

GCW vs. TJPW: They're In A Hurry

GCW vs. TJPW

Date: April 6, 2024

Location: Penns Landing Caterers, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

Commentators: Dave Prazak, Veda Scott

We have Game Changer Wrestling vs. Tokyo Joshi Pro-Wrestling, meaning it's a women's show. It's another promotional war show, though this one seems to be a bit less intense than the others. I've liked the stuff I've seen from TJPW over the years, including this weekend, so hopefully they can continue their streak. Let's get to it.

Suzume vs. Pom Harajaku vs. Saki

Suzume and Pom are from TJPW while Saki is a freelancer, making this more of an exhibition rather than an interpromotional match. Saki gets taken down with a double wristlock to start but she rolls her way to freedom and it's a standoff. With Pom sent outside, Suzume grabs a headlock on Saki before scoring with a dropkick. Saki swings Suzume down, allowing Pom to come back in and steal a two count.

The much bigger Saki sends Pom back to the floor, only for Pom to come back in and kick her in the shin. Suzume grabs a bulldog to put Saki down before sidestepping Pom's missile dropkick. Saki kicks Pom in the face but gets rolled up for two. A rope walk spinning faceplant drops Saki again but she's back up with a Michinoku Driver for two on Suzume. Saki is sent outside though and Suzume cutters Pom for the pin at 7:56.

Rating: C+. The action was fast paced but it was only so interesting, with Suzume dominating a good chunk of the match as the other two were just kind of there. It made sense for

the speedy opener, though having a match that has nothing to do with the concept was a bit odd. Saki worked as a power star, but this didn't break through to that next level.

Session Moth Martina (GCW) vs. Raku (TJPW)

Martina has Every Time We Touch as her entrance music and yes the fans do go rather nuts for it. Raku on the other hand comes to the ring with a pillow. We pause for Martina to get in a fight with the streamers before she can offer Raku a beer. Raku would rather have a nap, so Martina pours beer in her mouth, which I think has Raku drunk (low tolerance and all that). That leaves Raku to beat on Martina with the pillow, which Martina is laid down on for a breather.

Raku steps onto her stomach a few times and then sits on her for a near fall. Back up and Martina sends her into the corner for the Bronco Buster. She loads up another one, but Raku has stopped for a nap. That means Martina has to slowly pull her back to the middle but Raku wakes up at two. Raku strikes away and gets two off a running dropkick. Code Red gets two more, only to have Martina come back with a spear for two of her own. Raku fights up but charges into a Codebreaker to give Martina the pin at 5:49.

Rating: C. This is one of those situations where the whole thing is going to depend on your tastes in comedy. Martina is a ball of energy and a lot of fun, but Raku with the sleeping thing...yeah I don't get it. I'm not big on that style with Wendy Choo in NXT and it's the same thing here, as I don't see the humor. The wrestling was a backdrop to the comedy and that mainly didn't land for me, so this wasn't much to see.

GCW – 1

TJPW – 0

Arisu Endo (TJPW) vs. Shazza McKenzie (GCW)

They fight over arm control to start with McKenzie getting the

better of things. That's reversed into a headlock, which McKenzie reverses into a headscissors and we get a standoff. Endo sends her into the corner but McKenzie is back with a running boot for two. McKenzie grabs a chinlock before hitting running legdrop to a seated Endo for two more. Endo is back up with a running hip attack into a splash for two of her own.

The camel clutch goes on but McKenzie crawls over to the ropes rather quickly. McKenzie ties her in the ropes for some kicks to the chest but a super Stunner is blocked. Endo hits a middle rope knee to drive her to the mat, setting up a torture rack neckbreaker for the pin on McKenzie at 7:32.

Rating: C+. McKenzie is someone I've seen a good many times over the years and I'm not sure why she has never gotten a chance on a bigger stage. She comes off as a polished enough star but it never comes together. Endo is rather good at what she does as well and it was a nice match between two women who know what they're doing.

GCW – 1

TJPW – 1

Steph de Lander (GCW) vs. Hyper Misao (TJPW)

Misao, a superhero, promises to save us all. De Lander, in American flag gear, jumps her to start but Misao blinds her with some kind of spray. We get some early skewer use, with Misao stabbing her in the head. De Lander is back with some skewers of her own but Misao, with skewers still in her head, misses a quick 619 attempt. Some chair shots stagger de Lander, who manages to take the chair away. The big swing hits rope though, with the chair smashing de Lander in her own face.

Misao throws in a bunch of chairs and plants de Lander onto them for two. A spinebuster onto the chairs gives de Lander two and it's time to bring out...a box full of tubes of (de Lander's) lipstick. De Lander gets knocked off the top and

high crossbodied into them for two. Back up and de Lander grabs a sitout F5 onto the lipstick and her Women's Internet Title for the pin at 8:13.

Rating: C. So much like the Raku vs. Martina match, this was a short form version of a special kind of match, though in this case it was the hardcore variety instead of comedy. While it makes sense to mix things up a bit, it's a bit hard to get into a violent match like this that only lasts eight minutes and is coming in cold. It wasn't bad, but it was like they were trying to get in a bunch of stuff in a short amount of time and it didn't exactly work.

GCW – 2

TJPW – 1

Yuki Kamifuku (TJPW) vs. Dark Sheik (GCW)

Sheik does the splits to start but Yuki isn't willing to try her own. Instead she takes Sheik down with a headscissors before sending her outside. Yuki's big dive is teased but she rolls into a pose instead. Back in and Sheik grabs a backbreaker into a splits splash for two, followed by a nice slingshot legdrop. Yuki slugs away but gets kicked in the head for her efforts.

Sheik has to break out of a quick Octopus hold and then pulls Yuki into the old rocking horse hold (the fans don't approve). A legsweep into a spinning kick to the head gives Sheik two but Yuki catches her with a running dropkick on the top. Sheik counters the Fameasser and grabs a bridging German suplex. A guillotine legdrop finishes Yuki off at 7:44.

Rating: B-. Best match of the night so far as again they didn't have much time but they packed in a bunch of stuff. Sheik dominated most of the match and then won in the end, as she should have. Good stuff here, with both of them doing well in the limited time that they had to put something together.

GCW – 3

TJPW – 1

Mizuki (TJPW) vs. Allie Katch (GCW)

The wrong graphic/music is put up and the fans are not impressed. The much smaller Mizuki is backed into the corner but she does the same thing to Katch. Mizuki blows a kiss, which Katch does not seem to care for, meaning it's time to fight over wrist control. Mizuki's suplex attempt gets little more than a shrug from Katch, who kicks her in the face for her efforts. Katch's suplex works a bit better and a corner Cannonball gets two.

A chinlock into a slam gives Katch two but Mizuki is back up with a double stomp to the back. The running dropkick against the ropes sends Katch outside and Mizuki is right there with the dive off the top. Back in and a Michinoku Driver gives Katch two but Mizuki bites her thigh. She bites her stomach as well, setting up a top rope double stomp for two. Katch misses another Cannonball, allowing Mizuki to grab a northern lights suplex for the pin at 7:38.

Rating: C+. Another match where they didn't have much time but they were playing into the small vs. big formula. Mizuki isn't your usual smaller style wrestler though, with the biting being more than a little odd. It was also nice to see the ending come from something *other than a rollup, as Mizuki beat her clean with a suplex.

GCW – 3

TJPW – 2

Post match Mizuki goes for another bite but Katch bails out.

Hakuchumu (TJPW) vs. Billie Starkz/Janai Kai (GCW)

That would be Miu Watanabe and Rika Tatsumi. Starkz and Watanabe have a tentative handshake to start before Watanabe

takes her down by the leg for an early two. A wristlock lasts a bit longer but Starkz grabs a rollup for two. That goes nowhere so it's off to Kai vs. Tatsumi, with Kai snapmaring her down for a kick to the back. Tatsumi chokes her into the corner and Watanabe comes in for a dancing double elbow.

Since it's just a double elbow, Kai is able to power Watanabe into the corner for the tag back to Starkz. Alternating kicks in the corner have Watanabe in more trouble but she suplexes her way to freedom. It's back to Tatsumi to clean house with some running hip attacks in the corner. A dragon screw legwhip over the rope has Starkz in more trouble but she's fine enough to hit a spinning kick to Tatsumi's head.

Tatsumi backbreakers Kai and it's back to Watanabe to pick the pace back up. Watanabe hits a backbreaker of her own and there's the very giant swing for two on Kai. Watanabe slips out of Kai's dragon sleeper and hits a powerslam for two, with Starkz making the save. With Starkz down, Kai gets loaded up into something like a spinning Big Ending/cutter combination for the pin at 13:29.

Rating: B. This got some more time and you can see that Hakuchumu is a regular team who has some experience together. They worked well together out there, with Starkz and Kai not quite being able to keep up. It's also nice to have something that feels different on here after a long string of singles matches.

GCW – 3

TJPW – 3

Maki Itoh/Masha Slamovich/Rina Yamashita (GCW) vs. Miyu Yamashita/Shoko Nakajima/Yuki Aino (TJPW)

The GCW team's entrance goes through the crowd and the fans rather approve. Miyu and Itoh start things off, with Itoh flipping her off. A big kick misses and we have a standoff, meaning it's off to Nakajima vs. Rina. Nakajima stomps on her

foot but needs Miyu and Aino to lift her up to get the height advantage over the taller Rina. That's fine with Rina, who has Itoh and Slamovich pick her up...or at least try to, as they can't get her up.

Rina and Slamovich can get Itoh up though and we get an elevated slugout, with Itoh getting the better of things. Everything breaks down and the fight heads out to the floor, with the GCW team getting back in to dance. We settle down to Rina hitting Aino in the chest before Itoh gets to hammer away in the corner. Aino manages a suplex to Rina and Nakajima comes back in to pick up the pace.

Hold on though as Nakajima brings in her bag full of kaiju toys, allowing Rina to slam her onto them. They take turns hitting each other with said kaiju with Rina getting the better of things. She heads up top but takes too long, allowing Nakajima to hurricanrana her back down onto the kaiju. Everything breaks down and it's Miyu slugging it out with Slamovich. Miyu gets pulled into a seated abdominal stretch and has to knee her way to freedom. Back up and they trade running shots to the face until Miyu runs up the corner for a spinning kick to the head.

An exchange of kicks to the head leave both of them down and it's Aino coming back in to run Itoh over with a shoulder. Itoh's running DDT connects and everything breaks down, with Itoh knocking Aino down for two. Chairs and a door are brought in...but the door breaks as soon as Aino is placed on it. Another door is brought in and Itoh is slammed through Aino for two. Slamovich chairs Miyu down but all six are up for the big slugout. Nakajima hits a big dive to the floor and Itoh rolls Aino up for two. A Walls of Jericho style Texas Cloverleaf makes Aino tap at 21:05.

Rating: B-. The time helped here and commentary was putting over the idea of these wrestlers knowing each other rather well. It made the match feel more personal, but at the same

time it wasn't exactly great. The kaiju stuff in the middle felt like it belonged in a different match and was only happening because it was a signature Nakajima deal. It's a perfectly fine main event, though not as good as the previous match.

GCW – 4

TJPW – 3

Overall Rating: B-. Good show here with a rather nice mixture of match types. The problem is a lot of those matches went rather quickly and didn't get the chance to stand out. There was probably a series of much better matches to be had with more time, but there is only so much you can do with an eight match show that doesn't even combine to go two hours.

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TJPW Live In Philly: That Was Fun

TJPW Live In Philly

Date: April 5, 2024

Location: Penns Landing Caterers, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

Commentators: Dave Prazak, Veda Scott

This is Tokyo Joshi Pro-Wrestling, a women's promotion based in Japan. As you might be able to guess, we're in Philadelphia over Wrestlemania Weekend and that means we're probably in for a bunch of guest stars. I remember liking the show from last year's Wrestlemania Weekend so hopefully they can do it again here. Let's get to it.

Note that I do not follow TJPW whatsoever so I apologize in advance for missing any plot or character points.

As is customary for the promotion, some of the wrestlers come out to welcome us to the show and do a song and dance routine. With that over, they seem to say a promotion catchphrase and we're ready to go.

Arisu Endo/Suzume vs. Yuki Aino/Zara Zakher

Endo and Suzume's Princess Tag Team Titles aren't on the line. Suzume and Aino start things off with Suzume's dropkick not working. A shoulder drops Aino and it's off to Endo vs. Zara. Aino hits the ropes and charges right into a pop up right hand. Everything breaks down and Endo/Suzume take them both down for stereo basement dropkicks. We settle down to Aino taking over on Endo and dropping a backsplash for two.

Zara comes back in for her own basement dropkick but Endo is up with a regular version for the double knockdown. Suzume comes in to pick up the pace...for all of five seconds before Zara drops her with a clothesline. A rope walk bulldog puts

Zara down though and it's Endo coming back in for a knee to the back of Aino's head.

Everything breaks down and Endo knocks Aino to the floor, only to have Aino grab an apron suplex to bring them back inside. They switch off again and Suzume grabs a sleeper on Zara, followed by a facebuster. Zara is fine enough to pull her out of the air for a toss, followed by a spinebuster to give Aino two.

Suzume is back up with a high crossbody for two of her own before locking hands with Aino for a slugout. Endo is back in but gets caught with a reverse DDT to send her right back to the floor. Zara loads up what looks to be a fisherman's buster but Suzume reverses into a rollup for the pin (on the third attempt) at 11:19.

Rating: B-. Starting a show with a tag match is often a good idea as you can get something fast paced like this to fire the crowd up early. I'm not sure why the champs weren't defending if they were going to win anyway but that's a minor issue at best. What matters is getting the show off to a good start and they managed to do so rather well.

Hyper Misao vs. Billie Starkz

Starkz has Athena with her and Misao looks like a superhero. She then says she is a superhero, so at least I can recognize a costume. Misao offers her a gift (looks like a stuffed animal) but then hammers Starkz down with it to start fast. They trade rollups for two each until Misao elbows her in the face. Misao ties up the limbs and swings her head first into the bottom buckle in the corner a few times.

Back up and Starkz grabs a German suplex for two but a big kick to the head is cut off. Misao hits a running knee to the back and then plants her on the apron for two. We get a bit wacky as Misao grabs the mascot head that Starkz wore to the ring, which allows Athena to hit her with the stuffed animal

that Misao brought. Kind of serves her right for cheating.

The distraction lets Starkz hit a fireman's carry backbreaker into a Swanton for two, giving us the surprised knockout face. A Nightmare On Helm Street gives Misao two, with Athena putting the foot on the ropes. Misao sprays...something in Athena's eyes, allowing Starkz to hit a suicide dive. Another Swanton gives Starkz the pin at 6:07.

Rating: C+. Misao was someone who stood out to me the last time I watched this company and she did so again here. Having her as a superhero who cheats is something that worked well enough and made her a bit more interesting, which is the point of such an over the top gimmick. Starkz and Athena are the far bigger names though and it makes sense for them to win, even in a short match like this.

Viva Van/Yuki Kamifuki vs. Trish Adora/Raku

Adora is apparently a substitute. Raku is one of the women who sang to start the show and is carrying a pillow. Van and Raku start things off with Van hitting a clothesline and posing a bit. Raku instead hits her with a pillow, which would seem to be some kind of rule violation. Van and Yuki are put on the pillow for a quiet two but Van gets up and throws the pillow into the crowd.

We settle down to Yuki sending Raku throat first into the rope, allowing Van to grab a Tarantula. A running facebuster gets Raku out of trouble though and Adora comes in to clean house. Van and Adora trade the big forearms until Van grabs a hurricanrana. A running boot in the corner gives Yuki two but Adora plants her with a Samoan drop. Yuki is back with an Octopus, which Adora breaks up and hits a Rough Ryder. Raku comes back in and is quickly kicked in the face but manages to grab a guillotine. Everything breaks down again and Yuki hits a Fameasser to pin Raku at 8:55.

Rating: B-. They kept this one energetic in the not overly

long run time and that made for a nice sprint. Yuki and Van seem to be a regular team who work well together while Adora and Raku made for a nice makeshift team. Adora continues to feel like she could be a big deal somewhere but that isn't going to happen when she keeps losing over and over, even on a show like this.

Mizuki/Vertvixen vs. Aja Kong/Pom Harajuku

Kong gets the big legend entrance and reception, which is more impressive since she's a replacement for Max the Impaler. Pom and Vertvixen start things off with the latter grabbing a headlock. That's broken up and we have a standoff before it's off to Mizuki vs. the much larger Kong. Mizuki bites the arm to limited success so Kong misses an elbow, allowing Mizuki to hit a basement dropkick.

Back up and Kong picks up Pom to throw her at Mizuki for two, which I guess is the same as a tag. Vertvixen slugs away in the corner and the villains (I think?) stomp Pom down. Mizuki steals Pom's shoe and throws it into the crowd, leaving Vertvixen to hit a hard forearm in the corner. The one shoed Pom manages an anklescissors for a breather and the tag brings Kong back in to wreck the mortals.

The spinning backfist misses and Vertvixen gets in a kick to the head, only for Kong to knock Mizuki out of the air. Pom comes back in for a wristdrag out of the corner but misses a backsplash. Kong seems rather gassed on the apron as Mizuki hits a running shot to Pom's back, only to miss a top rope double stomp. Mizuki is fine enough to put pom over the middle rope and now the double stomp connects. Kong makes the save but gets Stunned by Vertvixen. That leaves Mizuki to hit Pom with a shoe, setting up the Beauty Special (kind of a tabletop suplex) for the pin at 10:31.

Rating: C+. The action was fast paced, but this felt more like a way to have Kong in a match, which is more important than

anything else. The fans seemed way into what they were seeing (as has been the case all show) and it was cool to see a legend in the ring. Odd name aside, Vertvixen feels like someone who could be a star somewhere, but she has been treated as such a jobber whenever she is in AEW or ROH that she has an even longer way to go.

Shoko Nakajima vs. Rhio

Nakajima stands about 4'10 and is billed as a Big Kaiju (a Japanese monster). The much larger Rhino throws her down to start but Nakajima takes over on the arm. That's reversed into a headscissors on the mat but Nakajima flips over into a headlock in a nice display. Nakajima flips away from her and hits a dropkick, only to get planted with a high angle spinebuster.

A full nelson goes on to keep Nakajima in trouble and a backbreaker makes it even worse. Rhio goes up but gets caught with a super hurricanrana, allowing Nakajima to hit a slingshot hilo for two. Nakajima sends her outside for the suicide dive, followed by a running flip dive to make it worse. They trade forearms on the floor and then keep it going inside, where Rhio drops her with a headbutt.

A top rope superplex plants Nakajima hard but she's able to block the package piledriver. Nakajima strikes away until a superkick into a torture rack slam gives Rhio two. Rhio goes up but gets kicked down, setting up a 619 despite being back on her feet. A double arm DDT sets up a top rope backsplash to give Nakajima the pin at 13:24.

Rating: B. This was straight out of the little vs. big playbook and believe it or not, the story still works. Nakajima is a ball of energy who never stops moving and throws everything she has at you to stay in there. Rhio is someone who feels like she could be a star somewhere on the bigger stage after a bit more seasoning, but the talent is pretty

clearly there.

Maki Itoh/Miyu Yamashita vs. Miu Watanabe/Rika Tatsumi

Itoh gets a heck of a reception during her entrance. Yamashita and Watanabe start things off and apparently they have been feuding over the company's top singles title. Yamashita powers her back up against the ropes to start but has to avoid some kicks for a standoff. Tatsumi and Itoh come in for an exchange of headlocks takeovers and a cute-off. Itoh knocks her down and loads up her falling headbutt, only to have Yamashita stand her in place (with Itoh standing there like a board) and roll Tatsumi into place so the headbutt can connect.

Itoh's right hands in the corner are broken up and Tatsumi takes it to the floor as everything breaks down. Tatsumi chokes Yamashita with a belt as we have to go split screen, much to the surprise of commentary. They tease going back to ringside but head over to the bar, with commentary saying this is a great way to showcase the building if you can't be here in person. Watanabe buys some beers (and leaves a tip) but Yamashita and Itoh steal the drinks and raise a quick toast.

That's broken up and the drinks are spilled, much to a variety of chagrins. Back in and Watanabe elbows Itoh down for two before Tatsumi starts in on the knee. The Figure Four has Itoh in trouble but she makes the rope rather quickly. Watanabe tries a reverse Alabama Slam to send Tatsumi onto Itoh but only hits mat. That's enough to bring Yamashita back in but Watanabe powers her into the corner.

A powerslam puts Yamashita down again and the giant swinging into Tatsumi's dropkick gets two. Yamashita blocks a Twist of Fate and kicks Tatsumi in the head before Itoh low bridges her to the floor. Back in and Yamashita hits a delayed AA with Tatsumi having to make a save. Everyone is knocked down until Tatsumi and Yamashita strike it out. Itoh is back in and a top rope Codebreaker into a German suplex (not the smoothest of

transitions) knocks Tatsumi silly. A Skull Kick gives Yamashita the pin at 19:07.

Rating: B. This felt like a mixture of a fun brawl and a regular match which made for a good back and forth fight. The fans were WAY into Itoh here and it makes sense given her incredible charisma. I had a good time with this and it wound up being probably the best thing on a solid show.

Overall Rating: B+. Rather solid effort up and down here, with the worst match being completely decent. Shows like this are meant to be something of a sampler for fans and they got a good result here, with the whole thing working. I've liked everything I've seen from this promotion before and while some of it might not be for everyone, there should be something worth seeing here if you're looking for something different.

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Tokyo Joshi Pro-Wrestling Live In Los Angeles: I Had To Get Here Someday

TJPW Live In Los Angeles

Date: March 31, 2023

Location: Globe Theater, Los Angeles, California

Commentators: Jonny Loquasto, Thom Fain

This is Tokyo Joshi Pro-Wrestling, a Japanese women's promotion which I've heard some amazing things about. There are going to be some names here you might have seen in AEW or elsewhere over the weekend, but I have no idea what to expect from the show. Let's get to it.

Note that I don't follow the promotion so I apologize in advance for not knowing history, characters or anything else.

The ring announcer welcomes us to the show and gives us a quick preview while also plugging the WrestleCon appearances. She also reminds the fans that the wrestlers don't speak much English and apologize in advance. Fair enough and something often forgotten.

And now, as is tradition, here are three wrestlers (Hikari Noa, Raka and Miu Watanabe, the Up Up Girls) for a song, apparently how they open all of their shows. With the mini concert over, the women greet the fans.

The announcer says some stuff in Japanese, which is apparently the introduction to the first match (almost fifteen minutes into the broadcast).

Daisy Monkey vs. Free WiFi

This would be Arisu Endo/Suzume vs. Hikari Noa vs. Nao Kakuta as I love Japanese team names. In response to why they're

called Free WiFi, the answer is simple: who doesn't like free wifi? Hikari and Suzume (rather popular) start things off with Hikari quickly being sent into the corner so Endo can come in for a dropkick to her back.

Kakuta gets in a cheap shot from the apron though and Endo gets caught in the wrong corner. What appears to be a double bite of the head has Endo in more trouble and stereo basement dropkicks make it worse. Endo's dropkick gets her out of trouble though and it's Suzume back in to pick up the pace.

Hikari pulls Suzume off the top and gets two off a rollup before it's back to Endo. A choke over the ropes slows Suzume down but she's back with a running bulldog. Kakuta comes back in with a dropkick into a camel clutch, sending Endo bailing to the ropes for two. Everything breaks down and a double torture rack faceplant finishes Kakuta at 11:41.

Rating: B-. Good start to the show here as they had a fast paced match with some fun action. The ending looked good as well as Kakuta got dropped on her face. Free WiFi (that's so ridiculous of a name that it's brilliant) was a nice team but Monkey (these names are fun) looked a bit more complete so the ending felt like the right choice.

Janai Kai vs. Yufi Kamifuku

Yufi dances a lot and gets kicked in the chest to cut him down. A running kick to the back gives Kai two but Yufi kicks her way up from the mat. There's a pair of dropkicks to send Kai into the corner but she's right back with a dragon sleeper. With that broken up, Kai hits a spinning kick to the head for the pin at 4:49.

Rating: C. This was more of a showcase for Kai, who had some rather hard kicks in there. At times the best thing that you can do is have someone go out there and kick someone else really hard, which is what Kai has done. I'm pretty sure I've seen Kai before and you know what you're getting going in,

which worked well here.

Hyper Misao/Trish Adora vs. Raku/Yuki Aino

Misao is a super hero and you've probably seen Adora a time or two. Before the match, Misao officially dubs Adora a superhero as well, giving her her own mask and naming her Hyper Trish. Adora backs Raku into the corner to start and everything breaks down rather fast. The heroes grab stereo submissions but Misao accidentally hairsprays (or whatever it was) Adora in the face.

Then Raku whips out a pillow and puts the heroes to sleep for two before it's off to Aino. Misao fights up and hands it back to Adora for the power. Aino grabs a gutwrench suplex for two as everything breaks down. Misao sprays them both and a high crossbody finishes Raku at 9:04.

Rating: C+. Mild obsession with the spray can aside (which isn't very heroic), this was a fun match and was giving me flashbacks to the Mighty Molly or Hurricane days (in a good way). It was designed to be nothing but fun and Adora is someone who feels like she could be a breakout star if she is given the chance. Raku stands out a bit as well, but that might be due to being in on the song earlier.

Wasteland War Party vs. Miu Watanabe/Shoko Nakajima

That would be Max the Impaler and Heidi Howitzer. After getting the streamers out of the ring, we start with Watanabe bouncing off of Max. Nakajima comes in and avoids a charge in the corner but the much bigger Max sends her into the corner. It's off to Heidi for two off a stalling brainbuster but Nakajima gets over to Watanabe anyway. The pace picks up for a few moments, until Heidi runs Watanabe over again.

Watanabe slugs away at Max and Nakajima comes in to add some running dropkicks. Max is finally knocked into the corner but comes back with the Wasteland. Back up and Watanabe gets Max

up for a pretty impressive slam before taking Heidi down as well. Nakajima hits a 619 on Max but Heidi runs her over. An elevated splash (the Master Blaster) gives Max the pin at 11:52.

Rating: C+. The War Party are one heck of a monster team and they were showcasing it here. Watanabe and Nakajima were cowering in fear, or at least looking scared, to put the War Party over. This was a good example of a way to have two stars look like threats and it isn't a surprise that they were apparently Tag Team Champions until a few weeks ago (if I heard commentary right).

International Princess Title: Rika Tatsumi vs. Billie Starkz

Tatsumi is defending what seems to be the midcard singles title. They go with the grappling to start but Tatsumi gets a bit more serious by ripping at Starkz' face. Starkz is right back up with a running knee to the back of the head for two, with Starkz getting frustrated by the near fall.

Tatsumi is back up with a hip attack and we hit the Figure Four in the middle. Starkz' long legs get her to the ropes so Tatsumi hip attacks her again. Back up and Starkz hits a brainbuster onto the knee for two but Tatsumi blasts her with a running hip attack. The Twist of Fate sets up a top rope hip attack to retain Tatsumi's title at 8:44.

Rating: C+. This was probably the weakest match of the night so far, partially because I didn't really buy that Tatsumi was in danger. Starkz is very talented for her age but she felt like she was in over her head with this one. It certainly wasn't bad, but it came off more like Tatsumi just waiting until she could finish Starkz off.

Respect is shown post match.

Princess Tag Team Titles: 121000000 vs. Magical Sugar Rabbits

That would be Maki Itoh/Miyu Yamashita (defending) vs. Mizuki (top singles champion)/Yuka Sakazaki. Miyu misses a big kick (her thing) to Sakazaki to start so it's Itoh coming in for an elbow to the face and a run around the ring. Everything breaks down fast and the champs headscissor them to the floor, setting up the big stereo dives. Back in and Itoh shrugs off a face first ram into the buckle and hits an assisted splash for two.

Itoh bites Mizuki's fingers and Miyu comes in for some kicks to the back. A roll over allows Mizuki to bring Mike back in to clean house. Everything breaks down and Itoh hits a...I'm not sure what that was but she follows with a brainbuster for two. Mizuki is back in with a high crossbody for two on Itoh with Miyu making a save.

Itoh goes up but gets superplex right back down. Back up and Itoh pulls her into a kneeling Texas Cloverleaf but the save is quickly made. Everything breaks down again and Miyu knees Itoh by mistake. With Miyu sent outside, Sakazaki hits a top rope splash, followed by Mizuki's top rope double stomp for the pin and the titles at 16:18.

Rating: B. The title change makes the show feel important and it was after a good match as well. The Rabbits felt like a more complete team and apparently they held the titles at some point before this. It was a solid main event and getting Itoh on the card was a necessity after the attention she got in AEW, though she was mostly playing it straight here.

Post match the new champs thank the and the locker room comes out to the ring for a JOSHI chant. The roster takes a photo and a PLEASE COME BACK chant takes us out.

Overall Rating: B-. The show wasn't a classic, but I can absolutely get the appeal for a lot of fans. These wrestlers are going to get your attention and the wrestling ranges from good to very good. While I don't think I'll be watching

regularly, it's the kind of thing I could see myself watching again once or twice. Nice stuff here, with everyone working hard and having a good time.

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WrestleCon Supershow 2023: I'm Going To Get Some Of This Wrong

WrestleCon Supershow 2023

Date: March 30, 2023

Location: Globe Theater, Los Angeles, California

Commentators: Ian Riccaboni, Veda Scott

With some independent shows from promotions I don't know much about out of the way, we now have one of the bigger

independent shows of the year. This is one of the best collections of independent talents you'll see and that should be the case again here. The card is stacked as usual so let's get to it.

We meet our announce team and here is Mick Foley to welcome us to the show. Foley was backstage earlier and Aja Kong asked for a picture with him so things are going well. He started off as a super fan just like the man this show is named after, Mark Hitchcock. We see a video on Hitchcock's career (I believe the same one as last year) and Foley wishes us a nice day.

Blake Christian vs. Michael Oku

Christian offers a handshake to start and Oku reluctantly accepts it, with everything being fine. Oku wastes no time in taking him down and going for the leg but it's too early for the half crab. They both try dropkicks and it's an early standoff. Christian offers a left handed handshake and this time he tries a cheap shot, only to get dropkicked down.

Oku gets knocked hard to the floor but there isn't enough room for a dive, meaning Christian has to ram him into the apron instead. A standing flip splash gives Christian two but Oku kicks his way to freedom. Oku's frog splash crossbody hits Christian but the ribs are too banged up to cover. There's the Penalty Kick to Christian, who kicks the leg out and hits a 619 between the bottom and middle rope.

A Saito suplex gives Christian two but Oku knocks him to the floor this time. Somehow Oku manages a Fosbury Flop, only to have Christian pop up and hit one of his own. They pull themselves to the apron and slug it out, with Christian grabbing a half and half suplex. For some reason they get back in even faster than after the dives so Christian hits another half and half on another apron. Back in and Christian misses a 450, allowing Oku to grab a half crab. The rope is quickly

grabbed so Oku heads up, with Christian following with a belly to back superplex. Now the springboard 450 can connect for the pin at 14:08.

Rating: B. This was the kind of independent match that you would expect from a show like this with these people involved. Oku is someone who has grown on me over the years as he is rather smooth in the ring most of the time. Then you have Christian, who is one of the hotter names outside of the major promotions right now and is getting some shots in Ring Of Honor as well. Good opener, with a rather indy style.

Respect is shown post match.

Bryan Keith/Kenta vs. Tom Lawlor/Christopher Daniels

Daniels is a mystery partner and I think he'll do. He even has his own Lawlor style cutoff jean shorts over his singlet. We also have a special guest enforcer for this match and it's....KEN SHAMROCK! That's quite the surprise. Daniels shoulders Keith down to start and stomps away in the corner, only to get big booted down. Lawlor comes in and takes Keith into the corner to stomp away as well as Scott says yes, that is in fact Ken Shamrock.

It's off to Kenta, who conducts the fans chanting his name. Daniels gets struck down and Keith is in for a double back elbow. Back up and Daniels manages to send him into the corner for the tag off to Lawlor. An Angle Slam looks to set up a cross armbreaker before Lawlor takes off his jean shorts to reveal...smaller ones! Daniels suplexes Keith into Lawlor's Penalty Kick for two as commentary talks about the shorts.

Lawlor accidentally forearm Daniels though and Keith gets in a kick, allowing the tag off to Kenta. A top rope clothesline gives Kenta two but it's back to Keith, who gets dropped with a double clothesline. Lawlor comes in to slug it out with Kenta until Lawlor gets caught with a hanging DDT.

The running basement dropkick in the corner rocks Lawlor again and there's the double stomp for two. Daniels breaks up the GTS and Lawlor gets in a few shots for two. Lawlor stares down at Shamrock as he puts on the ankle lock, only to have it reversed into a crossface. Daniels decks the referee though, meaning Lawlor tapping means nothing.

A low blow cuts Keith down so Shamrock comes in...but won't count. Daniels yells at Shamrock and gets dropped with a right hand, meaning it's time for the showdown with Lawlor. The distraction lets Kenta roll Lawlor up for the pin (as counted by Shamrock) for the pin at 18:04.

Rating: C. The Shamrock/Lawlor stuff was good but this was more long than anything else. It never quite got to the next level and it followed a pattern: Kenta beat the other two up and then Keith would lose control. That was repeated multiple times and it doesn't exactly make for the most exciting match. It wasn't bad, but just kind of there until the end.

Post match Lawlor goes after Shamrock, who suplexes and ankle locks him. Kenta and Keith get to leave in peace.

Negro Casas vs. Ultimo Dragon

Commentary says these two have had 100+ documented matches against or with each other, which is probably closer to 250-300. Before the match, we get a video from Chris Jericho (ok then), who praises both guys and talks about the influence they had on his career. Jericho wants some cheering for these two because we're in for a treat. Casas backs him into the corner to start and works on the arm until Dragon gets a rollup.

With that broken up, Casas goes back to the arm until a standoff gives them a breather. Dragon reverses an armbar into the surfboard, which is broken up fast because these two are 119 years old combined. We get another standoff and the fans are pleased again. Casas kicks him into the corner but Dragon

kicks him out to the floor. The Asai moonsault is broken up so Dragon settles for a superplex instead. The Dragon Sleeper finishes Casas (perhaps by knockout) at 12:00.

Rating: C+. This is one of those “you mean we get to see this???” matches and that is not a bad thing. The idea of this show is giving you matches you won’t get to see elsewhere and at this point in their careers, how likely was it to get to see this match again? It wasn’t even bad as they were both working hard and had a completely watchable match. Nice job, and a special treat for longtime fans.

Respect is shown post match.

Arez/Latigo/Laredo Kid vs. Rey Horus/Galeno Del Mal/Aramis

Why yes, this will be under lucha rules. Latigo offers a handshake to start and promises it’s ok. The ensuing rollup gives Aramis two and they have a stand off, with a middle finger included. Arez (who takes off his mask to reveal the face paint that inspired Finn Balor’s Demon look) comes in to face Horus for an exchange of quick covers. Horus seems to be annoyed so it’s off to the rather large Galeno, with Arez panicking.

Arez hands it off to the Kid, who isn’t pleased at all. Some triple teaming manages to take Galeno down and out to the floor. Kid hits a dive onto Galeno as his partners grab half crabs back inside. Some very loud chops have Aramis in trouble and the crowd wincing, followed by the running strikes in the corner. Galeno has to make a save so he gets triple teamed fight back down. Arez and company manages a triple gorilla press on Galeno for two in an impressive crash.

Horus and Aramis get back up and fight back though, allowing Galeno to go up top for the HUGE high crossbody to wipe out everyone. Galeno LAUNCHES Horus over the top into a dive onto the other three, followed by Galeno’s flip dive over the top (and he sticks the landing). Arez is back in to kick Galeno

down but Aramis grabs an Air Raid Crash for two. Horus is back in as well with that very spinning DDT of his, setting up double dives from Horus and Aramis. That leaves Galeno to grab a swinging butterfly superplex to finish Latigo at 11:14.

Rating: B. You know what you're getting in a match like this and that's all they delivered on. This was six people going nuts and doing whatever they could squeeze in, with Galeno looking awesome throughout. It's a lot of fun and you can always count on seeing something like this around this show. Good stuff here and as usual, the flips and dives were a lot of fun.

Post match respect is shown and money is thrown into the ring, as is tradition.

The Tokyo Joshi Pro ring announcer (apparently popular) handles the intros for the next match.

Hyper Misao/Shoko Nakajima/Yuki Kamafuku/Mizuki/Yuki Aino vs. Raku/Nao Kakuta/Miu Watanabe/Riku Tatsumi/Hikari Noa

I apologize in advance for getting the names wrong as there are no name graphics and I'm trying to figure out who is who. Hyper Misao grabs the mic and says since she is a superhero, she can win this on her own in seconds (not even minutes). Misao's partners are sent to the floor and everyone gets in a running charge on Misao in the corner. Raku runs the ropes, puts her hands next to her head to signal sleep, and then sits on Misao for two. Scott: "She loves trains and she loves naps!"

Misao gets over for the tag to Aino, who hammers away a bit. Raku brings in Tatsumi to pick up the pace. The rather strong Watanabe comes in for a double slam and a double swing (egads) and it's off to Mizuki (the top champion). A double stomp rocks Yuki and it's Mizuki coming back in (they're changing in and out VERY fast), only to get her legs wrapped around the post. Watanabe comes in and reverse Alabama Slams Tatsumi onto

Mizuki.

Raku grabs comes in but can't get a Russian legsweep and everything breaks down for a bit. The second legsweep attempt connects but Mizuki reverses into a Crossface. That's broken up and Misao comes in with a high crossbody as everything breaks down. Raku Sling Blades Mizuki, who is back with a quick suplex for two. A top rope double stomp gives Mizuki the pin on Raku at 14:20.

Rating: B. It was a lot of fun and it was all fast paced, but the lack of telling us who these people are (Veda Scott shouting names that she is familiar with as us for 15 minutes doesn't count) made it kind of insane. Now that being said, the athleticism was great and some of the power stuff was hard to believe. I could absolutely see this being a lot more interesting with less going on at once and that means as a showcase, this was a success. Just let us settle in to something (literally) foreign to a lot of us a little better next time.

Mike Bailey vs. Shigehiro Irie

The stream slips up a bit so we go from the end of Bailey's entrance to Irie hitting a cannonball for two. Bailey fights back with the kicks until Irie blasts him with a clothesline. A powerbomb is cut off though and Bailey hits the standing moonsault knee drop. The tornado kick hits Irie in the corner but the Ultimate Weapon misses. The Beast Bomber lariat gives Irie two and it's another cannonball into another Beast Bomber to knock Bailey. Some hard strikes to the side of Bailey's head knock Bailey out for the stoppage at about 10:15.

Rating: C+. From what I could see, this was another hard hitting slugfest, though it's almost weird to see Bailey losing. Irie is a monster who impressed me before and it's nice to see him getting a win over a prominent name. If he wants a contract somewhere, I'm sure multiple companies would

be willing to sign him, though granted I said the same thing a few years back. Bailey can absorb a loss as I'm sure he'll have 17 more matches this weekend to make up for things.

United Empire vs. Time Machine

That would be Jeff Cobb/Aussie Open vs. Kushida/Motor City Machine Guns. The fans are split between Aussie Open and the Machine Guns as Hiroshi Tanahashi joins commentary (allegedly, as he doesn't say anything and isn't seen, making me think I didn't hear that right). Kushida takes Fletcher down with a headscissors to start before switching into a kind of surfboard. Shelley comes in to stay on the arm and it's off to Davis, who gets kicked in the head.

It's Sabin coming in to double kick Archer down, with Kushida coming in for the double submission and Dream Sequence. Cobb comes in and isn't about to get sunset flipped. A backbreaker and World's Strongest Slam have Sabin in trouble for a change but he fights out and brings Shelley back in. Everything breaks down and the Aussies pick the Guns up to ram them together.

Fletcher sends Shelley into the corner, allowing Cobb to come in and stand on the banged up back. Cobb holds the legs down so Davis can stand on Shelley's hand for a change. A missed backsplash lets Shelley bring Kushida in to clean house as we're having audio/visual issues. Kushida hits a running palm strike in the corner before rolling into a DDT on Davis. Time machine grabs triple submissions until Cobb escapes and makes some saves.

Shelley and Fletcher slug it out with the former getting the better of things to take over. The Aussies fight back up and clean house, with Kushida having to break up Coriolis. Time Machine takes over with a three man Dream Sequence to Fletcher and Sabin dives onto all three at once. Davis is back in to clean house until he gets Downward Spiraled into the buckle.

Sabin tornado DDTs Cobb but the Aussies are back up with Coriolis to finish Sabin at 16:32.

Rating: B+. Yeah this worked again, as all six were rolling and you had an awesome match throughout. The Guns can still hang with anyone and the Aussies are getting better every time they're in the ring. Kushida's spot is long established and Cobb is the monster that can work anywhere. I had a really good time with this and it went just as a match like this would have been expected to go. It's also nice to see the Aussies win a big match for a change as they don't tend to do so.

AAA Mega Title: El Hijo del Vikingo vs. Komander vs. Black Taurus

Vikingo is defending and I think this might work. Komander and Vikingo shake hands but Taurus is having none of that. Taurus manages a running crucifix bomb to both of them at once before launching Komander over the top and out onto Vikingo. Naturally he follows with a big twisting dive onto both of them as the fans approve. Back in and Taurus hits some running corner clotheslines until the other two get together and pull him outside.

Now it's a double dive to drop Taurus, followed by stereo rope walk moonsaults to drop him again (awesome indeed). Back in and Vikingo hits his springboard 450 stomp, followed by Komander's rope walk shooting star for two. That's enough for Vikingo to go after Komander for daring to try for his title. A top rope hurricanrana takes Komander down but Vikingo has to deal with Taurus in the form of a top rope shooting star hurricanrana (geez).

Vikingo goes right back up top, then to the post, for a rope walk front flip...where he bounces off the top and backflips into an armdrag. Komander springboards a lot (I stopped counting at six) into a hurricanrana to Taurus before flipping

Vikingo from his shoulders into a backbreaker. With Taurus on the floor, Komander rope walks into a dragon rana to plant him again, only to have Vikingo jump to the top for a corkscrew dive. Scott: "Taurus, every time he gets back on his feet, a human being keeps falling from the heavens to take him down!"

Back in and Vikingo's shooting star hits raised knees and Komander spins him into two knees to the chest. Taurus comes back in for a backbreaker on Komander and a pop up Samoan drop makes it worse. Komander hits a springboard poisonrana on Taurus but gets dropped by Vikingo.

A crucifix driver plants Taurus, who pops back up with a spear to put Vikingo down for a three way breather. Taurus and Komander fight on the apron with Komander being dropped hard onto the ropes. Vikingo 630s onto the waiting challengers, followed by some running knees to Taurus in the corner. The 630 finishes Taurus to retain the title at 12:42.

Rating: A-. Much like the six man lucha libre match earlier, you knew what you were getting with this match and that is what they delivered. This was about going insane with one flip after another, plus Taurus doing well with his power stuff as an addition. It was a heck of a fight and I had a blast having my jaw drop over and over. Vikingo and Komander can blow your mind time after time. Great stuff here and nothing was following this one, making it the only choice for a main event.

Respect is shown and money is collected after the match. The three of them pose to end the show.

Overall Rating: B+. This show started a bit slow but once it got going, it was the kind of WrestleCon Supershow that you would have expected. It was a bunch of random matches with one different style after another, allowing all kinds of stars to get the chance to shine. I look forward to this show every year because you get so much out of it and that was the case

again, as the show ends with an awesome one two punch. Throw in everything else that worked and this was great, with only one match not being rather good (mainly due to time issues more than quality). Check this out if you get the chance and have a lot of fun.

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**Dark – February 11, 2020:
That's A Popular Move Around
Here**



IMG Credit: AEW

Dark

Date: February 11, 2020

Location: Von Braun Center, Huntsville, Alabama

Commentators: Tazz, Excalibur

Host: Tony Schiavone

This show continues to be all over the place and that is rather interesting at times. You never can tell what to expect on something like this and that's one of the best things about it. Hopefully it's a bit shorter than last week, which was longer than a show like this needs to be. Let's get to it.

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

Tony runs down the card.

Riho vs. Shoko Nakajima

Non-title. They go with the technical stuff to start with Nakajima grabbing a headlock to little avail. A dropkick puts Nakajima down but she's able to send Riho out side for a suicide dive. Back in and a cravate with knees to the head rock Riho some more, setting up a running basement Blockbuster. Nakajima pulls on both arms at once but Riho rolls through into a double stomp.

Riho misses a 619 so Nakajima tries and misses her own, only to keep swinging to hit a second attempt for a cool spot. They slug it out until Nakajima grabs a guillotine, only to get reversed into a northern lights suplex for two. A top rope double stomp gets two on Nakajima and it's off

to a pinfall reversal sequence for two each. Nakajima misses a top rope backplash, allowing Riho to hit a running knee to the face for the pin at 7:32.

Rating: B-. The action was pretty good but Nakajima is the latest name added to a long list of women who aren't all that interesting in the first place. The biggest problem continues to be we know nothing about them and there is little that sets them apart other than their name and their gear. Yes the action can carry them, but they are going to need something else.

Jimmy Havoc vs. Sonny Kiss

Havoc takes him to the mat to start and Sonny can't spin out of a wristlock. A quick reversal into a sunset flip gives Kiss two and he takes Havoc down with a hurricanrana. The handspring splash just annoys Havoc so he knocks Kiss down in the corner. They fight to the floor with Kiss chopping the post by mistake, allowing Havoc to bend the arm around the turnbuckle.

Back in and we hit the armbar on Kiss, followed by a suplex to send him into the corner for two. A Death Valley Driver gets two and we hit the Fujiwara armbar to keep Kiss in trouble. That's broken up and Kiss hits a one armed belly to belly, plus a front flip kick to the ribs for two. Kiss tries a Matrix but hurts his arm, setting up Havoc's cross armbreaker, with the finger being bent back to make Kiss tap at 10:01.

Rating: C. I was shocked by the fact that the arm actually played into the finish and that's a good thing. It's the kind of a finish that you don't get very often and I'm glad to see them doing something like that for a change. Nice enough match and I'm not sure what Havoc is doing next, but I'm not sure I even remembered him being around.

Dr. Luther seems to threaten Jimmy Havoc.

Here's where Dynamite is coming.

Hikaru Shida vs. Cassandra Golden

Golden is taller and grabs a headlock to start. Shida's shoulder has no

effect and Golden throws her down by the hair. A whip into the corner gets two but Shida manages a backbreaker. Golden is right back with a much bigger side slam and a Vader Bomb gets a deep cover for two. This time it's Shida coming back with a running forearm and a missile dropkick puts Golden down. She isn't down long though as she is right back up with a running enziguri and a Falcon Arrow. Shida is fine enough to hit a running knee (popular move around here) for the pin at 6:29.

Rating: C-. Golden was impressive enough here and Shida has already proven herself. I got more out of Golden than I did Nakajima earlier, if nothing else because she stood out a bit more. We got a good enough match here but it's nothing overly memorable, which is fine enough on a show like this one.

Dark Order vs. Jurassic Express

Jungle Boy/Marko Stunt here while Alex Reynolds and John Silver are out with the Order. Stunt avoids a charge from Grayson to start and hits a springboard bulldog. That just earns Stunt a running elbow to the face so it's off to Jungle Boy for a hiptoss. A basement superkick has Grayson in trouble and it's Uno coming in for an elbow to the face. Uno hits a Swanton for two more and Grayson adds a spinebuster for the same.

Boy tries to fight up but gets his back raked to take him down again. A slingshot hilo to the apron keeps Boy down and there's a t-bone suplex to make it worse. The Fatality is broken up though and it's Stunt coming back in for the dodging disguised as offense. A tornado DDT plants Uno as everything breaks down.

Boy hits a suicide dive on Silver and Reynolds, followed by a Samoan drop for two on Uno. Grayson gets caught in a bridging German suplex so Uno slams Stunt onto him for the save. Uno tells Boy to stop and then punches him in the face before Grayson catches Stunt's super hurricanrana. That means Stunt can be thrown at Uno for a sitout powerbomb and now the Fatality is good for the pin at 9:45.

Rating: C. I'm not sure on having a THIS IS AWESOME during this one but at least they had some fast paced action at times and Stunt took the fall. It's amazing how much more interesting the Dark Order is when

they're not talking and how much less intimidating they are when Uno is one of the focal points. Grayson looks fine but Uno looks like an indy guy who stumbled in here. Fix that and you might have something.

Post match the Dark Order goes after Boy but here are Luchasaurus and SCU for the save. Posing ends the show.

Overall Rating: C+. The wrestling is what mattered here and we had a nice enough night. Couple that with the show being shorter than last week and the lack of a match being shot with a handheld camera and this was an upgrade. They had a decent enough variety this week and I liked what we got well enough. This show is going to be built entirely around the wrestling and this week's was better than most so call it a good one.

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