

Middle Kingdom Wrestling – May 11, 2016: What I Asked For

Middle Kingdom Wrestling

Date: May 11, 2016

Location: CWE Gym, Dongguan, China

Commentators: Eddie Strong, Cam Ferguson

This promotion is in a kind of weird place as they haven't had much storyline stuff this season but the standalone shows have been more fun and definitely better presented than a lot of the stuff from last season. I still like what I'm seeing and the shows are still short enough to make these easy sits. Let's get to it.

Standard opening sequence.

Len Bai says something to someone named Tony Trivaldo but I could barely make any of it out. I'm not sure if I was supposed to understand this but if I was, they REALLY need to work on their audio.

Trivaldo, a French wrestling champion, is here to go after Bai for hurting Dalton Bragg's arm.

In something you don't see every day, we cut back and forth between the two as they respond to each other. Bai isn't scared and Trivaldo promises to make Bai regret this. Then Bai bites into something that looked like a piece of chicken.

Len Bai vs. Tony Trivaldo

Trivaldo is definitely the face here and does a decent enough job of playing to the crowd early on. Some armdrags take Bai down to start but he blocks the third as Strong talks about how this has been brewing for some time but thankfully Ferguson points out how weak of a line that is. A dropkick puts Bai on the floor but he comes back with a snapmare and basement dropkick for two as the announcers keep bickering.

Off to a reverse cross armbreaker but Trivaldo powers him up into a sitout powerbomb before nipping up and completely failing to get the crowd to clap with him. Well at least he's trying. Bai counters a backdrop into a DDT and fires off strikes to cut off a comeback (During which Trivaldo tried the clapping thing again and got NOTHING. This time he even looked at the crowd as if to say "come on work with me here." Again, the fact that he's trying is what matters.). A running basement dropkick in the corner before we hit the Figure Four Neck Lock on Trivaldo.

Back up and Tony uppercuts him before trying to get a chant going, only to have a few fans tell him he sucks. Bai grabs a guillotine choke so Tony throws him with a northern lights suplex. Back up and a German suplex sends Bai flying and he pulls off the turnbuckle pad for a cool visual. Apparently Eddie kicks the turnbuckle pad away, thereby screwing up the audio in the process. Well he can't do everything around here. Bai sends him head first into the exposed buckle setting up a spinning fisherman's brainbuster (minus most of the busting) to give Bai the pin.

Rating: C. I was liking the match and there's something cool about seeing people who you'll never likely see otherwise getting a chance to show off in something like this. It also helps to have two people who clearly have some ring experience as it can be kind of tiresome watching people who aren't entirely sure what they're doing. The turnbuckle thing was fine for an ending, though I really hope they don't get rid of Ferguson like they were suggesting in the annotations on Youtube, as he's pretty regularly the most entertaining thing about the show.

We recap the events that set up the six man that has been shown in the opening sequence on every episode of this season. Ash is still mad at Da Li Sam for costing him his tournament match last season by sending him into the post. Then Black Mamba cost Ash a match against Jason....and then it gets a bit confusing. There's something about a mystery partner and Andrew Tag, a champion from another promotion. One of Ash's partners seems to think he's a superhero. I think Sam and Mamba are teaming with the other champion and Ash's partner (along with the superhero) is still a mystery.

Overall Rating: C+. Yeah I know there was only one match on the show but the key thing here was the addition of the storylines. The match had a story and there was a story setting up the match next time (as confusing as it was). I know they're not the most interesting stories in the world but it's better than "here's a tournament match". I still don't know the characters well enough but even the simplest stories are a step up.

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Middle Kingdom Wrestling – October 12, 2015: American Know-How

Middle Kingdom Wrestling Episode 4

Date: October 12, 2015

Location: CWE Gym, Dongguan, China

Commentator: Eddie Strong, Cam Ferguson

Back to the east again with the latest offering from a company that I like for reasons I can't put my finger on. We're moving forward in the tournament but it's been a long time and I might not remember everyone involved. Hopefully they have a decent recap, along with a better

announcer. Let's get to it.

The opening sequence has changed a bit but the recap is still the same. They still need to get a better graphic though.

We open with a recap of Black Mamba being ejected from the tournament for cheating and getting to face the Slam as a result. That right there is all I needed for a recap so far as it took less than a minute and summed up the big story. Well done.

Ash isn't pleased with being cheated out of the tournament by Black Mamba and Da Li Sam. After implying that Sam is a prostitute for fat women, he talks about ripping the stitches out of his head with chopsticks. I think that deserves a HE'S HARDCORE chant. He's back earlier than the doctors recommended and he wants the Slam's top student Jason. Therefore, Jason needs to go tell Slam that he's tired of taking out the trash and buying toilet paper and wants to face Ash instead. The delivery wasn't the best but he definitely had some charisma to him and was comfortable in front of a camera.

Ash vs. Jason

This is billed as a special challenge match. Ash has an American flag on his jacket so I'm guessing he's the heel here. He comes out with a good looking woman so he can't be all bad. We have a new commentator named Cam Ferguson who apparently has a Masters in Confucianism and is clearly a heel.

Jason hides in the corner to start as Eddie recaps the story so far in that annoying voice of his. A dropkick gets two on Jason and Ash messes with the hair. Ferguson says that's typical American bullying but Eddie says he's supposed to be hitting him in a wrestling match. Ferguson: "So it's ok to kick him in the stomach?" A quick belly to belly puts Ash down and Ferguson accuses Ash of hitting low.

We hit a chinlock from Jason (Or a rear naked chin hold according to Eddie. That sounds like the Matt Striker school of "here's a WAY more complicated name than you need.") as Ferguson accuses the referee of being a traitor to the Communist Party. Ash comes back with some forearms

and a middle rope kick to the chest (think RVD) for two, followed by a Boston crab for the win.

Rating: C. You can really tell which people in this promotion have the ring experience. Ash isn't great but he clearly has a much better idea of what he's doing. There was even a little story here and it helped the match move on a lot. Also they're starting to go longer and I'm not bored so things are definitely improving.

MKW Title Tournament Semi-Finals: Dalton Bragg vs. Len Bai

Bragg has comically skinny arms. Bai doesn't like Dalton taking his time on the floor and dives over the top, only to crash down in front of him. It doesn't really matter as the ring is only about three feet above the ground but it was still quite the crash. Bragg gets in a cheap shot from behind to take over and we get a ridiculously slow motion Irish whip into a monkey flip to Bai.

Back up and they trade chops (with Bai's lacking any follow through) until Bragg asks a little girl to rub his hand to make him stronger. Bragg's cross body is countered into a backbreaker for two and Strong is somehow still on my nerves. After Bai hasn't done anything flashy all match, he slaps on Cattle Mutilation of all things. Where did he learn that? A fisherman's buster gets two on Bragg but he pops up and hits a nice middle rope Codebreaker to advance to the finals.

Rating: C-. Not the best match here but you can see that Bai is still new out there. Bragg isn't anything worth watching either though he definitely has more experience and looked more comfortable. The Cattle Mutilation and Codebreaker looked good and the right guy won though so it's not the worst in the world.

Post match Bai breaks Bragg's arm in a surprisingly big heel move.

After the credits, Black Mamba and Da Lip Sam say they're not worried about the Slam. Bai promises to take care of the tournament final too.

Overall Rating: C-. The tournament is coming to a close as we're wrapping up the first season but this wasn't their strongest show. You can clearly

see the difference between the talent levels and it can be a bit tiring watching the people with next to no experience. The show is still watchable at less than half an hour but I'm hoping it picks up a bit in the final.

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Middle Kingdom Wrestling – September 5, 2015: It's Wrestling. But In China.

Middle Kingdom Wrestling Episode 1

Date: September 5, 2015

Commentator: Eddie Strong

It's wrestling in China. I have no idea what to expect here and the show is only nineteen minutes long. This is one of the major countries where wrestling hasn't spread yet and it should be very interesting to see where it goes. I'm hoping this is in English as otherwise, it could be a rather confusing show. Let's get to it.

So it seems that we'll be having a tournament to determine the first ever MKW Champion, though it says that the CWE Champion The Slam (I've heard

worse names) defended his title twice this weekend. So did they just spoil the whole thing?

MKW Title Tournament First Round: Hoho Lun vs. The Selfie King

Selfie King is exactly what he sounds like. Lun has sunglasses on the back of his head. King is sent to the floor and it's time for a picture. Lun is apparently from Hong Kong and is one of the company's founders. The ring is really short as King is above the middle rope while standing on the floor.

Back in and King's kicks to the leg have almost no effect and Lun gets two off a running forearm in the corner. They hit the floor for a chase until Lun takes him back inside for a Boston crab. King makes the rope and tells the referee that he saw a bird, allowing for some selfie stick shots to the back. A standing moonsault (with the camera out of focus for some reason) is enough to pin Lun.

Rating: D. Yeah this was bad. Lun was a mile ahead of King, who might have been making his professional debut here. Above all else here, the commentary is killing it. The guy sounds like he's about 19 years old and trying too hard. He never stops talking and is more annoying than anything else, but it sounds a lot more like he's brand new at this and has no idea what he's doing.

MKW Title Tournament First Round: Len Bai vs. Tangguo Ge

Ge is a masked man in a full body suit and what looks like CM Punk trunks. He gives candy to some kids and comes out to Christina Aguilera's Candyman. So he's the reincarnation of Brad Armstrong? Bai has his face painted and looks like a cocky heel. Ge (whose name means Candy Brother) tries a quick cross body but gets caught in a fall away slam. Back up and Bai is Irish whipped but doesn't seem to know what to do so he just stops. Ge gets whipped into the buckle, followed by a backbreaker for two.

We hit the chinlock on Ge for a bit before he tries.....something like a Canadian Destroyer. That's pretty high up on a list of moves I never thought I would see here, even if it was more of a roll into the

piledriver than a jump. A big clothesline gets two for Bai but Ge grabs the Black Widow of all things. This match continues to surprise me. Bai drops him down in a side slam to break it up before a pair of fisherman's busters are enough for the pin (with the three in slow motion).

Rating: C. WAY better here as both guys looked like they knew what they were doing, at least for the most part. They definitely had some issues out there that can be helped a lot with more experience and some coaching, but both of them looked a lot more polished. It also helps that they were wrestling instead of being obsessed with the gimmick like King was. Far better match here and it even had a story with Bai working on the head to set up the fisherman's buster.

The credits, including thanking the wrestlers, take us out.

Overall Rating: D+. That's on a very strong curve. It's very clear that this is their first show and it looks like they had a budget of about \$18. That being said, I can't imagine there's a very deep talent pool to pick from and they were doing the best with what they had. I'll check out the second episode which might be an improvement, but they have a lot of stuff to fix, some of which might be out of their control.

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