

Mae Young Classic – Episode Three: I Don't Get The Hair Thing

Mae Young Classic Episode #3

Date: August 28, 2017

Location: Full Sail University, Winter Park, Florida

Commentators: Jim Ross, Lita

It's time to start the second half of the first round and I've liked the tournament so far. It might not be anything great so far but the talent is there and they're still in the opening stages, meaning we won't be seeing any showdowns until the second round. That's when these things get good but we have to get there first. Let's get to it.

Mauro recaps and previews us again.

Opening sequence.

Video on Toni Storm, an Australian with an attitude. Oh and a little top hat. She's also the first Progress Women's Champion.

Video on Ayesha Raymond, the Deadlift Diva. I think you get the idea here.

First Round: Toni Storm vs. Ayesha Raymond

No handshake before the match. Raymond is much bigger but the fans are behind Storm. Toni backs out of a headlock and offers a handshake but this time pulls her own hand back when Ayesha goes for it. A running kick to the face sets up some hip attacks to drop Raymond again. Raymond is right back up with a side slam and corner splash as the pace slows. Toni avoids a charge in the corner and grabs a Backstabber as the Aussie fans start up again. A slam off the top puts Storm down but Raymond hops down instead of going after her. The delay lets Toni avoid a top rope splash and grab a rolling cradle for the pin at 4:28.

Rating: D+. Storm looked very good out there and has the charisma to back up the work. It's easy to see why she's getting a push on the independent scene and I'd like to see more of her. Raymond...not so much. She's every generic power wrestler you've seen with little charisma and a confusing moment at the end where she stopped to yell at the fans instead of following up. It came off as stupid, which isn't exactly the best thing to do in a big debut like this. But yeah, Storm looked awesome.

Charlotte and Sara Amoto are here. Can we just put both of them in the Hall of Fame already?

Video on Kavita Devi, the first Indian woman ever in WWE. She was trained by Great Khali so her future isn't exactly bright.

Video on Dakota Kai, the girl next girl from New Zealand who can get very serious if necessary.

First Round: Kavita Devi vs. Dakota Kai

The much bigger Devi shoves her around without much effort and then walks the top rope into an armdrag in a very impressive bit of athleticism. A second version works just as well Kai's dropkick has no effect and a gorilla press drop makes things even worse for her. Devi slowly walks around instead of following up though and gets caught with a running boot to the face in the corner. Kai is quickly up top and a double stomp ends Davi at 3:58.

Rating: D+. Much like Raymond, Davi didn't show me anything here and it made for a dull match. Kai has a good look and seems to have the charisma to back it up but there's only so much you can do against someone who was trained by Great Khali. Hopefully the next match is a better fit for her, which I can't imagine being the case otherwise.

Rock's family, including Nia Jax, is here.

Video on Bianca Belair, who is quite the well rounded athlete with a VERY long hair braid that is often used as a weapon.

Video on Sage Beckett, formerly known as Rosie Lottalove. She's lost something like 150lbs and turned into quite the vicious brawler. Beckett

talks about channeling energy to do whatever she needs.

First Round: Sage Beckett vs. Bianca Belair

The power showdown starts early with the bigger Sage (though Bianca is far from small) running her over and getting two off a shoulder. Belair comes back with a dropkick and a hard clothesline for two each as they're beating each other pretty well here. Something like a running frog splash gets the same and it's off to a double chickenwing on Sage. Back up and a Bubba Bomb gives Beckett (who was trained by the Dudleys) a near fall of her own and Bianca gets splashed in the corner. Belair gets tied in the Tree of Woe but avoids a Vader Bomb. A shot with the hair braid sets up a spear to send Bianca on at 5:25.

Rating: C+. I liked this one but it had some rough spots. Beckett is a bit better than your average monster, though it felt like she was just there for Belair to slay. As for Belair, there's some awesome potential there due to natural athleticism but the hair thing isn't working for me. It's distracting and having her whip Sage back with it was too far for me.

Charly Caruso recaps things.

Video on Santana Garrett, who is billed as the Wonder Woman of the tournament and has appeared on NXT (and TNA) before.

Video on Piper Niven, a Scot with some size to her. She's better known as Viper on the indy scene.

First Round: Santana Garrett vs. Piper Niven

Piper drives her into the corner and gives her a friendly shove to the jaw. The fans are split again as Garrett spins out of a wristlock. Niven easily powers out of something like a Black Widow, only to get kicked in the chest for two. A headscissors drops Niven but she comes right back with a crossbody for a near fall of her own. It's off to the cravate, which JR compares to bangers and mash or fish and chips.

A clothesline gives Piper too as JR praises her for her simple strategy. Garrett gets two off a DDT and an Eat Defeat but a bulldog is broken up.

Piper's running splash gets two (looked great too) but she gets caught on top with a running strike to the face. The fans are WAY into these near falls and Santana's superkick makes it even better. She misses a moonsault though and a backsplash sets up the Michinoku Driver to end Garrett at 7:10.

Rating: B-. Niven did more than most huge females do and that makes for an entertaining match. Sometimes you need a change of pace from all the same stuff and that's why she's going to shine so well. Garrett still seems to have most of the tools but needs some better coaching. You know, like at the Performance Center, where she's still not signed for some reason.

The recap and preview finish things off.

Overall Rating: C. The good was good and the bad was tolerable but some of this stuff is starting to run together. There are definitely some people starting to stand out though and that's what makes things more interesting. Avoiding spoilers for the most part has helped too, though when WWE.com is telling you who won some of the first round matches, it gets a little annoying. Still though, not a bad show but it's yet to hit that high gear.

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