part of the show, though they could have gone longer.

Post match respect is shown and here is Momo Watanabe to say she's the next challenger. Watanabe pulls back her baseball bat to swing at Maika but Bayne gets in her way and sends Watanabe bailing. Maika says they're on for April 27 in Yokohama before leading the fans in the WE ARE STARDOM chant to end the show.

Overall Rating: C+. That's it? The show didn't even run an hour and forty five minutes, with the longest match out of five lasting less than fifteen minutes. I'm not sure if that is Stardom's style, but this was really short and felt like it could have gone another hour or so. What we got was good, but I was sitting in the crowd wondering what else they were going to do because it wasn't even two hours and then the show just ended. For the prices being charged, this should have been more, as it just didn't last long enough. What we got was good, but egads give us more than that.

Results

Saki Kashima b. Ram Kaichow and Mei Seira – Crucifix to Seira
Stephanie Vaquer/Starlight Kid/Momo Watanabe b. AZM/Saya
Kamitani/Camron Branae – Package piledriver onto the knee to
Branae

Stars b. Club Venus – Twilight Dream to Brookside

Maika b. Megan Bayne – Michinoku Driver II

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