

Stardom American Dream 2024 In The Keystone State: What A Title

American Dream 2024 In The Keystone State

Date: April 4, 2024

Location: 2300 Arena, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

Commentators: Tom Lawlor, Veda Scott

So this is from Stardom, the Japanese women's promotion, who are in town for Wrestlemania Weekend. I was in town for the weekend and since I'm not likely to ever see something like this again in person, it was worth a look. I'm not sure what to expect from this and that's part of the fun. Let's get to it.

I was sitting in the corner of the arena for this show with the entrance on my right and the ring pretty much straight in front of me. Keep in mind that I do not follow Stardom whatsoever and will likely have no idea what is going on as far as characters or storylines. I apologize in advance for any errors but I'm coming in mostly blind.

The opening video runs down the card, which is only five matches.

High Speed Title: Mei Seira vs. Ram Kaichow vs. Saki Kashima

Seira is defending and from what I can tell, this is similar to the X-Division/Cruiserweight Title. The audio mix is really missing as commentary is barely audible over the entrance music and I can't make out more than a few words of what they are saying. Seira has two belts and Kaichow has one, making things all the more confusing. The fans seem to like Kaichow, who might be a bit dead.

Kashima locks up with Kaichow, who has dust flying off of her to scare Kashima away. More dust gets Kaichow out of a double wristlock before they pick up the pace with Seira hitting a running basement dropkick on Kaichow. They run the ropes until the challengers fall down, leaving Seira as the only one standing. Kaichow rolls Seira up for two and an exchange of rollups give not-Kaichow two each. Back up and Kaichow throws more dust, allowing Kashima to pin Seira for the title at 5:06.

Rating: C+. Well they weren't kidding about the HIGH SPEED part as this was rather fast paced until the ending, which came out of nowhere. I got the concept well enough and Kaichow's dust thing made her stand out, but the other two didn't do much to separate themselves from the other. Either way, it was a nice introduction to the show as it was flying by and kept me interested.

AZM/Saya Kamitani/Camron Branae vs. Stephanie Vaquer/Starlight Kid/Momo Watanabe

Saya and Kid start things off, which is apparently a big rivalry. They go to the mat and get nowhere so they both flip up for a staredown. Branae comes in for part of a triple Gory Bomb to put Kid down for two and it's back to Saya, who gets caught with a headscissors. Watanabe crushes Saya in the corner but gets cut off with a spinning kick to the face. A springboard crossbody gives Saya two and a triple dropkick takes Watanabe down again.

Back up and Watanabe kicks Saya in the head and the double tag brings in AZM and Vaquer. AZM kicks Vaquer in the head and it's back to Branae, who gets caught with Eat Defeat. Some running knees give Branae two but the villains (I think?) take her into the corner for the train of running shots. Everything breaks down and Kid dives onto the floor to take out AZM and Saya. That leaves Vaquer to headbutt Branae in the corner and go after her recently injured knee. Branae manages a

neckbreaker but walks into a package piledriver onto the knee to give Vaquer the pin at 9:11.

Rating: C+. Another fast paced match here as they had a bit more time to showcase the people involved. Six women spread over nine minutes isn't much but it's better than cramming it into even less time. Vaquer felt like a star and that makes sense as she is the New Japan Women's Strong Champion. Not a great match, but if the idea is to get as many people on the show as possible, they're doing well.

Willow Nightingale/Saki vs. Konami/Syuri

Syuri is one of the most revered names going today and I might have seen her once before. Saki and Syuri start things off with Syuri grabbing a rollup for a fast two, giving us an early standoff. Nightingale comes in for a double shoulder to Syuri but she's back up to kick Saki in the back for two. Konami comes in for a dropkick and a one kneed cover gets two. It's already back to Syuri for a kick to the back but Saki suplexes her way to freedom. Nightingale comes back in to run Syuri over, setting up a spinebuster for two.

A Cannonball misses though and Syuri gets two off a DDT. Everything breaks down and Syuri and Konami grab stereo holds, both of which are broken up just as fast. Syuri chokes Saki on the floor, leaving Konami to missile dropkick Nightingale. Saki is back in to make a save and Konami is tossed onto Syuri. Nightingale has had enough of this and hits a heck of a Pounce on Konami, setting up a DDT for two. The Babe With The Powerbomb finishes for Nightingale at 8:28.

Rating: B-. Another fun match here but they were blazing through it again. That's been a trend with this show, which isn't the best idea for a five match card. Nightingale continues to be a ball of energy no matter where she is and it's great to see her getting a win like this. Now give her a win with some gold on the line and it'll be even better.

Mayu Iwatani/Tam Nakano/Momo Kohgo vs. Mina Shirakawa/Mariah May/Xia Brookside

This is Stars vs. Club Venus, the latter of which comes off as some kind of pop band/Mean Girls deal. Venus seems to be mainly about Shirakawa, with the other two being her henchwomen. May ducks Kohgo's running dropkick to start and plans her with a very spinning side slam. Brookside comes in for the running knees to the back and we get a triple Venus pose.

The fans approve of Shirakawa coming in and grabbing a quickly released surfboard. May comes back in but gets caught with a dropkick, allowing Kohgo to hit a crossbody. Iwatani comes in and gets to pick up the pace, including a double springboard wristdrag to May and Shirakawa. May is back up with a Sling Blade and it's Shirakawa coming in for a kick to the head. Nakano comes in for the first time for a shake off (just go with it) with Shirakawa.

A hanging suplex gives Shirakawa two and it's Brookside coming in with a neckbreaker for the same. Everything breaks down and a double 619 hits Brookside to give Nakano two. Venus is back in with a double Paige Turner to give Brookside her own near fall on Nakano. There's a running Codebreaker to drop Nakano as everything breaks down again. Iwatani hits a big dive to the floor and a kick to the face gets two on Brookside, with the rest of Venus making the save. Nakano has had it with this and grabs Twilight Dream (tiger suplex) for the pin at Brookside at 12:13.

Rating: B-. This was another case where the extra time helped but the other thing here was it felt like Venus came off as a full time team rather than two people thrown together. Everyone got a chance to shine here and it felt like more of a showcase, with Brookside getting a lot of time in there. Good stuff here, and probably the best match of the show so far.

Post match the winners leave....and here is Toni Storm, with the AEW Women's Title and a bouquet of flowers. She talks about the time she has had in Philadelphia, where she started with Easter Championship Wrestling. Storm: "I'll have you know that this is the very place where I entered Sandman." She puts over Stardom and praises May, even giving her the flowers. As for Mina Shirakawa, who is standing in the ring as well, the Forbidden Door is always open. Shirakawa is game.

We recap the main event. Maika is the World Champion, Megan Bayne is a power monster, they've teamed together and fought before, title match on.

World Of Stardom Title: Maika vs. Megan Bayne

Bayne, billed as the Megabus and the much larger of the two, is challenging. Maika tries some running shoulders to no avail so she tells Bayne to come on. An armdrag works better but Bayne is back up to run her over with a real shoulder. A butterfly suplex gets two, followed by a Samoan drop for the same.

Back up and some running clotheslines in the corner give Maika two and she goes after the arm. Bayne powers up and suplexes her way to freedom, setting up a side slam for two more. Maika puts her up top for a superplex and another near fall, followed by a cutter for the same. Bayne is back with a big boot and a heck of a running clothesline to leave them both down.

Back up and they slug it out until Maika snaps off a powerslam. Maika catches her up top with a powerbomb for one but Bayne is back with a heck of a spear. An apron German suplex gives Bayne two more with an F5 getting the same. They go up again and this time it's a super Michinoku Driver to give Maika two of her own. A Michinoku Driver II gives Maika the pin at 14:24.

Rating: B. This was just starting to cook when they went home,

with Maika being a good fighting from underneath champion. Bayne is a monster with something of a Beth Phoenix look/style so there was an obvious story to be told here. Good match and the best part of the show, though they could have gone longer.

Post match respect is shown and here is Momo Watanabe to say she's the next challenger. Watanabe pulls back her baseball bat to swing at Maika but Bayne gets in her way and sends Watanabe bailing. Maika says they're on for April 27 in Yokohama before leading the fans in the WE ARE STARDOM chant to end the show.

Overall Rating: C+. That's it? The show didn't even run an hour and forty five minutes, with the longest match out of five lasting less than fifteen minutes. I'm not sure if that is Stardom's style, but this was really short and felt like it could have gone another hour or so. What we got was good, but I was sitting in the crowd wondering what else they were going to do because it wasn't even two hours and then the show just ended. For the prices being charged, this should have been more, as it just didn't last long enough. What we got was good, but egads give us more than that.

Results

Saki Kashima b. Ram Kaichow and Mei Seira – Crucifix to Seira
Stephanie Vaquer/Starlight Kid/Momo Watanabe b. AZM/Saya
Kamitani/Camron Branae – Package piledriver onto the knee to
Branae

Stars b. Club Venus – Twilight Dream to Brookside

Maika b. Megan Bayne – Michinoku Driver II

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Wrestle Kingdom XVI Night Two: They've Still Got It

Wrestle Kingdom XVI Night Two

Date: January 5, 2022

Location: Tokyo Dome, Tokyo, Japan

Attendance: 6,379

Commentators: Chris Charlton, Kevin Kelly

It's the second of three nights of this show and this one feels like the biggest. Last night's main event saw Kazuchika Okada win the IWGP World Title again, which leaves him ready for his first defense against Will Ospreay. The second biggest match on the card is Kenta defending the United States Title against Hiroshi Tanahashi in a No DQ match, which could be a heck of a fight. Let's get to it.

[Here is Night One if you need a recap.](#)

Pre-Show: Togi Makabe/Yuji Nagata/Tomoaki Honma vs. Bullet Club

That would be Bad Luck Fale, Gedo and Jado for the Club. The Club jumps them to start but Jado and Gedo are knocked to the floor to start. Fale is fine enough to run Honma over though and the good guys are in trouble early. Honma is sent outside

and Makabe gets taken into the corner with Jado standing on his chest.

Gedo and Fale take Jado's place but Makabe fights up and brings Nagata in to strike away on Fale. Jado breaks up a Crossface on Fale and it's Honma coming coming in. Everything breaks down and Fale is clotheslined out to the floor. That leaves Honma to headbutt Jado down, setting up a middle rope headbutt for the pin. Kelly: "Heavens be praised, Honma has won a match!"

Rating: C. This worked out well enough as it was all about warming the fans up and the good guys beating the evil villains is as smart of an idea as there is. Honma seems to be a bit of a cult hero so give him a pin to pop the crowd early on. Perfectly watchable six man here and that's all they were shooting for.

Pre-Show: Master Wato/Tenkoji vs. Suzuki-Gun

It's El Desperado/Yoshinobu Kantemaru/Taka Michinoku for Suzuki-Gun. It's a brawl before the bell again until we settle down to Wato kicking away at Desperado. Wato stomps away in the corner and Tenzan tags himself in and has to back Wato off from the beating. Tenzan headbutts away but Kantemaru gets in a cheap shot from the apron to take him down. The brawl heads outside for a bit with Suzuki-Gun taking over again. Back in and Tenzan manages a mountain bomb but Taka is right there to cut him off.

As tends to be the case, one more shot is enough to get Tenzan over for the tag to Kojima, meaning we get the very rapid fire chops in the corner. A DDT hits Taka and the Koji Cutter drops Kantemaru and it's a double tag to bring in Wato and Desperado. Wato strikes away but gets caught in a spinebuster, setting up kind of a gutwrench blue thunder bomb. That's broken up as well and Desperado walks into the Tenkoji Cutter (3D). Everything breaks down again and it's Wato grabbing

something like a reverse Rings of Saturn to make Desperado tap at 9:24.

Rating: C+. They packed a lot into this one and it made for a good match as a result. Wato making Desperado tap should give him a future Junior Heavyweight Title match so they are even going somewhere with the result. The other four did well too, but this was about Wato and they did what they needed to do.

Pre-Show: Los Ingobernables de Japon vs. Suzuki-Gun

That would be Shingo Takagi/Bushi/Hiromu Takahashi vs. Taichi/Zack Sabre Jr./Douki. Bushi armdrags Douki to start so it's off to Takahashi, who wants Sabre. Takahashi has to slip out of a backbreaker and runs Sabre over, only to get pulled into a kneebar. A bridging leglock has Tanahashi in more trouble and it's Douki coming back in for a double stomp. Various choking and stomping ensue but Takahashi manages a dragon screw legwhip.

The dragon screw legwhip and it's Takagi coming in to clean house. Sabre tries a guillotine but gets suplexed down in a hurry. Taichi comes in for an exchange of clotheslines but Douki manages to low bridge Takagi to the floor. Everything breaks down and Douki dives off the top to take them out. Back in and Takagi hits a sliding lariat on Douki, followed by a Gory Bomb on Sabre. Takahashi comes back in to beat on Douki, setting up Last of the Dragon to give Takagi the pin at 10:28.

Rating: C+. Nice job here of giving Takagi a quick win to get him back on track after losing the World Title to Okada last night. This was a rather action packed match as they flew around the ring and kept things moving. That being said, Los Ingobernables are a good bit deeper than Suzuki-Gun so this wasn't exactly in doubt.

The opening video runs down the card.

IWGP Junior Heavyweight Tag Team Titles: Mega Coaches vs.

Bullet Club's Cutest Tag Team vs. Flying Tigers

The Tigers (Robbie Eagles/Tiger Mask) are defending against Ryusuke Taguchi/Rocky Romero (Coaches) and Taiji Ishimori/El Phantasma (Bullet Club). Before the bell, Phantasma jumps Tiger though and we're starting 2 vs. 2 vs. 1. The Coaches get to clean house and Romero catapults Phantasma into the back of Taguchi's tights. Eagles is back in to take out the Coaches but the Club takes over on Eagles with an assisted back rake.

Phantasma uses his loaded boot to take over until Eagles is back up with a dive. The Coaches hit dives of their own but it's Tiger butterfly superplexing Phantasma. Back to back tilt-a-whirl backbreakers drop the Coaches as everything stays broken down. The Coaches hit a double hip attack on Eagles but the Club is back in with double knees to Romero's chest.

A top rope knee sets up the UFO on Tiger and a Thunder Kiss 86 gives Ishimori two. Eagles sends Phantasma's kick into Ishimori's face though and it's time for the other teams to go after Phantasma. It's time to unload the boot though, which contains a piece of metal. As a result, the Club is eliminated and we're down to a regular tag match. An exchange of rollups gets two each and Tiger dives onto Taguchi on the floor. That leaves Eagles to tie Romero up with a leglock for the tap to retain the titles at 12:09.

Rating: B-. This was pure chaos throughout but they did pay off what seemed to be a long running story with the loaded boot. There was nothing resembling a tag match here and that's what they were trying to do. It can get a little complicated and hard to follow, but some good commentary kept it simple enough to understand for the most part. It's also nice to see these titles retained, as they seem to change hands most of the time at this show.

Tam Nakano/Saya Kamitani vs. Mayu Iwatani/Starlight Kid

This is a Stardom (women's promotion) exhibition tag. Each one

is from a different faction and they drew straws to determine the participants. Kid headscissors Kamitani down to start and snaps off a basement dropkick to make it worse. Iwatani comes in for a double 619 into a double standing moonsault, meaning it's time to kick Kamitani in the back. Kamitani comes back with a spinwheel kick but Nakano can't add a German suplex.

Iwatani kicks Nakano in the head for a breather and there's a Sling Blade to take her down again. The double tag brings in Kamitani and Kid as everything breaks down. Iwatani dives onto Nakano and Kamitani, setting up Kid's twisting top rope splash back inside. Kid climbs onto Iwatani's shoulders (already on the middle rope) for a high crossbody onto Kamitani for two, with Nakano making the save.

That's fine with Kid, who grabs a Texas Cloverleaf on Kamitani to make it worse. Nakano breaks that up as well and hits a big dive off the top to the floor. Back in and Kamitani's bridging northern lights suplex gets two on Kid with Iwatani making the save this time. Kid and Kamitani trade rollups for two each but Iwatani is back in with a superkick. Nakano tiger suplexes Iwatani and it's Kamitani hitting a sitout fisherman's buster to knock Kid silly. A Phoenix splash is enough to give Kamitani the pin at 9:16.

Rating: B. This was a straight sprint as they didn't waste time doing anything but getting in as much as they could. What made it work was that most everything looked crisp and they were flying through the whole match. I've heard almost nothing but good things about Stardom and it is pretty awesome to see them getting a showcase match on the biggest card in Japan. Heck of a match here and very fun.

King of Pro Wrestling Provisional Title: Cima vs. Minoru Suzuki vs. Toru Yano vs. Chase Owens

This is a weird title, as it isn't so much about winning the title here, but rather holding it at the end of the year.

These four were the final four in a battle royal yesterday to set this up. The other three jump Yano to start, because he has won the trophy two years running. With Yano and Owens sent outside, Suzuki and Cima strike it out until Suzuki is sent to the floor as well.

Cima hits a big dive onto all three of them and everyone heads back inside. Yano takes off a buckle pad as Owens hits Suzuki in the face. Owens immediately apologized and gets beaten up again, leaving Cima to put Yano in an Indian deathlock. Suzuki beats Cima up, which cranks on Yano's leg over and over. That's broken up so Suzuki grabs his sleeper on Owens, with Yano hitting a double low blow to break it up. Suzuki isn't having this so he kicks Yano in the face and hits the piledriver for the pin at 6:09.

Rating: C. They didn't waste time here either and it was a fast/to the point match. Suzuki shouldn't have had any trouble with Yano or Owens so once he got the chance, he ran through Yano for the win. That being said, this is just the start of the year's story, but Suzuki hurting people for trying to go after his title could be rather entertaining.

Post match, Suzuki beats up Yano some more and pulls out some handcuffs. In Yano fashion, he manages to handcuff Suzuki to the rope instead and runs off.

Never Openweight Six Man Tag Team Titles: House of Torture vs. Chaos

That would be Evil/Yujiro Takahashi/Sho, who are defending, vs. Hirooki Goto/Yoshi-Hashi/Yoh. It's a brawl on the floor before the bell until Goto spinwheel kicks and bulldogs Evil. Sho and Yoh come back in to continue their rivalry, with Yoh dropkicking him outside and hitting a dive. The Torture corner's turnbuckle pad is ripped off as Sho knees Goto in the ribs back inside.

Takahashi comes in but can't hit a suplex, instead getting

clotheslined down by Goto. Hashi gets the tag to pick up the pace and a running dropkick to the back gets two on Takahashi. A kick to the head rocks Hashi but he's back up with a running clothesline. It's back to Yoh vs. Sho for the strike off but Torture catches Yoh in the corner for the series of running shots to the face.

Sho grabs a wrench Yoh can get choked behind the referee's back until Goto and Hashi make the save. A superkick sets up the fireman's carry backbreaker on Sho, with Yoh hitting his own superkick. Takahashi offers a distraction though and it's a low blow from Evil into a wrench shot from Sho for the pin at 9:39.

Rating: C. I was getting into it but then the lame ending brought it right back down. I can understand not wanting to see Yoh pin Sho on back to back nights but they didn't have anything other than a low blow into a weapon shot? Evil's match yesterday felt rather out of place and that was the same here, though at least this came after a good enough match.

The teams yell at each other post match and odds are we'll be seeing a rematch.

Here are a bunch of Pro Wrestling Noah stars, led by Keiji Mutoh (better known as Great Muta) to say that they are ready to face New Japan on Saturday. Cue Shingo Takagi and company to say he knew Noah would say something offensive and it is time to show who is better when they face off. Noah issues the challenge but Takagai and company being down about 20-3 is enough to make New Japan think twice. Noah promises to win and that's it.

New Japan is back on AXS TV on March 3.

Here are some upcoming shows.

Intermission.

Sanada vs. Great-O-Khan

Los Ingobernables de Japon vs. United Empire. Feeling out process to start with neither getting very far early on. They fight over some armbars until Sanada dropkicks him to the floor. Khan is ready for the dive and takes him out, setting up a half nelson Skull Crushing Finale. A release gordbuster drops Sanada for two but the Mongolian chop is blocked. Sanada armdrags him down and hits a backbreaker to send Khan outside for some pleasant applause.

Back in and Sanada can't get the Paradise Lock as Khan kicks him right back to the floor. Khan shouts down at Sanada, who stands there as Khan dives on him (with commentary pointing out that there was no reason to believe he would actually jump, meaning Sanada thought he had nothing to fear).and then a rollup gets two back inside. The Sheep Killer (I think? It's something like an abdominal stretch.) has Sanada in trouble but he fights out hand tries an O'Connor roll.

That's broken up as well and the Sheep Killer goes on again, but this time Sanada reverses into a tiger suplex for two. Sanada's top rope splash hits raised knees and they slug it out with Khan getting the better of things. A kick to the face staggers Khan, but he knocks Sanada silly with a straight right hand for two of his own. Khan hits a middle rope moonsault and tries a claw, only to get reversed into a European Clutch for the pin at 13:22.

Rating: B-. This was the first singles match of the night and it was nice to see things change pace like they did here. The idea seemed to be that Sanada needed to prove he could win here and he took Khan down in the process. Khan's improvement over the last year is still close to remarkable, as he was dreadful last time and put in a pretty good match here.

Tetsuya Naito vs. Jeff Cobb

More Los Ingobernables de Japon vs. United Empire and this

should be good. Cobb lost to Naito on a quick rollup recently and now it is time for revenge. Said revenge starts fast with Cobb unloading on him in the corner to start. Naito gets a boot up in the corner though and dropkicks the knee out to slow Cobb down. Another dropkick to the knee takes Cobb outside and the tease of the Tranquilo pose lets Naito kick him in the face again.

This time Naito follows him outside so Cobb grabs a suplex and drives Naito into the post over and over. Naito takes his time getting inside again, allowing Cobb to drive some knees into his back. There's a gorilla press toss before Cobb puts him on his shoulder for some rams into the corner. Back up and Naito slugs away with forearms to no avail but a running boot to the face manages to drop Cobb.

Naito goes after the knee with a running dropkick, followed by a basement version in the corner. A version of the Indian Deathlock goes on but Cobb is in the rope before too long. Cobb blocks a shinbreaker and hits an overhead belly to belly, followed by a belly to belly (minus his usual running start) for two.

Tour of the Islands is broken up and Naito hits a DDT for a breather. It's time to go back to the knee but Destino is countered again. Naito kicks him in the knee to send him into the corner and it's time to go up. The super hurricanrana is countered into a superbomb but the knee gives out again. Naito slaps on a leglock but Cobb pounds his way to freedom. A German suplex drops Naito, only to have Cobb pop up with a hard clothesline. Tour of the Islands is broken up again and Naito hits a scoop brainbuster. Destino is enough to finish Cobb at 15:36.

Rating: B. These guys beat each other up and it was a much more definitive win than a rollup. Naito picks Cobb's knee apart and took away a lot of his power, which made him closer to a mortal. This felt like a big win for Naito, who seems

ready to move back up to the main event. He's always good for a solid match and Cobb is still a heck of a monster, with this being the best match on the show so far. Or at least the best singles match so far.

IWGP United States Title: Hiroshi Tanahashi vs. Kenta

Kenta is defending and it's No DQ. Tanahashi is all about honor and Kenta is all about the title, but Kenta has pushed Tanahashi too far. That could make Tanahashi extra dangerous. Before the bell, Kenta grabs some kendo sticks and throws one to Tanahashi so we start fast. The battle of the sticks goes to Kenta and a belt shot makes it worse. More stick shots rock Tanahashi and it's time to bring in a bunch of weapons.

Various shots to the head and back have Tanahashi in more trouble as this is one sided to start. A short ladder is put in the corner but Tanahashi dropkicks Kenta's knee, sending the champ face first into a trashcan. Tanahashi puts the trashcan over Kenta's head and beats on it with a chair, meaning it's time for a guitar. A good shot to the head puts a hole through the guitar (which doesn't seem to be gimmicked) and let's bring in a table for a bonus.

Tanahashi dragon screw legwhips Kenta down but a briefcase shot gives Kenta a much needed breather. They both go up top with Tanahashi palm striking his way out of trouble. Let's throw in several more chairs and it's a Sling Blade to drive Kenta into said chairs. The High Fly Flow only hits chairs though and Tanahashi is down again. Kenta buries him underneath the chairs in the corner for a running dropkick to crush him again.

Go To Sleep is loaded up but Tanahashi reverses into Twist and Shout onto the chairs. With nothing else working, the table is thrown inside and is decorated with a nice Kenta holding a chair. Tanahashi takes too long going up top though and gets chaired down, setting up a super Falcon Arrow to send

Tanahashi mostly through said table.

Another table is thrown in and Kenta finds a big ladder (that thing is huge) for a bonus. Kenta sets up the ladder (and has to screw in the support) and puts Tanahashi on the table. That takes way too long though, as Tanahashi gets up and knocks Kenta down in a SCARY crash. The High Fly Flow through the bloody Kenta gives Tanahashi the pin and the title at 22:16.

Rating: B+. This took some time to get going, but the violence worked because it stood out. New Japan doesn't seem to do this kind of thing very often and it felt like a physical fight as a result. Tanahashi beats Kenta at his own game because he is the better man and as a result, it was a great way to blow off their feud. That being said, Kenta was very banged up in this match, suffering a dislocated hip, a broke nose, nerve damage in his finger and the lacerations, meaning he's going to be gone for a little while.

Tanahashi is tended to but walks off on his own.

IWGP World Heavyweight Title: Will Ospreay vs. Kazuchika Okada

Okada is defending but Ospreay has his own belt, as he was stripped of the title due to an injury. They stare at each other for a good while to start before some grappling goes nowhere. Okada takes him down by the leg before switching to an early headlock. Back up and Okada scores with a big boot into a backdrop to keep Ospreay in trouble. A neckbreaker sets up another chinlock as Okada is going after various parts. Ospreay fights up and scores with a Phenomenal Forearm to send Okada outside.

There's no big dive though, as Ospreay instead opts to go outside and hit Okada in the face. Back in and some chops rock put Okada down, setting up a suplex to bang up Okada's back as well. The cravate keeps Okada in trouble but he's right back with a flapjack (Ospreay: "Oh s***!") for a breather. A DDT and neckbreaker give Okada two each but Ospreay lifts him out

to the apron.

That's fine with Okada, who hits a running dropkick to knock Ospreay out to the floor. Okada whips him into the barricade but Ospreay superkicks him out of the air, sending Okada's knee into the concrete. Ospreay climbs the lighting rig (as he did at a previous Wrestle Kingdom) and moonsaults down onto Okada for the big crash. Back in and a top rope forearm to the back of the head gives Ospreay two and the confidence is starting to roll. Okada is sent outside and Ospreay tries the Sasuke Special, only to get caught in a tombstone on the floor.

Back in and Okada hits a missile dropkick for two, setting up the Money Clip. Okada lets that go and hits a top rope elbow but Ospreay kicks him in the face. Ospreay's standing shooting star press hits knees but Ospreay is back up with a Liger Bomb for two. With Okada draped over the top rope, it's a shooting star to the back for two more. There's the Oscutter for two more but the Hidden Blade misses. Ospreay doesn't seem to mind and hits his own tombstone.

Since he didn't watch last night, Ospreay tries the Rainmaker on Okada, who reverses into his own Stormbreaker (Ospreay's finisher) for two. Back up and Okada hits his dropkick but the Rainmaker is countered into a C4 for a double knockdown. A super Oscutter gets two on Okada but Stormbreaker is countered into a spinning tombstone.

Okada hits a discus lariat into the Rainmaker for two but Ospreay is back up with his own Rainmaker. They slug it out from their knees and Okada hits another Rainmaker, but he tries again and gets reversed into the Hidden Blade for two. Stormbreaker is countered so Ospreay knees him in the face but another Hidden Blade is countered with a dropkick. The Landslide sets up the Rainmaker to retain Okada's title at 32:53.

Rating: A-. It's a really good match and felt like a Wrestle Kingdom main event, but it did have some of the same problems that almost always pop up in an Okada match. The kickouts got ridiculous here as it was at least three tombstones and about 73 Rainmakers to finally put Ospreay away. That being said, these two beat the fire out of each other and it was nice to see them finally have a definitive champion after all the months of screwiness (which wasn't the company's fault). Great match, but it could have had some finishers trimmed out.

Post match Okada says he respects Ospreay but now there is no doubt about who is the real World Champion. Cue Tetsuya Naito to praise Okada's victories but he needs to be the next challenger. Okada thinks that's a good idea and Naito leaves. Okada thanks the fans for coming out and giving the wrestlers their strength. He wants to wrestle and promises to keep making it rain.

Commentary has their big recap to end the show.

Overall Rating: B+. This was better than the first night and it felt like a Wrestle Kingdom worthy show. The two main events are the best parts of the night, as tends to be the case, but there are also some awesome matches earlier on the card to make it that much better. You could tell that everyone was working hard and wanted to make this the biggest night of the year. I had a rather good time with it and that's the right feeling to have after a show this big.

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