

Hey, everybody! My name is Johnny Stevens and I volunteered to be Inside The Ropes' official recapper of CCW - Combat Corner Wrestling. The shows are going to happen down the street from my house at the old Crockett Coliseum so hey... why not?

Now, for those who don't know, CCW is a side project for the American Wrestling Alliance. The AWA happens to be the biggest pro wrestling company on the planet and they gotta get their guys from somewhere. The territory system has been dying out since the late 90s when places like Portland and South Laredo went under so the AWA is looking to the future.

The Combat Corner is the AWA's training school and has been open since the AWA has. When Todd Michaelson agreed to sell Pro Wrestling Revolution to the group that was creating the AWA, he insisted on opening a training school with himself as the Head Trainer. Since then, that school has produced stars like Supreme Wright, Eric Preston, Air Strike, and a bunch of others. So, Michaelson's got a track record of being able to produce high level talent... now let's see if he can turn that into a viable wrestling promotion.

The partnership between the AWA and Fox Sports X has been a huge hit in my estimation so far and it continues here with Fox Sports X agreeing to show CCW programming on their website. I've heard it's a test and if the numbers are right, The X may add CCW programming to the network too. But that's probably a long ways off.

It takes guts to announce a show and sell tickets with no lineup and no stars announced but that's what the AWA decided to do for the first CCW show. I bought my tickets first day - down at ringside. Upon arriving at the new Crockett, the first thing I noticed was the outside of the building had been completed repainted. Other than that, the building looked about the same... until I got inside.

WOW! The AWA really sunk some cash into the remodel. If you had blindfolded me and stuck me in that building, I'd have had no idea that I'd been there before. New seats, new lighting... the arena bowl was completely changed to reduce the seating capacity. I'd guess the place holds about half of what it did before, giving a really intimate and cozy building to work. Outside there are new concession stands, new merch stands, and just an overall awesome venue for pro wrestling.

CCW's color scheme seems to be the same green and white of the Combat Corner as the turnbuckles and ropes were green, white, green. The ring apron was digitized and could change depending on who was in the ring or what was going on. Can't imagine it'll be too long before we see that on SNW. The stage was small but at a bit of incline with this crazy rectangular pyramid looking video wall. Hard to describe but I've seen similar stuff in Japan so that's gotta be Michaelson's influence.

The crowd was buzzing before the show. We'd all heard rumors of who might show up... what might happen. No one knew for sure but we all knew the AWA would be looking to impress with this first show and might lend just

about anyone from the main roster to bolster the debut event. The first thing I noticed was the makeup of the crowd. Lots of kids like you'd see at any AWA event but there were also a lot of teenagers and adults... your typical "smart mark" crowd that loves them some indy wrestling.

As bell time approached, the announcers moved down into place. Surprisingly, no Mark Stegglet... no Colt Patterson. Melissa Cannon was doing the ring announcing but I found out after the show that she was only here for one night. I guess they're still looking for a permanent ring announcer. She introduced the commentators as Harvey Sutton (on PBP) and the first shocker of the night came as the color commentator was introduced.

Thanks go out to The X, the AWA, CCW... whoever got Fox to agree to post some YouTube clips of the show... check it out...

[If you clicked the link above, you'd see Melissa Cannon in the green and white ring, raising the mic...]

MC: And your Combat Corner Wrestling Color Commentator is...

[She lowers the mic as...

"Super Bon Bon" by Soul Coughing kicks in as the place goes banana!

After a few moments, the "San Jose Shark" Marcus Broussard walks through the curtain to another huge reaction. Broussard grins, standing at the top of the ramp in a white dress shirt, olive colored tie, and matching slacks. He points to the cheering fans, arrogantly walking down the ramp towards the ring. The former National Champion slowly makes his way around the ring, moving over to where Harvey Sutton is waiting with his hand extended towards the San Jose Shark. Broussard extends his hand...

...and then pulls it back, running it through his hair to a big cheer from the indy crowd who perhaps predictably breaks into a smarky chant of "WE'RE NOT WORTHY" clap clap clapclapclap that brings a grin to Broussard's face as he climbs the ringsteps, ducking through the ropes. He grabs the mic from Melissa, giving her a wink as she steps back to the corner.]

MB: Cut the music!

[The music cuts to another big cheer as the surging chant of "SHARK! SHARK! SHARK!" fills the air. Broussard nods with a grin, raising the mic.]

MB: Over seven years ago, a man named Todd Michaelson called me and said, "I'm starting a new company. I think it could be something really special and I want YOU to be a part of it."

[Big cheer!]

MB: If seven years has taught me anything, that man knows this business and the best decision of my life was saying yes during that call. So, a few weeks ago, he calls me again...

"Marcus, you've been doing a hell of a job as a talent scout for the AWA. But we're starting something new... and we think it could be something really special... and I want YOU to be a part of it!"

[Broussard nods as the fans cheer.]

MB: So here I am. I was there for the first day of the AWA... so it's only fitting I'm here for the first day of CCW!

[Another big cheer as the first "CEE-CEE-DUB!" chant in the promotion's short history starts up from the rabid fanbase.]

MB: Now, there are a whole lot of guys back in that locker room who are ready to come out here and show you what the future of this business is all about. So, I'm going to step out of this ring, sit right down there at ringside with whoever this clown is they found for me...

[Cut to ringside where Harvey Sutton looks embarrassed.]

MB: ...and show Bucky Wilde what the future of COLOR COMMENTARY IS ALL ABOUT!

[Another big cheer! Broussard hands the mic back to Melissa Cannon, giving the fans a wave as he steps out of the ring...

...and our YouTube video comes to an end.]

The crowd was red hot after the announcement of Marcus Broussard as the color commentator and was ready for action. Melissa Cannon made the announcements and our first match was ready to get going.

Match #1 - SWLL Showcase: El Caliente vs Veneno

You've gotta be kidding me! These guys just tore the house down in Mexico a few weeks back and now they're in the States and in the OPENING MATCH?! Talk about wanting to kick things off with a bang! Both guys got a HUGE reaction coming to the ring - told you it was a "smart" crowd. They both got big chants during their introductions and it quickly broke down into dueling chants as the bell rang.

There was a few minutes of mat wrestling, trading some nice holds and counterholds, but they both knew that wasn't what this crowd wanted to see out of two of the best high flyers in the world. An armtwist by Veneno resulted in Caliente climbing up the ropes, bouncing off them, flipping around and throwing Veneno down to the mat and out to the floor with an armdrag. The crowd was going absolutely nuts for Caliente as he jumped up and down, waving his arms, driving the fans into a frenzy before diving over the top in a somersault plancha that wiped them both out.

The next five minutes was absolute bliss for this lucha libre fan. More dives and big spots than you can imagine. A powerbomb by Veneno turned into a rana. A top rope rana by Caliente turned into a sit-out superbomb. Veneno using the spinning headscissors into the Fujiwara for a near submission. Caliente's twisting corkscrew dive off the top for a double near countout.

The finishing stretch was awesome with Veneno using a fishermanbuster to plant Caliente before a Phoenix Splash earned a near fall. Veneno was frustrated after that, ripping and tearing at the mask which earned him pretty loud boos from the CCW fans - those who are respectful of the lucha libre traditions at least. He went for a second fishermanbuster but Caliente turned it into a small package for two. A thrust kick to the jaw stunned Veneno as Caliente set him up top, getting set for the Spicy Hot Rana.

I was super stoked as I've never seen it live before but it's one of my favorite moves in wrestling. He ran across, jumping up on the ropes when Veneno hooked a front facelock, kicking and twisting off the top and SPIKING Caliente with a tornado DDT! No doubt that was the finish as Veneno won the first match in CCW history.

Both men got a standing ovation after the match which only grew louder as the man many have given full credit for for CCW - Todd Michaelson - walked out on the stage and joined the ovation. He shook both men's hands as they exited before coming to the ring, taking the mic.

Check out what happened next...

[Livin' that YouTube life, we see Todd Michaelson, mic in hand, in the middle of the green and white ring..]

TM: How about that?

[Another big cheer! Michaelson is beaming.]

TM: Those two guys came here from Mexico to be a part of something. They wanted to be here the first night we re-opened the Crockett Coliseum so they could be a part of something special. The same reason they're here... is the same reason he's here...

[He points over the ropes at Marcus Broussard.]

TM: ...is the same reason everyone in that locker room is here... it's the same reason you're here...

[He points out at the fans.]

TM: ...and it's the same reason I'm here. We all want to be a part of something special. We all want to get a glimpse of what the future looks like and we're going to see it right here tonight and every other night we get together to see the best and the brightest of the future of professional wrestling in action.

CCW is the future of this business... and the future is-

[Michaelson's cut off by a voice coming from off-camera.]

"NOOOOOOOOOOW!"

[The Head Trainer of the Combat Corner turns towards the entrance ramp, looking up the aisle as another familiar face emerges from the backstage area. A well-toned, well-tanned competitor with shoulder length blonde hair, he stands in green trunks, matching boots and kneepads, and a black t-shirt with "SHATTER THE CEILING" in bold white font.]

HS: It's Kerry Kendrick live and in living color in the Crockett Coliseum!

MB: This night keeps on getting better, Sutton.

[Kendrick raises the mic, staring down the aisle at Todd Michaelson.]

KK: In my time being associated with this company, I have learned one thing in particular. Don't trust anybody.

For years, the front office told me, "It's not your time." For years, they told me that my time would come. Then a few months ago, they told me it was time... they told it was my moment to shine...

And then they buried me like they always do.

[The fans jeer... most of them at least.]

KK: And you, Michaelson... you're no better. "Come down to the Corner. Work out for a bit. Show the office that you really want it."

I came... I saw... I ran laps around the best you've got...

[Kendrick spreads his arms arrogantly as he continues to walk down the aisle.]

KK: And here I am, stuck in this abandoned warehouse while the REAL superstars are putting on Main Events in the Cajundome.

So it occurs to me, Michaelson, that if the AWA doesn't want to take advantage of what they've got and make me the centerpiece of the company...

[He gestures at himself.]

KK: ...then maybe I'll take this joint, stick it on my back, and carry it to heights that the AWA's never even dreamed of!

[There's a decent sized cheer for that as Kendrick climbs the steps, ducking through the ropes.]

KK: It's Opening Night, bookerman. There's gotta be someone back there who thinks they can beat the next franchise player in this industry.

[Michaelson raises the mic to respond...

...but doesn't get a word out before the lights drop down to nothing, plunging the arena into darkness to the loud buzz of the crowd.]

HS: This could be bad news, Marcus.

MB: Sutton, if I've learned anything in my years in this business, it's that whenever the lights go out... here comes trouble!

[A low electronic buzz is heard; the opening section of "Final Countdown" by Europe. As the various industrial/synth sounds come up, small plumes of steam emit from around the entranceway. The crowd buzzes at the relatively high production values for the small promotion as the famous synthesizer riff begins, causing the crowd hype to build.]

HS: I don't have a clue who we're about to see and that fact alone sends a shiver down my spine, Shark.

MB: This crowd is going nuts and THEY don't even know who they're going to see either! The energy in this building is absolutely electric!

[The entire opening keyboard section plays with the arena in darkness.

At last, as the voice counts down from ten, a thin golden silhouette appears on the big screen. It fills in as the countdown proceeds, and dim white lighting reveals that the entranceway is filling with thick white mist, like a smoke cloud. At about four, we can make out that the filling-in silhouette is a gradually-illuminated Olympic Gold Medal, and the mist really starts to pour out from the curtain as the crowd EXPLODES!

At two, the entrance way floods with golden light, as if a rocket were taking off. And at zero, the light drops, replaced by red, white, and blue small spotlights playing through the now-receding mist, and resting on a figure who is now being revealed standing in the entrance way... none other than Bret Grayson. The big screen displays a slow-motion image of Bret Grayson on the gold medal stand in the 2004 Olympic Games as Grayson replicates the gold medal pose under the spotlights, head bowed as if receiving the medal. His head raises back up as the arena lights return to normal, and smirks at the arena as he displays his Olympic Gold Medal by stretching out his arms.]

HS: BRET GRAYSON! THE OLYMPIC GOLD MEDALIST IS IN... THE...
HOUUUUUUUSE!

[Bret Grayson is a man in prime physical condition, with wide shoulders and well-defined muscles. He has black hair kept short but messily curled. He has hazel eyes and an epic-level smirk. He's wearing a white ring jacket with an American flag design motif and "USA" emblazoned on the back in red and blue font. Grayson strides down the aisle, chin up and head held high as mist jets fill the aisle at his feet ahead of him, while red, white, and blue lights shine from above into the mist. The arena itself is still mostly in darkness with only the colored spotlights shining into the mist and onto Grayson illuminating the scene.]

MB: This man has been a champion at every level, Sutton. High school, college when he went to Iowa to become a four-time All-American and a two-time NCAA champion. He won the World Championship in 2003 while still in college. And in 2004, his crowning achievement - an Olympic gold medal that he won on a broken freakin' ankle! Grayson is as talented as they come and as tough as they come to boot!

We're leaving together,
But still it's farewell

[Upon arriving at ringside, Grayson walks around the ring and walks up to the steps. He stands on the steps, head bowed again, and both hands raised in the air with index fingers pointing to the sky. And he waits. The crowd is absolutely captivated by the former Olympic champion.]

And maybe we'll come back,
To earth, who can tell ?
I guess there is no one to blame
We're leaving ground
Will things ever be the same again?

[Grayson waits until the chorus...]

IT'S THE FINAL COUNTDOWN!

[... and as it goes, he takes the last step onto the apron, nimbly hops over the top rope, and does a quick spin, immediately dropping to his knees and stretching his arms again to the boos of the crowd as a single white spotlight is now on him. Red, white, and blue spotlights now sweep the entire arena. He leaps up from his knees, much as he did when he won his gold medal in Athens, and flings his ring jacket off to the mat with a flourish. This reveals his ring attire: a blue stylized version of a Team USA wrestling singlet, with red-and-white star logos and "USA" imprinted across the back in red and white. His boots are a matching shade of blue and he sports white knee pads. Grayson walks around the ring, going to the second rope in each corner, soaking in the cheers...]

HS: What a moment for this young man out of Youngstown, Ohio!

MB: One of my favorite Springsteen songs! Love ya, Boss!

[Grayson hops down off the second rope as the lights come back up. Kerry Kendrick looks as agitated as you might imagine as Grayson walks up to him...]

...and snatches the mic from his hand to an "OHHHHHHHH!" from the crowd. Grayson smirks a confident smile as he walks around the ring.]

BG: Did I hear someone say something about the next franchise player in this industry?

[Big cheer! Grayson smiles again at the reaction, nodding his head.]

BG: I thought so. You call and I came because when you're talking about being the Franchise... when you're talking about being a Blue Chipper... when you're talking about being the one and the only "can't miss" prospect in the world of professional wrestling...

[Dramatic pause.]

BG: Then you're talking about Bret Freaking Grayson!

[BIG CHEER! A solid "GRAY-SON!" chant starts out. The Olympic champion listens, nodding his head as Kerry Kendrick looks ready to pitch a fit.]

BG: But if you're looking for someone to face here on the first night of CCW... then I got a one way ticket to Takedown Town with your name on it!

[Another big cheer!]

BG: So, how about it, Mr. Michaelson? What do you say?

[Grayson goes to hand the mic off to the Head Trainer of the Combat Corner when Kerry Kendrick attacks him from behind, smashing him with a forearm to the back of the head, knocking Grayson to a knee. A second forearm knocks him down to all fours where a big boot to the ribs flips him over onto his back.]

HS: Out of nowhere, the Pearl Harbor job by Kerry Kendrick has put the Olympian down on his back! Kendrick putting the boots to Bret Grayson in the middle of the ring and he's hearing it from these fans!

[Kendrick spins away, cupping a hand to his ear, taunting the Crockett Coliseum crowd as he pulls Grayson up, wrapping his arms around his torso, setting for his signature belly-to-belly suplex...

...but Grayson has other ideas, slapping the arms away, twisting around, and LAUNCHING Kendrick halfway across the ring, bouncing him off the canvas with an overhead belly-to-belly throw!]

HS: UP AND OVER GOES KENDRICK!

[Grayson pops up to his feet, stalking in behind Kendrick as he tries to recover, jerking the leg out from under him...

...and twisting the ankle in an obscene direction!]

HS: AHHH! AHHH! AHHH!

MB: Calm yourself, Sutton! The Liberty Lock is hooked in and it's hooked in deep!

[Kendrick claws at the mat for a few moments and then instantly starts tapping out as quickly as possible. The crowd ROARS for the unofficial tapout as Grayson releases, smirking as Kendrick crawls under the ropes, falling to the floor as "The Final Countdown" begins to play again.]

HS: Wow! You talk about a debut! You talk about an impact! Bret Grayson has come to CCW and he's come to make a name for himself!

[Grayson celebrates his "handling" of Kerry Kendrick as we fade to black.]

After that, the announcement was made that Bret Grayson would make his official CCW debut later tonight. With a big match already set for later, it was time for tag team action in the Crockett Coliseum - the second match in CCW history.

Match #2 - Tag Team Match - Downfall (w/Mr. Sadisuto) vs The Tennessee Kids (Justin Sanders/Timmy Brooks)

Two new teams. Biggest pop during the intros came for Mr. Sadisuto. Downfall is made up of two face-painted guys who didn't get their names read - or at least I didn't catch them. They look just about the same... not very bulky but very aggressive in the ring. Sadisuto stole the show for that act with his running commentary at ringside. Hysterical. The Tennessee Kids got a big pop from the girls - good looking young guys. If Air Strike ever decides to hang 'em up, the AWA might just slot these guys in their spots.

Sanders and Brooks had some fun double teams including one where they went for a double kick to the gut on... let's say Downfall #1 for lack of names. He caught both their feet and they popped him with a double enzuigiri. The crowd marked out for that.

The match went about seven minutes with Downfall winning with a pretty simple but cool doubleteam where one of them picked Brooks up in a bearhug while the other came off the second rope with a double axehandle across the face for the three count. They beat on the Kids for a bit after the match too with Sadiusto getting some licks in as well. Nothing special but fun.

We had our first backstage promo of the night with Theresa Lynch - yes, one of THOSE Lynches - serving as the interviewer. Guess ol' Blackjack needed to get a cut of the action in CCW too.

Her guest was a world champion powerlifter in Sammy Carson. If you were watching Memorial Day Mayhem and saw the commercial for this show, he's the big barrel-chested black dude who crushed some poor fool under him in a front powerslam. His promo was pretty straight forward. He's the strongest guy in CCW which makes him the best guy in CCW. It was a little hard to tell if he was a heel or a face in this. Guess it doesn't matter much yet.

Match #3 - Sammy Carson vs jobber

For a company that loves them some enhancement matches, I wasn't the least bit surprised to see that CCW is going to have some of those too. Carson is an absolute BEAST in person - gotta be close to 350 pounds - and he has some of the most entertaining power spots I've ever seen in the ring

including a delayed vertical suplex that must've left that poor guy hanging up there for almost a minute and a one-armed slam that shook the ring.

Soon enough, Carson would score the win with that same front powerslam from the commercial. The crowd responded well to Carson. Really green in there but you get the feeling he could be something really special if he develops as they'd like him to...

What came next got two words from me...

HO SHIT!

Take a look...

[As we get back to YouTube, we discover Sammy Carson celebrating his victory. Suddenly, the crowd starts to buzz as someone hurdles over the Crockett Coliseum barricade, diving into the ring.]

HS: Who in the world...?!

MB: HERE COMES DANGER!

[The young man inside the ring is a huge, hulking brute of a man that looks like he was created inside a lab. A massive physical specimen, he is a blonde, blue-eyed man of Nordic or Scandinavian origins with a close-cropped, slicked back crewcut and a nearly trimmed beard. He is nearly three hundred pounds of pure muscle contained in a man that looks like he'd be better off raiding villages as part of a barbarian horde. He has the look of a barely controlled beast, ready to unleash violence at a moment's notice...mostly because that's exactly what he is.]

HS: THAT'S MAX MAGNUM!

MB: IT SURE IS!

[Magnum effortlessly lifts a near-350 pound man up onto his shoulders in a fireman's carry, waiting, turning so the entire world can see what this behemoth of a man is planning on doing...

...when he upends the big man, dumping him down in an aggressive fireman's carry slam!]

HS: OHHH! THAT'S WELL OVER THREE HUNDRED POUNDS BOUNCING OFF THE MAT!

[Magnum throws his chiseled arms apart with a roar as the crowd looks on in disbelief at what they're seeing.]

MB: I hate to be the bearer of bad tidings, Sutton... but look who's with him!

[The camera cuts to ringside where "Agent To The Stars" Ben Waterson is watching, a huge grin on his face as Magnum watches Carson roll to all fours...

...and then he hooks a waistlock on his massive frame!]

HS: No way! There's no way!

MB: Tell HIM that!

[Max Magnum yanks Carson up off the mat, slowly lifting, holding the big man aloft...

...and DUMPS him on the back of his head with a ring-shaking German Suplex!]

HS: WHAMMO! This man is a machine, Shark!

[Magnum stands over Carson, staring down at him. He shoves him in the head with the toe of his boot, laughing at the helpless power lifter. Waterson gives a shout of "END IT!", getting a nod from Magnum who pulls Carson off the mat by the arm, ducking low and hoisting him up into a fireman's carry again...]

HS: He's got him up again! He just lifts that man like he's nothing!

MB: Maybe he is. Maybe ALL mere mortals are nothing when you're Max Magnum!

[He strides out to the center of the ring, looking dead into the camera...

...and SWINGS Carson around, sitting out in a split-legged slam as he DRIVES Carson down onto the back of his head and neck!]

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

MB: That oughta do it.

HS: You think?! Carson was done two minutes ago! This was Max Magnum and Ben Waterson of all people sending a message to the entire CCW locker room!

MB: You think they got the message?

HS: It couldn't be clearer if it was in skywriting, Shark.

[Magnum climbs to his feet, barely having broken a sweat as a grinning Ben Waterson climbs the ringsteps, bringing a handheld mic with him as he steps through the ropes.]

ATTSBW: Long time no see.

[The fans let the slimy Agent To The Stars have it.]

ATTSBW: For those who don't remember... my name is Ben Waterson and I am the Agent To The Stars. And you can step outside this building tonight, look up into a night sky clearer than anything you've ever seen before, and STILL not find a star bigger nor brighter than the man standing by my side right now... my client...
MAAAAAX MAAAAGNUM!

[The crowd is still mostly booing but there seems to be some awe-inspired cheers for Max Magnum who looks out arrogantly at the crowd.]

ATTSBW: Earlier tonight, there was talk about franchise players... about blue chippers... about can't miss prospects...

[Waterson shakes his head.]

ATTSBW: And not a single mention of a man who transcends the words "professional wrestler." You see, my client, is no mere professional wrestler. In fact, if you took the greatest professional wrestlers in the world... If you took the genetic material of John Wesley Hardin, Caleb Temple, Brody Thunder, Casey James, Eddie Van Gibson, Juan Vasquez, and ever single soul before them, during them, or after them... dropped it into the greatest blender that ever existed, and mixed yourself a shake of the ultimate professional wrestler...

[He looks admiringly at his new client.]

ATTSBW: ...you STILL wouldn't be able to TOUCH the man by my side... Maaaaaax Maaaaagnum.

Because my client is no mere professional wrestler... my client is no mere combatant... my client is no mere prospect... my client is no mere blue chipper... my client is no mere franchise player...

My client is a warrior! My client is the stuff of legend! My client is the most dominant force to strike the world since Zeus reached back and cast down his first thunderbolt! My client is a monster in a world full of mere mortals!

My client is here.

[Waterson waggles a finger.]

ATTSBW: But not for long. Your brush with greatness is short-lived because we fully expect the phones to be ringing off the hook tonight. I expect that... hold on...

[He reaches into his pocket, pulling his phone into view.]

ATTSBW: Yes, yes... voice mails from Jon Stegklet... Bobby Taylor... oh, Chris Blue... hey, boss man... if you'd had this man around in the 90s, the Empire might still be standing...

[The crowd "OHHHHHHs!" the verbal harpoon.]

ATTSBW: These are men of wisdom. These are men who KNOW this business inside and out. These are the men who shape the professional wrestling that the entire world knows and watches.

And these are men who have dollar signs in their eyes right now.

[Waterson points at Magnum who starts to bounce from one foot to the other.]

ATTSBW: Dollar signs as they picture the marquee - Ryan Martinez vs Maaaax Maaaagnum. Supreme Wright vs Maaaaax Magnum. Juan Vasquez vs Maaaax Maaaagnum.

You line up the biggest names this sport has ever seen. You go dig up "Hotshot" Stevie Scott for "one more run." You go find Mark Langseth and drag him out from whatever rock he's hiding under. You tell Joe Reed to put down his wife's sewing and get his ass back in our world. You tell them all that we're coming.

You tell 'em I'm coming...

[He smirks, looking at his charge again.]

ATTSBW: And Hell is coming with me. Consider... yourselves... warned.

[Waterson extends his arm, showing the mic to the crowd before dropping it down on the canvas. With a gesture, Waterson exits the ring, Max Magnum trailing behind him as the crowd roars with a mixed reaction for what they've seen and we fade to black.]

Whew. The crowd seemed exhausted at this point. Too much awesomeness in too short of a period of time. Max Magnum just put it all over the top and the show's not even halfway done yet!

We went right to the next match which definitely seemed designed to take things down a notch before going further.

Match #3 - Bonecrusher Boone vs Caspian Abaran

Bonecrusher Boone is a big 400 plus pounder out of New Jersey. He's not the best worker but he moves pretty well for a big man. His opponent has been on AWA television and doing pretty well as of late.

This match was all Abaran early on, using some flashy lucha style offense but when Boone cut him off with a short-arm clothesline, he went to work. There were a few minutes solid of Boone offense - big slams, elbowdrops, choking in the corner.

Eventually, the end came when Boone went for an avalanche in the corner, Abaran got out of the way, Boone staggered back, Abaran snapped off a top rope moonsault on the standing Boone and got a three count. Nice "upset" win for Abaran who continues to build fan support.

After the match, a video played hyping the CCW debut of another SWLL superstar in Coloso Castillo. Castillo threatened Abaran and promised to be at the CCW show in June to confront him. Abaran looked concerned as the video ended.

We went right to another match after that.

Match #4 - Clinton Tyler vs Engel Ubelmacht

Tyler is your typical whitebread babyface... big guy though... about 6'5" and 275 pounds. Came out to "Fanfare For The Common Man" to little reaction. I don't think anyone was familiar with him. His opponent was about the same height but about 70 pounds lighter which made for a weird matchup. Ubelmacht's been around for a few years, worked in IPW out of Vegas... even made an appearance or two in the AWA, I think. Masked guy too.

Ubelmacht bumped all over the ring for Tyler from the outset but a missed clothesline in the corner gave Ubelmacht the edge. He lit up Tyler with a bunch of kicks that left several nice red welts on Tyler's chest and back. Ubelmacht's springboard moonsault to the floor got the fans going for sure.

In the end, Ubelmacht ducked a Lariat attempt and used his reverse bulldog to get a three count. Afterwards, he got on the mic and promised to "rain down fire" on CCW. He said he had friends - powerful friends - and they'd be with him next month.

After Ubelmacht left the ring, the announcers were talking about what happened when suddenly the lights went out...

DMP! DMP! DMP!

You don't even understand! I'm the world's biggest Dead Man's Party mark and I think I needed a change of pants after their music hit. Unfortunately, it wasn't the full group but MUHFUCKIN' JAY ALANA WAS THERE! Youth In Asia - those annoying little pricks God bless 'em - were there too. The three beat the holy crap out of Tyler, leaving him laying. Alana took the mic afterwards and said that what they did last week at Memorial Day Mayhem wasn't enough... that they needed to send EVERYONE involved with the AWA a real clear message... and that when he heard that an old friend of his was in CCW... (crowd went batshit as soon as he said it by the way)... he knew he had to pay him a visit.

KOJI NAKANO CAME OUT NEXT! HOLY... there are friends of mine in Japan who would be losing it at this point!

Nakano and Alana, of course, were former tag team partners in Tiger Paw Pro and Alana didn't waste any time pointing out that while he'd gone to be the leader of the Dead Man's Party and one of the top competitors in all of Japan, Nakano had been sent to CCW to train. Nakano took it all in stride and pointed out that when they used to train together in Japan, that he'd beat Alana every time... and that if Alana wanted to test him, he'd be happy to oblige.

The crowd was going nuts. I was going nuts. If I got to see Alana vs Nakano at a show where I wasn't expecting to see either... holy fuck.

Nope. Alana pussied out and offered up Youth In Asia instead. He told Nakano that he could have his pick of either Wallace to face. Nakano said he'd take 'em both.

The Wallaces cut their usually dicky promo towards Nakano, saying he couldn't even beat one of them... how could he beat two. Turns out that Nakano had an old friend come to visit him while he was stateside...

KENTA OH DAAAAAAMN KITZUKAWA!

If the AWA and CCW were looking to make headlines at their first show, they sure as shit pulled it off. Kitzukawa and Nakano vs Youth In Asia with Jay Alana in their corner was set for the Main Event.

And at that point, we went to intermission... thank God because I was exhausted and needed to Tweet about this BADLY.

I guess during the intermission, there were some backstage interviews for television. Charlie Fleming's apparently in CCW and he'll debut in July. Kiora Donavon's twin brothers, Liam and Cormac Donavon... none of whom are any relation to Robert or Tony or any of the other DonOvAns. Seriously. It's the same name. How the hell is it spelled two different ways? Anyways, they'll be in action against the Tennessee Kids in July too. Looks like CCW isn't JUST for Combat Corner students because there's been a lot of decent name talent on this show.

Back from intermission... four more matches to go...

Match #5 - Grant Carter vs Dylan Jasper Anderson w/Reverend Calvin Mackey

Anderson and Mackey came out first, cutting a religious-themed promo on their way to the ring. This is a controversial act and I'm a bit surprised to see them in CCW. Texas fans love guns, Jesus, and wrestling... and one of those things being insulted tends to piss 'em off. So, Anderson and Mackey had plenty of heat as they came to the ring even though I've seen far worse promos from them on YouTube.

If Anderson was over as a heel, you just know his opponent was going to be over as a face... and he sure was. Take a look at the entrance...

[Clicking on that YouTube link gets you going with the opening notes to Bon Jovi's "It's My Life" that starts up to a cheer from the crowd.]

MC: Introducing... from Asbury Park, New Jersey... weighing in at 262 pounds...

[Watson pauses just as the lyrics begin and "Golden" Grant Carter bursts through the curtain into view to a bigger cheer, throwing his arms up in a "V" with his left fist clenched and pressed into his fully-extended right palm.]

MC: "GOLLLLLLDEN" GRAAAAAAAANT CAAAAAARRRRRTERRR!

[Carter throws his arms apart, a big grin on his face at the crowd's reaction. He hops a couple of times, pointing out at the cheering fans before he starts striding down the aisle, quickly making his way down towards the ring.]

HS: "Golden" Grant Carter, the elder statesman of the Combat Corner, is making his debut here in CCW after a stalled start in the AWA in recent months.

MB: The kid - and I use that term loosely - had gotten the call to the big leagues but after a few weeks of hanging out at the shows, waiting to make it onto TV, he got sent back to the Corner for a little more seasoning. That's good though. Probably put one heck of a chip on his shoulder about it.

[About thirty seconds into the song, he pulls himself up on the apron, turning towards the crowd, cupping his hand to his ear as he "listens" to the lyrics.]

#I ain't gonna be just a face in the crowd
You're gonna hear my voice
When I shout it out loud#

[The music pauses for a second as Carter reaches over his head, clapping his hands together twice in rhythm with the beat and then points out to the crowd, encouraging them to sing along with the chorus.]

#It's my life
It's now or never
I ain't gonna live forever
I just want to live while I'm alive

It's... my... life#

[A grinning Carter ducks through the ropes, throwing his arms up into the same gesture we saw earlier as he faces his opponent and the music continues to play, ending with the very symbolic lyric.]

#It's... my... life#

With his entrance done, it came time to see if "Golden" Grant Carter could hang inside the squared circle with a guy widely thought of as one of the best in-ring wrestlers not signed to a major company. No word yet on whether every guy who appears for CCW is under an AWA deal or if they're on a per appearance gig.

The match started with Anderson taking Carter down and working him on the mat with some grappling. Carter looks pretty outmatched on the canvas and soon was diving for the ropes to escape. The next tieup saw him taken down again... and again. This continued for a few minutes before an Anderson takedown attempt was turned into an airplane spin. Carter went around and around a dozen or so times before dumping Anderson down to the mat.

He really got the crowd going by dragging Anderson from corner to corner, smashing his head into each of the turnbuckles and then did a ten count punch in the corner. A short-arm clothesline attempt came up empty when Anderson ducked it and turned it into a German Suplex to turn the tide.

Anderson worked him over in the corner with a series of European uppercuts before taking him out with a butterfly suplex. By this point, the fans were really getting into this one so at the ten minute mark when Anderson whipped him in, went for a sleeper, and got DUMPED on his head when Carter countered into a snapmare... head spike thing... for the three count, the crowd - myself included - wanted to see more. Big win for GGC though in his CCW debut.

Match #6 - Bret Grayson vs jobber

ENHANNNNNCEMENT MAAAAAATCH!

Grayson just worked this poor kid. Takedowns, amateur wrestling, suplexes. He tossed the guy halfway across the ring with his overhead belly-to-belly. He snapped off some rolling gutwrench suplexes that had the kid wobbly. But instead of going for the anklelock he used on Kendrick, Grayson grabbed him in a torture rack swinging slam for the three count. Impressive win. Grayson's another guy who could be on the AWA roster tomorrow without missing a beat...

...except for Kerry Kendrick coming to clean his clock! Kendrick attacked him from behind, beat him down, hit two of his belly-to-belly suplexes, and left Grayson laying to a chorus of boos. I'm guessing this one's not over by a longshot.

Match #7 - "Alarmingly Charming" Ted Bentley vs Arawak Jack Veles

Okay, first off let me express how fucking shocked I am that the AWA is willing to give a paycheck to Ted Bentley. The guy entered the ring to "Inside Of You" from that movie with the vampire puppets. Seriously. Anyways, I guess he's playing a total sleazeball character here and he had HEAT as he walked out. Arawak Jack has had runs in Canada and some smaller indies. He's also worked in some of the smaller promotions in Japan but this is the first time I've heard of any of the bigger promotions being willing to give him a shot.

So, the high flying spotmonkey against the fat MMA dude. Now, Jack's not what I'd call orca fat or anything but he's gotta be about 300 pounds and I certainly would doubt he's seen too many weight machines in his day.

Jack controlled the early part, using a nice array of strikes to repeatedly take Bentley off his feet. A running palm strike to the sternum flipped Bentley inside out in a pretty cool spot. He also took Bentley over with a snap mare, kicked him in the back, chopped him in the chest, and then dropped a three hundred pound kneedrop in the chest. The dude wasn't fucking around either because Bentley came up with red welts on his back and chest.

The match turned when Jack missed a running boot against the ropes, crotching himself over the top. Bentley popped the crowd by jumping up on the middle rope for a springboard but just kept jumping up and down, shaking the top rope into Jack's groin. The ref counted to four and Bentley landed a springboard enzuigiri for the last count. Cool stuff.

With such a big opponent, Bentley was stuck flipping and flying across the ring. He hit a couple of nice dives to the floor as well as a 450 splash for a near fall. But when he went for his top rope legdrop - the Newport Jai Alai Jam - Jack moved and his ass hit the mat.

A few seconds later, Jack threw him into the ropes, shoved him towards the roof, and powerbombed him almost through the match for a three count. Another fun match.

Main Event: Koji Nakano/Kenta Kitukawa vs Youth In Asia w/Jay Alana

Shit on a sandwich... what can you say about this match? If you're a wrestling fan at all, you've probably already heard about it. Almost 40 minutes of crazy tag action. Youth In Asia were their usual douche selves... which I love. They were all over the place including an extended Dropkick Party where they each ran about a half dozen times into the corner for tree of woe dropkicks on Nakano.

Nakano played face in peril for most of the match, taking all of YIA's flashy offense. Every time Nakano looked to be coming back, the DMP cut 'em off. Even Alana got involved a few times on the floor. But after Chet Wallace missed a springboard splash, Nakano got the tag and Kenta RULED THE WORLD!

Chops, kicks, powerbombs... and some of the meanest lariats you'll ever see had the Wallaces in trouble. Kitukawa was setting for the Billion Dollar Bomb (or maybe the Driver) when Jay Alana got up on the apron for a distraction. Kenta went over to get him down and a double superkick sent him out to the floor.

Cue Kenta playing FIP. The Wallaces beat him senseless too. It was really a showcase for Youth In Asia to the point that you have to wonder if they're getting set for an AWA run.

But Kenta hit another big lariat on Chaz at the 38 minute mark, tagging Nakano back in... check out the finish and the post-match...

[YOUUUUTUUUUUUUUUBE~!

As we join the action, Kitukawa has JUST tagged in Koji Nakano who slingshots himself over the ropes into the ring to a huge cheer from the Crockett Coliseum crowd.]

HS: NAKANO IS IN!

[The six foot, 225 pound 22 year old comes storming in towards Chet Wallace who has entered the ring illegally, trying to cut off the tag.]

MB: So is Chet!

[A series of short elbows to the jaw staggers Chet Wallace as Nakano slips in behind him, hooking a side waistlock, dumping him on the back of his head with a backdrop suplex that folds Wallace in half, sending him rolling out of the ring to the floor!]

HS: CHET WALLACE GOT _DUMPED_ ON HIS SKULL! HE CLEARS OUT!

[Nakano pulls Chaz Wallace off the mat, throwing him into the corner where the youngster stalks in, all sorts of fired up as he rears back with his right arm...]

HS: Nakano opens up on Wallace in the corner!

[Forearm after forearm, elbow after elbow, bounces off the skull of Chaz Wallace as the referee screams a warning at Nakano. The battering forces Chaz to have a eat on the mat. Nakano stalks across the ring, arms pumping in front of him as he gives a shout to the cheering crowd. He turns to the corner, placing his back against the turnbuckles...]

HS: Nakano in the corner... setting up for that corner dropkick!

[He sprints across the ring, leaping up, bending his legs...

...and at the last moment, extends them, driving both feet into Chaz Wallace's face!]

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

[Nakano pulls himself up off the mat, gritting his teeth, scrunching up his face as he drags a thumb across his throat.]

HS: Koji Nakano is looking to finish off Chaz Wallace!

[Pulling Chaz off the mat, he does a quick signal with his hands, clasping them together before he goes to apply a full nelson. As SOON as the hold is applied, he SNAPS Wallace up and over, driving him down with a lightning-quick snap dragon suplex, holding in a bridge...]

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

HS: MANTISPLEX CONNECTS! ONE!! TWO!! THREEEEEEEEEE!!!

"DING! DING! DING!"

[Nakano climbs off the mat, throwing his arms up into the air...]

MB: ALANA!

"WHAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAACK!"

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

[And the young Japanese star turns right into a superkick up under the chin!]

HS: ALANA WIPES OUT HIS FORMER PARTNER!

[With Nakano down on the mat, Jay Alana starts stomping him into the canvas as the fans jeer. After a few moments, Kenta Kitukawa rolls back in, entering the fray...

...but he's swarmed by the Wallaces!]

HS: It's a three-on-two assault by the Dead Man's Party! They're hammering Nakano and Kitukawa into the canvas!

[The Wallaces pull Kitukawa up to his feet, holding his arms out to the side, throwing him back into the turnbuckles. They each step out to the apron as Alana takes aim...]

"DROPKICK PAAAAARRRRRTYYYYY!"

[In unison, the Wallaces charge down the length of the apron as Alana runs from corner to corner, all three landing picture perfect dropkicks to the skull of Kitukawa in synchronization!]

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

[Kitukawa staggers out towards Alana who shoves him into the air, dropping back in a pop-up Samoan Drop with him!]

HS: The Dead Man's Party sent a message to the entire AWA back at Memorial Day Mayhem last weekend and it looks like they're doing the same thing right here tonight at CCW, fans! It looks like-

[Suddenly, the Texas crowd loses their dadgummed minds.]

HS: IS THAT-?!

MB: You've gotta be kidding me!

[The legendary visage of Blackjack Lynch comes stalking down the aisle, a steel pipe in his hands. He quickly steps up on the apron, ducking through the ropes.]

HS: What in the world is HE doing here?!

[Lynch takes aim as Chet Wallace rushes him, burying the steel pipe into the ribcage of the Wallace!]

HS: GAAAH! WHAT A SHOT TO THE RIBS!

[Chaz Wallace dives out, wanting no part of the pipe-wielding Blackjack Lynch who turns...

...and spots Jay Alana. He points the pipe at Alana who holds up his hands, begging off from the legend!]

MB: OLD MAN LYNCH HAS COME TO GET SOME OF THE DEAD MAN'S PARTY!

[Lynch takes a big baseball style swing at the skull of Alana who just BARELY managed to avoid it, rolling out to the floor in terror of the pipe-wielding Texan who the crowd is still going nuts for!]

HS: BLACKJACK LYNCH HAS CLEARED THE RING! THE DEAD MAN'S PARTY IS HEADING FOR HIGHER GROUND!

MB: The guy's got a pipe! Can you blame them?!

[Blackjack Lynch leans over, checking on Kenta Kitzuawa who is still down on the mat.]

HS: Blackjack's checking on- NO!

[Never one to be backed away, the Dead Man's Party is back in in a storm, swarming Blackjack Lynch, hammering him with fists and boots, knocking him down to his knees where Alana snatches the pipe away!]

HS: Alana's got the pipe! He's got the-

[Cold, calculating, and never one to hesitate, Alana SLAMS the pipe down between the eyes of the elderly Blackjack, knocking him flat on his face on the canvas. The crowd is ALL OVER Jay Alana, letting him have it as he stands over the Texas legend, pipe raised high over his head!]

MB: Ain't many times that the old man has been laid out like that, Sutton.

HS: These fans are in shock. They've grown up with Blackjack Lynch as THE Texas wrestling legend. He's a hero to many of them and now they've had to watch him get laid out by the Dead Man's Party!

[The Wallaces and Jay Alana stand tall in the ring, standing over the laid out Kitzukawa, Nakano, and Lynch as our feed cut to black.]

After the beatdown, the DMP left. Eventually, Nakano and Kitzukawa got Blackjack to his feet... of course, he was bleeding. And it was Blackjack promo time. He told us that Kitzukawa had helped him son, Jack, out of a jam back at MDM and that Blackjack never lets a debt go unpaid...

Seriously? Did he just say that? That's gotta be a rib, right?

Anyways, he said that he was in the back and just couldn't let Kitzukawa get beat down by "those young punks!" He throws down a challenge for the June show. The Wallaces and Alana taking on Kenta/Nakano... and a mystery partner. Then he dropped the bombshell. He's signing the match...

...because HE'S been hired as the CCW President! WHAAAAAT?!

The crowd went nuts. Blackjack, Kenta, and Koji waved for the crowd and... well, that was that.

Great action. Some killer surprises. And a real happy crowd going home. You can't ask for anything more out of a debut show, can you?

Return date was announced for June 27th... right back here at the Coliseum. I'll be there for sure!

Hope you liked the recap/review. Hit me up if you have comments, suggestions, what not!