

# Major League Wrestling Never Say Never 2021: Yeah I'm Done

## Never Say Never 2021

Date: March 31, 2021

Location: Gilt Nightclub, Orlando, Florida

Commentators: Ray Flores, Jared St. Laurent

This is pretty much it for me with MLW, as they have lost so much of what made them special now that they have back after the pandemic hiatus. There is little here that interests me, including the main event of Jacob Fatu defending the World Title against newcomer Calvin Tankman. Let's get to it.

Jacob Fatu says Calvin Tankman is going to be just another body on the count.

Calvin Tankman says he is different and you can't play games with him.

Opening sequence.

## Simon Gotch vs. Jordan Oliver

Gotch has beaten/beaten up Oliver a few times now. They go to the mat to start with Gotch working on the legs in a smart move. The chinlock goes on as commentary talks about how balanced Contra is between all of its members. Gotch takes him to the mat again with something like a reverse Koji Clutch. That's broken up in a hurry with Jordan nailing some forearms to the floor but something like the Coffin Drop misses back inside.

With Oliver down, Gotch hammers away with the bandanna around his hand, followed by some choking for a bonus. A kick to the ribs gives Gotch two and an armbar sends Oliver over to the rope. Some knees to the back keep Oliver down as this has been one sided so far. Oliver manages to fight up with a DDT and a running forearm. A clothesline puts Gotch down and the top rope cutter is enough to give Oliver the pin at 9:14.

**Rating:** C. Just a match here as they are setting up the Injustice vs. Contra trilogy for the night. MLW seems to see quite a bit in Oliver though I'm not sure how far he is going to be able to do. Oliver can talk and is decent enough in the ring, but he looks like he is about fifteen years old and that is going to cause some issues.

Video on Calvin Tankman.

Josef Samael isn't sweating Tankman or Injustice.

Dragon Gate is coming. Cool.

### Daivari vs. Myron Reed

They slug it out to start and Reed throws him outside for a suicide dive. Daivari sends him into a wall and they fight up the stage. Reed backdrops his way out of a piledriver attempt and hits a quick dive to take over again. It's time to go back inside where Daivari gets smart by going after the leg.

The Figure Four goes on so Reed grabs the rope and comes up with a jawbreaker. Reed goes to the apron and hits a quick Fameasser over the middle rope. Back in and Daivari snaps off a powerslam for two before stealing and putting on Reed's chest protector. The frog splash misses so Reed hits a springboard cutter and takes the protector back, setting up a 450 to finish Daivari at 8:05.

**Rating:** C. Reed continues to be someone who seems like he could go somewhere as a face, though I'm not sure how likely that is after such a long reign as the Middleweight Champion. I like his charisma though and this felt like an important win over a somewhat more established name. Daivari and Contra will be fine, so they had the right winner here.

Alex Hammerstone is ready to face Mil Muertes in two weeks because he is ready to take his title back.

We get a split screen interview with Gino Medina and Richard Holliday, though Holliday gets in an argument with Alicia Atout first. Gino wants to kick Holliday in the head and Atout mentions how much cologne Holliday wears. Holliday does not like being compared to a Ken doll and they

insult each other so much that Atout calls them petty. Atout also announces a Caribbean Title match between the two of them on April 14. Works for Medina.

Another Calvin Tankman video.

We see Tankman attacking Jacob Fatu to set up the title match.

We will get a medical update on Bu Ku Dao in two weeks.

### MLW World Title: Jacob Fatu vs. Calvin Tankman

Fatu, with Daivari, is defending and Tankman might have had food poisoning earlier this week. They trade shoulders to start and Fatu is knocked hard out to the floor. That just makes Fatu mad so Tankman hammers away at him even more. Tankman kicks him into the corner but Fatu nails a headbutt.

A springboard clothesline (dang) and a superkick drop Tankman, followed by a Samoan drop for two. The unwrapped wrist tape goes around Tankman's throat and the reverse Cannonball gives Tankman two more. We hit the nerve hold (of course), which doesn't last long as Fatu lets go for a running headbutt instead. Tankman is right back up for a slugout and knocks Fatu outside again.

Back in and Fatu kicks him in the head, setting up a handspring moonsault for two more. Tankman is back with a spinning backfist and a hard clothesline gets another near fall. Daivari comes in for a distraction though and Fatu hits Tankman with the flat. The double jump moonsault retains the title at 10:44.

**Rating:** C+. The ending holds back what was otherwise a pretty good hoss fight, with Tankman giving Fatu everything he could but ultimately getting stopped by a flag pole. I would hope that they could come up with something a little bit better than that a distraction into a weapon shot. It's just so basic and that is not the kind of feeling I want for a main event title match.

**Overall Rating:** C. Yeah I'm done. This was every problem with MLW rolled into one: more of the same stories which feel like they go on forever,

what could have been some great matches reduced to just pretty good and nothing that I'm going to remember. MLW was a heck of a fun company at one point but they have lost that almost completely and now they have lost me watching their show, at least for the time being.

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# Major League Wrestling Fusion – March 3, 2021: They're Interesting Me

## **Fusion #123**

Date: March 3, 2021

Location: Gilt Nightclub, Orlando, Florida

Commentators: Jared St. Laurent, Rich Bocchini

This company is on the clock as I'm giving them two more shows to do something interesting to keep me around. I haven't been impressed by the shows since their return and there comes a point where it's too much. Hopefully they can shake it up a

bit, but otherwise I'm out. Let's get to it.

We open with a recap of Contra vs. Injustice to set up Jacob Fatu's World Title defense against Jordan Oliver.

Opening sequence.

### Tag Team Titles: Los Parks vs. Contra

Simon Gotch and Daivari are challenging for Contra and Salina de la Renta is here with the champs. Daivari takes Hijo down into an armbar but everything breaks down in a hurry. With Park and Gotch cleared out, Daivari starts working on Hijo's knee to take over. Back up and Hijo takes Daivari down by the arm, earning another kick from Gotch. Daivari is back on the leg but Hijo kicks him back.

With Daivari sitting down on the mat, Hijo wraps his legs around his arms (picture the start of a Code Red if Daivari was standing) and then bends back to put Daivari's head near the mat between his own legs (it's hard to describe but it looks great), which again draws Gotch in for the save. Park comes in for the brawl but this time Daivari beats on Hijo as everything breaks down, much to Salina's annoyance.

Back in and Hijo hits a double missile dropkick to put Contra on the floor. That sets up the stereo dives to the floor, followed by a top rope hurricanrana to send Gotch outside. Everything breaks down again with Hijo missing another missile dropkick. Park gets stomped in the corner so here's LA Park Jr...who is cut off by the referee. That lets Injustice come in to cut off Daivari, meaning Park can hit the spear to retain at 8:21.

**Rating:** C. The Parks are a weird team as they aren't much to see in the ring but they are hilarious on the mic and Park has great charisma so it is easy to like them. This part of Contra isn't exactly interesting, though Daivari has been pretty good since he arrived. Not a good match, but any champion is going

to have to deal with Contra at some point.

The Von Erichs talk about how much they want to get their hands on Tom Lawlor. Or maybe a hammerhead shark can do it.

Video on Jordan Oliver.

Salina de la Renta, who has changed outfits in the last five minutes, says she is addicted to gold and suggests that Alicia Atout is rather friendly with Richard Holliday. Anyway, Salina wants the Openweight Title.

### Parrow vs. Dugan

Parrow is a monster who was here in the early days. Dugan gets thrown around to start, including a fall away slam into the corner. Parrow hits a chokeslam into a sitout powerbomb (the Murder Bomb) for the pin at 1:37. Total squash and I've always liked Parrow so this was a nice surprise.

Post match Parrow says he wants Mil Muertes.

Tom Lawlor is furious at the Von Erichs, who threw him through the window of a truck and cut his back open. He wants either of them or ACH...to face Kevin Ku!

We look back at TJP turning on Bu Ku Dao and not caring much about it.

Dao wants TJP.

Azteca Underground ad.

Jordan Oliver is ready to show that he is a heavyweight, even though Jacob Fatu is going to f\*\*\* (uncensored here) him up.

### Calvin Tankman vs. Laredo Kid

The much bigger Tankman shoves him down to start but Kid snaps off a headscissors. You don't do that to Tankman though and he hits a heck of a running shoulder. A toss lets Tankman get two

so Kid bails out to the floor. Back in and a suplex gives Tankman two as this is one sided so far. Kid gets his feet up in the corner to block some charges and Tankman is knocked to the floor. That means a big dive to take him down in a heap and Kid gets two back inside. A top rope elbow gets the same on Tankman, who is right back with a heck of a powerbomb. Kid pops back up with a top rope elbow to the jaw but Tankman blasts him in the back of the head. The Tankman Driver finishes Kid at 6:44.

**Rating:** C+. Tankman is a guy who has some potential but there is something missing from him so far. It might be experience, but at the moment he feels like a few people in the moving big men category. At the same time you have Kid, who went from being in the main event of a major show a few weeks ago to barely surviving against Tankman for a few minutes. That's doing a good job of making Tankman look good, but do you want to burn what you have in a name like Kid?

Tankman likes the world finding out who he is and wants the World Title.

We look at some of the international attention Lio Rush is receiving for becoming AAA Cruiserweight Champion.

Alicia Atout comes into the men's locker room to find out why she is being accused of sleeping with Holliday. The Dynasty doesn't care so she leaves, with Hammerstone accusing Holliday of having a thing for her. He denies it rather quickly, with Bocchini being suspicious.

We look at Injustice taking Jacob Fatu down a few weeks ago.

Contra promises to destroy Injustice for playing in deep water where they don't belong.

Here are the Top 5 Tag Teams:

5. Dirty Blonds

4. Injustice

3. Violence Is Forever

2. Contra

1. Von Erichs

We look at Gino Medina beating Gringo Loco a few weeks ago and getting in another brawl after the match.

Medina says Loco isn't a real luchador and he will expose Loco soon.

We look at the Alicia Atout/Richard Holliday stuff again.

Next week: Alex Hammerstone vs. LA Park for the Openweight Title and in two weeks, Parrow vs. Mil Muertes.

MLW World Title: Jacob Fatu vs. Jordan Oliver

Oliver is challenging and commentary isn't exactly high on his chances. Myron Reed is here with Oliver and Daivari is here with Fatu. Oliver isn't waiting and dives over the top onto Fatu, followed by a quick posting as we get the bell. Another suicide dive is countered into a Samoan drop to plant Oliver hard and they head inside. Fatu runs him over with an elbow and drops some elbows to crush Oliver's chest again. Oliver gets in a chop block to the posing Fatu but gets sent hard into the corner for his efforts.

A few shots to Fatu's head just earn Oliver a superkick so he grabs Fatu's leg and hopes for the best. Fatu misses a sitdown splash and Reed grabs Fatu's leg so Oliver can hit a superkick. Another dive is countered into a drop onto the apron and the video starts glitching a bit. Fatu loads up the moonsault but his knee gives out, allowing Oliver to German suplex him off the top. The top rope cutter and a superkick rock Fatu but he's right back with a pop up Samoan drop. The moonsault finishes Oliver at 9:08.



**Rating:** C. Oliver was trying here but there is a limit on how far you can go in this situation. They did about as well as they could have and I'll take what I can get in this kind of a match. Reed would have been a more believable challenger, but I'm not sure that was the point of this one. This wasn't awful, but Fatu needs a serious challenger soon.

Post match the Sentai Death Squad runs in to beat down Reed and put Injustice in the body bags. Calvin Tankman comes out for the save and Pounces Fatu to the floor to end the show.

**Overall Rating:** C+. Well, it was more interesting, and that ending has me a little curious. I'm not sure if this is going to be enough to keep me around, but this was a nice step up over some previous shows. Above all else, focusing on the World Title and making Fatu seem like he might be in a little danger for once was a welcome change. Now have a good follow up to this and they might be on their way out of their funk.

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# Major League Wrestling Fusion – February 10, 2021: Learn To Stick The Landing

## Fusion #121

Date: February 10, 2021

Location: Gilt Nightclub, Orlando, Florida

Commentators: Jared St. Laurent, Rich Bocchini

It's time for a big night as we have a title vs. title match. This time around it's the AAA Cruiserweight Champion Laredo Kid vs. MLW Middleweight Champion Lio Rush with both championships on the line. I'm not sure how that is going to go but at least it feels like a big deal. Let's get to it.

[Here are last week's results if you need a recap.](#)

The opening video sets up the title match. As it should.

Opening sequence.

### ACH vs. Brian Pillman Jr.

For the second time in a row, Pillman doesn't get an entrance, which doesn't bode well for his future around here. ACH's ribs are still banged up but here's Team Filthy to watch on the stage. Pillman is smart enough to go for the ribs but ACH chops him into the corner without much effort. A dropkick sends Pillman outside as Team Filthy gets a little bit closer. Back in and Pillman elbows him down, setting up a bodyscissors to keep ACH's ribs in trouble.

ACH slips out and tries a surfboard, sending Pillman straight over to the ropes. More knees to the ribs cut off ACH again but he kicks the knee out for a breather. Team Filthy is at ringside now as ACH wins a slugout but gets backdropped down. Pillman heads up top but ACH runs the corner and kicks him down. The brainbuster finishes Pillman at 5:53.

**Rating:** C. The wrestling was perfectly fine but you can pretty much tell that Pillman is either done trying here or checked out mentally as he wasn't exactly on fire here. At the same time, he might as well have been any warm body given how commentary sounded, as there was no reference to his history with the company or much about how good he is in the ring. ACH going over is fine, but Pillman feels like an MLW zombie at the moment.

Post match Team Filthy comes in to jump ACH but the Von Erichs run in for the save. After the ring is cleared, ACH and the Von Erichs say don't mess with Texas.

We hear Salina de la Renta talking about the owner of Azteca Underground wanting to buy the IWA in Puerto Rico.

Savio Vega says IWA isn't for sale because the company is for the fans.

We look back at Los Parks retaining the Tag Team Titles last week through some shenanigans.

### Zenshi vs. Calvin Tankman

Zenshi's legsweeps just make Tankman glare at him and a kick to the head doesn't do much more. Tankman shows him how to do a dropkick and there's a spinebuster for two on Zenshi. A big toss sends Zenshi flying for two but he avoids a running shooting star press. Zenshi's running shooting star connects for two and he kicks Tankman to the apron.

Tankman blocks a posionrana to the floor (because no) and a flying shoulder drops Zenshi with ease. One heck of a clothesline gets two on Zenshi but he slips out of the Tankman Driver. Some kicks to the head put Tankman on the ropes and there's a 619. Zenshi goes up top but Tankman pulls him out of the air and hits the Tankman Driver for the pin at 5:52.

**Rating:** C-. Above all else, Tankman beating someone with a bit of stature is going to mean more for him. Zenshi might not be the biggest star around here but he's a name, and that's the kind of win Tankman can use. This helped him out a bit and while he needs a lot more ring time and polish, he's something worth keeping an eye on and that's a good sign.

We look back at Alex Hammerstone beating up a fake Mads Krugger last week and then getting beaten down by the real one.

Josef Samael says Mads Krugger is training for his next mission and promises to destroy Injustice.

Video on Contra vs. Injustice.

Earlier today, Lio Rush was ready for the big main event title vs. title match. He pays the cameraman to get his bag.

We get a sitdown interview with Richards Holliday over the recent referee issues. Holliday insists that there is nothing to the fact that the referee is disgraced NBA referee Tim Donaghy or that there was a lot of money placed on the match. People like gambling you see. A lot of arguing ensues and we're done.

Here's the Top Ten:

10. Laredo Kid

9. Daivari

8. Myron Reed

7. Mil Muertes

6. Richard Holliday

5. Mads Krugger

4. Lio Rush

3. Low Ki

2. Tom Lawlor

1. Alex Hammerstone

Contra vs. Injustice

It's Simon Gotch/Daivari for Contra but hold on as here's Jacob Fatu to

jump Injustice from behind. Myron Reed fights back and it's a superkick into a middle rope cutter to put Fatu down. Believe it or not, Injustice stands tall.

It's time for the Filthy Island Control Center.

Rocky Romero will be on the show.

Dominic Garrini will face Mauna Loa (who doesn't have a photo).

Salina de la Renta doesn't like the idea that Savio Vega thought the offer was optional, so next week it's Savio vs. Mil Muertes in a Jungle Fight.

Also, it's Low Ki vs. King Mo in what sounds like the main event.

Jacob Fatu gets a World Title shot on March 3. Oh that's going to hurt.

AAA Cruiserweight Title/MLW Middleweight Title: Laredo Kid vs. Lio Rush

Winner take all (though the ring announcer makes it sound like it's just Rush defending, despite everything else saying it's title for title). Feeling out process to start with Rush being sent outside in a hurry. Back in and Rush does his always cool running of the ropes while sliding to Kid's side over and over. Rush heads outside again but this time Kid kicks him down to take over. A side slam gets two and a running kick to the head puts Rush on the floor again.

Back in and Rush fires off some right hands to the head, followed by an uppercut to the back gets two. There's a suplex for the same and we hit the chinlock. That's broken up but Laredo misses a spinning middle rope crossbody. The double arm crank goes on for a bit but Kid is back up with a Michinoku Driver into a moonsault for two. Kid slaps on a nasty leglock, followed by a running neckbreaker to drop Rush again. Rush is right back with a springboard Stunner and the Final Hour connects for the pin and both titles at 10:25.

**Rating:** C. This didn't exactly live up to the hype as they just had a match and then Rush hit his finisher to win. I'm not sure how big of a deal this is as the AAA Title doesn't have a ton of meaning up here. It's

a cool thing to be able to say for MLW and does make the partnership feel more important, but the match wasn't exactly thrilling.

Rush brags to end the show. Given the lack of the AAA Title being announced at the beginning or at the end, I wonder if this is one of those phantom title changes that won't be acknowledged in Mexico.

**Overall Rating:** C. I'm getting rather bored by MLW as they have completely lost the ability to stick the landing. I don't remember the last time they had a huge match that felt like it ended on a big note. Everything feels like it just ends with as little fanfare as possible and that gets a little tiring. I'm not sure what MLW can do to fix things, but they need to do something sooner or later because it's not quite working all that well these days.

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# Major League Wrestling Fusion – December 9, 2020: More Than Air Pods

**Fusion #113**

Date: December 9, 2020

Location: Gilt Nightclub, Orlando, Florida

Commentators: Jared St. Laurent, Rich Bocchini

Last week's show was the best since the Restart and we're in for some good stuff if they can keep that up. What matters here is capitalizing on the momentum and the big piece is in place as the Von Erichs defend the Tag Team Titles against Contra. That could go either way so let's get to it.

[Here are last week's results if you need a recap.](#)

Contra says MLW hasn't taken control of anything and promises to bring the heroes to their knees. Look at what they have done to Davey Boy Smith Jr. and Alex Hammerstone. Tonight, they come for the Tag Team Titles.

Opening sequence.

Zenshi vs. Calvin Tankman

Zenshi's legsweep has no effect to start and a dropkick to the back just annoys Tankman. A hurricanrana sends him into the corner and a kick to the head staggers the monster a bit. That's about it for the offense though as Tankman plants him with a spinebuster and chops away in the corner. Tankman sends him flying but Zenshi knees his way out of a suplex. A handspring Pele rocks Tankman for a bit but he hits Zenshi in the throat. The Tankman Driver finishes Zenshi at 3:44.

**Rating:** D+. This was designed to make Tankman look like a cross between a tank and a man, which worked out well enough. Having him shrug off everything Zenshi threw at him made for some good visuals, as Tankman seems to be someone they want to push. Given how many names they have lost/are losing, that is one of the most important things they can do at the moment.

Tankman says that's just a small taste so line him up some more opponents. Heavyweight Hustle is going to knock them all down.

We look back at Richard Holliday and Low Ki winning their first round Opera Cup matches.

Salina de la Renta is at the Aztec Ruins (labeled as such) where she is looking for a certain man. Salina talks about a man being caught in a horrible earthquake in Mexico City in 1985 (uh oh) but a witch brought him back to life. She whips out a knife, licks it, and says she is summoning Pascal Mendoza. This isn't going to go well.

Dan Lambert doesn't like Low Ki moving forward in the tournament while King Mo is sitting on the sidelines.

#### Violence Is Forever vs. Jason Dugan/Robert Martyr

Violence Is Forever is Team Filthy's Kevin Ku/Dominic Garrini and the jobbers don't even get first names to start things off. Garrini takes Dugan over with a quick judo throw but a cross armbreaker attempt sends Dugan bailing to the ropes. Ku comes in to step on Dugan's arm and a brainbuster/kick to the head combination (better known as Chasing the Dragon but not called that of course) finishes at 1:54.

Low Ki is ready to kick Richard Holliday's Air Pods out.

Holliday hopes Low Ki's bravado can handle his rarefied air.

We look at Myron Reed challenging Lio Rush.

Rush says he needs no introduction as he is on the way to the studio to record another hit. He won't be facing Reed on December 23 because Rush is coming for the title on the first show of the new year. Until then, Reed can eat his off brand cereal and train like never before.

We get a sitdown interview with Alex Hammerstone, who isn't worried about Mags Krugger. He's also cleared to wrestle so he'll be back in the ring next week.

Contra hacks the feed and Krugger wants Hammerstone at Kings of Coliseum on January 6.

#### Opera Cup Semifinals: Low Ki vs. Richard Holliday

Holliday starts fast by stomping Low Ki down in the corner, followed by a hard elbow to the face. Ki is right back with a running elbow of his own



and a hard chop, only to get dropped face first onto the turnbuckle. It's time to start working on Ki's leg and a belly to back suplex gets two. Holliday switches gears by moving to the arm...followed by a backbreaker as he is certainly mixing things up.

Ki comes back with a choke out of the corner but Holliday falls down into the ropes for the break. Back up and Holliday hits a quick clothesline and they're both down for a bit. It's Holliday back up with a heck of a pop up sitout powerbomb for two, meaning it's time to yell at the referee. A spinebuster gets the same as commentary is getting way into this. Ki dropkicks him into the corner, setting up the Warrior's Wrath (top rope double stomp) for the fast pin at 9:19.

**Rating:** B-. This started picking up the pace at the end and that's great to see from Holliday. I know he gets most of his attention for the talking but he has surprised me in the ring more than once. Ki has been WAY better in MLW than anywhere else I remember seeing him and that's a great surprise. Both guys were working here and I could have gone with five more minutes.

Post match Ki grabs the Caribbean Title. Sweet on a possible rematch.

We go to the Kings of Coliseum Control Center with Reed defending the Middleweight Title against Lio Rush confirmed.

Reed says it's time but Rush isn't taking the title from him.

Tag Team Titles: Contra Unit vs. Von Erichs

Simon Gotch and Jacob Fatu are challenging for Contra. The brawl starts on the floor with the music still playing and the champs taking over. Ross and Simon get in the ring to officially start with Ross snapping off a fisherman's suplex. Fatu isn't having that and comes in with the superkick to take over.

Some kicks to the chest don't do much as Fatu pulls him back in by the leg. It's back to Gotch for the chinlock for a bit but Fatu comes back in and gets low bridged to the floor. The hot tag brings in Marshall to clean house as everything breaks down. A hurricanrana sends Fatu outside

and Marshall claw slams Gotch through a board at ringside. Cue Jordan Oliver and Violence Is Forever for the brawl and double DQ at 7:14.

**Rating:** C-. This didn't have time to get very far and that might be for the best. You absolutely don't want Contra losing but I can see why you don't want them to win the titles yet. I wouldn't be surprised to see a rematch at Kings of Coliseum or on a big Fusion, but for now it was just an ok at best match and the ending came when it should have.

**Overall Rating:** C. The show had more energy this week and hopefully that keeps up because it helped a bit here. The wrestling wasn't as good as it was last time around but at least they had a nice show for the most part. They still aren't hitting their stride with the big matches most of the time but at least the show was decent enough as a whole. I want to see where some of these people go and that's a good sign for the future.

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# Major League Wrestling Fusion – November 25, 2020: Just Like Last Time



IMG Credit: Major League Wrestling

## **Fusion #111**

Date: November 18, 2020

Location: Gilt Nightclub, Orlando, Florida

Commentators: Jared Saint Laurent, Rich Bocchini

I'm not sure what to make of things around here. Last week's show wasn't the worst but it also didn't exactly live up to the expectations I was hoping for around here. It's time to start the Opera Cup again and while it's a nice idea, it's not like the first one was a blow away idea. Let's get to it.

[Here are last week's results if you need a recap.](#)

We open with a quick preview of tonight's first round Opera Cup matches.

Opening sequence.

We look at the end of last week's show with a new member of Contra attacking Alex Hammerstone.

Earlier today, Richard Holliday didn't think much of Contra and promises

that Hammerstone will be fine. He runs into Gino Medina, who claims he quit the Dynasty while Holliday insisted he was fired. Medina implies violence by the end of the night.

### Opera Cup First Round: TJP vs. Richard Holliday

Holliday has the Caribbean Title held up but makes it clear that this is non-title. The bigger Holliday shoves him down without much effort to start so TJP runs the corner for a headlock takeover. A basement dropkick sends Holliday bailing into the corner for a breather and the threat of the Octopus sends Holliday to the ropes a moment later. We settle down to TJP working on a hammerlock, followed by an armdrag to frustrate Holliday even more.

TJP slips out of a suplex attempt and hits a dropkick to the back. Holliday is knocked outside and that means it's the Wrecking Ball dropkick to keep him in trouble. Back in and TJP gets crotched on top to finally give Holliday control. Holliday starts stomping away at the leg before switching over to the arm. TJP is right back up and slides through the legs to grab a Sharpshooter. Make that a Muta Lock, followed by a Pentagon arm snap.

Holliday's arm is fine enough to drop TJP onto the apron but TJP snaps off a top rope hurricanrana. Holliday plants him back down and grabs the chinlock, which is enough to start TJP's comeback. A not great looking tornado DDT sets up Three Amigos but Holliday hits a spinebuster. The Market Crash finishes TJP at 10:25.

**Rating:** D+. Not their best showing here as it was just a collection of moves that took up about ten and a half minutes. I've seen better from both of them so maybe it was just an off night. Either way, this wasn't quite the best way to start off the tournament, which isn't exactly thrilling in the first place.

The Von Erichs wish you a happy Thanksgiving. They're coming for Team Filthy too.

We look back at Myron Reed retaining the Middleweight Title over Brian Pillman Jr. and calling out Lio Rush as his next challenger.

Lio Rush likes the idea of a big debut with a big title shot.

We look at King Mo knockout out Low Ki (thanks to some interference) earlier this year.

King Mo wants the doctors to keep Low Ki out of the ring because his head is too scrambled.

Dan Lambert wants to know why Low Ki is in the Opera Cup but King Mo isn't.

Salina de la Renta interrupts the announcers and wants to know who tried to get her contract broken. She is running the January 6 episode and no one is canceling that.

#### Calvin Tankman vs. Robert Martyr

This is Tankman's debut and he's a rather large guy who can move around well. Tankman starts fast with a dropkick and chops Martyr down in the corner. Martyr runs into a backbreaker and the Tankman Driver (Drill Claw) finishes at 1:14. Total destruction.

Tankman dedicates that to his baby and now he wants to beat everyone in his path to the World Title. That was to the point.

Alex Hammerstone has ribs, neck and back injuries.

Hammerstone calls in and says the injuries aren't even keeping him out of the gym, let alone the ring. Contra hacks the feed though and promises to end Hammerstone.

#### Opera Cup First Round: Rocky Romero vs. Tom Lawlor

Team Filthy is here with Lawlor and I've missed the I HAVE COME TO KILL YOU theme. Romero blocks an early takedown attempt and grabs a headscissors on the mat as the grappling begins. Romero's rollup gets two and it's off to a cravate, which Lawlor reverses into one of his own. That doesn't go anywhere either so Romero grabs a headlock to slow things down.

Lawlor wins a battle of shoulder blocks but Romero dropkicks him to the

floor. A running knee off the apron drops Lawlor again and we hit the chinlock back inside. There's the Octopus to have Lawlor in even more trouble so he slowly walks to the ropes. A headscissors takes Lawlor down but he pulls Romero into a bow and arrow hold. With that broken up, it's a Hennig necksnap into a sliding clothesline for two on Romero. Lawlor grabs a Fujiwara armbar before switching to a double arm crank.

That's reversed into something like a crucifix with a Crossface (that's a new one) with Lawlor making it over to the rope. Lawlor starts cranking on the leg until Romero uses the good one for an enziguri. Romero's guillotine choke is countered into an exploder suplex but he's right back with another tornado DDT.

Lawlor gets tied in the ropes for a middle rope stomp to the back. A running Sliced Bread gives Romero two but Lawlor is right back with Lars Sullivan's Freak Accident. They strike it out until Lawlor gets two off a backslide. With the rear naked choke not working, Lawlor uses his legs to grab a cradle for the pin to advance at 17:43.

**Rating:** B-. Good back and forth match here which might have gone a bit longer than necessary. The most important part here though was that it felt like an important match with Lawlor hanging in there to win in the end over a game Romero. It wasn't a classic, but it did what it was supposed to do and worked well enough.

Post match Lawlor says he is coming for the Opera Cup to add his name to the list of winners.

**Overall Rating:** C. This was almost all about the tournament and Contra, which seems like it could be the case for a long time to come. Much like last week, what we got here was fine though it wasn't anything memorable. MLW has a tendency to not have the big fight feeling and that has been the case so far. Maybe they need more time, but it isn't exactly promising so far.

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