

# SHIMMER Volume 113: It Fits The Weekend



IMG Credit: SHIMMER Women's Athletes

## SHIMMER Volume 113

Date: April 5, 2019

Location: La Boom, Woodside, New York

Commentators: Lenny Leonard, Dave Prazak

I've seen one Shimmer show in my day and that was about nine years ago so I'm virtually coming in blind. Women's wrestling has come a very, very long way since then and there's a good chance that I'll actually have an idea what I'm watching this time around. If nothing else, it almost has to be better than some of the matches I've been watching this weekend. Let's get to it.

Shimmer Title: Nicole Savoy vs. Hiroyo Matsumoto

Nicole is defending. Feeling out process to start with Matsumoto getting nowhere off a shoulder and having to escape an early headscissors attempt. A hurricanrana gives Savoy two but she spends too much time posing on the ropes and gets powerbombed down. They head outside with Matsumoto getting the better of the fight as the announcers describe her as sexy Godzilla. A running kick from the apron rocks Savoy again and we hit the neck crank back inside.

That's broken up with a roll thru and it's time to chop it out with Matsumoto taking over again. Savoy is right back with a powerslam and the first of what commentary suggests should be several suplexes. The cross armbreaker doesn't last long either so Savoy switches to a Fujiwara armbar for a change. Savoy's triangle choke is countered into a Boston crab, sending Savoy straight to the ropes. A Vader Bomb gives Matsumoto two, which brings Savoy to her feet for the screaming forearms.

Matsumoto gets the better of it again and hits a sliding lariat for two, only to get pulled into a guillotine choke. That's broken up so Savoy goes with a snap suplex and it's a double knockdown. Another sliding lariat is countered into a crucifix for two more and it's time for another slugout. They trade German suplexes and Matsumoto elbows her in the face for another near fall. Savoy has had it and snaps off another German suplex. A bridging dragon suplex retains the title at 12:23.

**Rating:** B. Nice hard hitting match here, with Savoy's year and a half long title reign continuing. This is definitely more of a workrate based promotion as there were no stories mentioned here and the match was a bunch of heavy shots with the women going back and forth. Savoy didn't exactly come off like the top star, but the match was quite good.

Post match Savoy is a little banged up.

Veda Scott vs. Brittany Blake vs. Brandi Lauren vs. Allie Recks vs. Hyan vs. Shotzi Blackheart vs. Indi Hartwell vs. Leva Bates

Lucha rules with no tags and one fall to a finish. I don't know who most of these people are but Blake comes out to the Charmed theme song so she's already a favorite. Then Bates (Blue Pants) tops that with Oops I Did It Again and the full red outfit from the song's video, plus a Britney Spears style dance. This gets Big Match Intros, which is only extending things far longer than necessary.

Hyan and Shotzi trade armdrags to start until Shotzi goes for the strikes to the face. The enziguri misses Hyan, but she misses a running knee in the corner as well. Shotzi misses a charge though and falls out to the floor, allowing Blake to come in with Leva following a few seconds later. Blake sends her into the ropes for the 619 to the floor, which doesn't

count as a tag for some reason.

Back in and Bates grabs a Stunner to send Blake outside so Veda comes in for a neck snap across the ropes. An Indian Deathlock doesn't go long so it's off to Recks vs. Lauren as the fast changes continue. The fans don't like Lauren so they go with Indi during the slugout. Everything breaks down and it's a parade of strikes to the face until Veda rope walks into a dive onto a bunch of people at ringside.

Shotzi dives onto the bigger pile, followed by Blake and Recks diving onto everyone else. Back in and it's a Human Centipede of submissions, which thankfully is broken up in a hurry. Hyan missile dropkicks Scott but gets kicked in the face by Leva. Shotzi gets in a Codebreaker on Recks, followed by a reverse Cannonball in the corner. Hyan breaks up something off the top though and it's a 450 double knees to Recks for the pin at 8:10.

**Rating:** C-. This was the indy style that can bring an energetic match down: too many people trying to get in too many spots in a limited time and it hurt things a lot. No one really got to stick out and that's kind of defeating the purpose here. Now I want to go listen to some Britney Spears.

The ring announcer welcomes us to the show again. After two matches.

### Allysin Kay vs. Kris Statlander

Kris has been around a lot this weekend and is an alien. After trying to eat the streamers, Kris bends over like Bray Wyatt to walk on all fours upside down. The test of strength goes nowhere so Kris rolls her around into a rollup for two. A hot shot gets Kay out of trouble and she clotheslines Kris out to the floor. Kay rams her into the barricade for two and we hit the chinlock.

That's broken up and Kris Matrixes away from a clothesline and scores with an enziguri. The Falcon Arrow gets two but Kay avoids the moonsault. Kay kicks her in the face and takes things to the top, only to get caught in an electric chair faceplant. A knee to Kay's face sets up a moonsault for two, with Kay coming back with an over the shoulder kneeling

piledriver for the same. The strike off goes to Kris...until Allysin is right back with a discus lariat for the pin at 8:33.

**Rating:** C-. Both of them worked well, though Kay definitely comes off as the bigger star than a lot of the roster, which is perfectly fine. This was a perfectly watchable match and Kris continues to look good, though some more seasoning will probably help her more than anything else. That and the alien gimmick either being more pronounced or dropped, as it's just kind of a detail at the moment.

Due to time, there is no intermission (good), though the ring announcer does ask us to grab a t-shirt after the show. I'm assuming paying is implied.

### Su Yung vs. Shazza McKenzie

Someone who might be Veda Scott is on commentary. Yung is exactly the same as she is in Impact and I've seen Shazza several times on Wrestlemania weekend shows. The fans remind Yung that she killed Allie, showing that they are up on their Impact (someone has to be). Shazza fires off some early kicks and gets two off a series of rollups. Yung gets tied in the rope for some kicks to the chest but is right back with a backbreaker onto the apron.

A middle finger to the crowd sets up Su's flip dive off the apron as Shazza is in some trouble. Yung ties her in the Tree of Woe for some kicks to the back and a hangman's neckbreaker out of the corner for two. That means a quickly broken chinlock as Shazza fights up and gets in a hurricanrana out of the corner. A hurricanrana driver gives Yung two more but Shazza is right back with some kicks to the face for a breather.

They forearm it out with Shazza getting the better of it to set up some running knees to the back. A high crossbody gives Shazza two more but she gets anklescissored into the corner. The Panic Switch is reversed into a northern light suplex so Yung goes for the kendo stick. That's broken up as well so they go to the middle rope at the same time, setting up a super Stunner to finish Yung at 11:07.

**Rating:** C. Does Yung ever win a bit match? This was a nice back and forth

effort with Shazza getting to showcase herself for a change. More often than not she's in some multiwoman match and doesn't get to show how good she is. The match wasn't great, but I haven't seen many great performances from Yung in the first place.

Tag Team Titles: Twisted Sisters vs. Cheerleader Melissa/Mercedes Martinez

The Sisters (Holidead/Thunder Rosa) are challenging. The rather happy Melissa chants delay the Big Match Intros for a little bit. Martinez and Rosa start things off to fight over a wristlock. Mercedes has to flip out of a headscissor attempt and it's a standoff with Rosa....I think dancing at her? That earns her a shot to the face but Rosa gets two off a victory roll. The Sisters start some double teaming with a tossed splash hitting Martinez for two more before it's off to Melissa for an elbow/side slam combination.

Holidead gets stomped down and Melissa dances at Rosa to even things up. The distraction lets Holidead get in a neckbreaker for two but Martinez gets in a cheap shot from the apron, meaning it's a German suplex into a running knee from Martinez for two more. It's off to a dragon sleeper with some forearms to Rosa's chest as I'm not entirely sure who I'm supposed to cheer for here.

Rosa finally kicks Mercedes away though and it's Holidead coming in to clean house (so the evil twins are faces). Everything breaks down and Holidead is sent outside. That leaves Martinez to hit Three Amigas (superplex, snap suplex and spinning suplex) but Holidead makes the save to put everyone down.

The champs are up first for a powerbomb/neckbreaker combination to Holidead with Rosa making another save. An ugly Code Red puts Martinez down but Melissa is right there with a Samoan drop to Rosa. Since Holidead isn't legal, Melissa hammers away on Rosa, allowing Holidead to come back in with a backbreaker. Mercedes brings in a title but drops it when the referee yells at her, allowing Melissa to hit the Air Raid Crash (White Noise) on Rosa onto the title. An assisted top rope curb stomp retains the titles at 14:45.

**Rating:** B-. Good but not great here as it took me a bit to figure out what they were going for here. The Twisted Sisters have been around Ring of Honor for a bit but it was nice to have them against some more seasoned opponents. Martinez and Melissa worked well as heels together and once everything broke down, this got a lot better.

### Britt Baker vs. Tessa Blanchard

This could be interesting. Tessa tries for a very early Buzzsaw (hammerlock) DDT but Baker shoves her away for an early standoff. The power game lets Tessa drive her into the corner so Baker grabs a rollup for two. That earns Baker a posting and a second one gives Tessa two. A running kick to the back gets the same as Tessa starts in on the spine. A Codebreaker out of the corner sets up a chinlock, which commentary politely calls a submission attempt.

Baker fights up and hits a superkick. The slugout goes to baker, who scores with a Sling Blade into a DDT for two. The Rings of Saturn send Tessa over to the ropes but she's right back with a jumping cutter. A top rope backplash and Batista Bomb get two each and Tessa is getting frustrated. She even steals a move from Britt with the Rings of Saturn, which is broken up just as fast.

Baker grabs a brainbuster for two of her own but Tessa hits a faceplant. Magnum (top rope Codebreaker) gives Tessa two more but Baker is right back with a Canadian Destroyer. Baker hits her own Magnum for her own two and it's back to the Rings. This time Tessa just muscles her up so Baker hits a superkick, only to get pulled into the Buzzsaw DDT to give Tessa the pin at 12:27.

**Rating:** B. As usual, Tessa looks like the most complete package the women's division of any company has seen in a long time. Baker is someone who is going to be treated like a star in AEW and performances like this against top talent is going to help her on the way. Tessa was too much for her here though and it's not like this is going to hurt Baker in any way.

Post match Tessa shows respect and Baker gets a warm reception.

## Blue Nation/Zoe Lucas/Steph De Lander vs. Solo Darling/Sea Stars/Kris Wolf

Blue Nation is Charli Evans/Jessica Troy and the Sea Stars are Ashley Vox/Delmi Exo. Wolf seems to be a little insane and VERY popular. Troy and Vox start things off as the announcers say they're going to be a bit confused as well. Vox slips out of the corner and hits a hard dropkick so it's off to Troy vs. Darling with the latter hitting some hard kicks to the chest. A snap suplex gets two on Lucas and it's off to De Lander for some power.

De Lander gets caught in the corner for a Codebreaker and it's Wolf coming in to fire things up, including a bunch of right hands to Evans. We settle back down to Wolf putting a wolf's head on De Lander so Vox can hit a running Meteora in the corner for two. A cheap shot from Evans lets the villains take over on Vox with Troy starting in on the arm. Evans works on an armbar to do her part and De Lander gets two off a side slam.

Lucas' running X Factor gets two more and it's back to Evans for a rather hard chinlock. Troy gets smart by pulling on the arm again, followed by a legdrop to the arm from Evans. Vox finally manages a double middle rope dropkick and it's Exo coming in to clean house. It's back to Darling for the kicks and suplexes, followed by a modified Sharpshooter on Lucas.

That's broken up as well and this time it's Darling in trouble in the corner. Darling, the smallest in the match, manages a pumphandle slam on the rather large De Lander and it's the real hot tag to Wolf for the real house cleaning. Everything breaks down and we get the chained fish hooking until Vox flips them all over. The heroines load up a quadruple dive but Wolf just throws the wolf head at everyone instead.

De Lander is thrown back inside for a bunch of running knee strikes but the dog pile cover is broken up. That means the big parade of strikes with everyone knocked down for a major breather. Lucas' running ax kick gets two on Wolf but everything breaks down again, leaving Wolf to hit a top rope Meteora to finish Evans at 19:59.

**Rating:** C+. I think this was supposed to be the big showcase match and while the extra time helped it a lot, it certainly feels like a match

where you're supposed to know the people and their characters before coming in. Wolf certainly stood out but she seemed to be the star coming into the match in the first place. This is a case where the backstory would have helped, but the action was good enough to carry things.

### Heart of Shimmer: Samantha Heights vs. Dust

This is the midcard title and Dust is defending but doesn't have her usual manager, Rosemary, here, due to Rosemary causing a DQ in their previous match. Heights is billed from the Second Star to the Right and straight on to Cincinnati, Ohio. Dust send her into the corner for two but has to escape a fireman's carry. They head outside with Heights big booting her over the barricade, followed by a running dive.

The champ is right back with a seated senton off the barricade and a double stomp to the back makes things even worse for Heights. Back in and Heights trips her down, setting up something like the Last Chancery. Dust makes the ropes and kicks away at the back, only to get kicked off the top. That means a series of suicide dives from Heights, followed by a high crossbody for two more.

There's a running kick to the side of Dust's head and the champ is dead weight on the floor. They slug it out on the apron with Dust hitting a DDT for a delayed two. A Backstabber gets the same and Dust kicks her hard in the face for another near fall. Heights is right back with a Blockbuster for two of her own, which is quick the kickout apparently. Dust ties her in the Tree of Woe for the Alberto Del Rio double stomp and now it's her turn to be stunned. Another Backstabber is countered so Heights grabs the hand and runs the corner for what looked like a spinning Downward Spiral for the pin and the title at 13:53.

**Rating:** B-. The ending felt a bit rushed but commentary told a good story and made me want to see Heights win the title. I can see why they went with the feel good moment to end the show and Heights seemed to be rather likable from the limited time she was out there. Dust didn't seem like the biggest star in the world but she was a villain to overcome and that's fine.

**Overall Rating:** B. Given how little there seems to be for character



development and stories, this is going to be more about the work and they did quite well in that department. This show flew by and the action was almost all at least fine if not strong, making this quite the event. It's not something I would watch every day, but for a big special show, they did very well.

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**Mae Young Classic – October 3, 2018: The Classic Of The Classic**



IMG Credit: WWE

### Mae Young Classic

Date: October 3, 2018

Location: Full Sail University, Winter Park, Florida

Commentators: Michael Cole, Renee Young, Beth Phoenix

We're on to the second round now and that means things are going to start getting interesting. In this case we have the first instance of previous winners facing off, which should make for some good matchups. That's the point of a tournament as you start getting to the better matches after you get to the halfway point. Let's get to it.

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

All matches are second round matches.

We open with a quick recap of the first round to set things up for tonight.

Opening sequence.

Toni Storm is a rock star with a ton of attitude.

Hiroyo Matsumoto is still Lady Godzilla, but does she still love to have fun?

Toni Storm vs. Hiroyo Matsumoto

A lockup goes nowhere to start so Toni does a rather complicated spin to escape a wristlock. Toni's wristlock keeps Matsumoto in trouble so they

hit the mat with Matsumoto headscissoring her way out of trouble. Toni handwalks out so Matsumoto kicks her in the ribs to keep her in trouble. A Stunner over the middle rope puts Storm down again and a missile dropkick gets two.

The dueling chants begin but the LET'S GO TONI chants are pretty clearly winning out. Matsumoto chokes with a boot in the corner but Toni catches her with a German suplex. A fisherman's suplex gets two and Toni slugs away but she has to backdrop her way out of a powerbomb attempt.

Matsumoto holds on though and puts on a half crab, which looks great on someone as tiny as Storm. Vader Bomb style double knees get two on Toni, who is right back with another German suplex. That's fine with Matsumoto who scores with the Rock Drop for two of her own as Toni has to get a foot on the rope.

One heck of a clothesline puts Storm down again and Matsumoto loads up another, only to have Storm duck underneath and grab a bridging rollup to advance at 9:17. Nice move on the ending there with Matsumoto listening to the crowd's chants of ONE MORE TIME instead of just going for the pin when she had it.

**Rating:** B. I had a good time with this and it's an encouraging sign that Storm is getting this good in a hurry. Matsumoto is a hard hitter in her own right and has a great future, but Storm has superstar written all over her and there is no reason to believe she isn't going to be a big time player for years to come.

Kacy Catanzaro is from American Ninja Warrior and can overcome her smaller size.

Rhea Ripley is ready to be a dominant force and is more serious than ever.

### Kacy Catanzaro vs. Rhea Ripley

David vs. Goliath, as tends to be the case for Catanzaro. A shoulder puts Catanzaro down in short order so she tries a change of pace with the kicks to Ripley's legs. Kacy gets sent to the apron where she dropkicks

Ripley in the ribs, followed by a hurricanrana. That's fine with Ripley, who drops her hard onto the ropes for two and starts slowing things down. Just to show off a bit, Ripley dropkicks her down for two, which looks rather odd/impressive given the size differential.

A basement dropkick gets one and the fans are split on this one too. Rhea hits a very delayed suplex and cranks on something like a Texas Cloverleaf, though she's standing behind Kacy like an ankle lock. Back up and Kacy spins around her multiple times into a DDT, which is straight out of a Rey Mysterio match. If you can do something that only Mysterio can usually pull off, I think you have a future around here.

Rhea bails to the floor so Kacy hits a corkscrew plancha to keep things moving. Back in and Kacy completely botches a springboard missile dropkick so she tries again, this time jumping over the top to land on the middle and dropkick Rhea down. Rhea has had it with all the flips though and kicks her in the ribs, setting up Riptide for the pin at 7:04.

**Rating:** C+. Kacy is a crazy good athlete and some of the stuff she was doing out there was almost hard to believe. That being said, she's also very new at this and clearly needs a lot of fine tuning. The look, charisma and athleticism are going to be more than enough to carry her though and that's what matters. Ripley on the other hand is ready to be a star right now and that's more than enough reason to send her forward here.

Lacey Lane is an underdog who scored an upset in the first round so she wants to continue her Cinderella story.

Taynara Conti is a black belt in judo who is ready to destroy Lacey.

### Taynara Conti vs. Lacey Lane

Conti wastes no time in flipping her down and does it again, just to show Lane that she's in over her head. Lacey is right back with a 619 for two and an elbow to the face. A missed charge in the corner allows Conti to pull her down by the long hair though and a few kicks to the chest have Lane in even more trouble. Conti is frustrated at the kickout so it's off to a crazy eyed armbar for a few seconds.

Back up and Lane hits a clothesline and something like Sister Abigail for two of her own. That's about it for Conti, who tries another flip but gets reversed into the crucifix bomb to give Lane another upset pin at 2:38. I don't think I get the appeal of Lane but the Full Sail fans seemed to like her so it makes sense to push her again, though I'm not sure about having her go over someone like Conti.

Meiko Satomura wants to show the world strength.

Mercedes Martinez wants to make up for her loss last year with another big win here.

### Meiko Satomura vs. Mercedes Martinez

Feeling out process to start with Meiko going into a wristlock for the very early control. That's reversed into a slightly harder arm crank but Meiko takes her right down again and drops a knee to the chest for two. A double underhook neck crank keeps Martinez down until a suplex gives her two of her own. Meiko slaps on a headscissors on the mat and the announcers laugh a bit too much while talking about how to escape.

Mercedes smacks her in the face for the break and it's time to slug it out. That goes to Martinez as she slams Meiko down and cranks on the leg for a bit. Some forearms in the corner have Meiko in trouble so she kicks Mercedes upside the head. A top rope crotching puts Meiko down again though and it's a hanging swinging neckbreaker for two. Mercedes' fisherman's buster is reversed into a Fujiwara armbar until a few rolls get Mercedes to the ropes.

With the submissions not working, Meiko tries a frog splash for two instead. Mercedes snaps off a Saito suplex for two and they're both down. Back up and Meiko spikes her with a DDT, followed by a second to set up a backflip knee to the ribs for a close two. Martinez is right back up with a big boot and the fisherman's buster...for two. That earns a standing ovation and I can't argue with that at all. A surfboard goes on but Mercedes can't add a dragon sleeper, allowing Meiko to elbow her way out. Meiko kicks her in the face and a running kick to the back of the head is enough for the pin at 11:32.

**Rating:** A-. Well that was awesome and blows away almost anything else in the tournament so far. They beat the heck out of each other until Martinez couldn't stand up any longer, which is often the best formula you can have. Satomura looked like a legend and Martinez was right there with her until the end. Great match and worth checking out for the reaction to that near fall alone.

**Overall Rating:** A. That's easily the best episode of either tournament with an instant classic and another very good match to go with it. Throw in a very entertaining Catanzaro vs. Ripley match and there's nothing bad here whatsoever. This is the kind of show that I've been waiting for from this thing and it was an incredible hour of wrestling. Now hopefully the rest can come close to this, though that's hard to do.

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# Mae Young Classic – September 26, 2018: That's What We're

# Here For



IMG Credit: WWE

## Mae Young Classic

Date: September 26, 2018

Location: Full Sail University, Winter Park, Florida

Commentators: Renee Young, Beth Phoenix, Michael Cole

We're wrapping up the first round tonight with the last four matches, meaning things are already going to be halfway done. The interesting thing here is going to be seeing which surprises WWE has left for us, along with Japanese superstar Io Shirai as this year's breaking name. Let's get to it.

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

The opening video talks about the eight names who will be competing tonight.

Opening sequence.

All matches are first round matches.

Rachel Evers is the daughter of Paul Ellering and wants to make her own path. She lost her focus last year but that's not happening this time around.

Hiroyo Matsumoto calls herself Lady Godzilla. I think that sums her up quite well.

Kassius Ohno, who is dating Evers, is here.

### Hiroyo Matsumoto vs. Rachel Evers

Cole's description of a woman who called herself LADY GODZILLA and wants to fight the Undertaker: "She's colorful and loves to have fun." Cole on Evers: "She wants to have fun!" They shove each other around (while still having fun) to start and some shoulders go nowhere. Clotheslines go nowhere so Matsumoto shoulders her down as Renee talks about joshi.

Evers gets two off a gutwrench suplex and kicks Matsumoto in the face. A missed charge lets Matsumoto Stun her over the ropes, which is called flamboyance for some reason. Matsumoto gets two off a missile dropkick and we hit the chinlock. Back up and Evers gets laid over the middle rope for some kicks to the ribs, followed by a Vader Bomb knee drop for two more.

Evers comes back with a pop up spinebuster (not a powerbomb Cole) for a double knockdown. A slugout goes to Evers and she grabs a cutter into a backsplash for two. Evers drops a spinning double springboard legdrop for two more and the fans are entirely behind her here. Another strike off goes to Matsumoto and she grabs a German suplex, which Evers no sells to a BIG reaction. Matsumoto has had it with Evers and powerbombs the heck out of her, followed by a Saito suplex (the Rock Drop) for the pin at 7:46.

**Rating:** B. Well that was awesome. These two beat the heck out of each other in a style that you just don't get around here. Matsumoto wasn't quite the monster I was expecting but Evers got to slug it out with her and it turned into a very entertaining match as a result. The crowd alone made it that much better, which is a major benefit that not every match can enjoy.

Taynara Conti is a Brazilian jujitsu fighter who has appeared on NXT before.

Jesse Eleban is a nerdy geek who is from Earth and describes herself as "amazeballs". I think you get the idea here.



Dana Brooke is here. Uh....ok then.

### Jessie Eleban vs. Taynara Conti

Conti wastes no time in throwing her down twice in a row. Jessie is right back up with a kick to the face (those long legs help with that) and a backsplash (egads enough with that move) gets two. Back up and Conti starts in on the arm, followed by an STO for two. A stomp to the arm sets up an armbar, followed by another version with some cranking on the wrist to keep Jessie in trouble.

Now it's off to bending the fingers apart, followed by some stomping to the ribs in the corner. Since that's enough to let Jessie fight back, Conti kicks her square in the arm to cut her off again. A catapult of all things drops Conti and some dropkicks keep Conti in trouble. Conti blocks a rollup though and spins her into a Boss Man Slam for the pin at 4:44.

**Rating:** D+. Conti winning here wasn't exactly a surprise here and there's nothing wrong with that. When you have someone who has wrestled on Wrestlemania and a newcomer, it's not exactly the biggest shock in the world. Jessie is charismatic and could get somewhere with some more experience and development, but there was no way she was winning here.

Isla Dawn says she takes a lot of inspiration from goddess worship and wants to fight.

Nicole Matthews is a veteran from Canada who wasn't happy with being an alternate last year. How can you have the best of the best if she's not included?

### Isla Dawn vs. Nicole Matthews

They fight over a few lockups to start as we hear about Dawn being into witchcraft. Dawn takes her down and hits a double stomp, followed by a running Meteora for two. Nicole is right back with a neckbreaker out of the corner (with an edit that made me think that was a second attempt) for two. A kick to the back and a backbreaker has Dawn in more trouble until she avoids a forearm in the corner.

Matthews ties her in the ropes though and kicks away at the chest to keep

Dawn in trouble. Some elbows and forearms set up a double arm crank but Dawn is right back up with some knees to the face. A snap belly to back suplex drops Matthews and a fisherman's suplex gets two. Dawn almost drops her on an Angle Slam for another near fall as Beth thinks a spell might be in need of a spell. Matthews has finally had enough of her and clotheslines Dawn into a Liontamer for the tap at 7:19.

**Rating:** D. This one didn't work for me and I don't think that's the biggest surprise. I was really disappointed in Dawn here who had an interesting backstory and then just went out and wrestled a normal match. The match itself felt disjointed and sloppy at times, which you shouldn't have from someone with Matthews' experience.

Io Shirai is a strong style high flier who was inspired by Rey Mysterio. Make sure the rocket attached to her back doesn't burn you as it launches.

Xia Brookside is nineteen years old and the daughter of NXT trainer Robbie Brookside. It was nice knowing her.

Of course Robbie is here.

### Io Shirai vs. Xia Brookside

Renee on Xia: "She looks like she's made of Skittles." That sounds cool, but Io's moniker is Genius of the Sky. I don't like Skittles so I'm taking Shirai there. Xia forearms her to start but Io lands on her feet to counter a headscissors. The look of shock on Xia's face pretty much seals her fate so as Io forearms her in the corner.

Slingshot knees to the chest in the corner and Io grabs a kind of reverse Sling Blade into a Crossface. A hard knee to the face drops Brookside but she gets in a faceplant for a breather. The fans get behind Brookside...for all of two seconds until a palm strike cuts her off. More running knees in the corner set up a Great Muta style moonsault for the pin at 3:17.

**Rating:** D+. This still wasn't the most thrilling match in the world as Xia was nothing more than cannon fodder for the big star. At the same time, Io isn't about to show off everything she can do in a match that is

little more than a squash. She's going to get a heck of a push in the tournament and beyond, which is exactly the point of a match like this.

Shirai helps what used to be Brookside up.

Here are the updated brackets:

Meiko Satomura

Mercedes Martinez

Lacey Lane

Taynara Conti

Toni Storm

Hiroyo Matsumoto

Mia Yim

Kaitlyn

Tegan Nox

Nicole Matthews

Rhea Ripley

Kacy Catanzaro

Io Shirai

Zeuxis

Deonna Purrazzo

Xia Li

We get a recap of the show, which doesn't happen every week. Feels like filler.

**Overall Rating:** C. The opening match more than makes up for some of the

weaker stuff down the card but the first round being over is the most important thing. The whole appeal of a tournament like this is seeing the people who stole the show in the first round fighting each other again later and that's going to make the next few weeks a lot of fun.