

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 kickout 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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