

Lucha Underground – May 6, 2015: Why I Love This Show

Lucha Underground

Date: May 6, 2015

Location: Lucha Underground Arena, Los Angeles, California

Commentators: Matt Striker, Vampiro

We're getting closer to the season finale and a lot of these stories are starting to reach their peaks. The big story from last week was the elimination of Drago after he lost his Lucha Underground Title shot. Other than that we have Dario Cueto being all evil with the threat of his brother, whoever or whatever that may be. Let's get to it.

The standard recap (I like these things as I haven't watched the show in a few weeks) shows us Albert vs. Johnny Mundo being set up and Hernandez becoming #1 contender.

Johnny and Alberto pitch themselves as #1 contender but Cueto isn't sure. Mundo thinks they're both more worthy than Fernandez, even though he won the triple threat. Cueto sets up Alberto vs. Mundo with the winner facing Hernandez for the #1 contendership next week. Hernandez better be ticked over this.

The Crew vs. Son of Havoc/Angelico

Neither gets an entrance. Bael is the odd man out here, as if that matters. Havoc starts with I think Cisco (seriously people, get them a nametag or something) and takes him down before Angelico tags himself in for the rolling kicks to the head. Castro comes in (thankfully in a shirt so I can tell these two apart) and jumps over a legsweep, only to eat another kick. Ivelisse, with her bad leg, is sitting in the front row and barking orders as her partners.

The Crew tries to make some tags but Angelico comes back in and cleans house with those fast strikes of his. Castro (wait now he doesn't have a shirt. Either they're changing clothes or Striker is making up the names

as he goes) gets rolled up for two and heads outside, only to have both champions “hit” big flip dives to take them out. Back in and Angelico gets a quick two on Castro but the fans want Havoc. That’s exactly what they get as he tags himself in after Angelico flips out of a double belly to back suplex. Everything breaks down and the Crew hits the flapjack into the Codebreaker to pin Havoc.

Rating: C-. This was decent enough but my goodness I’m sick of the Crew being the same guy with three different names. The champions that can’t get along idea has been covered, but this match continues to show the bigger issue: there aren’t enough trios to validate having a whole division with titles. Decent match but I really don’t care for the Crew.

Daivari tells Cueto he likes to inflict violence, so Dario gives him Texano next. Apparently Daivari’s family owns a bunch of real estate in the area so he’s a wealthy man. That’s one of the things I love about Lucha Underground: they just make up characters and backstories, like you would see in the old days before everything had to be the truth. You don’t have a story for someone? Just make one up. Why is that so complicated?

Konnan doesn’t want Hernandez coming after Puma’s title because of their friendship but Hernandez want to beat Puma for the belt. The chuckling Cueto comes in and tells Hernandez about the ruling he made earlier about Alberto and Mundo, which thankfully ticks him off. As for tonight, it’s Puma/Hernandez vs. Cage/Cuerno. Simple, effective, and it took about a minute. If this were WWE, it would be five minutes, boring, and predictable.

Delavar Daivari vs. Texano

Daivari has a drink during the entrances. Texano charges in and beats Daivari down, only to be called for the DQ maybe 15 seconds in.

Cage/King Cuerno vs. Hernandez/Prince Puma

Still no entrances. Cage and Hernandez get things going and trade shoulders with Cage getting the better of it until Hernandez hits a slingshot shoulder to take over. Off to the champ but he’s quickly caught

in a powerslam, only to break it up with a headscissors. Cuerno comes in but gets taken down just as quickly. The King kicks the Prince in the chest and nails a TKO (love that move), setting up a 619 of all things from Cage. That was really cool to see actually.

The squats into a Jackhammer gets two for Cage but Puma pops up (selling? What's that?) and hits a series of kicks to the face and a Blue Thunder Bomb on Cuerno. Back to Hernandez who cleans house and throws Cuerno over the top and onto Cage. The big SuperMex dive takes both guys down again and of course the fans are way into it. Puma loads up one of his own but Hernandez gets back on the apron to "accidentally" break it up.

Back in and Puma and Hernandez clean house on Cuerno but Cage takes Hernandez's head off with a clothesline. Hernandez runs Cuerno over but eats another clothesline from Cage. They head outside, where Hernandez pulls Puma right in the way of the suicide dive from Cuerno. Hernandez has had enough of this teaming up thing and powerbombs Puma on the apron, setting up Weapon X to give Cage the pin over the champ.

Rating: C. Storyline loss for Puma here and there's nothing wrong with that. Hernandez is a good choice for a big power guy who can put over someone like Puma in the future as he looks more and more like a giant killer every time he fights off someone like Hernandez or Cage. Good enough stuff here and that Arrow from Cuerno looked great.

Black Lotus' master says if she can beat him, she can go for her revenge. She tries to strike him and is easily blocked. The master tells him that she requires more training so she agrees to stay.

Alberto El Patron vs. Johnny Mundo

The winner faces Hernandez next week for a future title shot. They trade headlocks to start until Alberto sends him into the corner and hits a dropkick to the back of the head for two. Johnny gets all ticked off and hits those hard right hands of his to knock Alberto to the floor, only to get tied up in the ring apron. An enziguri knocks Mundo's block off and we hit the chinlock.

Patron misses a moonsault and Johnny starts slugging away, followed by

the Flying Chuck for two. Mundo slaps on something like the cousin of a cobra clutch but Patron pops up for a backdrop over the top, sending Mundo onto the steps. A big suicide dive takes Mundo down again but Alberto can't follow up. Back in and they slug it out with Alberto taking over with clotheslines followed by the tilt-a-whirl backbreaker. That goes nowhere as Johnny knocks him outside for a big corkscrew plancha.

Back in again and Alberto nails a reverse superplex for two before finally taking his shirt off. Alberto starts going for the arm but eats a running knee to the head, setting up the End of the World for two. The armbreaker sends Mundo rolling to the ropes for a quick break. Patron misses a charge into the post and takes a top rope double stomp to the back for two more. Back up and a quick Codebreaker to the arm sets up the low superkick to give Patron the pin.

Rating: B+. I don't know if it was the dream match that the announcers were building it up to be but this was a very fun wrestling match, which is all it needed to be. Mundo can still more than go in the ring and Patron's style is so much better suited for a company like Lucha Underground than WWE. Good stuff here.

Catrina, with the magic rock, opens the casket to release Mil Muertes.

Overall Rating: B. Really fun show here and it set up the stories for the future. Alberto and Mundo are the kind of guys you need for the main event scene to give Puma some serious competition as well as credibility. On top of that you have the continuing story of Black Lotus but I'm not sure where that's going and I'm not sure if I care. That being said, it's different enough to make me want to see where it goes and that's the point of a wrestling story. Good show here and I had fun watching it, as always.

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Global Force Wrestling Makes First Roster Announcements

And some of them are pretty familiar.

Chael Sonnen – Analyst

Justin Gabriel

Davey Boy Smith Jr.

Doc Gallows

Karl Anderson

Lance Hoyt

Chris Masters

Quinn Ojinnaka

Lei'D Tapa

Thea Trinidad

Sanada

We waited a year for some WWE/TNA rejects and a few guys from Japan? The shows might be fun, but this is going to need some major work to get anywhere.

Lucha Underground – April 29, 2015: Ummmm.....Deep?

Lucha Underground

Date: April 29, 2015

Location: Lucha Underground Arena, Los Angeles, California

Commentators: Vampiro, Matt Striker

We now have four champions in this promotion after Angelico/Son of Havok/Ivelisse became the inaugural Trios Champions last week despite having to wrestle twice in one night. However, we're coming up on the season finale of this show and a lot of big things are about to happen. First up tonight we have Drago putting his career on the line against Lucha Underground Champion Prince Puma. Let's get to it.

The opening recap shows us the new champs winning their belts last week, including Angelico's incredible dive. Tonight's title match gets a little time as well.

Cueto yells at the Crew for botching the layup he handed them last week. He wants to give them some real motivation and takes them into a room where they meet Cueto's brother. We can't see him but he appears to be huge.

Fenix vs. Killshot

They actually shake hands to start before Killshot spins out of a wristlock, only to have Fenix counter right back into one of his own. The wrist stuff gets old so Killshot dropkicks him out to the floor and nails a nice dive to take him down one more time. Killshot runs right back in for a dive of his own to take over before avoiding a running kick to the face back inside. Fenix slaps him in the face but let's look at the announcers instead of where it goes.

Killshot counters a springboard tornado DDT into a slam, followed by rolling into a cutter for two. A quick belly to back into a Backstabber gets two on Fenix as Killshot is getting in a lot of offense here. Fenix comes right back with some running kicks in the corner, only to charge into a spinning kick to the Face. Er the mask. Fenix pops back up and puts him in the reverse Tree of Woe for a knee to the back, followed by an over the shoulder sitout piledriver for the pin.

Rating: C. This wasn't great but Killshot got in some offense and looked good with the kicks to the face. So many people use the body kicks but Killshot was looking more like a martial artist instead of your standard striker, which worked a lot better than the same stuff you see so often around here. The other stuff isn't bad but this looked more precise.

Cueto comes in and asks Drago for a thank you for tonight's opportunity. He's SO good at this smarmy jerk.

Puma is getting ready when Cueto comes in to see him too. Doesn't he ever just sit in his office with conveniently places posters while having obviously scripted promos which only start when the cameras are in place? Anyway Hernandez comes in and rants about being put in a three way tonight. Cueto calms him down by making it a #1 contenders match.

Ricky Mandel vs. Argenis vs. Vin Massaro vs. Famous B.

These are all guys who have been injured by Pentagon Jr. It's kind of a jobber class reunion. Not that it matters as Texano comes in for the no contest after maybe ten seconds.

The beatings go on for about ten times the length of the "match" and Texano calls out Daivari to meet him in the ring.

A fan named Marty "the Moth" Martinez comes up to Cueto to ask for a shot in the temple but gets turned down for fear of being squashed like....a moth.

Hernandez vs. King Cuerno vs. Cage

I don't see this going well. Hernandez gets beaten down to start and again we cut away to the commentators for reasons I don't quite

understand. A double suplex puts Hernandez down and Cuerno hits a top rope splash for two, setting off the early eruption between he and Cage. Hernandez takes a breather on the floor before getting knocked back down in the corner.

Cage suplexes Cuerno in half but Hernandez does his always awesome pull up onto the top rope for a top rope shoulder. He spends a bit too much time posing over Cuerno and gets kicked in the face by Cage, who powerbombs Cuerno onto Hernandez for two. They argue again, which seems to surprise the announcers because it hasn't happened in the last three seconds. Hernandez hits a kind of reverse Samoan drop on Cuerno but the Moth comes in and gets beaten up with ease. Hernandez dropkicks Cage to the floor, setting up a sitout Dominator for the pin on Cuerno.

Rating: D. Yeah this didn't work too well. It was a messy fight with the Moth thing not really fitting, but at least they kept it quick. Puma vs. Hernandez (come on, Drago isn't winning that title) is going to be entertaining enough, but I don't see him as being the big boss fight for the championship.

Vampiro sits down with the Trios Champions and asks about last week. They're all thrilled, but Ivelisse doesn't think the cross body was all that special. The interview breaks down into another argument.

The announcers preview the title match, which is treated as the big deal that a title match should be.

Lucha Underground Title: Prince Puma vs. Drago

Title vs. career and Konnan is here with Puma. They shake hands to start before we get the "YOU CAN'T HIT ME" sequence. Drago jumps into an electric chair but headscissors the champ to the floor for a big flip dive. Back in and Drago goes after the legs to try and take away the 630 but Puma shrugs it off and hits a springboard missile dropkick, followed by a huge dive of his own.

A slingshot hilo and the Dragon's Tail get two on Drago (I'm still not a fan of move stealing but at least it's not done that often here). Puma charges into a boot in the corner and Drago hits a big corkscrew dive for

two more. Off to an arm crank with a headscissors but Konnan's coaching helps Puma get to the ropes. Something like a fisherman's belly to back suplex (that's a new one) gets two for the champ but Drago comes back with a hurricanrana for the same.

Drago seems scared to go for the big move here and the fans are calling him out on it. A big blue thunder bomb gets two for Puma and he starts pounding Drago in the face. There goes the referee though, just as Drago hits a Canadian Destroyer for no count. Cue Hernandez to spear Drago but it wasn't clear who he was aiming for. Puma doesn't like it but hits something like a sitout Emerald Flosion for the pin to retain.

Rating: B-. This had a good story going on with Drago being worried about going insane like he usually does but not being able to reach his normal level as a result. Puma looking worried about getting rid of someone he respected made sense and we even got some bonus stuff for the future thrown in. Good stuff.

Drago gets the big hero's sendoff. We see him leaving with Cueto waiting on him. They'll meet again apparently and an explosion goes off as Drago disappears. Ummm.....deep?

Overall Rating: C+. Good but not great show this week but they were clearly setting up some stuff for down the road. Puma is a good champion and it's going to be a big deal when someone knocks him off. I'm curious to see where this Cueto's brother thing goes, but hopefully it's not towards some power struggle. Then again, I've said things like that before and Lucha Underground has surprised me so maybe it can work.

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And check out my Amazon author page with wrestling books for under \$4 at:

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

For The Sake Of Perspective

ESPN's Pardon the Interruption has mentioned wrestling twice in a week.

On Billy Corgan signing with TNA (paraphrased): "Corgan has signed with TNA Wrestling.....whatever that is."

On the passing of Verne Gagne: A 45 second fond farewell to someone both hosts clearly knew and respected with name drops of various opponents. Guest host Bob Ryan said that in a world of rasslers, Gagne was clearly the best wrestler.

Moral of the story: there's a difference between being on TV and being known and respected.

Verne Gagne Passes Away

Gagne was 89 years old and had been battling dementia for years. While I'm not a fan of everything he does, the guy was one of the most important and influential names in wrestling history, which isn't even getting into his in ring work. The list of wrestlers he trained is as great of a who's who as you'll ever see. The guy deserves a ton of respect and he more than earned it.

Checked Out Pro Wrestlers vs. Zombies

And it was pretty fun.

The movie has some big names in it like Kurt Angle, Roddy Piper, Shane Douglas, Jim Duggan and Matt Hardy and it's EXACTLY what the title sounds like. It's made well enough to get by and there are enough funny lines ("I'm an icon! Just ask Hogan!") to make you chuckle a few times. They keep it short at 90 minutes (84 without credits) and it's a good time. They don't try to make it anything more than what it should be and that's the way to go. Check it out if you get the chance.

Lucha Underground – April 22, 2015: Not Since NXT....

Lucha Underground

Date: April 22, 2015

Location: Lucha Underground Arena, Los Angeles, California

Commentators: Vampiro, Matt Striker

We're coming up on the season finale of this series, which is scheduled to end with a big PPV style show that hasn't been announced on TV as of yet. The big story tonight is the finals of the Trios Titles tournament with the three way final for the inaugural titles. We also have Sexy Star vs. Pentagon with Star finally standing up to his evil. Let's get to it.

The opening recap sets up the tournament final and a bit about Pentagon

vs. Star.

Black Lotus says she isn't sure when she gets to fight but she knows she's ready. Now she's just waiting on her master. We see a montage of her beating people up in shadow. The master shows up and easily puts her down, saying Lotus isn't ready.

The house band plays us in. They could easily drop this in season 2.

The Trios Titles are at the commentary desk.

Sexy Star vs. Pentagon Jr.

Ring announcer Melissa Santos limps away after seeing Pentagon coming in due to him injuring her last week. Star takes over to start and the camera makes sure to keep showing Santos at ringside with the tape around her ankle. Pentagon comes back with a hard chop as the fans are split on who to cheer for, which Striker says represents the evil spreading throughout the temple.

Star sends him face first into the middle buckle and chokes in the corner, followed by something like a slingshot bronco buster for two. A HARD kick to the ribs puts Star back down so Striker calls him a no limit soldier. Please, ANYTHING but that horrible stable again. Bring back the Beverly Brothers before you make me sit through that one more time. Star rolls away from the armbar attempt and gets to the floor, only to start a chase scene capped off by a tornado DDT for two on Pentagon.

A dropkick puts him on the floor, setting up a big dive from Star to put both of them down again. Back up and Pentagon gets two off something like Project Ciampa (powerbomb into a Backstabber) for two. The armbar is escaped again and Star spins around his shoulders into a Backstabber of her own for the pin (with the referee ignoring the arms flailing everywhere, including off the mat).

Rating: C+. Good enough match here that likely sets up Pentagon's master going after him for punishment. Pentagon should have been a bit more dominant and, perhaps, GONE AFTER THE ARM, but the action was good enough and you get a quick feel good moment with Santos some revenge.

Johnny Mundo is working out when Alberto El Patron comes in to remind Johnny that he lost last week. Alberto came here because of Johnny's match with Prince Puma, which made it an even bigger surprise when Puma beat him in Aztec Warfare. Mundo isn't cool with this line of speaking and says he isn't just some guy that Alberto can slap around. Alberto tells him to chill and leaves.

The announcers talk about Drago's huge night next week: either win the title or leave forever.

Trios Titles: Texano/Cage/King Cuerno vs. Mack/Big Ryck/Killshot vs. Ivelisse/Angelico/Son of Havok

Elimination rules with three in the ring at once (old school WCW triple threat tag rules for a BIG plus). I don't know if it was mentioned earlier but Ryck and Mack are cousins. Angelico and Killshot double team Cage to start but he clotheslines both of them down with ease. A double suplex doesn't go over with as much ease but it looks more impressive. Off to Cuerno, Angelico and Texano with Angelico getting double teamed, including Texano lifting him into the air for a knee to the face.

Killshot, who I believe is still legal, gets back in to give Angelico a breather so Cuerno kicks him in the ribs. Angelico gets stomped as well as Cuerno and company are dominating so far. A kick to the head staggers Cuerno and Killshot hits a double running knee to Texano's chest. The referee is fine with four people being in the ring at once. Well five if you count the referee but who does that.

Mack comes in for a swinging slam on Texano, leaving us with a showdown of Mack vs. Havok. That's fine with Mack who quickly dives over the top to take out Texano all over again. Havok teases a dive of his own but has to bail out, allowing Cage to take him down with a big clothesline. We get the big showdown between Ryck and Cage with Cage easily slamming the eyepatched one down.

Cage isn't done though as he moonsaults down onto a big group of people, only to have Ryck take his head off with a clothesline back inside. Angelico hits a running knee off the apron to drive Texano into the front row, only to draw a "fan" (Daivari I believe) out to beat him up.

Killshot hits a top rope double stomp to Texano and we have our first elimination as we go to a break, I believe for only the second time ever in this company. Oh that's a nice thing to be able to say.

We come back after missing nothing (again, that's REALLY nice to say) and Ryck splashing Angelico in the corner. Ivelisse seems to be holding her leg on the apron and Havok is nowhere to be seen. Mack chops Angelico down and Killshot hits a sick looking jumping kick to the back of the head for two. Ivelisse and Havok are back in the corner (adjacent to their opponents' corner for some reason) but Angelico is still being destroyed.

Mack drops a top rope elbow to the back but Angelico is able to dump everyone not named Killshot and make the tag to Havok. Killshot is waiting for him with what looked like a running C4 for two but Havok blocks the top rope reverse hurricanrana. The injured Ivelisse goes up top but dives into the arms of Mack and Ryck. Havok dives onto all of them, leaving Angelico to hit the Fall of the Angels on Killshot for the pin and the titles in a nice surprise.

Rating: B. Fun match here and the ending wasn't quite what I saw coming at first. It was a bit more obvious once Cuerno's team was eliminated, but they gave it some good drama to get there. Also, I liked Angelico getting the pin instead of going with the more conventional idea of giving Ivelisse the big feel good win. Angelico has earned the right to get the pin in a big match.

We're not done though as Cueto says there's one more team and for fun, let's make it a No DQ match. I don't remember anyone not named Vince being this evil as the boss and I LOVE it.

Trios Titles: Angelico/Son of Havok/Ivelisse vs. The Crew

Anything goes. The Crew goes right after the winners on the floor and my fun is instantly marred as I can't remember which Crew member is which. Bael stays on Ivelisse and the bad leg as we're still waiting on anyone to get inside. Cisco beats up a mostly defenseless Angelico as Bael throws Ivelisse inside. Castro holds her for a cane shot but Havok remembers that he's in this match and comes in for a save. Bael and

Angelico go up the stairs with Angelico getting backdropped onto a platform above the ring.

Castro chokes Ivelisse with the stick as Havok gets suplexed off the barricade. That's fine with him as he pops back up for a moonsault off the same barricade.....AND ANGELICO DIVES OFF THE PLATFORM TO TAKE OUT CASTRO AND BAEL!!! Good night that was awesome and thankfully they let the match stop for a second to breathe. Ivelisse gets the stick and hammers on both downed guys before ordering her partners to the top. A stereo shooting star from Havok and double stomp from Angelico are enough to finally give us new champions.

Rating: B. The match wasn't great but that dive was something else. I really liked the ending too as it felt like something special instead of just another title change. I don't see them holding the belts for long but that's a great way to give us the first set of champions. Angelico is on a roll right now and I actually want to see more of him, which isn't something I say often.

Overall Rating: B+. This was WAY better than I was expecting and it got me into things in just forty five minutes. Outside of NXT, almost nothing is capable of doing that and it was a really nice surprise. This show has hit a huge groove and knows exactly what it wants to do every week, which is one of the most important things a wrestling company can do. The fact that Lucha Underground has done it in about six months is all the more impressive. Check this show out if you want a fun hour of wrestling that flies by.

Lucha Underground – April 15, 2015: Time For The Authority

To Go To School

Lucha Underground

Date: April 15, 2015

Location: Lucha Underground Arena, Los Angeles, California

Commentators: Matt Striker, Vampiro

Tonight is a big double main event with the finals of the best of five series between Drago and Aero Star for whatever the mystery prize may be, plus Cuerno's team meeting Puma's team in the Trios Title tournament. Last week wasn't the best episode the show has ever had so they could use an upgrade tonight, hopefully with more logic abounding. Let's get to it.

We open with a recap of the Trios Title tournament, the Puma v. Cuerno title match and the Aero Star vs. Drago series.

Cueto and Aero Star appear to be on the roof with Cueto saying Star needs to win tonight. Just remember that everything has a price.

The house band plays us in.

Trios Tag Team Title Tournament First Round: Cage/King Cuerno/Texano vs. Johnny Mundo/Prince Puma/Hernandez

Hernandez and Cuerno get things going in what could be a decent fight. Cuerno kicks him into the corner to start and nails a forearm, only to have Hernandez shrug it off and catch a charging Cuerno. An attempt at an Alpha Bomb is countered into a sunset flip but Hernandez just laughs at him. A gorilla press drop sends the King flying but he makes the tag to Texano.

Hernandez throws him onto the shoulder and takes Texano into the corner with Johnny tagging himself in for some kicks to the ribs. He gets to nine but opts for a breakdancing kick for number ten in a nice touch. Off to Puma vs. Cuerno in a battle of royalty. Johnny tries to come in without a tag, allowing Cuerno and Texano to take turns slapping Puma. Well they've got the jerk thing down. Puma comes back with kicks to the head, allowing for the hot tag to Johnny as everything breaks down.

Hernandez throws Johnny at Texano in the corner, followed by Johnny's running knee strikes to the head. The melee allows Texano to get in a cheap shot to Johnny and slap on a half crab to the bad knee. It's finally off to Cage, with Striker singing his entrance to the tune of Man Called Sting from WCW. Just...stop with the unfunny comedy. Leave that to me. Puma gets the hot tag and sends Texano into Cage, making him DDT his own partner. Two things in a row I can't stand indeed.

Everything breaks down and Hernandez hits a big dive to take out Cage, allowing Mundo and Puma to break up the Arrow from Cuerno. They follow that up with stereo corkscrew dives to put everyone down. After a bit on the floor it's Cage vs. Puma inside, but everyone comes back in for a series of train spots in the corner (like seven in a row with both teams getting in shots. The Godfather would be proud.), setting up a 450 for two on Cage. Nice false finish there.

Texano hits a Codebreaker on Hernandez but Mundo hits a top rope spear to drop him as well. Puma's Blue Thunder Bomb drops Cuerno and everyone is down again. Texano pulls out the bullrope to nail Mundo and Puma in succession, setting up the Thrill of the Hunt to pin the champ and send Cuerno's team to the finals.

Rating: C+. If they're going for anarchy with the Trios Titles, they're on the right track. I don't mind it here as that's the style they seem to be going for, but it's still not something I can get into for the most part. Cuerno didn't need to pin Puma though, unless that's Puma's next challenger. It also shows that there was no need for last week to be a title match.

Cueto is thrilled with the win but wants a preview of next week. Therefore it's one member of each team in a three way match right now.

Cage vs. The Mack vs. Son of Havok

Havok and Mack try to double team Cage to start but they can't quite get it together. Vampiro thinks we should give this to Havok because he's a fan favorite, which is more proof that Vampiro is stupid. The Mack sends Havok to the floor but charges into Cage's boot in the corner. That goes nowhere though and Mack puts cage down in the corner, only to have Havok

come in and take him down for two off a standing moonsault.

Cage gets back up but walks into some suplexes from Mack, only to have Havok crotch him on the top. Havok hurricanranas Mack into a Swanton onto Cage for two but Mack makes the save and hits his own standing moonsault for two. The announcers talk about PCP (that would explain so much) and we get a Tower of Doom with Mack being superplexed down (Striker: "Who took the brunt of it though?" Striker....just dang man.).

Mack rolls to the floor (BECAUSE HE GOT SUPERPLEXED AND POWEBOMBED AT THE SAME TIME YOU STUPID STUPID MAN) but Havok uses Cage as a stepping stone into a suicide dive to take Mack down. Cage heads outside so Havok can try another dive, only to get caught in a delayed vertical suplex. Ok that looked awesome. Back in and Mack breaks up Weapon X with a kick to the face but Havok drops Mack, only to miss the shooting star. A quick Weapon X (Cage really needs a better finisher for a move with that name) is enough to pin Havok.

Rating: C. Striker induced rage aside, this was a fun three way with everyone looking decent enough. Mack still stands out like a sore thumb but he's athletic enough to get by. This was a nice preview for next week and the best thing they probably could have done. I like it better than a random brawl because wrestling is the focus here. Imagine that.

Cueto goes into a bathroom to talk to Drago, where he asks if Aero Star is going to slay the dragon. Cueto leaves and Drago....spits up blue goo.

Pentagon is in the ring without a match scheduled. He dedicates his next sacrifice to his master and goes after the ring announcer, drawing Vampiro out of his seat but Sexy Star comes out for the real save.

Aero Star vs. Drago

Cueto is doing the ring announcing and goes insanely over the top with the facial expressions. The winner wins the series and a unique opportunities. Drago takes him down to start and puts on something like a chinlock as we see Cueto looking all sinister. Star heads to the apron and pulls Drago down by the head, setting up a slingshot backsplash for two. That's fine with Drago who ties Star up in the Tree of Woe for a

running dropkick to the face. As usual, when all else fails, KICK HIM IN THE FACE.

Both guys get back up and growl, setting up a double clothesline to get a breather. Star is up first with a 619 to the ribs, followed by a dropkick to send Drago outside. Something like Stardust's Falling Star puts Drago down but Star can't follow up. Back in and Drago hits a quick backsplash for two but Star sends him into the corner for something like a seated senton to the back for two of his own.

The springboard splash gets two for Star but Drago kicks him back to the floor. It's table time and Cueto smiles approvingly. Apparently this is no countout and no DQ, which is the first mention of this that I've heard but it makes the match a bit more interesting. Star fights back and puts Drago on the table, setting up a running springboard splash for the HUGE spot of the match.

Back in and a springboard backsplash gets two on Drago as frustration begins setting in. The fans are split here as Star gets two off a quick victory roll. Drago gets the same off a small package and they slowly slug it out as Striker compares the bottom of the ninth to overtime because he doesn't get traditional sports either. A big kick sends Star into the ropes and he looks out on his feet, so the Dragon's Lair is enough to give Drago the series.

Rating: B+. They saved the best for last as this was an amped up version of what they usually do. I could have gone with either guy winning here so Drago is fine with me. The good thing is either guy can go on to something else so everyone is still in good shape. Really fun stuff here as both guys looked good in matches that didn't have to be great for you, but man alive they were entertaining.

Cueto congratulates Drago on the win and gives him his prize: a Lucha Underground Title shot. That's a bit too tame though, so if Drago loses, he's out of Lucha Underground forever. Now that's how you heel it up: being evil BECAUSE YOU CAN.

Overall Rating: B. Yep they're fine. This is the Lucha Underground I've come to know and love as everyone was all fired up tonight to set up the

big title match next week. The cool thing about this company is they can throw enough curves to keep you surprised while also giving you exactly what you're hoping to see out of a show like this. Good show this week and it's nice to see them back on track.

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Championship Wrestling From Hollywood – April 12, 2015: Indies Are Fun

Championship Wrestling From Hollywood

Date: April 12, 2015

Location: Oceanview Pavilion, Port Hueneme, California

Commentators: Johnny Loquasto, Stu Stone

You might have heard of this promotion before but I wouldn't be surprised if you haven't. Until a few years ago it was a member of the NWA but eventually went independent. It turns out they also have a TV show airing on some channel called Youtoo TV. Apparently I have this channel so why not check out a show. I have no idea what to expect here and I've only heard of a few names on the roster. Let's get to it.

We open with a commentator opening the show backstage when three men (a

Russian, a guy smoking a cigar and a short Hispanic guy) called the Revolution interrupt. They aren't happy with not being booked on the show so they're going to do something about it. Well they're definitely heels.

Opening sequence with the names of some wrestlers on stars. Unfortunately the stars are cut off at the sides and I couldn't make out a lot of them. A more upbeat song would have helped too.

Before we get started, there's a tiny chance you've heard of Stu Stone. He's actually a voice actor and rapper, appearing on shows such as the Tick, X-Men, Rugrats and the classic Rollin With Saget.

Che Cabrera vs. Sgt. Major

Cabrera, a Cuban, is the cigar guy in the Revolution and the others are named Sasha Derevko and Fidel Bravo. They certainly got on the show quickly. Stone is a big but generic military guy. The fans chant USA and it's easy to hear them across the pretty small ring. They slug it out to start with Major grabbing a headlock as the announcers talk about the Revolution hating America.

We hear about the chain around Derevko's arm (Stone: "He's the best chain wrestler in this company." That was good for a chuckle) before the audio freaks out and makes me think my TV is broken. Major hits a loud chop in the corner but Bravo trips him up to change control after about nine seconds of Major on offense.

The fans chant Fuzzy Wuzzy at someone as Major is sent to the floor for a beating from Bravo. Cabrera starts in on the arm as the announced main event is Willie Mack (now in TNA as the Mack) and the Hobo (really?) vs. the Vermin. Major comes back with the Blackhawk (TKO) but a Revolution distraction lets Derevko get in a chain shot to give Cabrera the cheap pin at 4:52.

Rating: D. I'm in for a long night. This was a basic enough story to get by but the wrestling was nothing special. The Revolution is fine for a run of the mill heel stable, but I don't have much of a desire to see them again. There really isn't much to say here as it was just a basic wrestling match with the heels cheating to win. Acceptable but nothing

more than that.

Revolution vs. Tag Game Strong

So they aren't scheduled and they get two matches. This would be Bravo/Derevko vs. Leo Blaze/Cedric King, with the latter looking a bit like the Prime Time Players. Heelish commentator Stone used to manage them but they act like faces here. The Revolution jumps them to start but TGS sends them into each other. A double dropkick sends the evil foreigners to the floor and the fans are behind TGS.

Blaze hits a flip dive (with the camera only seeing the crash) to give King two on Derevko back inside. The announcers run down the tag division which sounds fairly deep in a positive note. Derevko hits a Brogue Kick for two on Blaze to take over before monkey flipping his partner onto Blaze for two. Not a bad spot. Bravo rolls through a sunset flip and gets two off a basement dropkick.

Blaze comes back with a quick backdrop and makes the hot tag to Cedric, who is still in sunglasses and his vest. A double slam puts Bravo down but Derevko makes the save. The camera work still needs a lot of work here. Something like a Black Widow puts Blaze down as King and Bravo cross body each other. Cabrera blows smoke in Derevko's eyes by mistake, setting up a superkick into a Saito Suplex (close enough to one at least) to pin Bravo at 5:55.

Rating: C. Well that was certainly better but aside from the ending blown heel spot, the Revolution wrestled like faces. I liked that monkey flipping your partner bit and Derevko and Bravo worked well together out there. TGS....eh they have potential but they don't seem to have any kind of strong personalities or presence. It looks like they've been giving a simple gimmick and are out there to get ring time, which is a fine way to use guys.

Jakob Austin Young vs. Dom de la Vega

Young is a small guy and looks like Alex Shelley. Vega is a skinny kid who looks to be a high flier. I really like his name if nothing else. They start with a basic wrestling sequence as we hear about Austin being

unproven and Vega being on a winning streak. See how easily you can recap two guys in a few sentences? I have an idea of who both guy is and the announcers repeating Young's catchphrase of "compassion is difficult" helps as well.

Vega takes him outside for a hard chop before raking the eyes back inside. A hard elbow gets two, but only after Young stares at the crowd for a bit. Vega gets two off a rollup, only to walk into a one footed dropkick. Back up and Vega scores with some dropkicks but Young hits him in the throat and hits a Backstabber for the pin at 3:54.

Rating: C. This Young guy has a future as he plays the part of a heel well and already has some of the mannerisms down. Vega looked like a spunky jobber and there's nothing wrong with that role. However, he was clearly outclassed here and I wouldn't mind seeing more of Young.

Ty Matthews, a soft spoken guy who looks like Kevin Smith, talks about taking a guy named Anderson Cruz under his wing but the philosophy didn't work. Tonight, Cruz has another chance on his own.

Anderson Cruz vs. Ryan Kidd

Kidd is the face here but no one seems to care for him. He's also never won a match in this company. Cruz is a much bigger guy but Kidd is chopping him around with ease. Cruz catches him diving off the top rope and hits a fall away slam before choking away. The announcers start talking about Scientology of all things as Cruz gets two off a running knee to the chest.

Matthews is watching in the back and we go to a split screen with a shot of Ty taking up about 80% of the screen. A middle rope splash gets two for Cruz and we hit the chinlock as those audio issues continue. Back to the split screen as Cruz gets a very close two off a spinning spinebuster. Cruz chokes away and doesn't let go, drawing a DQ at 5:12.

Rating: D+. The story here isn't bad but it doesn't help that the story is about someone not winning for a year. It makes you think that there's no way he's going to win....and that's exactly what you get. Cruz has some potential as well but there are dozens of guys with a similar look and

style.

The split screen shows a calm Matthews holding his open hand towards the screen with Cruz doing the same in the ring.

Vermin vs. Willie Mack/Hobo

Vermin are Kevin Martinson (a decent sized guy) and Yuma (looks like a cruiserweight), the latter of whom is Heritage Champion (seems to be the top belt in the company). The announcers both loathe Yuma for recently stealing the title from Hobo, who is billed as weighing 200 cans of beans. Mack is one of the few guys I've heard of here and he has HUGE trunks ala Jim Duggan. Before we get started, Kevin has to take care of the belt on the announcers' table.

Hobo and Yuma get things going with the fans entirely against the champ. Yuma gets punched back and forth between the good guys (billed as a dream team here) before he gets planted with an atomic drop. Off to Mack to drop Yuma with a chop. A big boot to the face drops Yuma again and a tandem elbow gets two. Martinson comes in and chokes Hobo down into the corner as we take a break. Back with Mack splashing Yuma in the corner before hitting a nice delayed vertical suplex for two on Martinson. Stone: "You can count to 100 there but you can't count to 3."

Yuma offers a distraction so Kevin can kick Willie in the face for two. We hit the chinlock on Mack but Yuma can barely get his arms around Mack's neck. Mack shrugs him off and makes the tag to Hobo for some house cleaning. Some running splashes in the corner (Hobo Trains) have Vermin in trouble but Martinson flips out of a belly to back and hits a nice dropkick to drop Hobo.

Vermin double teams Hobo in the corner as Stone sings the Facts of Life theme song. I think I like this guy. Yuma misses a charge (Stone: "No water in the corner!") and the hot tag brings in Mack. Everything breaks down and it's back to Hobo for more trains, with Mack hitting them as well. Martinson gets clotheslined to the floor, leaving Hobo to hit the Hobo Driver (Roman Reigns' Moment of Silence if you watched him in NXT) for the pin on Yuma at 13:44.

Rating: C+. Nice tag match here which helped to set up the title rematch in the future. Hobo seems like a guy who isn't anything special but the fans like him, which isn't the best thing to do with a champion but it works well enough around here. Yuma seemed in over his head out there but Martinson looked pretty smooth.

Overall Rating: C+. Opening match aside, I had a decent time with this show. They don't go back to a story they've already covered in the night and there were very few backstage segments, which leaves you with a wrestling heavy product. I liked it well enough to watch another week, but this feels minor league due to the audio and camera work along with some talent not being the strongest out there. Still though, fun for what it was.

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Lucha Underground – April 8, 2015: That's Not Good

Lucha Underground

Date: April 8, 2015

Location: Lucha Underground Arena, Los Angeles, California

Commentators: Vampiro, Matt Striker

The tournament continues tonight as we try to find the first Trios Tag Team Champions. I get the idea behind doing this instead of having a regular set of Tag Team Titles but it's not really winning me over just yet. If nothing else, it doesn't help that the matches usually break down into insanity too quickly, though that can be said about a lot of things on this show. Let's get to it.

We open with a recap of last week's tournament match and Prince Puma successfully defending his title against Cage.

Konnan and Puma are in Cuerno's office. The boss wants Puma in the tournament to make it mean more, so he needs to get some partners because next week he's facing King Cuerno and two partners who will be ringside tonight for Cuerno's title shot.

Trios Tag Team Titles Tournament First Round: Son of Havok/Ivelisse/Angelico vs. Aero Star/Fenix/Drago

Well that's different. Fenix and Angelico slap hands to start but Fenix counters a monkey flip with a double stomp to the back to take over early. Off to Ivelisse who gets thrown into Angelico, only to have him flip her over to the apron and come in instead. Fenix kicks Angelico in the face and it's off to Drago for a DDT as Vampiro goes into fanboy mode. Now we get to the problems as Fenix goes to the middle rope and Star climbs onto his shoulders for an elbow, but Drago wants the pin.

Off to Havok vs. Star with the fans behind the former as he gets two off a standing shooting star press. Ivelisse comes in off a slap but Angelico tags himself in and gets spun around by Star, allowing Drago to come in for a tornado DDT. Angelico is sent to the floor so Fenix can launch Drago onto him, but Fenix's corkscrew dive hits his partner by mistake. Back in and Ivelisse hits a running DDT (Think Dolph Ziggler) to stun Fenix before Havok hits a flip dive on Drago.

Fenix dives on everyone so Ivelisse dives on everyone not named Fenix (he only got a rope kicked between his legs). Fenix walks the ropes to drop an elbow on Angelico, leaving Drago to kick Havok back inside. That's fine with Havok as he springboards off the ropes into a double back elbow to Drago and Star. Ivelisse short arms Havok on a tag attempt and walks

out, so Havok kicks Drago in the head and hits the shooting star to advance to the finals.

Rating: B-. This fits into the category of a match that isn't really good from a quality standpoint but man alive was it fun. They were flying all over the place and hitting dive after dive, which is all you need for something like this. It doesn't hurt that Ivelisse looks great and can back it up in the ring. Fun stuff here.

Konnan has found Puma a partner with Hernandez. Johnny Mundo pops up and says Puma already asked him to be his partner because he wants a piece of Cuerno. Konnan isn't pleased.

Sexy Star vs. Super Fly

This is mask vs. mask, which really should be a bigger deal than it is here. Cueto set this up because Star saved Fly from having his arm broken and Cueto is kind of a jerk. Star works on a wristlock to start before they fight over a top wristlock. They hit the mat and come up in a standoff before Fly just pops her in the face to take over. Back up and Star kicks him in the ribs and nails an X-Factor (modified version of an old Konnan sequence) but Fly slaps her in the face again.

A middle rope hurricanrana drops Fly to the floor and Star hits a big dive for good measure. Striker is doing play by play a mile a minute here, which is FAR easier to sit through than his fanboy stuff. Back in and a Codebreaker gets two for Star but she grabs a running DDT for the same. Fly powerbombs her down and goes up for a moonsault but Star rolls away and grabs La Majistral for the pin.

Rating: D. Uh...what the heck was that? They set up a lucha de apuesta and blow it off in the span of eight minutes? That's totally out of character for this promotion and I'm really surprised they did this. I know it's because Super Fly recently lost his mask in Mexico and they had to get rid of it here too, but they could have built this up for weeks given their taping schedule. One good note here: Star looked like a wrestler who happened to be a woman. That's a good sign.

Post break, Fly kneels so Star can unmask him in a pretty emotional

moment. Pentagon Jr. comes in and snaps his arm.

Lucha Underground Title: Prince Puma vs. King Cuerno

So is Cuerno Puma's father or are they from different countries? The champ has Hernandez, Konnan and Mundo in his corner but Cuerno's partners are revealed to be Cage and Texano. Feeling out process to start with both guys grabbing wristlocks but Cuerno bails to the floor. Puma dives on the partners but they throw him to Cuerno for a neckbreaker. Mundo and Hernandez come over for a save but the sandpaper snake stops them.

We get a...oh you don't know what Striker means when he mentions a sandpaper snake? It's Texano's bullrops. How did you not get that connection? Back in and Cuerno stomps away before kicking Puma hard in the ribs. Texano gets in some cheap shots on Puma's leg as the referees around here continue to be kind of worthless. Puma comes back with a Superman Punch but eats an enziguri from the apron.

A big flip dive over the top takes Cuerno down (why he was on the floor isn't shown as we were looking at the commentators) and Mundo follows with a flip pf his own. Striker: "Arguably the best athlete on the planet!" WHAT PLANET IS HE TALKING ABOUT???? Mundo is good but dude, come on. Back in and Puma gets two off something like a Blue Thunder Bomb but misses a springboard 450. Cuerno rolls some Germans for two but the partners get up on the apron for some cheap shots but Puma wants Hernandez to get down (Puma didn't see Hernandez interfere). The 630 retains Puma's title.

Rating: C. Uh...why was the title on the line here? Tell me, what does this add to this match? Cuerno lost his last match against Mundo in the cage but for some reason he gets a title match here? That's the kind of bad logic that Lucha Underground usually avoids but this felt like throwing a title match on the show so they could say we have a title match tonight. The wrestling was your standard fare here but I never got into it with all the other moving parts at ringside.

Hernandez tries to raise Puma's hand but the champ doesn't want his praise. Everything breaks down into a big brawl to end the show.

Overall Rating: D+. They're entitled to a misfire every now and then. The problem with this show was the lack of patience and wanting to just hotshot everything at once. Instead of letting something build up over a few weeks, they announced a mask vs. mask match and a title match on one show. That's the kind of low level mistake that you don't expect from these guys and I hope it's not something that continues in the future. Not much to this week but it's hard to get too upset in 45 minutes.

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