

Lucha Underground – August 9, 2017: Anyone Could Win

Lucha Underground

Date: August 9, 2017

Location: Lucha Underground Temple, Boyle Heights, California

Commentators: Vampiro, Matt Striker

It's time to set the final four in the Cueto Cup as we'll be having the final two quarterfinal matches tonight. In addition to that though, we're restarting the process of putting together the Gift of the Gods Title and that means it's time to find some people to possess the medallions. Let's get to it.

The opening video of course looks at the tournament so far, plus the Worldwide Underground getting a chance to win three medallions tonight.

Aztec Medallions: Rabbit Tribe vs. Worldwide Underground

The winners all get medallions of course. Before the Worldwide Underground comes out, the Rabbit Tribe (Paul London/Saltador/Mala Suerte) dance around Melissa Santos, who doesn't seem to mind. Taya and Saltador start with the latter sliding between her legs and shoving her down by the back of her trunks. Ricky Mandel comes in and takes a hurricanrana, followed by a standing moonsault for two.

Taya charges into a clothesline but sends Suerte into the corner. All three members of the Tribe get in the corner for a Bronco Buster because we've somehow teleported back to the Attitude Era. Everything breaks down and the Underground is knocked out to the floor, leaving Mandel to get caught in a neckbreaker. London adds a shooting star for the pin and the medallions at 4:36.

Rating: D+. Not long enough to get anywhere but the Tribe's oddness is starting to grow on me. I get that it's the idea but for once it's actually working. It's also interesting to see the Underground lose as you would have guessed the three of them would make it to the seven way

but a bit of a surprise can be a nice thing.

Post break, the Underground's agent yells at the losing team and says they would be fired if not for Johnny Mundo's intervention.

Cueto Cup Quarterfinals: Jeremiah Crane vs. Mil Muertes

Muertes jumps him in the aisle and the fight is on in a hurry. Muertes throws him through some boxes and we take a break with no bell. Back with Crane being thrown through a door as Striker says this is going to be a No DQ match. They fight in the balcony above the announcers' area with Crane being thrown down to a lower balcony as this has been one sided so far. Crane fights back but gets sent into the post for his efforts, followed by going into the apron.

They finally get inside and I guess the match has already started as there's no bell. Crane is quickly sent back outside and through some empty wooden chairs. Some chops have no effect on Muertes so Crane tries a lap around the ring, only to get cut in half by a spear. Muertes throws some chairs into the ring and a backbreaker puts Crane through them for two.

Crane gets all fired up and hits Muertes in the head with a chair over and over to get a breather. The chair is set over Muertes' throat and Crane pounds it down with the other chair. Now it's table time (duh) but Muertes spears him down instead. Muertes drops him face first onto the apron and it seems like it's time to wrap things up.

Back in and another spear is countered with a guillotine choke but Muertes drops him down for the break. Muertes throws in a table but Crane puts him through it instead for a very close two. Jeremiah goes to the middle rope and dives right into the Flatliner to send Muertes to the semifinals at 10:15 (with the clock starting when they first got into the ring).

Rating: B-. Crane has gotten a huge rub from this tournament and it's kind of sad to see him eliminated. Muertes is the right choice to go forward though as even though he's not as dominant as he used to be, there's always the chance that he could go on a tear and destroy everyone

else to win the tournament.

Catrina kisses Crane, who seems to like it. That earns him a hard kick to the head and the villains leave.

An FBI agent comes to see Dario Cueto and says that the Order has chosen him to replace Councilman Delgado. The death seems to be news to Cueto but he's a bit shaken by the agent's presence. The agent says he's a big Pentagon Dark fan but even his skin will burn when the war comes. All that matters is bringing the gods back to power.

Cueto Cup Quarterfinals: The Mack vs. Pentagon Dark

Texano goes right after him and gets two off a leg lariat. Pentagon knocks him outside though and nails a big running kick to the head. A Codebreaker with Pentagon hanging over the ropes gives Texano control again and he sends Pentagon hard into the barricade. Cue Famous B. and Brenda for a distraction, allowing Pentagon to hit back to back Sling Blades.

Texano kicks him down again though, only to charge into a Backstabber out of the corner. Something like an Indian Deathlock has Pentagon in trouble but he's quickly in the ropes. Texano puts him in the Tree of Woe for a delayed dropkick, followed by a middle rope leg lariat for two. Famous B. tries to throw in a horseshoe but Pentagon takes it away and knocks Texano out for the easy pin at 6:08.

Rating: D+. The Famous B. stuff feels so out of place in the tournament, which is one of the biggest things Lucha Underground has ever done. B. is pure comedy (not exactly funny comedy that is) and that's not what you should be having with one of the most serious characters in the company.

The semifinals are now set:

Pentagon Dark vs. Mil Muertes

Prince Puma vs. Fenix

Post match Pentagon loads up Texano's arm but B. calls him out. That earns B. his second broken arm but Pentagon isn't done. After leaving for

a bit, Pentagon comes back to break Brenda's arm to end the show.

Catrina is meeting Captain Vazquez, who she seems to know. Catrina says the gods don't fear her and Vazquez talks about the gods using Cage's gauntlet as a gateway. They both pull out their halves of the medallion and Vazquez says only one man in the Temple can take the gauntlet from Cage. He just so happens to answer to Catrina (Muertes' name isn't mentioned but it's heavily implied), but she points out that without her half of the medallion, Vazquez will no longer be immortal. Catrina says the gods will learn to fear a thousand deaths and leave, after saying goodbye to her mother. Now that's a twist.

Overall Rating: B-. This show did what it needed to do as we can see the end of the tournament from here. Things have really picked up and now that we have two great matches next week and then the big show, things should start getting back to the point that made this show such a hit. Throw in the storylines FINALLY picking up and this was one of the more entertaining shows they've done in a good, long while.

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Lucha Underground – August 2, 2017: He's Grown Up

Lucha Underground

Date: August 2, 2017

Location: Lucha Underground Temple, Boyle Heights, California

Commentators: Vampiro, Matt Striker

The tournament is really starting to pick up and that means it's time to start winding it down. We're three weeks away from the finals and at the moment, we're down to just eight to go. On top of that, the build towards Johnny Mundo vs. Rey Mysterio for the Lucha Underground Title is really taking off. Let's get to it.

The standard opening recap gets things going with a focus on the title match and Mysterio vs. PJ Black from last week.

Dario Cueto brings Matanza some raw meat while saying that Matanza is shaken by his recent loss. If he doesn't control his human desires, the powers of the gods will be taken from him. Matanza refuses the food.

Cueto Cup Quarterfinals: Pindar vs. Fenix

Melissa still seems to have a thing for Fenix. Pindar wastes no time in kicking Fenix down and hammering away. A backbreaker gets two but Fenix flips out of a second one and kicks Pindar in the head. Fenix tries to get all fired up but Pindar charges into the corner to crush both Fenix and his comeback.

One heck of a monkey flip sends Fenix flying and a double underhook spinning slam gives Pindar two. That's enough for Fenix as he elbows Pindar in the jaw and muscles him over for a German suplex. Melissa is openly cheering for Fenix now and a springboard C4 (or close to one) sets up the top rope double knees to advance Fenix at 5:18.

Rating: C. Fenix winning is the right idea as he's a valuable person to have in the tournament. While he isn't likely winning, there's the

slightest chance that he could pull off a big upset and win the whole thing and that makes his matches more interesting. Even if he doesn't win, whoever beats him is going to get a big rub as a result.

The Worldwide Underground comes in to see Dario with Jack Evans' jaw wired shut. The short version: next week Taya/PJ/Jack are getting a Trios Titles match and they're all involved in the Gift of the Gods title matches (there are a series of medallions, whoever gets all of them together can cash in for a Lucha Underground Title shot).

Cueto Cup Quarterfinals: Dante Fox vs. Prince Puma

They run the ropes to start with Puma flipping all over the place and avoiding a dropkick, only to have Dante take him down with a dive. That's fine with Puma who hits a dive through the ropes and another over them to really wake the crowd up. Fox is right back up and tries a running shooting star off the apron but gets caught in the air. That's fine with him as he spins around into a tornado DDT on the floor. The fans are all behind Puma as Dante chokes him on the ropes like a villain is supposed to be doing.

Puma jawbreaks his way to freedom but gets caught in a twisting suplex for two. A 619 in the corner into a springboard crossbody gives Puma two of his own as the Fox chants are starting to sprinkle in. Fox is right back with a springboard Codebreaker for two, followed by a pinfall reversal sequence. One heck of a Blue Thunder Bomb gives Puma two and he snaps off some running knees in the corner.

Puma misses a charge though and Fox hits a slingshot dropkick. Fox's 450 hits knees though and both guys are down again. Some kicks to the head and a brainbuster give Puma two more. A reverse exploder suplex of all things plants Fox again but he STILL kicks out. Puma has finally had it so a shotgun dropkick into the corner sets up the 630 to put Fox away at 11:03.

Rating: B. Now that's more like it. This was a match where they just kept hitting each other with bigger and bigger spots until one of them couldn't get up. Puma is of course the right call for the win here and it makes sense to have him go one gear further than Fox. There's a good

chance that Puma is winning this thing, especially with the extra gear he's had in recent weeks thanks to Vampiro.

Post match Killshot comes in and hits something like a One Winged Angel before saying it's not over between them.

Captain Vazquez (Cortez Castro's boss) isn't happy with him getting crushed by Cage, but to be fair Cage is a god. Cortez says no man alive can get the gauntlet away from him. He leaves and Vazquez agrees but looks at her half of the medallion.

Johnny Mundo vs. El Dragon Azteca Jr.

Non-title and Rey Mysterio's family is in the crowd. Mundo can't get a suplex so Dragon smacks him in the chest. An enziguri drops Johnny and he bails to the ropes for a staredown. A hurricanrana sends Johnny to the floor but he catches a flip version and plants Dragon on the floor with a spinebuster.

Back in and we hit the chinlock for a bit before Mundo rams in some shoulders in the corner. A backdrop puts Mundo on the floor though and that means a BIG flip dive over the top to take him down. Back in again and some kicks to the face give Dragon two more, only to have Johnny grab a standing C4 for two of his own. Dragon's super victory roll of all things gets two more but he gets pulled off the top, setting up the End of the World to give Johnny the pin at 9:00.

Rating: B-. Dragon Azteca is good but he's clearly a step or two behind some of the top names. Having Mundo beat Mysterio's protege is good storytelling though and you can tell there's going to be something involving Rey's family to wrap things up. I really like how they've been setting up the title match as it feels like something important that they're actually building for a change instead of just doing it all of a sudden. You don't get that enough anymore and it's working for me.

Post match Johnny wraps a chair around Dragon's neck but here's Mysterio for the save. Johnny bails and Rey leaves but Mundo comes back. Since Rey apparently isn't watching, Mundo gets in Rey's son Dominic's (who has grown WAY up) face and here's the Worldwide Underground to beat Dominic

down, including a belt shot from Mundo.

Fenix and Melissa Santos seem to be getting rather comfortable in the parking lot with Melissa asking if Fenix ever takes that mask off. He says on special occasions and they leave together. Marty the Moth Martinez is shown watching from the shadows and promises to take Fenix's mask.

Overall Rating: B. I had a great time with this show as it flew by but more importantly it made me want to see the big show in three weeks. The tournament finals should be a lot of fun and there's a major match on top of it. They're also starting to tie some of the bigger stories together for once instead of having things all over the place. That's plagued this season horribly and it would be a great thing to fix, which it seems like they are for the time being.

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Lucha Underground – July 26,

2017: The Old Lucha Way

Lucha Underground

Date: July 26, 2017

Location: Lucha Underground Temple, Boyle Heights, California

Commentators: Vampiro, Matt Striker

I believe the second round of the Cueto Cup wraps up tonight but the bigger deal is Rey Mysterio getting back into the ring for the first time in a good while. Worldwide Underground has a new pesky agent who has gotten PJ Black a match with Mysterio. That could be a lot of fun and when you couple it with the tournament stuff, this show has potential. Let's get to it.

Standard opening, looking at the tournament as a whole and the matches for those competing tonight.

Striker mentions that the tournament final is in four weeks, which will also see Mysterio vs. Johnny Mundo for the Lucha Underground Title.

Cueto Cup Second Round: Texano vs. The Mack

They actually speed things up to start instead of going with the power brawl, including a series of near falls into a standoff. That's quite the surprise. It even warrants a handshake before Mack grabs a headlock for a negligible advantage. Mack sends him outside for a running flip dive, followed by a running basement Blockbuster for two inside.

Some very loud chops have Texano in even more trouble but he comes back with some softer chops. They head outside again with a tilt-a-whirl backbreaker dropping Texano, only to have Mack go down as well. Back in and Mack gets two off a swinging slam but here's Famous B to spray him with a water gun. That earns B. a Stunner but the distraction allows Texano to grab a Batista Bomb to advance at 7:19.

Rating: C+. Good power brawl here though the ending felt like a cop out rather than a win for Texano. It's not like either of them are going to win the tournament but the ending didn't work for me. The match was fun

while it lasted though and that's a good thing, but Famous B. isn't doing anything for me and hasn't in a long time.

Son of Havoc is at a bar when Son of Madness comes out and takes his drink. They were in the same biker gang and Madness is here to bring Havoc back whether he likes it or not. At least it's a story.

Mascarita Sagrada brings the Rabbit Tribe a present, with the card saying it will bring them good luck. It's a rabbit's foot, meaning panic ensues.

Cueto Cup Second Round: Pentagon Dark vs. Drago

They hit the mat to start, which is a lot more technical than you would expect from someone as violent as Pentagon. Drago sends him outside for a big flip dive, earning himself some rather loud cheering. Back inside and they trade some hard running kicks in the corner with Pentagon getting the better of it because he's rather good at the whole beating people up thing.

Pentagon suplexes him into the corner for two but Drago grabs a hurricanrana for the same. A running Blockbuster gets the same, only to have Pentagon catch him in a half nelson driver for another near fall. Drago runs up the corner for a tornado DDT followed by a top rope hurricanrana but the top rope splash only gets two. Pentagon is tired of playing around though and hits a Mexican Destroyer....for two. Well of course that doesn't finish it. The package piledriver finishes Drago a few seconds later at 7:57. Then just have the Destroyer finish the thing.

Rating: C+. Ending aside, this was a nice back and forth spot trading showcase with each of them hitting most of their big stuff. Pentagon is coming off like a bigger star every single week and they would be crazy to not put him back into the title picture, likely destroying everyone in his path, very soon.

Post match Pentagon lays out Kobra Moon and goes for the arm but Aero Star makes the save. Drago lays out Aero Star and Pentagon breaks Star's arm as a trophy.

Pentagon runs into Catrina in the back where she reminds him of his

issues with Mil Muertes. Catrina promises that Mil hasn't forgotten and will take him out of the Cup.

PJ Black vs. Rey Mysterio

They start fast with Rey grabbing a hurricanrana and a victory roll for two, sending us to a standoff with Black smiling. An ankle scissors sends Black outside but he catches a dive and drops Rey with something like a reverse Rack Attack. A top rope fist to the face gives Black two and it's off to a double arm crank.

Back up and the 619 is broken up by a superkick but Rey misses a springboard. They slug it out until Rey flips him out to the floor for an Asai moonsault. The spinning crossbody gives Rey two but he gets caught in the Tree of Woe for a top rope double stomp. Can we please ban that spot all over wrestling? I've got money. A Styles Clash gives Black two but he gets caught in a tornado DDT.

The referee gets bumped though and here's Johnny Mundo to lay out Mysterio. Jack Evans comes in to make it a triple team but here's El Dragon Azteca to make the save. Taya takes him out though, leaving Black to get a close two. Azteca chases the Worldwide Underground off, leaving Rey to reverse a Razor's Edge into a hurricanrana. The 619 sets up a springboard frog splash for the pin at 11:29.

Rating: B-. Black has really showcased himself over the last two weeks and that's quite the improvement. I've never been the biggest fan of the guy in the world but it's a good sign that he's able to do a lot more than just have a flashy finisher. Mysterio might not be what he used to be but he's still far better than many other cruiserweights and he gives Lucha Underground credibility, which they really can use.

Mysterio says everyone here will win the title from Mundo in four weeks.

Overall Rating: C+. Not a great show this week but we're down to the final eight in the tournament and are starting to get some real build towards the title match. As usual, the best way to make TV seem important is to give it a long form build and that's what we've gotten so far. These shows have been FAR more entertaining than what we had been seeing

in the months leading up to it and that's a very important upgrade.

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Lucha Underground – July 19, 2017: How Rudo of Him

Lucha Underground

Date: July 19, 2017

Location: Lucha Underground Temple, Boyle Heights, California

Commentators: Vampiro, Matt Striker

It's another night of the Cueto Cup as we're getting closer to the quarterfinals. The wrestling is starting to get better too as we have more matches worth watching between talents who have chances to win the whole thing. We should also be in for some more build towards Rey Mysterio vs. Johnny Mundo. Let's get to it.

We open with the now regular recap of the Cueto Cup so far, including some of the wrestlers in action tonight.

Prince Puma is on the roof and looking nervous. Vampiro comes up and says the only way to get rid of the memories is to become the champion again. Puma has flashbacks to facing Johnny Mundo and calls Vampiro his master.

Cueto Cup Second Round: Cage vs. Pindar

The referee wants Cage to take off the gauntlet so Cage drops him for a DQ before the match ever started. Cage beats up Pindar for fun. This makes sense as they had to have a way to get rid of Cage without beating him so this was their best option.

Cueto Cup Second Round: Dante Fox vs. Son of Havoc

Hang on a second as Son of Madness jumps Havoc from behind and chokes him down. A shot to the head with a chain knocks Havoc even sillier but Dario Cueto comes out and says fight or be out of the tournament. Naturally Havoc is ready to go and the bell rings after a break. Fox knocks him outside for a running flip dive over the post.

A guillotine legdrop over the apron gets two but Dante misses a dive and gets sent hard into the barricade. Back in and a jumping knee to the head gives Havoc two. Striker calls Havoc the diesel fueled maniac of the open road and even Vampiro isn't sure what to make of him.

The Foxcatcher is broken up and Havoc bounces off the ropes into a cutter for two. A Death Valley Driver is broken up and something like a C4 2000 gives Dante two of his own. They slug it out on the apron and a Death Valley Driver/AA (somewhere in between) to the floor knocks Fox silly. The shooting star, nearly to the middle of the ring, misses and the Foxcatcher sends Dante to the next round at 9:12.

Rating: C+. Fox has some skills but I can only get so much out of the ex-military guy. These guys beat on each other for a good while and it was nice to see Havoc get a pass on the loss. I'm not wild on seeing Havoc vs. Madness again but the backstory could carry it far enough, especially around here, where such a thing could actually work for a change.

Johnny Mundo has hired an agent (Benjamin Cooke) for the Worldwide Underground. PJ Black comes in and we get a pretty solid speech from

Benjamin about how far the team could go with the right representation. We're talking cereal boxes here.

Cueto Cup Second Round: PJ Black vs. Prince Puma

They fight over the arms to start with Puma actually using the ropes for the break. How rudo of him. Back up and one heck of a right hand staggers Black and some rollups give Puma two. A monkey flip doesn't work though and we wind up with a standoff. That's fine with Puma who sends Black to the floor and stops for some posing.

A running kick to the back of Black's head keeps him in trouble and Puma stomps a bit of a mudhole in the corner. You can hear the pride in Vampiro's voice too, making him all the better of a choice for an evil boss. Black grabs a seated dragon suplex but Puma slips out without too much trouble.

That's fine with Black who cranks on the arm before going with a hard shot to the head to drop Puma again. It's off to an abdominal stretch to turn things a bit more simple but Puma slips out again. Puma heads up top for a clothesline, followed by a rolling DDT and a standing shooting star for two. A cutter into a belly to back gets the same but Puma is a bit spent. Now it's Black coming back with something like a Dominator (the Wellness Policy because making fun of WWE is funny) for two of his own.

They slug it out with Puma getting the better of it, capped off by a northern lights suplex for two. Black kicks him in the face and gets two off a top rope Lionsault. He gets crotched on top though, allowing Puma to hit a reverse super hurricanrana for a near fall of his own. A shotgun dropkick sets up the 630 to finally put Black away at 15:53.

Rating: B+. Yep. Now that's a lot more like it with the kind of match that makes Lucha Underground work so well. These two were beating the heck out of each other and trading big spots until one of them couldn't get up. Puma is looking like a world beater in this tournament and him looking stronger is a good thing for the promotion. Really solid match here.

Black comes into Dario's office and is told that Cooke has already set

him up with another match. Next week, Black gets Rey Mysterio. He leaves and Cooke calls Dario again, causing him to throw his phone in the trash.

Overall Rating: B. I had a lot of fun with this and it was flying by. This tournament needed a match like Black vs. Puma and it was one of the more entertaining matches they've put on in a good while. It's also nice to have them add something else to the card besides just the tournament matches as you can only get so far doing one story per show. Good show this week though, which the show needs a lot more of at this point.

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Lucha Underground – July 5, 2017: Something About Me Forgetting to Post This Again

Lucha Underground

Date: July 5, 2017

Location: Lucha Underground Temple, Boyle Heights, California

Commentators: Vampiro, Matt Striker

It's the final night of the first round of the Cueto Cup tournament, meaning next week we can start finding out who might make a run in this thing. First though, we need to have the EVIL TWIN story, which could mean almost anything around here. Alternate dimensions certainly aren't out of the question and I really don't know what to think about that. Let's get to it.

We recap Dante Fox vs. Killshot, who were soldiers together in Afghanistan.

Fox is out for a jog and has a flashback. Killshot left Fox during a battle, resulting in Fox being captured and tortured. Now he's here for revenge.

Cueto Cup First Round: Sexy Star vs. PJ Black

Black takes her down by the hand to start and lifts her up by the arm without too much effort. Back up and a delayed headscissors drops Black, only to have her guillotine countered into a suplex. Black heads up top and gets pulled down with a hurricanrana, followed by a big shove to send him off the top again. Cue Taya to throw in some brass knuckles, only to have Star take them away and lay Black out for the DQ at 4:16.

Rating: D. I'm really sick of Sexy Star, even though she hasn't been around for weeks now. Her character of someone who has survived so much stuff really isn't clicking and I have no desire to watch almost anything she does. It's like they just threw a woman out there, gave her a story and expect her to be a big deal with nothing else thrown in. As is the case with anyone in wrestling, that's just not the case.

Star decks the referee with the knuckles too.

Another Rey Mysterio vs. Johnny Mundo video, which actually have me wanting to see the match. It's almost like talking about a match for weeks is a good way to hype something up instead of just airing it an hour after it's announced. Rey says he's doing this for the people who have supported him while Johnny says he's winning because he's the best. Mundo: "I'm the best right now so deal with it. Suck it Rey."

Cueto Cup First Round: Son of Havoc vs. Son of Madness

Madness seems to be Havoc's twin, though their names alone would suggest that they're not brothers. Pay attention people. Havoc goes right at him in the aisle and sends him into the barricade. They head inside for the first time as Vampiro explains the biker culture. Madness dives into a kick to the face but takes his vest off to throw at Havoc. Apparently that means a lot but I'd be more worried about who can rip off Sons of Anarchy more next.

They trade missed clotheslines in the corner until Havoc is sent outside for a dive to the floor. Back in and Havoc slugs away and gets two off a spinning springboard crossbody. Madness gets the same off something like a Jackhammer They head to the top with Havoc snapping him throat first across the top rope, only to miss the shooting star. Instead a rollup ends Madness at 8:50.

Rating: B-. Good high flying match here and I'm sure it's going to be something a bit, longer than this would suggest. As long as it's nothing like the Aces and 8's nonsense (oh was it nonsense) then this could be an interesting story. Havoc is a popular enough guy to make almost anything work so maybe he can get this over too.

Post match Madness kicks Havoc in the mask and takes his vest. Again, this seems to be a big deal, or at least so Vampiro says.

Cueto Cup First Round: Prince Puma vs. Ricky Mandel

Mandel is the Johnny Mundo fanboy and billed as interning with the Worldwide Underground. Before the match, Mantel uses Mundo's catchphrases and gets kicked in the face to open things up. Puma suplexes him for two and hits another running kick to the face. A spinning piledriver ends Mandel at 1:14. Puma never even took his hoodie off.

Mysterio gives El Dragon Azteca Jr. a pep talk. Azteca wants to win the tournament and get a title shot. Puma comes in to say the same, much to Azteca's annoyance.

We look at next week's second round matches.

Cueto Cup First Round: El Dragon Azteca Jr. vs. Dante Fox

Mysterio is in Dragon's corner. Dragon chops away in the corner to start and springboards in with a crossbody for no cover. Back up and Dragon slides to the floor for no apparent reason, setting up a suicide dive and another dive off the top. A guillotine legdrop to the apron gets two on Fox as Vampiro compares Fox to Marvin Hagler. Dragon takes him outside again and sends him head first into the barricade, followed by a whip to do the same with his back.

Back in and Dragon loads up something flashy but has to settle for a regular legdrop instead. A running C4 gives Fox two of his own, only to have Azteca hit a regular C4 of his own for two. They trade basement dropkicks and both guys are down again. Cue Taya to go after Mysterio, earning herself a dropkick. Mundo himself runs in and powerbombs Rey into the barricade, setting up a beatdown from the entire Worldwide Underground. Azteca dives outside for a save and dives back in to the Foxcatcher (inverted DDT) for the pin at 9:06.

Rating: C+. This was a bit too choreographed for my taste but it's a good idea to have Mundo vs. Mysterio happening in the arena for a change. The videos are great but there's only so much you're going to get out of them. Azteca losing could go somewhere, even though he hasn't been around much lately.

Overall Rating: B-. I liked this show again but it's nothing to write home about. Above all else though, it's nice to have the first round already over. We should be able to wrap the thing up in a few more weeks, though I'm not sure how long it can go without putting some other stuff together besides just the title match. Good enough show but the first round needed to end when it did.

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Lucha Underground – July 12, 2017: Battle of the Best

Lucha Underground

Date: July 12, 2017

Location: Lucha Underground Temple, Boyle Heights, California

Commentators: Vampiro, Matt Striker

It's time for the second round of the Cueto Cup as we're down to sixteen names. Hopefully that means the end of the squashes which dominated so much of the first round. You can probably guess the winner fairly easily but it's nice to have some good matches along the way. Let's get to it.

We open with a recap of the tournament and some first round matches.

Cueto Cup Second Round: Jeremiah Crane vs. Taya

Taya turns up the sex appeal to land an early slap but Crane does the same, minus the sex appeal that is. That sends Taya outside for a suicide elbow, followed by a run around the ring for a flip dive to drive Taya through a chair. Back up and Taya knocks him off the barricade for a dive of her own.

She hammers on Crane back inside, followed by a running boot in the corner as Striker is losing his mind here despite it not being that big

of a deal. A series of strikes to the head drops Taya again but she plants him with a tornado DDT for two of her own. Cue Sexy Star for a distraction though and it's Cranial Contusion to send Crane to the next round at 6:25.

Rating: C. They were beating the heck out of each other here and it was nice to see Taya getting in some offense and hanging in there with Crane for a bit but there's only so far that she's going to be able to take something like this. At least Crane can get in a big fight in the quarterfinals and move on from here.

Post match Star knocks Taya out with brass knuckles.

Fenix and Aero Star talk about Drago leaving to join the Reptile Tribe. Aero Star, a time traveler, bets on Fenix, who doesn't find that exactly fair.

Cueto Cup Second Round: Mil Muertes vs. Paul London

London starts dancing to start as we hear about his time in Ring of Honor with Striker mentioning specific matches. After over a minute of walking around, London gets thrown into the corner, meaning it's time to head outside for a chase. The fans are entirely behind Muertes here as he unloads on London and throws him around with ease. Ten shoulders to the ribs have London in even more trouble but he snaps Muertes' throat across the top.

That's fine with Mil, who sends London into the barricade for a crash. A string of superkicks that would make the Young Bucks tell you to turn it down staggers Muertes and a top rope double stomp to the back puts him down again. The swinging chokeslam drops London though but the Rabbit Tribe comes in for a distraction. London gets two off a middle rope shooting star but it's a spear and the Flatliner to end Paul at 9:29.

Rating: C+. Much like the first match, it was entertaining but did anyone <http://onhealthy.net/product-category/erectile-dysfunction/> really buy another ending? London was certainly game here though and that helps a lot, even if there was no way around anything Muertes had for him. Muertes has to be a favorite in this thing but whoever beats him will get

a heck of a rub.

Post match London gets the Lick of Death, which he seemed to enjoy. The fans even call him lucky.

Brenda hits on Texano, who buys her a drink. She calls him boring so he breaks a beer bottle in his hand. A woman's touch could fix that though and Texano smiles.

Cueto Cup Second Round: Fenix vs. Marty Martinez

Melissa Santos still seems to have a crush on Fenix. Marty creepily rubs his stomach but gets dropped as things speed up. Fenix ducks a charge to send him outside for a kick to the face and a running flip dive. Mariposa offers a distraction though and Marty kicks him down, sending Melissa into a bit of fear.

Back in and we hit the chinlock with Marty ripping at the mask a bit. Fenix gets up and hits a good looking (and loud) running kick to the face in the corner, followed by a double stomp for two. A spring flipping moonsault misses though and Marty kicks him in the face for his own near fall.

Marty flips him forward into something like a Codebreaker (cool move) for two more but Fenix gets in a superkick. Mariposa grabs some kind of box that Marty brought with him but, for perhaps the first time ever, Melissa gets physical and blocks the shot, freaking the crowd out even more. The distraction lets Fenix grab a hurricanrana for the pin at 10:19.

Rating: C+. This was more about the storytelling and anything that involved me getting to see more of Melissa Santos, the better. She and Fenix could be interesting and having Marty and Mariposa around to antagonize them should help a lot as well. The match was good too, especial with Fenix flying all over the place like he does.

Post match Marty hits him with the box and pulls out a fork to carve up Fenix's head as Melissa is forced to watch. Marty even licks the blood to be extra creepy.

Overall Rating: B. Now that's more what I was looking for. This show

featured bigger matches that felt like showdowns and I'm curious to see where some of these matches are going to go. We should have the final eight set up in two weeks and then the tournament finals three to four weeks later. They're getting through this tournament fairly fast and that's a good thing. Solid show here and better than the first round stuff.

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<http://kbwrestlingreviews.com/2017/05/19/history-of-saturday-nights-main-event-and-clash-of-the-champions-now-in-paperback-plus-price-drops/>

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<http://www.amazon.com/Thomas-Hall/e/B00E6282W6>

NJPW G1 Special in USA Night Two: The Omega of the Alpha

NJPW G1 Special in USA Night Two

Date: July 2, 2017

Location: Long Beach Convention and Entertainment Center, Long Beach, California

Attendance: 2,305

Commentators: Jim Ross, Josh Barnett

We're back with night two of the show, though this didn't air on American

TV until five days later. The big story tonight is the United States Heavyweight Title, which will be decided for the first time ever. Other than that we have Hiroshi Tanahashi defending the Intercontinental Title against Billy Gunn for reasons I can't quite comprehend. Let's get to it.

JR and Barnett welcome us to the show and recap the tournament so far. The Intercontinental Title match gets some attention of its own.

Jushin Thunder Liger/David Finlay/Kushida vs. Tempura Boyz/Yoshitatsu

Before we get going, we hit the posedown for some nice reactions from the crowd. Eh fine enough to open a show, especially when you have a major fan favorite like Liger in there. Liger puts Komatsu in a modified surfboard to start before sending him into the barricade. For some reason this gives us a Who's On First routine from the announcers because they aren't the best pairing in the world.

Everything breaks down with Liger getting triple teamed in the corner with a flapjack getting two. The Shotei Palm Strike drops Komatsu again though and it's a hot tag to Kushida as things speed way up. The announcers talk about food as Kushida grabs a Hoverboard Lock on Tanaka, only to be reversed into an over the shoulder backbreaker. A package piledriver doesn't work on Kushida and it's time to slug it out. Something like a Pele kick drops Tanaka but he catches Kushida in a German suplex.

Yoshitatsu comes in with a missile dropkick and is immediately booted out of the building, which apparently is a big thing for him. I always liked the guy but New Japan fans can't STAND the guy. Finlay comes back in and runs him over for two, only to get kned in the face for the same. Everything breaks down and it's a triple submission with a Stretch Muffler making Komatsu tap at 8:54 while Liger had Tanaka in a surfboard and Yoshitatsu was in a Hoverboard Lock.

Rating: C+. Fine choice for an opener here as the fans are always going to eat Liger up with a spoon. The guy is really entertaining (his music is worth the price of admission alone) and Kushida is one of my favorites in the whole promotion. I'd still like to know what's up with Yoshitatsu but I'm sure it's something he did before.

IWGP United States Title Tournament Semi-Finals: Kenny Omega vs. Jay Lethal

Lethal has bad ribs coming in. Feeling out process to start and Omega wastes no time kicking him in the bad ribs, followed by another one to the chest. The ribs (both the good and the bad) are sent into the barricade a few times as it's very one sided to start. Back in and the One Winged Angle is broken up but it's too early for the Lethal Injection. Instead it's three straight superkicks (well if the Bucks aren't going to do them...), followed by the Lethal Injection. Lethal pops back up for three straight suicide dives.

Hail to the King gets two and Jay starts in on the leg as he channels Ric Flair. The Figure Four is broken up so he tries another Lethal Injection, only to have Omega block it with a somewhat botched Codebreaker. Eh I'll give it five and a half stars anyway. Omega is limping a bit but comes back up a few shots to the ribs. You can't say his psychology is off. The tape finally comes off the ribs and a few knees to the back get two.

Lethal fights out of the corner and grabs a Blue Thunder Bomb but can't follow up because of the ribs. The dragon suplex staggers Jay and the running knee to the jaw gives Omega two. A gutwrench sitout powerbomb (always looks cool) is good for the same but the One Winged Angle is countered. The counter is countered into the One Winged Angel though and Omega is in the finals at 12:58.

Rating: B. The psychology was working here, even if the finish was a bit off. Still though, these two beat the heck out of each other and the ribs vs. the knee made enough sense. That being said, there was no way that Omega wasn't at least making the finals of this thing so it's not like the ending was in any real doubt.

IWGP United States Title Tournament Semi-Finals: Zack Sabre Jr. vs. Tomohiro Ishii

There's a weird visual here as Ishii is really thick but the lanky Sabre is a good four inches taller than him. Ishii forearms him in the face to start and Sabre hurts himself with a headbutt. Some hard chops in the corner have Sabre rocked but he keeps sticking his chest out asking for

more.

With JR trying to figure out what Sabre is thinking, he gets in a kick to Ishii's arm and we have a target. It doesn't make the early strategy any more logical but at least he's doing his thing now. We hit something like a modified Tequila Sunrise with Sabre letting go for no apparent reason. Ishii knocks him back again and hits a loud running clothesline in the corner.

They head up top and Sabre grabs a Kimura, earning himself one heck of a superplex to bring him back down. Sabre comes right back with something like a reverse cross armbreaker but Ishii suplexes him into a heap. As JR says Sabre is the "TWG" World Champion, Ishii misses the sliding lariat and gets caught in another armbreaker. Sabre grabs the leg as well before wrapping his legs around the neck (these holds are INSANE every time).

Ishii dives over for the ropes for the break so Sabre kicks at the arm again. That's fine with Ishii who HITS HIM IN THE FACE. I love simple counters like that. Ishii counters yet another armbreaker so Sabre kicks him square in the chest. Not that it matters though as Ishii pops up with the brainbuster to advance at 11:45.

Rating: C+. Ishii is slowly growing on me but I'm in awe of a lot of those holds that Sabre throws out there. I don't even understand how he does most of them, let alone how anyone gets out of them. It's not a great match here but it was rather entertaining, which is all you need a lot of the time.

Los Ingobernables de Japon vs. Dragon Lee/Jay White/Juice Robinson/Volador Jr./Titan

JR basically guarantees a spot fest here. This is New Japan vs. CMLL and hopefully JR can remember which luchador is which. Volador Jr., in a mask unlike last night, starts with Naito, who keeps walking away from lockups. Instead Naito rolls straight into his pose so it's off to Bushi and Takahashi to double team Volador, who has no problem sending them outside for an Asai moonsault.

Everything breaks down with Naito choking on the floor as Bushi chokes

Titan inside. Sanada ties up Juice and Titan for kicks to the back of the tights. JR: "We don't have any idea what's going on either." Titan's comeback is cut off by Naito's enziguri as the announcers go into a discussion of Trish Stratus' chest. The hot tag brings in Robinson so clean house with a spinebuster planting Evil.

Takahashi eats a hard lariat and it's off to Lee to speed things up again. They chop the heck out of each other with the fans getting into it until Lee flips out of a hurricanrana. It's off to Evil vs. White (who I forgot was in this) with Jay getting the better of it off a clothesline. White gets cut off by a guillotine over the ropes and Evil gets in a side slam.

Everything breaks down again and it's White getting quadruple teamed inside. Robinson makes the save and cleans house and Titan hits a top rope Asai moonsault to take out Takahashi. White gets two off a Rock Bottom to Bushi but a Flatliner is enough to give Jay the pin at 12:29.

Rating: C+. It was fun and energetic but things go down a bit when you have the announcers riffing on the match being such a mess. It also doesn't help when there's very little setting the faces apart and the announcers didn't seem to know anything about them. Still a fun match, though I'm getting a bit numb to all these multi man tags.

Bullet Club vs. War Machine/Michael Elgin

It's the Guerrillas of Destiny and Hangman Page here and they're flanked by Chase Owens and FREAKING HAKU, the father of the Guerrillas. Well that works. Page and Elgin get things going with Adam having no problem forearming him in the face. It's fine with Elgin too, who BLASTS Page in the face with a forearm of his own.

That goes nowhere so it's off to the tag teams with War Machine shrugging off a double dropkick and throwing the brothers at each other. Everything breaks down and Elgin suplexes Page, followed by Rowe slamming Hanson on top of him. Hanson rubs his beard on Tama's face, which might be approved of in some areas. Loa comes in for an Oklahoma Stampede of all things and you know JR is happy with that one.

The beating of Hanson continues with the Bullet Club taking turns picking him apart. Hanson finally avoids a charge and makes the hot tag off to Elgin for the power man offense. The Falcon Arrow gets two on Page and everything breaks down again. Tama gets in a jumping neckbreaker on Elgin but Hanson cannonballs off the top to take out the Guerrillas. A fireman's carry/Blockbuster combo drops Hanson so Rowe comes in to hit people very hard. Page comes back in with a heck of a lariat though and the Rite of Passage ends Rowe at 11:17.

Rating: D+. This felt like they had a six man tag for the sake of having a six man tag. War Machine won the titles the night before and I really don't think they needed to set up a new match so quickly. Since all six of them appeared on the show the night before, they really could have cut this out to let the show breathe a bit more.

The New Japan boss thanks the fans for making this special and promises to bring the company back to America...in 2018. It's been an impressive weekend but I expected something a bit sooner than that.

IWGP Junior Heavyweight Tag Team Titles: Young Bucks vs. Roppongi Vice

The Bucks are defending and yes, these teams are fighting AGAIN. Now at Best in the World, the Bucks had the best match I've ever seen them have because they spared the superkicks. Let's see if they keep that up or revert to the form that gets them the most praise. Nick throws a superkick less than a minute in but goes with the Sharpshooter instead, sending Romero bailing to the ropes.

All four come in and no one can hit anything, including a quadruple dropkick for a standoff. The Bucks are sent into the corner but come back with a double superkick (oh here we go) to knock Vice outside. Matt hits a heck of a moonsault to the floor, only to have Nick (the announcers are getting them confused again) miss a big flip dive back inside. Nick grabs Beretta off the apron and runs him up the aisle for a heck of a powerbomb as a fan yells something about Hot Topic.

Back in and the Bucks stay on Romero as we're doing the same "one member of Vice gets powerbombed in the aisle" formula for at least the third time. We hit the chinlock for a bit before the Indy Taker is broken up

but there's no one for Romero to tag. JR: "It's almost like a handicap match." Thanks Jim. A double clothesline drops the bucks and Beretta is back up to take the tag.

Matt takes a tornado DDT but the powerbomb into the enziguri in the corner cuts Beretta off. Another Sharpshooter (I'm assuming that's a new thing for the Bucks because reasons) is broken up so Romero gets powerbombed onto Beretta for two. Romero gets in a double hurricanrana but eats a double superkick. A 450 and moonsault onto the back get two and Nick gets in a great shocked face. It's back to the Sharpshooter (NOT a Scorpion Deathlock JR/Barnett. There's a difference and you really should know that, even if you sound bored with this show.) but Romero makes a quick save.

Sliced Bread #2 (not a Blockbuster Barnett) is broken up so Beretta piledrives Nick on the apron. For those of you counting, Nick is on his feet twelve seconds later. A cradle piledriver gives Beretta two and Strong Zero gets the same and...my goodness we actually get tags. For what? Like seriously, for what?

Romero and Matt come in but the tagging part is quickly forgotten, allowing the Bucks to (mostly miss, though it's fair in this case) get in a springboard flip Meltzer Driver to Romero on the floor. This is actually a tribute to Meltzer's father, who passed away recently before this show. Romero is dead so Beretta comes back in and spits at Matt, earning himself a superkick to the face and two to the back. Another Meltzer Driver to Romero sets up double Sharpshooters for the tap at 22:43.

Rating: B-. Too long here but, again, the lack of superkicks made it a more entertaining match. Granted it was brought down a good bit by the length and the sloppiness that came with some of the ridiculous flips. I'm not a big fan of the Meltzer stuff but the fans dig it enough so it's hard to get that mad about it. The Bucks are entertaining but hard to watch at the same time, if that makes sense.

Post match, Ricochet runs in and takes out both Bucks, saying he wanted to be here but a certain Underground fighting company (Lucha Underground

if you're a bit slow) wasn't being very nice. He wants a shot at the titles with Ryusuke Taguchi as his partner. This segment didn't air in America due to Ricochet's contract with Lucha Underground.

Post dark segment Roppongi Vice lists off their five year checklist, which they've already accomplished. So now they're done because it's time for Beretta to move up to the heavyweight division.

Bullet Club vs. Chaos

Bullet Club: Bad Luck Fale/Cody/Marty Scurll/Yujiro Takahashi

Chaos: Briscoe Brothers, Kazuchika Okada/Will Ospreay

Just in case you didn't get enough multi-man tags yet. Scurll and Mark get things going as we hear about the Briscoes having 70,000 chickens. Red Neck Kung Fu is countered by the bird pose and we hit a standoff. One heck of a chop has Marty scurrying over to the ropes so it's off to Cody vs. Jay.

Cody tags Scurll back in but it's back to Scurll, then Cody, then Scurll and this is the reason both shows were three and a half hours. The fans want Fale so it's off to the big man...who tags Cody right back in. Now the fans want and get Yujiro and he tags right back to Cody. DID YOU GET THE JOKE YET??? I'm not sure it sunk in. I'm aware Cody has a bad shoulder, but maybe they should just have him sit out and have a match if you just have to get this on the card.

Okada comes in so Cody bails as we're about three minutes straight now with no action. Ospreay is sitting in the front row having a beer before coming in to chase Cody around.....for a meeting in the corner. Now it's back to Jay and the lockup gets a pop. Cody powerslams Jay down, making me think that the comedy (as HILARIOUS as it was) was an even bigger waste of time.

Ospreay comes in and kicks away at the chest. Will misses a dive though and it's Yujiro coming in to stomp away. Yujiro dances a bit, then Scurll dances a bit, then Cody flips us off and gyrates the hips. Fale, in his Make Jobbers Great Again shirt, sits on Ospreay's chest for two but

Scurll charges into a boot in the corner. Scurll does his big chickenwing thing, earning himself an enziguri.

Jay comes in to fire off the clotheslines and hands it off to Okada for the real house cleaning. A DDT drops Fale but Okada can't slam the monster. The second attempt works a bit better (naturally) but walks into a Samoan drop, followed by a splash for two. Cody comes back in and eats the flapjack (hopefully with some syrup) before it's back to Ospreay, who catches him with a spinning Stunner.

Scurll snaps the fingers, which JR calls illegal for sure. Uh, why exactly? We get the parade of people hitting each other in the face but Scurll busts out the umbrella to block the Rainmaker (how appropriate). Ospreay kicks Scurll and Cody in the face though and moonsaults over the top to take Marty out again. Will tries another springboard but Cody is right there with the Disaster Kick. Cross Rhodes ends Ospreay at 14:00.

Rating: C. This got better later on but I was getting very sick of that stupid comedy schtick. This was a great example of a match that could have been cut as Cody already had his big match and pinning Ospreay in an eight man tag isn't exactly going to reignite whatever he had going on. We already saw these people last night and it really didn't help the show in any real way. It's ok to let the show breathe a bit instead of cramming everything in.

We recap the IWGP Intercontinental Title match with Billy Gunn promising to bring his A game. Gunn's A game wasn't great at the peak of his career and I don't think I want to see what it's going to be like in his 50s.

IWGP Intercontinental Title: Hiroshi Tanahashi vs. Billy Gunn

Gunn is challenging and no, it still doesn't make sense no matter what. Feeling out process to start until Gunn shoulders Tanahashi away. They fight over a top wristlock until Tanahashi takes him down with a headlock. We're four minute into this and that shoulder block is the high spot so far.

The announcers talk about Lou Thesz as Gunn suplexes him down and throws the champ outside. Tanahashi's bad arm is wrapped around the post as I

have a bad feeling we've already reached the peak of Gunn's abilities. A Jackhammer sets up a top wristlock and Gunn actually adds a low superkick.

Tanahashi gets punched out of the air but pulls Gunn's trunks down to reveal....more trunks. I guess Tanahashi gets bored and comes back with forearms, only to get caught with a cobra clutch slam. The Fameasser gets two but Tanahashi hits a quick Sling Blade and the High Fly Flow (with a SUCK IT) retains the title at 14:26.

Rating: D-. This is a situation where the bigger problem is what else it could have been. There are a TON of names on this roster that you could have put in there (pick one of Los Ingobernables for instance) and they go with Gunn. I get that he's a bigger American name but I really don't buy that they couldn't have brought in almost ANYONE else and gotten a better match. For the promotion based on in-ring work, this really didn't work, though it did to by very quickly.

IWGP United States Heavyweight Title: Kenny Omega vs. Tomohiro Ishii

For the inaugural title and Omega has the Bucks with him. They get straight to the physicality with an exchange of strikes before Omega slaps him in the face. Thankfully he's smart enough to stay on him and get Ishii down before he can hand Omega one of his own body parts. Ishii tells him to kick harder and even sits there for them.

They head into the crowd as we go to the Attitude Era style brawling, which makes sense for someone like Ishii. Back in and Ishii slugs away before Omega invites him to get in a kick of his own. Ishii does just that and Omega suddenly realizes that was a REALLY BAD IDEA. The exchange of loud chops goes to Ishii and a powerslam gets two. Omega comes back with some ax handles to the chest and a middle rope moonsault for the same.

Kenny hits a big flip dive over the top and the Bucks set up a table. Josh: "The Bucks with their own gimmick table." We'll save that for later though as Kenny goes with a top rope dropkick to the back of Ishii's head. Ishii doesn't take kindly to all of these chops though and starts staring Omega down instead of selling the forearms. A hurricanrana gets

Omega out of trouble because hitting him in the face over and over has no effect but a short flip onto your back knocks you silly.

Ishii takes him to the apron and blocks a German suplex through the table. Instead Omega tries a dragon suplex through the table so Ishii BITES THE ROPE to hang on, only to have his teeth give way so it's the dragon suplex through the table. That's only good for a nineteen count so Kenny blasts him in the head with a series of knees. A final knee is blocked so Omega tries a final, final knee, followed by another knee for two.

The One Winged Angel is countered into a DDT and Ishii hits a good looking top rope superplex for another near fall. They have another slugout until Omega hits the brainbuster for two. Ishii gets in a knee of his own, followed by the sliding lariat. Naturally Ishii is right back with a One Winged Angel of his own but Omega knees him down (AGAIN), followed by a reverse hurricanrana. Another running knee to the face sets up the One Winged Angel for the pin and the title at 31:22.

Rating: A-. It's good and had the right finish but those running knees to the face were getting on my nerves. The best positive about this match was how fast it went by. There are several matches with this much time that feel close to twice this long but this one flew by like it was half the time. Ishii was a good foil for Omega here and the win feels important, even if it was fairly obvious.

Post match Cody comes out and snatches the belt away from Kenny, only to wrap it around his waist instead. The rest of the Bullet Club comes out to celebrate as Kenny grabs the mic. He's had a bunch of hardships this year but what separates the Bullet Club from the rest of the world is they never give up, just like the rest of the people here tonight. The fans made this show and New Japan is back next year. They rule the wrestling world and that's never changing. This was a good way to end the show as Omega is one of the faces of the promotion and the face of the promotion in America.

The announcers quickly wrap things up.

Overall Rating: B. I definitely liked the first night better but it's not

like this one was bad. The problem here is the first night felt like a grand spectacle as the promotion made its big debut. This one though felt like they were cramming in a bunch of stuff that didn't need to be on there. I couldn't really think of anything that could have been cut off the first night but this one had multiple moments that could have been trimmed or flat out eliminated.

The Tanahashi match, which should have been a major deal, was a complete misfire and the War Machine stuff felt like it could have come weeks from now instead of immediately. It's still a good show and a big success for the promotion but this show could have had a good half hour to forty five minutes cut out to really improve things.

Overall for the two nights, it's definitely a great debut, but you know the fans are going to get ahead of themselves. They put on two very good shows in front of less than 5,000 fans combined in the second biggest market in the country. It's a very solid performance for the independent level around here but they're FAR away from being in WWE's universe over here, which to be fair New Japan certainly seems to know. If this show is even something of a hit among the casual fans, we'll see where they can go from there but for now, just consider it a success and start to build from here.

Remember to follow me on Twitter @kbreviews and pick up the Histories of Saturday Night's Main Event and Clash of the Champions, now in PAPERBACK. Check out the information here:

<http://kbwrestlingreviews.com/2017/05/19/history-of-saturday-nights-main-event-and-clash-of-the-champions-now-in-paperback-plus-price-drops/>

And check out my Amazon author page with cheap wrestling books at:

<http://www.amazon.com/Thomas-Hall/e/B00E6282W6>

Watched GLOW and Read a Book

So as you've probably heard, the latest hot show on Netflix is GLOW (Gorgeous Ladies of Wrestling), a dramatized story about the backstage workings of the comedy wrestling show of the same name from back in the 80s. The original was actually a hot show in syndication, though it was one of the dumbest things you'll find related to wrestling. I checked out the new series though and it's actually quite good.

The show is a drama built around how the show is put together and how the girls were brought in. It's certainly entertaining and goes by very fast (ten episodes, the longest of which doesn't even break forty minutes, meaning you can knock out the season in just a day), which helps fix a major flaw in a lot of these online originals: episodes basically being short movies instead of TV shows.

There are a bunch of wrestling cameos, with John Morrison, Brodus Clay, Carlito, Christopher Daniels and Kazarian as the most notable. That's the best wrestling stuff on the show though, as GLOW certainly wasn't known for its in-ring product. They do a pretty entertaining job of showing how the training portion works though and that's always cool to see from an outsider's perspective.

Check the show out if you have the chance, but keep in mind that it is NOT PG. There's a bit of nudity, a lot of swearing and some rather adult plotlines. It's going to be around for at least another season and that's a good sign as it's one of the best depictions of wrestling I've seen in a very long time. It's worth seeing and given how fast you can go through the season, it's an easy watch.

On the other front, I recently received a rather nice Amazon gift card and spent a good chunk of it on a pile of wrestling books. The first one I finished off was Tim Hornbaker's Capitol Revolution, the story of the New York territory which of course became the WWE of today. This is a

good choice if you want a look at the older days (it goes back to the 1920s and carries forward), which is a period that isn't often covered.

The book is rather detailed to start and covers a lot of the backstage nature of the territory. There are a lot of names that you might be familiar with (Toots Mondt, Strangler Lewis, Jess McMahon) and several you won't (who I won't list because, you know, they won't mean much to you). You get a good look at how the structure worked back then, which goes to show you how things tend to stay the same over the years. It's a very interesting look back at how the system used to work, which isn't something you get to see very often.

Now the problem is how fast the pace picks up. The book is less than 300 pages and the first two thirds or so cover the origins up until the rise of Bruno Sammartino. Then the speeds picks WAY up and we're suddenly at the Rock N Wrestling Connection era, which is where things wrap up. It feels like they hit a deadline and had to wrap things up instead of letting it build like they wanted it to. The majority of the book is very entertaining though and worth checking out, though I could have gone for a much longer edition. Still though, check it out if you like the historical aspect of wrestling.

New Japan G1 Special in USA Night One: Welcome To Our Turf

[New Japan G1 Special in USA Night One](#)

Date: July 1, 2017

Location: Long Beach Convention and Entertainment Center, Long Beach, California

Commentators: Jim Ross, Josh Barnett

This has the potential to be either a major moment in history or something that won't be remembered in a few years. New Japan has been the favorite promotion of a lot of wrestling fans in recent years and now they've come to America on their own instead of co-promoting with someone like Ring of Honor. This is the first of a two night event, the latter of which will air six days from now. Let's get to it.

The opening video looks back at the history of the company (not exactly in depth) and the build to the show. This includes a variety of big matches over both nights and how important it is for the competitors in a tournament for the inaugural IWGP United States Title.

Here are the tournament brackets:

Michael Elgin

Kenny Omega

Jay Lethal

Hangman Page

Juice Robinson

Zack Sabre Jr.

Tomohiro Ishii

Tetsuya Naito

We look at the tape of the match for the World Title match between Kazuchika Okada and Cody Rhodes.

We get some pre-show ceremonies with the announcers talking over both the Japanese announcements and the English translations. This goes on for several minutes with the announcers talking about the tournament and making some predictions. If nothing else it's VERY weird to hear the term "belt" so many times.

Roppongi Vice/Will Ospreay/Briscoe Brothers vs. Young Bucks/Marty Scurll/Yujiro Takahashi/Bad Luck Fale

Chaos vs. Bullet Club, again. Ospreay and Scurll start things off because...well who else was going to? Scurll flips away from him a few times and does the bird wings thing a few times. Ospreay sends him outside and apparently we're under lucha rules (never mentioned by commentary) so it's off to the Briscoes to dropkick Fale down. Takahashi gets caught in between the Brothers, who JR has confused.

Mark hits his running Blockbuster off the apron and it's off to Roppongi Vice vs. the Bucks (And for once it's not something that you would know if you were watching New Japan because this is actually New Japan!). Vice takes over without much effort but there are the superkicks. Marty adds one from the apron and busts out the umbrella, allowing the Bucks to dive onto the Briscoes.

Ospreay kicks Scurll to the floor and there's the BIG springboard shooting star to take out the pile. Back in and Scurll breaks Mark's finger but the wild dancing and shouting CHICKENWING somehow tips Mark off about what to expect. Now it's Romero coming in to clean house...until a superkick cuts him off. In case that's not enough for you, Jay gets in a little comeback and eats a superkick as well.

Ospreay grabs a C4 on Scurll and it's back to Romero for the clotheslines in the corner. The clotheslines have no effect on Fale (duh) and he keeps walking forward despite Ospreay hitting clothesline after clothesline for a cool visual. Fale shrugs it off and Razors Edges Romero onto the pile, though it knocks out some partners as well. The Briscoes drop Fale but it's the Bucks coming right back in to take over. The Meltzer driver is broken up and Romero rolls Matt up for the pin at 9:25.

Rating: B. Not the highest quality match but it was entertaining and fast paced, making it the perfect choice for an opener. This also helps set up Vice vs. Bucks for the Junior Heavyweight Tag Team Titles tomorrow night, which is almost always a good idea. I'm still not sure why Chaos and the Club are feuding but they've long since reached the point where they just are feuding so it's kind of hard to really complain anymore.

Los Ingobernables de Japon vs. Titan/Dragon Lee/Volador Jr./Jushin Thunder Liger

That would be Sanada/Bushi/Evil/Hiromu Takahashi, the first three of whom are the Never Openweight Six Man Tag Team Champions. The first three of their opponents are all from CMLL. If nothing else it's cool to hear Liger's music on TV. Finally, Titan is pronounced Tee-Tan as something that is likely lost in translation. Volador headscissors Bushi to the floor to start and it's off to Liger for a very nice reception.

Sanada comes in as well as we hear about JR seeing Liger facing Brian Pillman back in 1992. That's when Liger had been around NINE YEARS already, meaning he's now a thirty three year veteran. I really don't know what to say to that but it's rather impressive. Los Ingobernables sneak in from behind and clean house, knocking all of the villains to the floor. Sanada ties Titan up (ala Jack Gallagher) and hits a running dropkick, which isn't treated like a comedy spot as it would be over here.

Liger gets in a palm strike and makes the tag to Lee for a BIG chop off with Takahashi. The CMLL team hits double flip dives, leaving Lee to kick Takahashi in the face. Titan hand walks away and spins into a headscissors, only making himself dizzy in the process. That's some awful luck, or mal suerte to him. Titan gets triple dropkicked for two and Takahashi grabs the referee, allowing Evil to chair Titan down. The Time Bomb is good for the pin on Titan at 6:47.

Rating: D+. Nowhere near as good as the previous match here but the time didn't help things. This is another good example of a match that was helped by commentary as they were explaining why these factions were feuding, which mainly took place in Mexico. I don't need anything detailed as just telling me they've fought before and it was here or there helps quite a bit. The action was fun and while I didn't know some of the guys, it was entertaining enough.

IWGP United States Title Tournament First Round: Jay Lethal vs. Hangman Page

The belt is big and rather ugly. Lethal has bad ribs coming in thanks to Silas Young and Beer City Bruiser. Page jumps him at the bell but Lethal is right back up with a suicide dive (not "drive" Josh). They head inside

with Lethal missing a moonsault and getting kicked in the bad ribs. Well at least Page isn't doing anything stupid. As I say that, he hits a shooting star shoulder off the apron in what is the best example of an unnecessary flip I've seen in a good while.

Back in and Lethal kicks him in the ribs but it's WAY too early for the Lethal Injection. Instead it's something like an Octopus Hold until Lethal escapes for some kicks to the head. Jay hits his top rope elbow but hurts the ribs again, allowing Page to get up at two. The front flip clothesline gives Page two but he gets caught in the Lethal Combination. The Lethal Injection almost completely misses though and both guys are down. I'm not sure why Page is but that's not the biggest deal. Lethal kicks him in the head again and NOW the Injection connects full on for the pin at 8:24.

Rating: C-. This felt really off and almost like a highlight reel or clipped version of a much longer match. Lethal and Page are two of the ROH guys I like more than usual and you would expect better chemistry between them. Maybe it's the injured ribs but I'm not sure if that's enough to excuse the blown spots and general lack of flow to the match. They just weren't on the same page and it felt like they were wrestling two very different matches.

IWGP United States Title Tournament First Round: Zack Sabre Jr. vs. Juice Robinson

JR thinks Sabre is Ospreay. Eh I've gotten them confused before too. The fans are already singing for Sabre, making me think they're all evil foreigners. Well maybe save for those chanting for Juice. After a brief feeling out process to start, Sabre wastes no time in going after the arm with a variety of holds that I can't even begin to name.

Robinson escapes the third straight hold (all of which looked like they should have broken the arm), eventually getting Zack up in a fireman's carry for a gutbuster. Zack rolls him up for two and it's time to kick at the arm a few more times. Robinson tells him to bring it on so Zack kicks away.

Something like a triangle choke has Robinson in more trouble but he

powerbombs his way to freedom (AMERICAN freedom that is). Back up and Robinson tries an Unprettier but gets reversed into an Octopus Hold with the arm being cranked at a CRAZY angle. The other arm is pulled back as well until it's a full nelson with Zack's leg between Robinson's arms (I told you his holds were hard to call) for the tap at 10:06.

Rating: C+. Sabre is an interesting guy as he's the best technician I've seen since Daniel Bryan (if not before) and that makes for some very fun matches. That being said, he's also so dominant that it's hard to imagine him losing, which makes things a bit worse. Now that being said, if there's ever a time for him to lose, it's in a tournament. Robinson continues to show WAY more upside than he did in NXT so maybe it just wasn't a good fit down there. I've liked enough of what I've seen from him so far outside of Orlando so there seems to be potential there.

David Finlay/Jay White/Kushida/Hiroshi Tanahashi vs. Sho Tanaka/Yohei Komatsu/Yoshi Hashi/Billy Gunn

Yes THAT Billy Gunn and yes he's challenging THAT Hiroshi Tanahashi for the Intercontinental Title. Kushida gets quite the reception and it's time for the eight way staredown to start. Yohei and Kushida start things off with Kushida easily taking him down and offering a SUCK IT to Gunn. Finlay comes in to dropkick Tanaka but the ring is quickly cleared, leaving Sho to dropkick Kushida in the back.

Sho grabs a bodyscissors before it's off to Gunn for one of the louder reactions of the night. A quick crotch chop sets up a staredown with Tanahashi before it's back to Sho to do the majority of the work. Kushida fights them off because the Tempura Boyz Tanaka and Komatsu don't seem all that great. Tanahashi comes in off the hot tag and forearms Gunn down with his bad arm.

Gunn completely fails to catch him off a crossbody throws in a SUCK IT, and goes down off his half of a double clothesline. White comes in to grab a suplex on Tatsu but gets caught with a spinwheel kick. A suplex into the corner drops Tatsu and everything breaks down. Tanahashi hits the Sling Blade on Gunn and it's White left in the ring for a Flatliner to put Tatsu away at 9:43.

Rating: D. This match has the one obvious question: why in the name of tree bark is Gunn getting the title shot? Star power? That's not exactly something this show is lacking and I have a really hard time believing that New Japan would have issues getting someone better in the ring and with more star power than Gunn to challenge Tanahashi. Throw Gunn into the tournament and let one of the people from there (Page maybe) have the shot instead. It really doesn't look good otherwise and the match could be a major mess, especially when you consider what Tanahashi is capable of.

A long celebration takes us to intermission, which features a look at the main event, a look at the Tag Team Title match and a recap of the night's matches so far. This runs just under twenty minutes.

Tag Team Titles: War Machine vs. Guerillas of Destiny

War Machine is challenging in a rematch from Dominion where they lost the belts. JR says War Machine are SEVEN TIME ROH Tag Team Champions, which makes me think one of two things: JR is drunk or he looked at their Wikipedia page, saw that they had seven successful title defenses in their ONE reign with the titles, and didn't bother checking what he was reading.

Before the match, Ray Rowe wants to make it a No DQ match and it's immediately on. The four of them head outside without wasting a second with the champs getting more fired up every time they take a shot to the face. JR goes into a weird rambling speech about having nothing to say, followed by Barnett taking over with play by play. Did he drop his notes there or something? A trashcan shot stops Rowe's suicide dive and the champs work him over in the ring.

Rowe takes a neckbreaker and splash for two but Hanson remembers that he's in the match and makes the save. About fifteen straight running clotheslines in the corner crush the champs again, prompting JR to talk about....Hanson's beard? The Bronco Buster misses though and it's time for the big slugout with War Machine throwing Tama around until Loa powerslams Hanson out of the air. A Swan Dive into a frog splash gets two on Rowe but Hanson is back in.

Fallout is loaded up but here's fellow Bullet Club member Chase Owens to take out Hanson with a chair. JR sounds rather annoyed about the lack of disqualifications, which isn't exactly like him. Rowe gets powerbombed through two chairs (Can Hanson just not take a big bump tonight?) but Hanson is here to save Rowe from going through a table. Fallout through the table ends Loa to give us new champions at 11:07.

Rating: B-. Sometimes you need four strong guys to beat the heck out of each other for a little over ten minutes. War Machine is a fun team and the Guerillas are the kind of team who can be right back due to pure charisma. A good power brawl is hard to come by and I had fun watching them beating on each other. Entertaining match and a nice change of pace to a lot of the other stuff on here.

IWGP United States Title Tournament First Round: Tetsuya Naito vs. Tomohiro Ishii

Naito jumps him from behind during the entrances, setting up the charge into the pose on the mat for a VERY strong reaction. After we hit the stall button to start, Ishii hammers Naito like he stole something, including the loud chops. Naito thinks it's a good idea to chop a guy named the Stone Pitbull (who I didn't realize was shorter than Naito), earning himself another beating.

Back up and Naito tries again for the same result. Must be a Ric Flair fan. A hiptoss and running dropkick to the back of the head work a bit better and it's time to pose. Ishii suplexes him down and blasts Naito with a suplex. A powerslam nearly drops Naito on his head for two but he pops right back up with a missile dropkick for a breather.

Ishii's suplex is countered into a DDT (always liked that counter) and a top rope hurricanrana gets two. Naito walks around for a good while...and then spits at Ishii. I get that he's confident but sweet goodness that seems unwise. One heck of a headbutt drops Naito and a powerbomb cuts him in half.

A hard clothesline gives Ishii two more but his brainbuster is countered, eventually into a tornado DDT. Destino is broken up so Naito kicks him in the head again, only to get caught by the sliding lariat. A dragon suplex

gives Naito two but it's a clothesline into the brainbuster to advance Ishii at 15:53.

Rating: B. They had a good story here with Naito being able to hang with Ishii on his own but getting too cocky and showing the lack of respect that a monster like Ishii deserved. It's a good way to make Ishii a big deal as pinning a former World Champion always will be. I liked this a lot more than the other Ishii matches I've seen so it was a nice surprise, though I tend to like Naito matches.

IWGP United States Title Tournament First Round: Michael Elgin vs. Kenny Omega

Omega has the Bucks with him as usual and is playing the full on face here despite still being a heel (officially). They try to get the referee to do Too Sweet but he offers a crotch chop instead. Elgin powers him (Omega, not the referee) into the corner to start before some forearms and kicks earn Kenny a wave of the finger. Kenny still can't do anything with the monster so Elgin chops him for a change.

The delayed vertical suplex has Kenny reeling but an Elite chant brings him back so he can do the Rise of the Terminator deal (still don't get it and don't really care to know). Back in and one heck of a top rope shoulder sends Omega flying across the ring and out to the floor. Omega hits a moonsault from the apron...and Elgin casually catches him because he can.

Kenny slams him onto the apron for a nineteen count and we hit the chinlock to slow things down a bit. Elgin raises his knees to block a middle rope moonsault as JR calls the Bucks very annoying. That might be the understatement of the year. A powerslam pulls Kenny out of the air for a close two (ignore the spitting onto the mat during the cover). Elgin powers him up again but gets caught in a snap dragon suplex to send him outside.

That means a big flip dive followed by a jumping knee to Elgin's face, only to have one heck of a clothesline take Omega's head off. They fight to the apron for a hard German suplex to drop Elgin on his head for a scary looking crash. Back in and a super crucifix bomb gives Elgin two

more, prompting JR to ask the obvious: if that doesn't work, what will?

Well nothing more than likely, but you have to be used to some big (and arguably ridiculous) kickouts around here. Three straight jumping knees to the head knock Elgin silly and a package Tombstone gets two. There's another running knee and the One Winged Angel sends Omega on at 22:36.

Rating: A-. I liked this a bit more than a lot of the Omega matches I've seen, mainly because it wasn't far longer than it really needed to be (and it won't be called 25% better than the best matches of all time). They had another good story here with Elgin using pure power while Omega was more well rounded and therefore capable of adapting to counter whatever Elgin threw at him. Omega is very good and it's fun watching him, face/heel issues aside (which is more a company/stable thing than anything else).

Here are tomorrow's final four:

Jay Lethal

Kenny Omega

Tomohiro Ishii

Zack Sabre Jr.

We recap Cody vs. Kazuchika Okada. It's a short story with Cody challenging Okada for the title right after Okada's draw against Omega at Dominion. Okada went with it because...well that's what wrestlers do.

IWGP World Title: Kazuchika Okada vs. Cody

Cody is challenging and comes out with a bunch of people in ex-President masks. Brandi Rhodes is with him (still absolutely stunning) in an American flag outfit and lights a cigar for him. After a kiss from Brandi (with his right shoulder taped up), we're ready to go with a slow start, which means this is likely going long. Okada takes him to the mat and then to the ropes where he gives Cody a friendly pat on the chest.

That warrants a break for another kiss, followed by heading back inside

for a standoff. They head outside to speed things up with Okada hitting a running dive over the barricade, only to have Cody go after the knee to take over. Cody chokes with his boot but Okada neckbreakers his way out.

Back up and a fast running elbow to the jaw followed by a DDT lets Okada nip up. The signature dropkick knocks Cody off the top and out to the floor in a heap. A DDT on the floor makes things even worse but Okada can't follow up, meaning it's a long count. Back in and Cody runs the corner for a super armdrag (looked like a C4 2000 at first) but the Disaster Kick is countered into a flapjack (cool).

There's the top rope elbow, only to have Cody grab the Trailer Hitch to go back to the knee. The hold is broken and a slap fires Okada up all over again, prompting a mudhole stomping in the corner. The jumping Tombstone and a pair of Rainmakers drop Cody. Cue Omega with a towel like Cody was teasing at Dominion but Brandi says no.

This brings out the Bucks to ask what Omega is doing and Okada nails another dropkick. Naturally Cody hits a Rainmaker of his own for two, followed by Okada grabbing his own Cross Rhodes. So now that we're back to even with the stolen finishers, Cody gets two more off an inverted DDT. To really mess with his boss, Cody loads up the One Winged Angel, which is quickly reversed into a German suplex. The jumping Tombstone (yes another one) sets up the Rainmaker to retain the title at 27:12.

Rating: B+. I liked the Omega match a bit more but Cody is a bit more of a generic style than Elgin being awesome with the power. Okada is still very smooth in the ring, though I do think he uses his big moves a bit too often. That being said, it was an excellent match with both guys hitting their big spots. Omega vs. Cody could be interesting, assuming it's not just a swerve for later. Very good main event, even though I didn't quite buy Cody as the biggest threat to the title.

Post match Okada poses but Omega gets in too. He won't take the night from Okada, even though he wanted to main event this show. They'll meet again in the G1 and tonight is Okada's. Gedo and Okada both say they're awesome and Okada will make it rain strong style around the world.

At the post show press conference...I have no idea as I don't speak

Japanese.

A highlight reel ends the show.

Overall Rating: A-. This was a very good show and that's the best thing that could have happened. It's not a masterpiece or a classic but for what was basically a pay per view in front of a small crowd, it worked as well as it could have. They showcased most of their stars and the two major matches were both outstanding. Couple that with this airing at 8pm EST and on free TV, it's hard to find anything major to complain about. Maybe a little bit could have been cut (as in like 10-15 minutes, or the Tanahashi eight man tag) but the time really wasn't a problem.

The one thing that needs to be remembered though is this is one match. Based on this, New Japan isn't going to overtake WWE or become the hottest thing in American wrestling. It's a very good night but they need to do it again (as in beyond night two) for it to mean much. It's a very good show though and they're off to a great start in America. Now build on that and keep it at (or really near for that matter) this level and we'll see where things go. Strong debut though.

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Lucha Underground – June 28, 2017: The Evil Twin?

Lucha Underground

Date: June 28, 2017

Location: Lucha Underground Temple, Boyle Heights, California

Commentators: Vampiro, Matt Striker

Another week, another four first round Cueto Cup matches. In other words, we might be getting one competitive match this week as the tournament hasn't exactly been thrilling so far. The good thing though is it has been going by quickly, which is more than you can say for a lot of these things. Let's get to it.

The opening video is a very quick tournament recap, plus looks at Killshot, Dante Fox and Jeremiah Crane.

Catrina tells Mil Muertes to destroy everyone, which he promises to do for her. They kiss and she demands the Cueto Cup. Jeremiah Crane watches from the shadows. You would think the supernatural powers would let them know he's there.

Cueto Cup First Round: Mil Muertes vs. Veneno

That would be Cortez Castro under a mask as he's still under cover (literally in this case). Muertes spears him down at the bell and it's a heck of a stomping early on. The chokeslam and Flatliner send Muertes on at 1:10. Well that worked.

Catrina licks Veneno's face (er, mask) after the match.

Cueto Cup First Round: Paul London vs. Vibora

London knocks him outside for some palm strikes to the chest but Vibora just stares him down. With that not working, London, I kid you not, holds

Kobra Moon hostage with the carrot from his hat. Fans: "SAVE THE CARROT!" They get in for the first time with Vibora throwing London around but getting kicked in the face a few times. Vibora gets sent to the floor for a springboard trust fall but he does the Undertaker situp, only to have the rest of the Rabbit Tribe grab his feet for a countout at 3:54.

Rating: D+. There was a story here with the much younger monster being caught by the pesky and more experienced Rabbit Tribe. The carrot thing was entertaining enough (I have a soft spot for rabbits) and this keeps Vibora looking strong, which could be a good idea going forward.

Cueto Cup First Round: Taya vs. Joey Ryan

Joey does his lollipop schtick and gets kneed in the face for his efforts. Taya throws him back inside by the chest hair but gets superkicked off the apron. Back in and Joey takes too much time going up (with Striker saying this isn't going to work) and gets slammed right back down. Taya misses a charge in the corner so Joey can give her a bit of a spank. That doesn't go well as Joey gets suplexed and double stomped to give Taya the pin at 3:38.

Rating: D. Joey is rapidly losing the limited charm he had for me so far as the whole cop thing seems to have been forgotten at the moment. I'm sure they'll get back to the point later on but for now, he's just Joey Ryan doing the same stuff he does most of the time, just without the Ironman Heavymetalweight Title.

Jeremiah Crane beats up the suit clad Mil Muertes and seems to Pillmanize his neck because "she's his".

Wrestlers give their thoughts on John Morrison vs. Rey Mysterio. These videos have been VERY good ideas and it's made the match feel like the biggest match the promotion has ever had.

Cueto Cup First Round: Jeremiah Crane vs. Killshot

Crane charges into a kick to the head to send him outside for a tumbling flip dive as they're certainly starting fast. Killshot stays with it and hits a flip dive off the low balcony before hitting Crane in the face.

That's fine with Crane who whips him into the metal wall and grabs an exploder suplex on the floor.

A run around the ring builds up enough momentum for a cannonball through Killshot through some chairs in a sick sounding crash. They change pace by going inside where Killshot kicks him in the face for two. Killshot flips up into a cutter for two but gets caught in a brainbuster for the same. They trade the very loud strikes until both guys are knocked silly on the mat.

For some reason Crane spits in his face, earning himself a DDT out of the corner. With nothing else working, Killshot hits a Death Valley Driver on the apron, immediately followed by the top rope double stomp...for two? Cue Dante Fox for a distraction though, allowing Crane to hit Cranial Contusion (a Jay Driller) for the pin at 13:04.

Rating: B. That's the match of the tournament so far and the match the tournament needed. So far most of them have been either squash matches or rather boring but these two were beating the heck out of each other and putting in the effort. In other words, it was something very entertaining and that's a good sign.

Post match Catrina comes out to look at Crane, who blows her a kiss.

Dario Cueto is in his office and freaking out over the brackets so far. There's a match spot to face Son of Havoc but luckily Dario has someone here to take the match. That would be...Son of Madness, who looks EXACTLY like Son of Havoc and says he's from the open road. Dario is cool with this because he's kind of an out there guy.

Overall Rating: C. The main event helped this one a lot as Lucha Underground has gone a few weeks without an especially good match. Thankfully the first round of the tournament wraps up next week and we have something curious to end this week's show. It's not a great show by any means but it's better than what we've been seeing lately.

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