

# Lucha Underground – July 26, 2017: The Old Lucha Way

## Lucha Underground

Date: July 26, 2017

Location: Lucha Underground Temple, Boyle Heights, California

Commentators: Vampiro, Matt Striker

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

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

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

### Cueto Cup Second Round: Texano vs. The Mack

They actually speed things up to start instead of going with the power brawl, including a series of near falls into a standoff.

That's quite the surprise. It even warrants a handshake before Mack grabs a headlock for a negligible advantage. Mack sends him outside for a running flip dive, followed by a running basement Blockbuster for two inside.

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

**Rating:** C+. Good power brawl here though the ending felt like a cop out rather than a win for Texano. It's not like either of them are going to win the tournament but the ending didn't work for me. The match was fun while it lasted though and that's a good thing, but Famous B. isn't doing anything for me and hasn't in a long time.

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

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

#### Cueto Cup Second Round: Pentagon Dark vs. Drago

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

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

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

Post match Pentagon lays out Kobra Moon and goes for the arm but

Aero Star makes the save. Drago lays out Aero Star and Pentagon breaks Star's arm as a trophy.

Pentagon runs into Catrina in the back where she reminds him of his issues with Mil Muertes. Catrina promises that Mil hasn't forgotten and will take him out of the Cup.

#### PJ Black vs. Rey Mysterio

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

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

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

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

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

**Overall Rating:** C+. Not a great show this week but we're down to the

final eight in the tournament and are starting to get some real build towards the title match. As usual, the best way to make TV seem important is to give it a long form build and that's what we've gotten so far. These shows have been FAR more entertaining than what we had been seeing in the months leading up to it and that's a very important upgrade.

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

### **Lucha Underground**

Date: July 19, 2017

Location: Lucha Underground Temple, Boyle Heights, California

Commentators: Vampiro, Matt Striker

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

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

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

#### Cueto Cup Second Round: Cage vs. Pindar

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

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

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

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

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

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

Johnny Mundo has hired an agent (Benjamin Cooke) for the Worldwide Underground. PJ Black comes in and we get a pretty solid speech from Benjamin about how far the team could go with the right

representation. We're talking cereal boxes here.

#### Cueto Cup Second Round: PJ Black vs. Prince Puma

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

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

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

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

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

Black comes into Dario's office and is told that Cooke has already set him up with another match. Next week, Black gets Rey Mysterio. He leaves and Cooke calls Dario again, causing him to throw his phone in the trash.

**Overall Rating:** B. I had a lot of fun with this and it was flying

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

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

## Lucha Underground

Date: July 5, 2017

Location: Lucha Underground Temple, Boyle Heights, California

Commentators: Vampiro, Matt Striker

It's the final night of the first round of the Cueto Cup tournament, meaning next week we can start finding out who might make a run in this thing. First though, we need to have the EVIL TWIN story, which could mean almost anything around here. Alternate dimensions

certainly aren't out of the question and I really don't know what to think about that. Let's get to it.

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

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

#### Cueto Cup First Round: Sexy Star vs. PJ Black

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

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

Star decks the referee with the knuckles too.

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

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

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

worried about who can rip off Sons of Anarchy more next.

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

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

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

#### Cueto Cup First Round: Prince Puma vs. Ricky Mandel

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

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

We look at next week's second round matches.

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

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

Back in and Dragon loads up something flashy but has to settle for a regular legdrop instead. A running C4 gives Fox two of his own, only to have Azteca hit a regular C4 of his own for two. They trade basement dropkicks and both guys are down again. Cue Taya to go

after Mysterio, earning herself a dropkick. Mundo himself runs in and powerbombs Rey into the barricade, setting up a beatdown from the entire Worldwide Underground. Azteca dives outside for a save and dives back in to the Foxcatcher (inverted DDT) for the pin at 9:06.

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

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

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# Lucha Underground —

# December 28, 2016: Lucha Underground Meets the Avengers

## Lucha Underground

Date: December 28, 2016

Location: Lucha Underground Temple, Boyle Heights, California

Commentators: Matt Striker, Vampiro

We're wrapping up the year with a match I'm actually interested in seeing as Mil Muertes faces Jeremiah Crane. I'm not sure what to make of Crane yet as he's such an odd character yet there's something about him that makes me want to see more of what they're doing with him. Let's get to it.

The opening video looks at Angelico returning, Cage vs. Texano, Catrina suggesting that Crane loves him and Prince Puma losing Grave Consequences.

Vampiro raises Puma from the grave and Puma, now dark, has a new master. I could totally go for this.

### Jeremiah Crane vs. Mil Muertes

Crane goes right after him at the entrance and is knocked for a loop as a result. A running forearm to the back and a powerslam plant Crane again. As the referee looks at Catrina (understandable), cue Puma with a kendo stick shot, allowing Crane to hit a bicycle kick for the pin at 2:04.

Puma kneels to Vampiro and Striker is scared.

A stranger gives Sexy Star a present but says he used to be a Johnny Mundo fanboy. The guy leaves and the package contains a spider, just like a few weeks back.

Famous B. gives Texano an offer of fame and is promptly scared off.

Vampiro doesn't want to talk about what just happened.

### PJ Black/Jack Evans vs. Angelico/Son of Havoc

This is Angelico's first match back from an injury and he starts by flipping around with Evans. The cocky one doesn't do so well and

Angelico cranks on his arm a bit. Black comes in and grabs Havoc by the beard (that's just evil), only to have a WAY too early hot tag bring Angelico back in. The bouncing kick to the head gets two on Black and everything breaks down. Angelico goes down holding his elbow (legitimately dislocated), leaving Black to kick Havoc for the pin at 5:58.

**Rating:** C. The injury destroyed whatever this match could have done and that's a shame. Angelico has always been one of my favorites in this promotion but unfortunately he keeps getting injured. The match could have been something entertaining between two teams that know each other very well but there's not much you can do when you lose a fourth of the wrestlers.

Dario is looking in his glowing box when Star comes in. She wants and is granted a match with Mariposa next week.

#### Cage vs. Texano

Match number four in a best of five series with Cage up 2-1. Texano runs him over to start and hits a sliding clothesline but Cage turns it into a slugout. A turnbuckle pad comes off and Cage goes face first into the steel, setting up a sitout powerbomb to tie the series at 2-2 at 2:01.

Dario comes out and says he knows they both want the ultimate opportunity. Dario: "And you should because IT'S REALLY FREAKING AWESOME!" The fifth match is happening right now and anything goes.

#### Cage vs. Texano

This is winner take all and Cage is coming in bloody. Texano stomps him down in the corner but walks into a DDT. That just earns Cage a kick to the head in the corner, followed by a top rope hurricanrana and a slingshot splash for two. Cage kicks him in the face again and sends Texano outside for a big suicide dive.

A trashcan to the head has Texano reeling and they head up the stairs so Cage can send him through a table. What would wrestling be without a table? Texano knocks him down the steps and Cage is just covered in blood. Now it's up into the balcony with Vampiro comparing this to World War II. A great sounding superkick staggers Texano again but he runs Cage over and knocks him into the empty chairs.

That means it's time for a bullrope over Cage's back and a

spinebuster onto a chair makes it even worse. Cage just blasts Texano with a chair, only to get pulled down into a Crossface. The hold is quickly broken and the discus lariat gets two for Cage, followed by a freaking STEINER SCREWDRIVER for the pin at 22:13.

**Rating:** B+. I'm a big fan of both of these guys so this was one heck of a brawl with both guys coming out looking great. They beat the heck out of each other in a rare case where the blood helped (though it wasn't necessary, as is always the case). Texano needs to do something soon but sweet goodness I could watch Cage do everything Ryback wished he could do for a long time.

Dario says Cage will get his prize behind closed doors. After the credits, Cage goes into Dario's office where Dario opens the box. Cage isn't impressed but apparently it's a gauntlet (metal glove) with SUPERPOWERS. He tries it on and chokes Dario as the gauntlet shoots electricity. Cage leaves and Dario is pleased.

**Overall Rating:** B-. For the first time in a long time, I'm digging Lucha Underground quite a bit. Between Jeremiah Crane being interesting, Johnny Mundo as a solid champion, Dark Puma and CAGE HAVING THE FREAKING INFINITY GAUNTLET, I think I've got a few things to look forward to around here. This show could get awesome in a hurry and that's very exciting for a long time fan.

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# Lucha Underground – December 21, 2016: Just Let It Be Over

## Lucha Underground

Date: December 21, 2016

Location: Lucha Underground Temple, Boyle Heights, California

Commentators: Vampiro, Matt Striker

It's a big night here as we have the finals of the Battle of the Bulls tournament, meaning a four way elimination match to crown a new #1 contender. Other than that we have a big title match as Sexy Star challenges Lucha Underground Champion Johnny Mundo for the title inside a steel cage. Let's get to it.

The opening recap looks at the two big matches.

Battle of the Bulls Finals: Cage vs. The Mack vs. PJ Black vs. Jeremiah Crane

Elimination rules. Cage takes over to start and suplexes Mack down, only to have Black kick him in the head. Crane clotheslines the heck out of Black but Cage hits a big flip dive over the top because he's that kind of an athletic freak. All four are outside with Crane's charge being countered into a Cage Jackhammer. Back in and a double team to Cage fails completely as he powerslams Black out of the air.

Crane is powerbombed onto Mack out of the air but here's Texano to punch Cage in the jaw, allowing a parade of finishers to eliminate him at 6:03. That's some smart booking. Back from a break with Crane hitting a slingshot swinging neckbreaker for two on Black, followed by a Brock Lock to keep him in a trouble. Crane takes Mack to the top but gets Stunned back down for the pin at 14:14. We take a second break and come back with Mack hitting another Stunner for the win at 20:02.

**Rating:** B-. I liked most of this as they had a fun, fast paced match instead of trying for something epic for a change. Mack is an interesting choice for the win as you don't really expect to see him as a title contender. Good match here and the Battle of the Bulls was a lot of fun, which I didn't really expect.

Fenix and Aerostar can't find Drago. Kobra Moon comes in and says Drago has come home with her. Moon's two monsters beat them down. Mack and Sexy Star celebrate. He tells her to get the title but don't be upset when he takes the title.

Crane goes to see Dario and is given a match he wants. Instead of leaving, Crane stands on a chair and gets something out of the ceiling, which he says he used to play with when he was a kid. After leaving, Crane runs into Catrina and says the match next week is with Mil Muertes. He walks through her like she's a ghost.

#### Lucha Underground Title: Johnny Mundo vs. Sexy Star

Mundo is defending and the Worldwide Underground is banned from ringside. In a very telling sign, the fans start a LOUD Johnny Mundo chant. Johnny kicks her away to start and poses because he's a man and she's a woman, meaning he's required to make fun of her. Star grabs a rollup for two and makes a very failed attempt to get out of the cage. The fans are a bit more split now as Johnny drives her into the cage and shouts that he's the man.

The champ misses a charge but still stops Star from escaping. That earns himself a crotching on the top but Johnny grabs a fireman's carry to send Sexy into the cage three times in a row. Star gets in a sitout powerbomb from the corner for two as Striker tells us to watch both wrestlers' chests. To check on their conditioning you see. Johnny gets pulled down again and hit with a not great high crossbody from the top of the cage for two. They both head to the top with Star firing off kicks until Johnny rips her mask off. Johnny climbs out to retain at 12:13 as Star is covering her face on the mat.

**Rating:** C. Is that it for Sexy Star near the title? I certainly hope so as her main event run has been one of the least interesting things Lucha Underground has done. The matches haven't exactly been bad but it feels like watching X-Pac or Rey Mysterio fighting Big Show. I am WAY past the point of buying her as a legitimate threat to the title as almost all of her wins and even hope spots come from someone being overconfident. It's not interesting and yet it's all we get from her. Move on to someone more interesting, please.

The Mack Stuns Johnny as the champ goes to leave.

Moon has Drago chained up but he won't call her queen. Drago

breathes fire to end the show.

**Overall Rating:** C+. There's some good stuff on this show with the opener working just fine and the main event being watchable, albeit dull. I'm interested in where Crane is going as he's already hit a better stride in Lucha Underground than he did in his entire NXT run. The thing to remember is that this season is forty episodes long and we're not even at the halfway mark yet. That's A LOT of material to get through and it's going to take time to get somewhere. I didn't hate this show and I don't hate this season but I'm a little bored, which might be even worse.

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# Lucha Underground – December 14, 2016: Tournaments Are Cool

## Lucha Underground

Date: December 14, 2016

Location: Lucha Underground Temple, Boyle Heights, California

Commentators: Vampiro, Matt Striker

We're wrapping up the first round of the Battle of the Bulls tournament this week and that could mean some good things. Last

week's matches were all about the action and that's exactly what they should be. It might be nice to hear from the champ for a change though as Johnny Mundo doesn't feel important. Let's get to it.

The recap looks at Angelico wanting Johnny Mundo, the Kobra Moon Tribe, Matanza wanting Rey Mysterio and Sexy Star earning a title rematch inside a cage.

#### Battle of the Bulls First Round: Dante Fox vs. Killshot vs. Jeremiah Crane vs. Mariposa

Killshot and Crane quickly clean house and turn it into a one on one fight. Fox gets back up and starts kicking people in the head, followed by a string of suicide dives. Everyone is down so let's talk about how inspiring Sexy Star is. Killshot's running moonsault dive takes some people down, only to have another knocked away by a Jeremiah chair shot.

Crane throws in a pile of chairs and sets them up, eventually meaning a Tower of Doom with Killshot getting the worse of it. Mariposa is the only one up so the fans cheer, even when she beats on everyone else with chairs. Killshot gets in a few shots of his own and everyone is down.

It's Crane up first with a sitout powerbomb and Brock Lock to put Killshot in trouble. The Butterfly Effect onto a chair gives Mariposa two on Killshot (he's been busy tonight) but Fox takes her out. The 450 hits Crane's boots though and a Cranial Contusion (Jay Driller) gives Jeremiah the pin at 11:02.

**Rating:** B-. More good stuff in these first round matches and I like the idea of Crane getting a push. Of course he's not going to win the match and of course not the title but it's cool to see him get a win like this to make people take him seriously. Good enough match here, though it was a lot of crashing with little flow for the most part.

Killshot kicks Fox in the head and gives him the top rope double stomp.

Taya is filming the rest of the Worldwide Underground in what feels

like an NW0 inspired vignette.

Sexy Star sees a spider and freaks out. So now she can rise above spiders.

#### Kobra Moon vs. Drago

This is over Drago leaving the tribe and annoying Moon. A loud dropkick puts Moon down early but Drago doesn't seem to want to follow up. Another hard kick has Moon in trouble but here's one of Moon's cronies (shown last week) to jump Drago for the DQ at 2:45.

Fenix and Aerostar come in for the save, only to have Moon summon a masked monster to clean house. The fans call him Luchasaurus for a good name. Drago gets tombstoned and carried out.

Star goes after Mariposa, accusing her of planting the spider. A wall is broken and Mariposa seems intimidated.

#### Battle of the Bulls First Round: PJ Black vs. Jack Evans vs. Son of Havoc vs. Angelico

They break down into the expected tag match to start until Angelico headlocks Havoc. That lasts all of three seconds before they dive onto Evans and Black to crank it up a bit. Back in and Angelico gets double teamed in the corner, only to have Havoc use a pair of top rope double stomps to save his buddy. Black and Evans catch Havoc's spinning crossbody but Angelico kicks them both in the head a few times.

The Fall of the Angels (running Razor's Edge) is broken up, only to have Havoc come back in for the save. A Doomsday Device doesn't work but Jack breaks up Havoc's shooting star. The Tower of Doom is broken up so Angelico superplexes Evans onto the other two on the floor. Back in and Angelico is shoved inside, leaving Black to tell Evans to pin him. It's a swerve though as Black rolls him up for the pin at 8:43.

**Rating:** C. They managed to turn a fourway into something like a tag match and that's the right move all around. I get the idea of moving Black on and this could help set up the end of the Worldwide Underground, which isn't the most interesting group in the first

place. They also made sure to keep Angelico strong by not having him take the fall, which helps set him up for Mundo later on.

That leaves us with PJ Black vs. Jeremiah Crane vs. the Mack vs. Cage for the title shot.

Mysterio is recovering when Dragon Azteca Jr. comes in. Rey says they can't win the fight against Matanza but Azteca has to try.

**Overall Rating:** C+. I'm getting into this Battle of the Bulls thing and the fourway final should be a lot of fun. Any of them vs. Mundo (please don't switch the title back) would be interesting though I'd like to see Crane for the sake of making a new star. The tribe stuff is fine as well due to a lack of challengers to the Trios Titles (Remember those?). It's been a nice few weeks and I'm starting to look forward to this show for the first time in a good while.

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# **Lucha Underground – December 7, 2016: Bullfighting**

**Lucha Underground**

Date: December 7, 2016

Location: Lucha Underground Temple, Boyle Heights, California

Commentators: Vampiro, Matt Striker

We're in a weird place here as this season is so long that it can take a long time to get anywhere. At the same time though, almost nothing interesting is really going on. We might be able to get somewhere with Matanza going after Rey Mysterio and Vampiro being Prince Puma's new mentor but it's hard to say what we might be getting here. Let's get to it.

The opening video looks at Johnny Mundo's rise to the Lucha Underground Title, the Best of Five series between Texano and Cage and Sexy Star losing the title.

Angelico comes in to see Dario Cueto and demands a match with Mundo tonight. The title doesn't have to be on the line but Dario talks about Johnny's lawyer. Lawsuits are threatened and Angelico suggests putting Dario through a table. Dario brings up a tournament for the #1 contendership. That's enough for Angelico.

The tournament will be called the Battle of the Bulls with four fatal fourways (one fall to a finish). The winners will advance to a fourway elimination match for the title shot.

Battle of the Bulls First Round: Cage vs. Texano vs. Joey Ryan vs. Dr. Wagner Jr.

Cage jumps Famous B. before he can get done with Wagner's entrances. So much for him getting fame. It's quickly down to Cage vs. Texano with the latter scoring off a leg lariat and grabbing his bullrope. A big flip dive takes out Wagner and Ryan but Cage moonsaults down onto all of them for a huge crash. Wagner gets superplexed back in as it's all Cage early on. For some reason Ryan tries a Blockbuster, only to get caught in a Jackhammer. That's just awesome.

Wagner starts in on Texano's knee before snapping off a middle rope cutter. Joey gets two on Cage off a middle rope neckbreaker but Cage is right back up with the Tower of Doom to put everyone else down. Back up with Ryan superkicking Cage into a German suplex from Texano, who sitout powerbombs Joey for two. Cage comes right back in

with the bullrope to knock Texano out for the pin at 8:32.

**Rating:** B-. The Battle of the Bulls name could work really well as this was all about hitting each other really hard. That being said, I really could go for them finishing up one competition before starting up something else in the middle. Cage vs. Texano needs to wrap up so they can be the vessel or whatever it's going to be so we can get somewhere.

Dario gives Sexy Star a match with PJ Black. If she wins, she gets her title rematch inside a cage. If she loses though, no more title shots ever.

Captain Vazquez sends Cortez Castro back into the Temple despite Dario knowing he's a cop. She gives him a mask, because all police officers keep those in their desk.

#### Sexy Star vs. PJ Black

Of note here, Striker explains the stipulations which are sent to his headset. Again: they don't see the backstage segments and I've always liked that. Star starts fast with a hurricanrana but Black doesn't seem all that worried. A quick throw sends Star down so PJ can pose a bit before blasting her with a shot to the face. The top rope Lionsault gets two but Star avoids a second and grabs a DDT for two. Cue Jack Evans for a failed distraction though, allowing Star to grab a rollup for the pin at 6:30.

**Rating:** D+. Oh my goodness I am sick of Sexy Star. In case it hasn't been BEATEN INTO YOUR HEAD enough by now, Sexy Star is a woman and male heels don't take her seriously. Also there's something about her fighting back from adversity from years ago which again you almost never hear about because we're too busy hearing about how amazing Star is. You don't have to

Kobra Moon tells her tribe that they must bring back the man who deserted them over a thousand years ago. She orders them to bring her the man who used to be a dragon.

Matanza still wants Rey Mysterio but Dario says Rey is injured. Matanza isn't pleased so Dario tries to calm him down, only to have

the monster attack. Now that's a change.

### Battle of the Bulls First Round: Marty Martinez vs. Dragon Azteca Jr. vs. The Mack vs. Mil Muertes

Everyone goes after Muertes to start and are easily shrugged off. A second attempt works a bit better and Muertes is dumped out to the floor. Dragon spins way into the air for a DDT on Mack, only to get speared in half by Muertes. Marty gets right in Mil's face so Muertes fires off ten clotheslines in the corner. Mack actually drops Mil but gets into it with Dragon instead of following up. What a schnook.

A big flip dive takes Mack down but Dragon can't follow up. Instead Mil spears Marty through the ropes to take the other two down in a big heap. Back in and Mil punches Dragon so hard that he hurts his own arm. Everyone decides to go after Muertes again but for the second time in the match, no one is smart enough to stay on him. The swinging chokeslam plants Dragon but he gets in a hurricanrana to send Muertes into the corner. A 450 crushes Mil and Dragon doesn't cover with even Vampiro saying that was a bad idea.

Cue Matanza to powerbomb Dragon onto Mil and plant him with Wrath of the Gods. Dario comes out with the key to draw Matanza to the back, leaving Mack to Stun Marty for the pin at 8:26. Striker: "On this night, the Mack was indeed the better man!" Not really. He was the only one who wasn't an idiot and one of the guys who wasn't laid out by Matanza.

**Rating:** C+. The interference was a bit much and Striker got on my nerves more and more every time he talked with the big ending line making it even worse. Still though, good match here as this tournament is entertaining so far. Mack winning is interesting and I'm glad they didn't go with the obvious choice in Muertes.

**Overall Rating:** C+. I really can't get over how much I can't stand Sexy Star. If there's ever been a more two note character....well there probably are several of them but none that really get on my nerves like she does. The tournament matches helped but it still feels like they're adding in more and more stuff instead of really

getting anywhere with the things they've already started. The action carries it though and that's what matters most.

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# **Lucha Underground – October 27, 2016: It's A Soul In A Box**

## **Lucha Underground**

Date: October 26, 2016

Location: Lucha Underground Temple, Boyle Heights, California

Commentators: Vampiro, Matt Striker

The countdown to Aztec Warfare is on and that means things are about to pick up around here. The problem with this season so far has been the lack of any meaningful story but the entire roster contending for the title in one match should get us somewhere. If nothing else it would be nice to see something other than one random challenger a week. Let's get to it.

This week's opening recap looks at Texano vs. Cage, Johnny Mundo getting a Gift of the Gods Title shot and Ivelisse's boyfriend Jeremiah. These things are a great refresher and a solid preview of things to come tonight.

Sexy Star comes into Dario Cueto's office and demands her Lucha Underground Title shot next week. Dario admires her huevos but says she has to defend the Gift of the Gods Title against Johnny Mundo tonight. If Aerostar, Fenix or Drago interfere, they're banned from the Temple forever.

#### Marty Martinez vs. Ivelisse

Marty smiles as Ivelisse forearm him in the face and a middle rope crossbody is turned into a powerslam. As the beating goes on, Vampiro says Marty weighs 300lbs. I know wrestling weights are gimmicked but that sounds insane. Mariposa gets in a few bites (thereby freaking Melissa Santos out) and Marty elbows Ivelisse in the face. A few strikes stagger Marty but Ivelisse's guillotine choke actually brings him down. Well at least a little down until he knocks her silly with a spinebuster. A full nelson slam puts Ivelisse away at 4:20.

**Rating:** D+. Lucha Underground is normally pretty good with their intergender matches but in this case it was Marty destroying one of the best women in the promotion. Ivelisse never had a chance here and Marty, who isn't much of a star in his own right, basically squashed her. What happened here?

Post match Jeremiah comes in and cleans house until it turns into a brawl, likely setting up a tag match. Jeremiah seems to apologize to Ivelisse for interfering but she's not pleased.

The Rabbit Tribe, including Paul London, is coming soon.

Jeremiah is still apologizing and suggests he join the Temple. The idea of them fighting together seems to appeal to Ivelisse.

And now, let's make things interesting. We go to the inside of Councilman Delgado's limo when Dario gets in. Dario says someone's ascension is complete (they might be talking about their boss but it's not clear) and Delgado talks about needing a host body. It seems that the series between Texano and Cage will be for the right to be the host so Delgado hands Dario a box....which I assume contains a soul? Now THIS is Lucha Underground!

#### Texano vs. Cage

This is match #3 in a best of five series with Cage up 2-0. Texano goes right after him (because he's desperate) and a clothesline sends Cage outside. A whip into the eternally empty wooden chairs

makes things even worse for Cage so he throws Texano right back. Texano pops back up as well and sunset bombs Cage over the top and back onto the floor.

Back in and the no selling continues with Cage throwing him down in a fall away slam. A top rope superplex puts both guys down in a heap and Cage is the first to cover for two. Cage's pumphandle faceplant gets the same so Texano hits a middle rope leg lariat for his own near fall. This is a bunch of trading spots and that's all it should be. A buckle bomb sets up an F5 on Texano and the kickout frustrates Cage even more. With Cage at his wits' end, Texano grabs a small package for the pin at 7:45.

**Rating:** C+. I'm a big fan of that ending as they were beating the heck out of each other until one guy puts the brakes on and goes in a completely opposite direction for the pin. It's good psychology and works almost every time. I'm sure we'll see these two fight again but it's nice to keep them from fighting on every single show. In other words, this isn't Cesaro vs. Sheamus.

Dario is looking in the box (What could that possibly look like?) when Rey Mysterio comes in. Rey wants to face Chavo Guerrero in a Loser Leaves the Temple match. Dario agrees and says you have to put a dog down for its own good. Now anyone other than a wrestling face would see that something is up with a statement like that but Rey is cursed with being an idiot.

#### Gift of the Gods Title: Johnny Mundo vs. Sexy Star

Star is defending. It's a change of pace this time as Star tries to stay away to start, only to get taken down into an amateur wrestling contest. This goes badly for the champ and Johnny kicking at the legs make it even worse. A botched looking neckbreaker puts Sexy down again and a running knee to the face gets two.

Johnny goes Backlund with a crossface chickenwing before putting Star on the top rope and elbowing her in the face. You don't see that very often but it's happened twice on this one show. Johnny tries a moonsault but lands on raised feet to FINALLY (ok they're four minutes into the match) give Star an opening. Star goes with some weak looking right hands to the face and a failed monkey flip because YOU CAN'T MONKEY FLIP JOHNNY MUNDO! Yeah doesn't have quite the same ring.

Mundo spears the referee by mistake and of course Star chokes Johnny

out a few seconds later. Cue the Worldwide Underground to lift Star up so Johnny can charge at her, sending her flipping over and down to the mat (Chikara's BDK used it as their finisher, Ragnarok). Another referee comes in as the Underground leaves (So he was watching the match to see the ref bump but not the interference?) to count two, meaning Johnny knocks him out too.

The Underground wraps a chair around Star's neck but before they can Pillmanize her, it's the Mack running in with a bunch of Stunners. Star chairs Mundo in the head for two and I can hear Vince Russo's laughter in my head. Johnny misses the split legged moonsault but pulls out a pair of brass knuckles to knock Star out for the pin and the title at 11:43.

**Rating:** D. I know this is a promotion where the suspension of disbelief has to be stretched but the idea that the referees didn't catch on to ANY of that cheating is too much for me to take. This was Sexy Star vs. the World (wide Underground) and it really didn't work. Mundo cheating to win once or twice at the most would have been fine but this was two people interfering, a chair, two ref bumps and brass knuckles. There's a line you can cross where it's too much to take and this match jumped over it.

Prince Puma is working out when Vampiro comes in to say beating Mil Muertes was a great first step. Vampiro brings up Muertes killing Konnan, which Puma finds due to Vampiro's hatred of Konnan. Puma seems to think about it to end the show.

**Overall Rating:** D+. This wasn't a strong episode on the wrestling side though we're starting to get back on the right path with the storytelling, which is where Lucha Underground shines. You can tell there's going to be some big stuff coming at the Aztec Warfare show and that's a good sign going forward. This show wasn't a good sign though and that's quite the fall after last week's strong outing.

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# Lucha Underground – July 20, 2016 (Season 2 Finale): See You....Long?

## Lucha Underground

Date: July 20, 2016

Location: Lucha Underground Temple, Boyle Heights, California

Commentators: Vampiro, Matt Striker

We'll wrap it up here with the season two finale and the final part of Ultima Lucha Dos. That means Pentagon Jr. challenging Matanza for the Lucha Underground Title, Taya vs. Ivelisse and Rey Mysterio vs. Prince Puma in a major battle of the generations. They've got their work cut out for them to top what they did last year and I'm not sure they can pull it off. Let's get to it.

We open with a long recap of all the major events this season, which really was divided up into two parts with the pre and post Dario return. Also there's a lot of stuff that was basically forgotten, including Aerostar being a time traveler. They really do pack a lot of stuff into this and it's done a great job of making me want to see the big finale.

Vampiro is in full Emperor Palpatine mode as Pentagon Jr. bows to him before the title match. Pentagon has to destroy the monster that broke him but there is still fear inside him. Vampiro takes him to a room full of Pentagons, who the real Pentagon must destroy. With those imposters easily dispatched, it's time for the big showdown with the masked master. Pentagon rips the mask off and Vampiro says he's ready but not before changing his name from Pentagon Jr. to Pentagon Black.

Trios Titles: Drago/Fenix/Aerostar vs. Johnny Mundo/Jack Evans/PJ Black

Mundo and company are defending but there's no Taya. Johnny gets in a backbreaker to start on Fenix and it's quickly off to Drago who gets in a spinning DDT. Black comes in sans tag but misses his top rope Lionsault. Aerostar's corkscrew crossbody takes Black down again and a slingshot corkscrew splash gets no count as the referee actually remembers who is legal. It's off to Fenix who superkicks Jack before the good guys clean house, only to have the referee stop the triple dive because they're not legal.

The distraction lets Fenix get stomped down in the corner as the champs take over. Evans comes in for a whip to crotch Fenix before a double belly to back suplex into a neckbreaker gets two. Everything breaks down again as Striker keeps talking about the referee, which has gotten more attention here than anything else. Jack's springboard is broken up with a superkick and a Canadian Destroyer plants Johnny.

Aerostar dives on the other champs and Fenix hits a great looking frog splash for two on Mundo. A slingshot splash from Aerostar and the springboard 450 from Fenix add up for two. The referee goes down so Mundo keeps getting beaten up until his partners FINALLY help him out with a belt shot to Fenix's head. A triple belt shot to the head gets two (seriously?) so Black kicks the ref in the head.

The champs go nuts with Chikara's BDK's Ragnarok (Evans and Black hold Fenix up by the arms while a running Johnny flips him forward for a big crash onto his back) but there's still no referee. Johnny puts the title on Fenix's face but here's Angelico on crutches to take Mundo out. Aerostar gets back up and springboards into a reverse moonsault to drop Evans. Another crutch shot sets up a Fenix Driver (Fire Thunder Driver) for the pin on Mundo at 11:50. That makes Fenix the first Triple Crown Champion.

**Rating:** B. Good choice for an opener here with a group of people going all over the place with a bunch of high spots and insanity. Angelico coming out made sense as Johnny won the title in the first place cue to Angelico being injured, presumably by Mundo in the first place. The referee stuff got a bit annoying as the story came out of nowhere but then was dropped halfway through the match. Still though, good opener here and that's why you have matches like this one.

Dragon Azteca Jr. vs. Black Lotus

So Lotus mistakenly thinks Azteca's father killed her parents and is out for revenge, which actually makes sense for a change. They start fast with some running flips and a headscissors to send Dragon down. As Vampiro says Lotus is sexy and turning him on, Azteca baseball slides her to take over for the first time. Azteca misses a flip dive but easily whips her into the barricade with some force. Back in and Dragon misses a high cross body (he isn't the most accurate) to give Lotus two, only to have him pop back up with a roaring elbow. Azteca goes up but Pentagon of all people runs out to crotch him at 4:20.

**Rating:** D. I think we've seen our first Ultima Lucha match to be sacrificed due to time restraints. To be fair though, it's not like this match had the biggest build in the world. This story has been kind of all over the place and the announcers can't talk about it because they haven't seen any of the buildup. You can barely talk about this one but Lotus looked fine while they lasted.

With Vampiro's blessing, Pentagon breaks both of their arms. After a break, Pentagon says he'll destroy Matanza with the new knowledge his master gave him. Now he's Pentagon Dark and ready for anything, including taking down the monster because there is zero fear. Actually, let's just do the title match RIGHT NOW.

#### Lucha Underground Title: Matanza vs. Pentagon Dark

Matanza is defending, Dario is in his corner and there must be a winner. Pentagon immediately hits a flip dive over the top to put the champion down. Vampiro keeps talking about the differences between Pentagon Jr. and Pentagon Dark as Pentagon knocks Matanza around ringside, including a hard whip into the barricade. An AA (not a Death Valley Driver announcers) has Matanza in even more trouble and he punches the post to make it even worse.

Some chairs to the back (including a La Parka guitar strum) knock Matanza around ringside and Pentagon whips him through some chairs. Matanza gets in a few right hands, only to be superkicked up against the barricade. Pentagon throws him through more chairs as this has been about 95% Pentagon through the first five minutes.

More chair shots to the leg keep Matanza in trouble on the floor and they FINALLY head inside. Dario: "Matanza! REMEMBER MAMA!" Matanza takes a third superkick and a running Codebreaker for two. A Backstabber gets the same so Dario is holding up the key. Pentagon

wedges a chair in the corner (because wrestlers never learn) and is quickly sent head first into it for Matanza's first major offense.

Matanza sends him flying with a pumphandle suplex and a standing moonsault gets two. Pentagon stands up after a German suplex and tells him to bring it. That means superkick #5 to the champ before a modified Wrath of the Gods (not an Irish Car Bomb Matt) gets two. Pentagon goes outside and stops a dive with a chair to the head, followed by a Canadian Destroyer to really knock Matanza silly.

Vampiro gets up and hands Pentagon a barbed wire baseball bat (the next logical step) but Dario knocks it out of his hands. Pentagon goes for Dario's arm but Matanza hits him (weakly) in the back with the bat and hits Wrath of the Gods to retain at 11:32. The fans are NOT happy with that ending and swear quite a bit.

**Rating:** B. Uh what? No seriously, what was that ending? Pentagon completely dominated Matanza the whole match, shrugged off most of his offense and then gets beaten by two moves? That felt like they had no idea how to get out of this and just said "oh just have him hit his finisher to retain". No build to it, no logical storytelling, no reason for Pentagon to lose that fast.

This match needed another five minutes or so and a lot more offense from Matanza if you're going to go with that ending. Having Pentagon lose after a hard fought war is fine but having him lose after he basically squashed Matanza for ten minutes isn't. If nothing else it makes your unstoppable monster champion look weak instead of like the killer he's supposed to be. A recharged Pentagon is a great choice to give him a fight but they toned Matanza WAY too far down this time and it hurt the story a lot.

Post match Vampiro goes to help Pentagon but gets shoved away.

After a break, Vampiro takes his medicine, saying he failed.

### Taya vs. Ivelisse

Basically they're the two best women in the promotion (not named Sexy Star that is) and they've been feuding for a few weeks so here's a match. Ivelisse takes her into the corner and drives Taya face first into the middle buckle ten times in a row. Vampiro keeps trying to get back into things as Taya knocks Ivelisse face first into the apron to take over on the floor.

Taya is sent into the chairs and they fight on the steps before

crashing down. Back in and Iveliss kicks her down a few times before grabbing a release German suplex. A bridging German suplex gets two and there go the lights. Back with Catrina in the ring and hitting a double arm DDT drop (think a Bubba Bomb but a double arm DDT instead of a full nelson). The lights go off again and Catrina disappears, allowing Taya to hit a double stomp for the pin at 6:20.

**Rating:** C-. The match was fine enough but another screwy finish is a little annoying. It also doesn't really settle anything between Taya and Ivelisse but rather sets up something for the next season, which seems to be the problem with this whole show: not a lot is actually being decided here in favor of setting something up down the road.

Post match Catrina appears again to give Ivelisse the Lick of Death. We get a voiceover from Konnan of all people, talking about finding a new protege to train. Apparently he's talking about Prince Puma, who gets a highlight video including beating up people in some warehouse. This turns into a quick video setting up Puma vs. Rey Mysterio.

#### Rey Mysterio Jr. vs. Prince Puma

The King vs. the Prince and I'm fine with this as the main event as it really is a dream match by Lucha Underground's standards. Rey even has the El Rey network logo on his back for a nice touch. They start fast (of course) and it's time to flip around a lot into a standoff. A headscissors from Rey is countered and Puma shakes his finger as we're at another standoff.

Rey changes the plan a bit with some kicks to the head but the sitout bulldog doesn't work. The fans cheer for different area codes before Puma bends Rey around his shoulders for a modified torture rack. Rey is able to escape and send him outside for that sliding splash under the bottom rope. The West Coast Pop gets two and a big springboard tornado DDT gets the same for Rey.

Mysterio tries a top rope hurricanrana but gets muscled up into a series of rolling suplexes (variety pack) for two. With nothing else working, Puma takes him up top for a super Razor's Edge but since there's no way that can happen, Rey gives him a reverse super hurricanrana for a near fall of his own. They slug it out with the fans being split on who to cheer for in a good sign. Another sitout bulldog is countered into a huge Backstabber, followed by a Blue Thunder Bomb for two. That move can't win anywhere.

The spinning kick to the head puts Rey in 619 position and Puma actually pulls off the move steal for a change. A 450 (not a 630 Striker) gets two and I feel like I'm in a math class. Puma gets two more off a fireman's carry into a kick to the head and goes up top. With Striker saying it's the I'm sorry, I love you moment, Puma misses the 630 and crashes down instead. Rey enziguris him into a 619 but Puma grabs the boots and spins him into a Tombstone. That's countered as well into a reverse hurricanrana (I don't think I've seen that before) to set up the 619 and a top rope West Coast Pop puts Puma away at 26:28.

**Rating:** A-. I'm ok with Puma winning here as it's basically the end of Creed: Puma is the future but he's still got work to do to be the luchador he wants to be. This was a sweet wrestling match and felt like a main event level match. Given the way the title match ended, this was absolutely the right call for the main event as it doesn't leave a bad taste in your mouth to end the show.

Puma goes to leave but Rey says these are Puma's people and leaves him to pose.

The announcers wrap it up but Pentagon hits Vampiro with the barbed wire bat and superkicks Striker (should have gotten a bigger pop). The bat is raked across Vampiro's head for some blood before Pentagon hits him over the back (covered in a rather thick looking jacket) with the bat. They go inside where Pentagon licks the blood and kicks Vampiro hard in the head. Pentagon says he's the new master and licks some more blood before kicking Vampiro in the face again.

We go outside and Dario Cueto is ARRESTED. The police van pulls away as Dario lifts his head up and smiles to end the season. No really, that's the end of the season. No other stories are addressed and we're out for another few months.

**Overall Rating:** B. On its own, this is a strong show with a very good main event, an acceptable World Title match and a good Trios Title match. The only bad match is less than five minutes and I can live with seeing Catrina getting a little more physical if I just have to. I like the way they changed things up by going with the dream match for the good ending instead of having the fans boo the show out of the building when Pentagon lost. That's smart and a sign that someone knows what they're doing instead of just going ahead

with their plan and dealing with the fans hating it.

Unfortunately, this was more than just a regular show. As soon as last season's finale ended, this became something everyone wanted to see. There was a huge set of expectations to go with this season and it made this finale a show with a lot additional weight on its shoulders. That's where things took a bad hit here.

All season long there were stories built, be it the big ones like Dario having a master, Councilman Delgado and everyone talking about what a big deal this was. Then there were individual ones like Marty the Moth vs. Killshot, Aerostar being from the future or whatever else you want to name. At the end of it though, all we get is this one storyline development that seems more like a teaser than any major change.

A term I've seen used to describe this show is "more like a mid-season finale" and I really can't disagree. At no point did this feel like some big conclusion. Instead was much more like a show where we come back in six weeks to see what they have next. I think a lot of that has to do with knowing a third season is guaranteed though as last year was kind of up in the air, meaning they had to pack a lot into the first finale.

Overall this season was kind of all over the place. It started off with Dario and Matanza having to get back to the Temple and focused on Mil Muertes and Catrina in power but that wrapped up pretty cleanly and was barely mentioned again. The titles started changing hands a lot more frequently to keep things moving but it never felt like there was a big moment coming at the end of the season like with Muertes' inevitable title victory. It's still a good season but it seems like it cracked under some of the pressure, which they'll need to fix next time around.

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# Lucha Underground – June 29, 2016: I Want To See It

## Lucha Underground

Date: June 29, 2016

Location: Lucha Underground Temple, Boyle Heights, California

Commentators: Vampiro, Matt Striker

It's the last regular show before the first week of Ultima Lucha, which will run for the next three shows. You can probably figure out most of the card from here but only a few matches have actually been announced. It should be interesting to see what Lucha Underground comes up with to get us there as they have some rather unique ways of setting up matches. Let's get to it.

The recap looks at Mil Muertes' latest death and feud with King Cuerno, plus Prince Puma challenging Rey Mysterio for Ultima Lucha Dos.

The Trios Titles will be on the line at Ultima Lucha with Fenix/Drago/Aerostar challenging PJ Black/Johnny Mundo/Jack Evans. The show now has its own graphics to really make it look important.

### King Cuerno vs. Mil Muertes

That's quite the opener. Cuerno gets Muertes to chase him around to start but Muertes just spears him down back inside, which Striker says is like the reaper's trident. He's kind of a weird guy. Muertes fires off some chops, which Striker says are designed to disorientate your opponent. I thought they were designed to hurt your opponent's chest but that's just me. A chokeslam gets two for Mil but Cuerno comes back with a running knee and dropkick to set up the big dive through the ropes.

The referee gets taken out as well so Cuerno grabs a chair. Of note here, Striker talks about some soldiers being in the crowd and then calls the bumped referee a casualty of war. Bad choice of words there. Muertes no sells a chair to the head and blasts Cuerno with a clothesline. The chair to Cuerno's back makes it even worse but Mil

misses a charge and goes head first into the chair in the corner, allowing Cuerno to grab a rollup (and the ropes) for the pin at 4:30.

**Rating:** C+. Striker driving me up the wall aside, this was a good enough brawl to set up the pretty obvious gimmick rematch at Ultima Lucha. Cuerno has always been one of my favorites around here so it's cool to see him getting a push and the biggest win he's ever had in the promotion, though I'm sure he'll get destroyed in the rematch.

Taya and Ivelisse come in to see Dario and get catty with each other from the start. Dario makes a match between them for Ultima Lucha to see who the baddest woman is. As they're leaving, Catrina comes in and calls Ivelisse a little girl. Apparently Muertes wants a rematch with Cuerno at Ultima Lucha but Dario lists off everything Catrina and Muertes have done to him. Catrina doesn't care and asks for it to be a death match. Dario actually agrees and Catrina disappears. Dario: "Women."

#### Prince Puma vs. Dragon Azteca Jr.

This should be good. Rey Mysterio is out with Azteca. They start fast (of course) by running the ropes with Puma missing a kick to the head and a standing moonsault before they trade armdrags. Striker begs Vampiro to help him with this play by play but he gets a break as the guys shake hands off a standoff. Dragon slaps him in the face and they run the ropes again with both guys sliding to the floor. Azteca runs back in for a suicide dive but gets caught on Puma's shoulders (surprising power display) and sent back first into the post.

Back in and Dragon's middle rope hurricanrana sends Puma flying and a springboard hurricanrana takes him off the middle rope. A running forearm to the jaw staggers Puma again, allowing Dragon to hit his pop up DDT (the DDTJ) for two. Back up and Puma pulls Dragon off the middle rope into a Blue Thunder Bomb followed by some rolling suplexes for two. The 630 is broken up as Puma gets crotched and a super victory roll gets two for Dragon. Puma kicks him in the back of the head and a Michinoku Driver gets two more. A dropkick sets up the 630 to finally put Dragon away at 8:44.

**Rating:** B+. Really awesome stuff here and that's all it was going to be. Azteca has hit the ground running in Lucha Underground and this

does a good job of setting up Puma vs. Mysterio. Unfortunately it doesn't do much to set up Azteca vs. Lotus, which isn't the strongest feud in the first place. Still though, great match.

Post match Puma says that's Mysterio at Ultima Lucha.

Here are Son of Havoc, the Mack, Cage and Texano in the ring for a chat with Dario. The boss has plans for the four of them for Ultima Lucha: the Unique Opportunity Tournament. The winner will receive the most unique opportunity that he's ever offered so give it everything you have. The tournament starts next week but he thinks they should get a start right now so the brawl is on.

We run down the Ultima Lucha card. Those graphics really do add something.

### Johnny Mundo vs. Fenix

Mundo flips off the crowd to make it clear that he is in fact the villain. Thanks for pointing that one out for us chum. Fenix starts with an early rollup attempt before a standing moonsault gets two. Mundo takes him into the corner for some choking, only to get chopped over and over and over. A quick C4 gets two for Mundo and we hit a double arm crank with a chinlock. Mundo spinebuster him for two and Taya gets involved with some choking.

Fenix superkicks him off the ropes though and dives out onto Johnny and Taya at the same time. We get a Super Calo reference before Striker says this is the fight of Fenix's life. I'd think the Muertes match where he won the title was a bit bigger but who am I to argue with Striker. Fenix gets two more off a sunset bomb but Taya grabs his foot so Johnny can kick him in the head. The End of the World misses as Taya puts the Trios Title belt on the apron. Fenix is right back up and chopping Johnny on the top, setting up a super C4 for no count as Taya has the referee. A belt shot puts Fenix away at 7:53.

**Rating:** B-. I'm not wild on the WWE style finish but at least it fits Johnny's character to perfection and helps set up the Trios Titles match at Ultima Lucha. Johnny and Taya are perfect together and you could see them being a thing in real life which always helps. Fenix has very quietly become one of the best performers in this company and it's always fun to see him in the ring.

Post match the other four members of the trios come out for the big brawl with Ivelisse following them to go after Taya. A huge brawl ends the show with the good guys (and Ivelisse) cleaning house.

**Overall Rating:** B+. Good wrestling and a VERY strong build towards Ultima Lucha makes this an awesome show. I love the fact that it's a three week show, basically guaranteeing that the matches don't have to be as rushed as they were last year. I'm looking forward to the show more than ever now and that's exactly how I should feel with a week to go. Really well done here as I've come to expect from this promotion.

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