

THE AMERICAN WRESTLING ALLIANCE  
AND TIGER PAW PRO PRESENT...

# RIISING SUN SHOWDOWN

MARCH 29TH, 2014  
TOKYO, JAPAN

[We slowly fade in to a warning about piracy and all that stuff. We here at the AWA do not condone piracy unless it's in a wacky, fun Pirates Of The Caribbean style (drink up me hearties, yo ho!) or totally justified. Speaking as someone who got booted off Napster by Metallica, I'm just saying... there's a price that I'm willing to pay for music and 15 bucks for a CD at Tower Records ain't it. So, if we have to slap on an eyepatch, get a parrot like an Andy Doran student, and cosplay Captain Jack Sparrow, well... there are some sacrifices worth making.

But I digress.

The warning fades to a black screen before the sounds of the theme to For A Few Dollars More are heard.

The blackness is broken up by a surging red sun, coming up from the bottom of the screen, glaringly bright - beams of sunlight bursting from it. Lens flare fills the shot as the Rising Sun Showdown logo comes down from the top to meet the sun.

The voice of Gordon Myers joins the mix.]

"The history of Japan is a warrior's history. Samurai. Ronin. Shinobi."

[The footage changes to aged looking sketches of the aforementioned warriors.]

"A proud nation. Proud to be able to stand and fight. Proud of the fighting spirit of a people.

On this night, the best of Japan's warriors and the best of America's warriors come together in a celebration of battle and to write a new page in the history books."

[Slow-mo aged footage of the early AWA shows. Marcus Broussard and Ron Houston trading blows. The Russians tangling with Werewolf Gregorson and Despair. "Hotshot" Stevie Scott antagonizing Kentucky's Pride.]

"Tonight, we will write of an evening where two great promotions come together for the very first time. We will write of an evening where the AWA comes to another country for the very first time. We will write of an evening where we once again crown the very best tag team in the wrestling world. We will write of an evening where the AWA celebrates their birthday in a record-setting way."

[The footage changes to show a mix of Tiger Paw Pro and AWA modern day footage. Juan Vasquez delivering the Right Cross to Ebola Zaire. Yoshinari Taguchi slapping an STF on LION Tetsuo. Violence Unlimited trading blows with the Lynch Brothers. Supreme Wright hitting Dave Bryant with the torture rack backbreaker. Kenta Kitazawa obliterating Ricky Armstrong with a lariat.]

"Tonight, LIVE on Internet Pay Per View.

Tonight in front of over forty thousand fans.

Tonight... we write history."

[The shot fades back to black...

...and then back up on a panning shot of the interior of the Tokyo Dome. It's a massive crowd - certainly larger than any AWA show in history so far. The shot is quite overwhelming to be honest. The crowd is impressive - even though the building does not appear to be completely sold out for this major event.

Tiger Paw Pro and American Wrestling Alliance logo banners are hanging from the upper levels of the building, showing the unity the two promotions are involved in going into this major event.

The ring is set up right in the center of the Dome - a white canvas with the Rising Sun Showdown, AWA, and Tiger Paw Pro logos splashed upon it. Black ropes and a matching black ring apron surround the ring on all four sides with the accompanying full turnbuckle covers instead of individual covers.

Above the ring is a metal superstructure with the lighting and sound rig set up. Colored lights are criss-crossing over the ring, drawing the attention to the squared circle. An elevated entrance ramp is on one side of the ring, leading all the way back up the aisle... a loonnnnnng way in a building of this size. Our cameras rush up the aisle, running towards a gigantic glowing video wall.

As we reach the top of the aisle, we see a large v-shaped split in the platform, leaving a triangle shaped opening in the center of it. A large metal structure bridges the gap, golden pyro shooting from the top of it. Closer to the video wall, we see bursts of fire blasting up into the sky. Behind the pyro are three split video screens - a large one in the center with the RSS

logo blazing and two smaller ones tilted in from the side sporting the AWA and TPP logos on them.

We cut to ringside where we see a very thin ringside mat surrounded by a metal barricade. There are several tables at ringside, including one with our own Jason Dane and Bucky Wilde standing in front of it. Dane is in a stylish olive-colored suit with a simple white dress shirt and matching olive tie. He is slender, dark-haired, and looks like a kid in a candy store. Wilde is colorful yet subdued for the occasion - a crimson red suit and sunburst yellow dress shirt. A blindingly white tie breaks up the color barrage as he looks over a pair of blue-tinted sunglasses at the camera.]

JD: Ladies and gentlemen, it is perhaps the greatest honor of my career to say... WELCOME TO THE TOKYO DOME!

[Another blast of pyro goes off, squealing through the air.]

JD: It is one of the biggest nights in the history of professional wrestling as the biggest promotion in the United States and the biggest promotion in Japan come together to present the RISING SUN SHOWDOWN!

[Another big blast of pyrotechnics fire.]

JD: Sore wa Nihon demo, yūkōkigen no surirudesu. It is the thrill of a lifetime to be here in Japan. As a professional wrestling fan, I have spent many a time watching tapes, DVDs, YouTube videos from right here in the Tokyo Dome seeing some of the best wrestling action in the world. It truly is a dream come true for me to be here to call the action here tonight. Gordon Myers is missing out, Bucky.

BW: Gordo never would've survived the sushi joint we went to last night. I'm still feeling that sea urchin.

JD: In just a short amount of time, you're going to be feeling something else entirely. The thrill of competition! Tonight, we have a jam-packed lineup of incredible action to present to you as the AWA comes to Japan for the very first time. Of course, the big thing on everyone's mind tonight is the Stampede Cup as twelve of the best teams in our sport compete to crown the greatest tag team in our sport. There is the Cup itself, one million dollars, and it now appears the AWA World Tag Team Titles on the line in this one.

BW: Jones and Hammonds threw down the gauntlet two weeks ago. They want to defend the title in every match they're in tonight. That means to win the Cup, they've got to successfully defend their titles three times as well!

JD: It's a tall order for any team let alone one who just recently went through a two out of three falls war with the Blonde Bombers. In addition to the Cup, we've got a six man tag team showdown pitting the squad of TORA, Super Solar, and Nenshou against November, LION Tetsuo, and Nijikon.

BW: If you like your action up in the air, you might want to buckle your seatbelts for that one, Dane. Staple your eyelids open while you're at it 'cause you won't want to miss a moment of it.

JD: We've got the Shoot Fight pitting Callum Mahoney against Kolya Sudakov. No countouts, no pinfalls... only knockouts or submissions.

BW: Well, if you like your action raw-boned, bare-knuckled, and jaw-bustin', you might want to buckle your seatbelts for THAT one instead.

JD: Juan Vasquez steps into what can best be described as utter hell as he meets Demon Boy Ishrinku - the hardcore legend - in an Exploding Ring Double Hell Death Match. Bucky, do you believe that Vasquez is ready for this?

BW: He's comin' in with a serious injury... and he's stepping into what can best be described by ME as a turkey shoot! Demon Boy Ishrinku is a hardcore savage and Juan Vasquez is... well, not... no matter how much he tries to convince us all that he is.

JD: And of course, the World Heavyweight Title will be on the line when Supreme Wright defends against Kenta Kitazawa!

BW: Wright's walking into the Dome as the champ... he's walking out of the Dome as the champ. Period.

JD: There you have it, fans. A big prediction from Bucky Wilde but the time for talking is over. It's time for action! It's time to make history! It's time for the Rising Sun Showdown!

[We crossfade from Jason and Bucky to the ring where Phil Watson is NOT standing. Instead, it's a smallish Japanese woman - thin, short, and dainty with her hair pulled back in a tight bun - holding the mic in hand. As she speaks, there is a surprising power to her voice, speaking in Japanese to the fans inside the Tokyo Dome. We get a subtitling at the bottom of the screen for much of her words.]

SUBTITLES: It is now time to begin the Stampede Cup!

[Cheers from the Japanese crowd.]

SUBTITLES: The first match tonight is a first round match in the tournament. It has a twenty minute time limit. Introducing first...

["Burst The Gravity" by Altima kicks in to a tremendous reaction from the Tokyo Dome crowd.]

SUBTITLES: At a weight of 255 kilos...

[The subtitles stop as she reaches the names, picking up the volume and pitch of her voice to a shocking level.]

"GEEEEEMMINIIIIIII! HAAAAASHIMOOOOTOOOO!"  
"KENNNNJIIIIIII! NAAAAKAAAAMUUURRAAAAAA!"

"SHAAAAADOOOOOW STAAAAAAAAR LEEEEEEEGIOOOOON!"

[The crowd ROARS for the introduction of the Tiger Paw Pro Global Tag Crown Champions.]

JD: The unique vocal stylings of Megumi Sato letting the entire world know that this magnificent showcase of tag team wrestling is about to begin. What do you think of the lovely Miss Sato, Bucky?

BW: Shoulda stole some of those ear plugs from the plane ride here. Never thought I'd miss Phil Watson, Dane.

[The lights die down as the silhouettes of golden stars illuminate the elevated ramp, leading a path down to the squared circle. The two members of the Shadow Star Legion emerge from the shadows, getting hit with a spotlight as each stands before the two side screens.

GEMINI Hashimoto is the larger of the two men - some might even call the man plump. He's shirtless which does little to dissuade that claim as his ample midsection loops over his waistline. A pair of bright white full-length tights with red "claw" marks across the thighs and red boots round out his attire. He's also sporting a white bandana with a burning red sun on it holding back his jet black hair. His Grand Crown Tag Team Title belt is slung over his shoulder as he looks towards the ring, revealing a well-drawn red and white star surrounding his right eye and splashing down his cheek.

Kenji Nakamura is on the other side of the entryway, slender but muscular - more of a swimmer's physique than a pro wrestler's. He claps his hands together over his head a few times, drawing more cheers from the crowd. He jerks a thumb at the similar painted star around his left eye. Nakamura is sporting red full-length pants, billowing out around his black boots. He slaps his chest, smacking the faceplate of his title belt.

After a few moments, the screens behind them change to show a shower of stars as a metal star structure rises out of the wooden ramp behind them. They both raise their arms as the stars begin to spin, spewing red and white sparks from the frame. The crowd roars for the big entrance as the duo points to one another before making their way down the ramp. They meet up at the "V", trading a high five before heading towards the ring.]

JD: Wow! What an entrance for the Tiger Paw Pro Global Tag Crown Champions, the Shadow Star Legion! GEMINI Hashimoto and Kenji Nakamura won a tournament of their own very recently to make this Stampede Cup field - the legendary Global Tag Crown Tournament. That particular tournament has been running for decades here in Japan - both in Tiger Paw Pro and other promotions that predate it. It's one of the most prestigious pro wrestling events in all of Japan so it's a great honor to have the winners as part of our tournament. But they are going to have their work cut out for them here in the first round as they take on the team who

won the Tag Team Gauntlet for the second year in a row on the last Saturday Night Wrestling - the Lights Out Express!

[Fade up backstage where Mark Stegglet stands to the left of three members of the illustrious Shane Gang. Lenny Strong and Aaron Anderson are split by Miss Sandra Hayes. The Siren's slender frame is wrapped tightly in a navy blue bandeau and hanky hem dress which bares much of her stomach with a keyhole center and cutout sides. Her black rat tail is braided as tight as ever and hangs beside her florescent pink branding iron over her left shoulder.

Strong and Anderson are in their "big game" gear. Green and white track jackets with added gold trim. Their ring tights mirror the jackets with solid green in the front and back with white diamonds with gold trim on the outside of their hips. Strong's brown hair is back to mullet-esque status with the bulkier Aaron Anderson's scalp and face having a three day shadow.]

MS: Gentlemen, the Lights Out Express... the last and final entry into the 2014 Stampede Cup after surviving the Tag Team Gauntlet two --

LS: Surviving?

[Strong stares at Stegglet, snickers, then turns towards Aaron Anderson who stands with his arms folded against his chest and turns his head from side to side. Lenny's chin snaps back towards Mark Stegglet...]

LS: Surviving?! When you look at us, Mark... do you see [miming quotes] survivors?! James Monosso, he was a survivor. The Lynches? They are survivors. Air Strike? They are PRAYING to survive against the Bizness. But us? Aaron Anderson and Lenny Strong...the LIGHTS OUT EXPRESS... We are the conquerors of heroes, jack! We outlasted, outclassed, and outsmarted every single team that had the cajones to step foot into the ring two weeks ago.

You call that surviving?

I call that having a game plan and executing it too perfection.

I call it setting the standard...

...and then raising the bar.

[Stegglet speaks up.]

MS: Are you referring to your attack on Ryan Martinez?

LS: No, Mark. I'm talking about the way we disposed of Ryan Martinez and Eric Preston in SECONDS courtesy of this fella...

[Lenny raises his black padded elbow into the air and points too it with a wry smile.]

LS: And this WRECKING MACHINE right here.

[And then slaps Anderson several times across the chest.]

AA: Tell me, Stegglet. What rules did we break? What sanction did we disobey? We followed the code and we slaughtered both the young lion AND the foolish lamb. You can spin the story however you want but in the end only one team walked away victorious and only one Combat Corner graduate booked his last minute ticket to Japan. Now, the only thing standing in our way is Tiger Paw Pro's own Shadow Star Legion.

[Strong holds his hands up and does the "spooky fingers".]

AA: When these clowns get in the ring with us tonight, they can forget about the titles. They can forget about bringing the championship gold to their homeland. They can forget any intuition they had of standing in that ring and hoisting the Cup over their heads because they don't have the physical elements and wrestling fortitude that Lenny Strong and I have.

Once they step through the ropes and stand toe to toe with the Lights Out Express they are going to start to feel the heat, Mark. Every eye, every breath, every single person fixated on their very essence and every move...and when they dig down deep into parts of their souls they didn't even know existed and it STILL isn't enough to put us away they are going to start to feel the doubt. They are going to feel the agony. They are going to feel their hearts being TORN out of their chest just like we are going to do every fan in attendance when we BEAT them back into obscurity. They are going to look us dead in the eyes and ask themselves...what is it going to take?!

What are these men made of?!

Why is it that NOBODY can put them away?!

Why is it every time they get in the ring it ends in DESTRUCTION?!

Why is it they call them the...

[Pause.]

AA [hushed tone]: Lights Out Express.

LS: Oh yeah, jack! Why, indeed! Why is it that every match ends with someone's head bein' knocked off their shoulders?! Because truly... every time ANYONE steps into the ring with us... whether it's in Dallas, Texas or here in Tokyo, Japan... they know that for THEM...

...It IS about survival.

They know they are facing the FUTURE of this business.

But most of all, they know that for them it's going to be LIGHTS...

[Strong slams his elbow into the palm of his other hand, creating a loud "SMACK!" sound.]

LS: ....OUT!

AA: Ain't no way else around it.

[We fade away from the brash duo back to the squared circle where Hashimoto and Nakamura are undergoing some last minute preparations, handing their title belts over to a Japanese referee.]

JD: The Lights Out Express have plenty of confidence going into this first round battle but is it misplaced, Bucky?

BW: They outlasted all those other teams two weeks ago and you're asking that?

JD: They defeated ONE team - a team that had already been beaten to a pulp by outside interference at that! I am certainly expecting a tougher fight out of the Shadow Star Legion and they better be as well.

BW: Can I ask why the heck the AWA agreed to have a Tiger Paw Pro referee in charge of this match?

JD: My understanding is that there was a random draw for all officials here tonight in any cross-promotional matchup. Referee Masa Fujiwara will be the man in stripes for this one. His son, Yoshi, is rapidly becoming a top heavyweight star here in Tiger Paw Pro as well.

BW: What the heck is with these companies hiring father and son combos to work for their promotion? First, it was those crooked Jaggers and now it's these two!

JD: Anything else you feel like complaining about?

BW: Don't get snippy with me, Dane. It's not too late to get you replaced.

[The subtitles return.]

SUBTITLES: And their opponents... at a combined weight of 229 kilos...

"AAAAAAAAAAAAAROOOOON ANNNNNNDERRRRSONNNNNN!"

"LENNNNNNNNNNNNYYYYYYY STRONNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNG!"

"THE LIIIIIIIIIGHTS OUUUUUUUUUUUUUUT EXPRESSSSSSSSSSSSSSSS!"

[Lights; Out! A loud whistle screeches over the airwaves...]

V/O: ALLLLLLL ABOOOOOOOOoooooooAAAAARRRRD!

[The slow clanking of train wheels churning quickly heightens into hard grinding noises just as the hard hitting lead guitar riff kicks in for the



"Kundalini Express" by Love and Rockets. The rapid banging of drums and synthesizers fire up next before the methodical and monotone voice of Daniel Ash is cued.]

BW: I ain't been this excited since I asked for an official Red Ryder, carbine action, two-hundred shot range model air rifle for Christmas!

JD: Are you stealing other peoples stories again and acting them out as if they were your own?

BW: I would never do such a thing.

[Smoke screens the entrance portal but soon enough the silhouettes of three figures are lit up by neon green flood lights and spiraling lasers. Miss Sandra Hayes slithers out first and it doesn't matter if it's Texas or Japan, the catcalls soon follow, even in the more conservative atmosphere! Hayes struts out, platform white heels and all, whipping her navy blue dress around before coming to a pause with her florescent pink branding iron pointed towards the entrance. In unison, the Lights Out Express step into view.

Lenny Strong's brown mullet is slicked back over his head and down to the bottom of his neck. The sides are shaven real tight, and his green, white, and gold track jacket is unzipped half way down revealing his muscular frame which is peppered with hair.

Beside him Aaron Anderson stands, stone-eyed, jacket zipped up to the throat. His thighs have white wraps around them just above the black knee pads. As the trio begin their ascension to the ring the ground fills up with smoke clouds underneath them creating this almost floating visual which is illuminated with light beams and dancing green lasers.]

JD: Aaron Anderson, the man once known as the All-American, brings a power-filled amateur background to the table for his team alongside the ever-dangerous striking power of Lenny Strong.

BW: The Lights Out Express won the Gauntlet, they're about to knock off these two never-weres, and then they're moving on to greatness! 2014 is the Shane Gang's year, daddy!

JD: You keep saying that but as the end of March is upon us, they've done little to prove it. Terry Shane still has yet to cash in his Rumble win from last year to get his World Title opportunity against Supreme Wright. Donnie White failed to win the World Television Title earlier this year and is trapped in what seems like an endless war with Shadoc Rage. But these two, the Lights Out Express, have a chance to change all of that right here tonight.

BW: Absolutely. If they win here tonight, they walk out of Tokyo as the World Tag Team Champions, the greatest tag team in our sport, and the winner of one million dollars!

JD: How much of that do you think goes straight into the pockets of Miss Sandra Hayes?

BW: Pay attention, Dane. None of her outfits have pockets.

JD: Or much material at all for that matter.

[With Hayes, Anderson, and Strong huddled up in the corner, the official steps in and points to the floor.]

JD: You have to wonder how much the language barrier between the referee and the Lights Out Express could impact this match. A misunderstood command at an inopportune time could be costly.

[Hayes walks down the ringsteps as Strong and Anderson trade a double high five up top. Strong steps out to the apron as the former Combat Corner student turns back to the ring, seeing Kenji Nakamura standing across the ring, lightly bouncing from foot to foot to stay loose. The referee steps to the center of the ring, points to the timekeeper, and gives a shout as the bell sounds.]

JD: The 2014 Stampede Cup is a go! Twenty minute time limit in these, our first round matches, as the Lights Out Express attempts to upset the Global Tag Crown Champions in the opening match of the Rising Sun Showdown!

[Nakamura dances out of the corner, switching back from foot to foot like a kickboxer as Anderson slowly approaches...

...and gets a snapping kick to the side of the knee!]

JD: Nakamura goes downstairs from the outset, kicking the side of the leg to try and limit the mobility of the 245 pound Axeman from Charlotte, North Carolina.

[Anderson backs off, lifting his leg off the canvas and wincing.]

JD: The kicks of Kenji Nakamura are amongst the hardest and most accurate you will find anywhere in the wrestling world, Bucky.

BW: I'm sure we've got a few people who can stand up to him.

JD: We may find out right here tonight.

[The former All-American slowly moves back in, trying to keep his left leg back to avoid another kick...

...which predictably means he gets kicked in the right leg. The fans cheer as Anderson hobbles back to his corner, angrily pointing across the ring at Nakamura who raises a hand, drawing more cheers from the crowd. Strong slides in behind Anderson, placing his hands on his partner's shoulders and trying to calm him down as Sandra Hayes complains to the official about something.]

JD: What in the world could Sandra Hayes be complaining about? Those kicks were perfectly legal.

BW: She'll find something... and it'll be the truth!

JD: Miss Hayes and the truth aren't exactly the closest of friends.

[Nakamura stands in the center of the ring, waving Anderson out of his corner. Fired up now, Anderson stomps out of the corner, coming in quickly...

...and gets armdragged down to the mat!]

JD: Armdrag takedown by Nakamura... both men back up... and right back down goes Anderson!

[Anderson again backs off, this time swinging his left arm back and forth and shouting at the official who waves for the action to continue. Nakamura glares across the ring, hands on his hips as the fans boo Anderson. The Shane Gang member paces along the ropes, slamming his arms down on the top rope in frustration.]

JD: Aaron Anderson is not having much luck here so far and he's obviously pretty upset about it. You have to wonder how much homework the Shane Gang did for this match. Anderson seems surprised by Nakamura's skills.

[Anderson again swings around, barreling across the ring at top speed, running right into a rolling sole butt into the midsection, catching Anderson by surprise. Nakamura reaches back, hooking him around the head, snapmaring him down into a seated position on the mat...]

"WHAAAAAAAAAAACK!"

[Nakamura slams a kick into the spine of the seated Anderson who cringes. The Japanese superstar pulls Anderson off the mat by the arm, twisting it around into a wristlock. He brings his left leg up into the midsection, doubling him up with a kick to the gut.]

JD: Downstairs he goes again...

[Swinging his leg up, Nakamura slams his calf down on the back of Anderson's head and neck, knocking him flat.]

JD: ...and the axe kick connects!

[Reaching out, Nakamura slaps his partner's hand.]

JD: In comes GEMINI Hashimoto off the tag.

[The big man pulls Anderson up, each man grabbing an arm...]

JD: The Shadow Star Legion fires him in...

[Nakamura throws another rounding kick, catching him in the midsection, doubling him up as Hashimoto charges in, throwing a big kneelift that snaps Anderson backwards, dropping him down to the mat.]

JD: A beautiful doubleteam by the Global Tag Crown champions who are quickly showing the entire world why they are one of the best tag teams in the world as they've completely got the Lights Out Express off their game right now.

[Hashimoto drags Anderson off the mat, throwing a brutal knife edge chop to the chest, sending Anderson staggering back into the neutral corner. The big man steps into the turnbuckles, nodding his head to the crowd...]

JD: Hashimoto loves to throw these chops and Aaron Anderson may be about to find out firsthand the hard way!

[The big man winds up...]

"WHAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAP!"  
"WHAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAP!"  
"WHAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAP!"  
"WHAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAP!"  
"WHAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAP!"  
"WHAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAP!"  
"WHAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAP!"  
"WHAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAP!"  
"WHAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAP!"  
"WHAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAP!"

[The barrage of skin-blistering chops sends Anderson staggering out of the turnbuckles, collapsing facefirst to the mat. Hashimoto gives a big shout, rushing out of the corner, leaping up to drop a heavy elbow down across the shoulderblades!]

JD: Hashimoto rolls him over - one! Two! Aaron Anderson kicks out at two.

[Hashimoto pushes up to his knees, looking over to Nakamura...

...and SLAMS a knife-edge chop down across the ribcage!]

JD: Wham! Right down into the ribs with the overhead Tomahawk chop!

[The big man climbs back to his feet, tugging Anderson into a front facelock before slapping the hand of his partner.]

JD: Another tag by the Shadow Star Legion...

[Nakamura grabs the top rope, slingshotting himself over the top rope to deliver a kick into the ribs!]

JD: Nakamura showing off his athleticism. He's quickly becoming one of the stars to watch in this business, fans. Mark down his name right here tonight but most believe - myself included - that it's only a matter of time before he's holding a major singles title either here in Japan or back home in the United States.

[Nakamura grabs the backpedaling Anderson by the arm, dragging him back towards his own corner.]

JD: The Shadow Star Legion using one of those trademarks of tag team wrestling - cutting the ring in half - as they attempt to isolate Aaron Anderson and take him out so they can move on to the second round of the tournament to face The War Pigs. Those two teams are absolutely no strangers to one another though. These fans here in the Tokyo Dome would love to see those two teams collide once again.

[The hard-kicking star shoves Anderson back into the neutral corner, throwing a rounding kick into the ribs once... twice... three times.]

JD: Nakamura continues to throw those kicks with dangerous and deadly accuracy in the corner.

[Grabbing Anderson by the arm, whipping him to the opposite corner.]

JD: Into the corner goes Anderson... Nakamura coming in after him!

[But Anderson wisely dives out of the way, causing Nakamura to slam chestfirst into the turnbuckles...]

JD: He missed! Nakamura missed the charge and-

[Anderson slips in behind him, hooking a rear waistlock, powering him up into the air...]

...and DUMPS him down on the back of his head and neck with a German Suplex!]

JD: OHHHH! Released German Suplex by Aaron Anderson! That'll turn the tide in this in major fashion.

[Anderson climbs off the mat, rubbing his ribcage as he turns towards his corner, walking in to tag Lenny Strong.]

JD: The tag is made to "Lights Out" Lenny Strong, the namesake of this tag team. Strong was one of the top competitors on the American independent wrestling scene before he got signed by the AWA and became a part of the Shane Gang back at SuperClash IV.

[Strong slips into the ring as Anderson pulls Nakamura off the mat, holding him by the hair as Strong rushes in, throwing a high kick to the cheek, spinning Nakamura away and putting him down to his knees.]

JD: Lenny Strong may be looking forward to this one, Bucky. Strong throws elbows, chops, and kicks like you wouldn't believe. He's one of the hardest hitters in the AWA locker room. He may like the idea of trading shots with Nakamura.

[With Nakamura down on his knees, Strong winds up, laying in a stiff forearm to the jaw.]

JD: Hard shot by Lenny Strong!

[Strong nods to the crowd, turning back to slam home a second stiff forearm to the jaw. He grabs a handful of hair, hitting a third forearm smash as Anderson shouts encouragement from the apron. Strong drags Nakamura off the mat, winding up and laying in another shot!]

JD: Strong's adjusting Nakamura's dental work with these forearm shots and-

[The crowd cheers as Nakamura winds up, throwing a forearm of his own at Strong!]

JD: Nakamura returns fire!

[Strong winds up, smashing another forearm!]

JD: Strong fires back!

[Nakamura winds up, returning the favor! The crowd begins to roar as Nakamura and Strong trade brutal forearm shots in the center of the ring.]

JD: We've got a throwdown in the middle of the Tokyo Dome!

[The speed of Nakamura's strikes picks up, landing shot after shot with no return fire for several moments, leaving Strong dazed and staggered. Nakamura gives a shout, turning to rush away...

...and runs right back into a high kick to the jaw, rocking Nakamura, spinning him away from Strong!]

JD: Strong catches him with another big boot to the chin! He slips in behind him...

[He muscles Nakamura into the air, dropping him down on the back of his head and neck with a backdrop suplex! Strong quickly rolls into a lateral press as the referee dives down to the mat.]

JD: ONE! TWO!

[But Nakamura slips the shoulder, breaking the count at two.]

JD: Only a two count for Lenny Strong... look out now!

[Strong slings a leg over Nakamura's torso, taking the mount as he grabs Nakamura by the hair...

...and SLAMS his forearm into the jaw!]

JD: Strong rains down forearms from the mount - that might be a preview of our Shoot Fight coming up late tonight, Bucky.

BW: If Sudakov gets the mount like that on Mahoney, it's going to be a real short night for the Irishman.

[After a half dozen big forearms landing, Strong attempts another cover.]

JD: Another two count for Lenny Strong right there. 260 pounds out of Philadelphia, Pennsylvania as he tries to assert himself physically against Kenji Nakamura.

[Strong lays in a few hard kicks to the ribs, forcing Nakamura to roll towards the ropes. Grabbing the top rope, Strong viciously stomps the downed Nakamura, forcing him under the ropes and out onto the ring apron as GEMINI Hashimoto angrily complains to the official who tries to back Strong away.]

JD: Nakamura rolls out to the apron, trying to get away from Lenny Strong. The referee backs him up, allowing Nakamura to get back to a knee out there on the apron.

[Strong dashes across the ring.]

JD: BASEBALL SLIIIIIIII-

[Nakamura grabs the rope, yanking himself off the apron, throwing a knee between the ropes and catching the incoming Strong flush on the face, knocking him flat!]

JD: KNEEEEEESTRIKE! Right into the face!

[A slightly dazed Nakamura grabs the top rope with both hands, shaking his head to clear the cobwebs as he takes aim on the downed Strong who uses the ropes to keep himself from slumping back to the mat, staying on a knee near the ropes.]

JD: Nakamura's setting up for something here!

[Nakamura slingshots over the ropes, looking for the attack...

...and Strong springs up to his feet, SLAMMING his forearm into the falling Nakamura to a BIG REACTION from the crowd!]

JD: STRONG HITS THE LIGHTS!

[Nakamura slumps down to the mat, having been creamed with the forearm smash as Nakamura came over the top and came down towards him. Strong drops down, applying the lateral press.]

JD: ONE!! TWO!!

[Up comes the shoulder to cheers from the crowd. Strong quickly gets up, leaping into the air...]

JD: OHH! Double stomp down into the midsection!

[Strong steps out onto the apron, grabbing the top rope. He gives a shout before catapulting himself over the ropes into a slingshot senton!]

JD: Strong goes over the top with the somersault senton... and back to a cover!

[He scrambles into a lateral press, earning another two count before Nakamura kicks out.]

JD: Nakamura continues to kick out of these high impact assaults by Lenny Strong. Strong is really showcasing his talents on a world stage right here tonight as the Lights Out Express looks to advance in the Stampede Cup tournament.

[Strong grabs a handful of hair, dragging Nakamura towards the corner where he makes the tag.]

JD: The Lights Out Express make the tag!

[Strong hops up on the neutral midbuckle as Anderson grabs the arm...]

JD: Anderson shoots him in...

[Strong LEAPS off the second rope, throwing a powerful forearm to the jaw that wipes out Nakamura! He scampers out of the ring as Anderson attempts another cover.]

JD: ONE!! TWO!! T- no! Up goes the shoulder and Nakamura's up at two!

[Anderson takes the mount himself, battering Nakamura with right hands to the skull. The referee quick counts, forcing the Combat Corner graduate to back away, leaving Nakamura down on the mat.]

JD: As we get close to the halfway point in the time limit, Aaron Anderson needs to find a way to keep Kenji Nakamura down for a three count.

[Anderson moves back in as Nakamura pushes up to all fours. The former All-American leans down, hooking a gutwrench...]

BW: Check this out, Dane. Anderson's a lot stronger than he looks!



[The Shane Gang member deadlifts Nakamura off the mat, letting him dangle in the gutwrench...]

...and then powers him up and over, throwing him down with a standing gutwrench suplex! Anderson sneers at the crowd, striking a double bicep pose to jeers from the fans and applause from Sandra Hayes.]

JD: The deadlift gutwrench - a sure sign of incredible strength!

[Nakamura rolls to all fours again, looking towards the corner where GEMINI Hashimoto sticking his hand out, shouting for a tag.]

JD: Hashimoto's waiting for the tag!

[Nakamura crawls closer to the corner...]

...and Anderson buries a boot into the ribcage, running in to deliver it with extra impact!]

JD: Good heavens! Anderson catches him right in the ribs with that!

[Grabbing the legs of Nakamura, Anderson drags him back towards the corner, falling back into a catapult as Strong grabs the top rope, leaning back...]

...and pulls himself into a forearm smash, sending Nakamura falling back down to the mat where Anderson holds him in a makeshift sunset flip!]

JD: ONE!! TWO!! TH- up comes the shoulder again!

[Anderson climbs to his feet, balling up his fist and dropping down to his knees, cutting off Nakamura's attempts to get back to his feet with a fistdrop down between the eyes! He shoves him back down to the mat, attempting another lateral press.]

JD: ONE!! TWO!! TH-

[Nakamura kicks out again, drawing cheers from the Tokyo Dome crowd as Anderson shouts at the Japanese official who holds up two fingers in response.]

JD: Two count only for Aaron Anderson as he's trying to get that one-two-three - that treasured three count to move on to the second round.

[A fired up Anderson grabs Nakamura by the hair, hauling him up to his feet and BLASTING him with a European uppercut, knocking Nakamura back down to his knees.]

JD: A brutal uppercut, nearly knocking the teeth right out of him!

[He yanks Nakamura back up, blasting him a second time... and a third sends Nakamura falling back into the neutral corner. A pissed-off Anderson

walks in, shoving Nakamura - who is about to stumble out - back into the buckles.]

JD: Anderson's on the attack!

[Anderson grabs the back of the head, hammering Nakamura over and over and over with a barrage of European uppercuts!]

JD: The Axeman is going to town!

[Anderson grabs an arm, throwing Nakamura across into the turnbuckles. The Japanese superstar hits hard, staggering back out where Anderson grabs him under the armpits, hurling him high into the air...

...where Nakamura hooks his head between the legs, taking him over in a rana to a huge reaction!]

JD: ONE!! TWO!! THR-

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

JD: HE ALMOST GOT HIM! Nakamura with the hurracanrana out of nowhere to counter that pop-up European uppercut attempt! He almost got the three count and that gives him a window to make that tag!

[Nakamura turns back to the corner, crawling towards his partner's outstretched hand.]

JD: Nakamura's got an opening here! He needs to get to that corner!

[Still down on the mat, Anderson makes a lunge at the legs, grabbing Nakamura by the ankle to prevent the tag.]

JD: Anderson blocks it! He's got the ankle, holding him back!

[The hard-kicking Japanese grappler rolls to his back, swinging his heel down to catch Anderson on the face a few times, breaking Anderson's grip.]

JD: He's going for it again and-

[Anderson springs to his feet, lunging at the corner to smash Hashimoto with a forearm smash, sending him falling off the apron. The crowd jeers and the official gets right into Anderson's face, shouting him back to the middle of the ring. A call out over the PA system in Japanese fills the air.]

JD: The ten minute call is made - only ten minutes remaining in the time limit as we've reached the halfway point.

[Anderson pulls Nakamura across the ring, dragging him back into the Lights Out Express corner as he slaps his partner's hand.]

JD: Strong comes in off the exchange.

[Each man grabs an arm on Nakamura, pulling him out of the corner and HURLING him back into the turnbuckles!]

JD: Ohh! A brutal whiplash-like effect as Nakamura slams back into the corner... and here it comes again!

[Nakamura gets dragged out and slammed back again, his head and neck snapping back. The Lights Out Express is getting jeered savagely by the crowd but they don't care, repeatedly driving Nakamura back into the corner.]

JD: Four times... five times... six times!

[Nakamura slumps down to his knees, collapsing down to the canvas. The referee steps in, forcing them back as Anderson steps out of the ring and Strong stands tall, mockingly applauding the downed Nakamura as Hashimoto retakes his spot on the apron, shouting across at the Lights Out Express.]

JD: GEMINI Hashimoto wants in that ring in the worst possible way and to be honest, Kenji Nakamura NEEDS him in that ring. This young man has been put through the wringer by Anderson and Strong and he needs to make a tag soon.

[Strong watches as Nakamura pushes up to his knees, trying to get off the mat to continue fighting...

...and buries a stiff palm strike into the midsection of Lenny Strong!]

JD: Ohh! The Knockout Kid gets caught downstairs!

[A second one causes Strong to backpedal a few steps as Nakamura climbs to his feet, falling back into the corner where Anderson steps back, clearing space as the official shouts at him.]

JD: Strong charges!

[And Nakamura front rolls to the side, causing Strong to slam chestfirst into the corner!]

JD: He missed! He missed the corner charge!

[Nakamura again gets to all fours, crawling across the ring as Strong grabs the top rope, pulling himself into a tag.]

JD: Quick tag by the Lights Out Express brings Aaron Anderson back in...

[Anderson quickly dashes in, leaping up to drop an elbow down into the kidneys of Nakamura, flipping him over for a cover.]

JD: ONE!! TWO!! TH- shoulder's out!

BW: This has gotta be getting frustrating for Anderson and Strong. This kid just seems to kick out of everything, Dane.

JD: Kenji Nakamura is showing the tremendous fighting spirit that makes him a top fan favorite here in Tiger Paw Pro.

[Anderson drags Nakamura off the feet, muscling him up across his body in a slam position...

...and falls back, throwing Nakamura overhead!]

JD: BRIDGING FALLAWAY SLAM!

[Anderson holds the bridge as the referee dives to the mat.]

JD: ONE!! TWO!! THRE-

[The crowd roars as Nakamura again kicks out in time!]

JD: Another near fall for the Lights Out Express... and Strong tags back in.

BW: Could be another double team coming up, Dane.

JD: It certainly looks that way... double whip sends him across...

[Nakamura rebounds, ducking under a double clothesline attempt and dashing into the far ropes where he rebounds off...

...and catches BOTH members of the Lights Out Express with a split-legged dropkick!]

JD: HE GOT THEM! HE GOT THEM BOTH WITH ONE DROPKICK!

[Nakamura rolls to all fours, breathing heavily as he looks towards the corner where his partner awaits.]

JD: GEMINI Hashimoto has barely been in this match at all at this point of the contest! He's fresh! He's ready! And he's looking for a fight!

[The younger competitor crawls towards his veteran partner, breathing hard as he pushes up to his knees...

...and shoves himself forward, slapping the outstretched hand!]

JD: THE TAG IS MADE!

[Hashimoto comes in and instantly buries a spinning back kick into the sternum of the rising Strong. A trio of palm strikes to the chest causes Strong to backpedal into the ropes.]

JD: Anderson from behind!

[Hashimoto sidesteps, burying a right hand into the midsection of the incoming Anderson. He grabs each by the back of the head, clanging their heads together to a cheer!]

JD: Both men down off that and Miss Hayes is losing her cool out on the floor, shouting at her men to get it together before the Shadow Star Legion puts this to an end.

[The big, burly Japanese star lumbers across the ring, delivering a meaty clothesline that takes Anderson over the ropes and down to the floor to a big reaction from the crowd!]

JD: OUT GOES ANDERSON!

[Hashimoto spins around, coming back across towards Strong who pushes off the ropes, connecting with a stiff forearm smash.]

JD: Strong connects again! Lenny Strong's gotta be loving this smashmouth Japanese style of wrestling!

[The Tiger Paw Pro competitor wheels to the side, connecting with a brutal knife-edge chop across the chest!]

JD: Big chop! And another one connects as well!

[A barrage of chops follows, backing Strong up against the ropes. Hashimoto grabs the arm.]

JD: Irish whip- no, reversed by Strong and-

[The crowd reacts as Aaron Anderson reaches up, tugging the top rope down and bringing Hashimoto tumbling over the ropes and down to the floor!]

JD: ANDERSON TAKES HIM OUT!

BW: Turnabout is fair play! Hashimoto took Anderson out to the floor and the Axeman just returned the favor!

[The jeers get louder as Anderson puts the boots to the big man out on the floor with the referee shouting at him. Ignoring the official, Anderson drags Hashimoto up to a knee...

...and gets CRACKED with a stiff palm strike to the gut!]

JD: Oh! Hashimoto caught him right there!

[Climbing off the mat, a well-placed knee to the head sends Anderson sprawling back down on the ringside mats. Hashimoto grabs the ropes, pulling himself up on the apron where a waiting Lenny Strong cracks him with a pair of forearms before hooking a front facelock, choking him over the top rope!]

JD: That's an illegal choke. Get in there, referee.

BW: You're starting to sound like Gordo.

JD: We both call 'em like we see 'em, Bucky.

[With Hashimoto struggling for air, Anderson gets back to his feet, reaching up to grab Hashimoto by the pants, pulling him back into an electric chair lift...]

JD: What in the world is he thinking right here?

BW: Strong's coming out to the apron!

[Strong backs down the apron, giving his elbow a big smack before charging down the length, leaping off, and SLAMMING his elbow into Hashimoto's jaw, sending him sailing down off Anderson's shoulders to the barely-padded concrete floor below!]

JD: DEAR LORD!! DID YOU SEE THAT?!

BW: Ain't a soul who missed that one! The Lights Out Express may have just lived up to their name right there!

JD: Hashimoto fell from about six feet in the air, crashing down on the floor. He very well could be knocked out from that - you're right, Bucky.

[Anderson backs off, getting shouted at by the referee as he gets back on the apron. Lenny Strong rolls back into the ring as well, waving for the referee to start his count.]

JD: The Lights Out Express have absolutely no issue with winning this match and advancing via countout, I can assure you of that.

BW: Why should they, Dane? A countout is as good as a pin, a submission, or anything else in this one. They squeaked in the back door through the Gauntlet Match but if they knock off the Global Tag Crown Champions in the first match of the night, they'll really be sending a message to the entire tournament field.

JD: Strong is on his feet, shouting at the official to start his ten count. Typically, in Japan, they use a twenty count but they have agreed to play by AWA rules for this tournament.

[The Japanese official's count quickly gets to three as Strong and Anderson huddle up in the corner, looking anxious as Kenji Nakamura shouts at his partner from the apron.]

JD: Nakamura's trying to get his tag team champion partner back to his feet as the referee's count gets to four... now to five...

BW: Halfway there! This fat slob on the floor ain't movin' yet, Dane!

JD: Hashimoto IS moving, Bucky. He's rolled to his stomach, trying to push himself up to his knees.

BW: When this guy lies on his stomach, he's halfway in the ring already.

[Dane chuckles as the count hits seven.]

JD: The count is up to seven! We're getting VERY close to a decision here, fans! If GEMINI Hashimoto isn't back in the ring before the count of ten, the Lights Out Express are moving on to the second round of the tournament.

[Hashimoto pushes up to his knees, the crowd growing anxious as the count increases to eight.]

JD: These Tokyo Dome fans are rallying behind the home team! Trying to cheer Hashimoto on as he tries to break the count and get back into the ring in time to continue!

[He reaches up, grabbing the ropes to pull himself off the ringside mats, breathing heavily...

...and yanks hard, tugging himself between the ropes into the ring JUST in time!]

JD: HE MADE IT!

[The ring announcer calls out something in Japanese.]

JD: Five minutes left! Remember, if we reach a time limit draw, BOTH teams will be eliminated from the tournament and the War Pigs will advance via bye to the Semifinals!

BW: That'd be HUGE for them, Dane. They'd only have to wrestle two matches to win this whole thing! That would put them in a huge advantage over the other teams in the tournament.

JD: You know that Hammer, Sabre, and their manager, Richard E. Lee are rooting for that to happen right about now. Five minutes more and they'll get their wish.

[Strong pulls Hashimoto up, blasting him across the chest with a knife-edge chop that puts him right back against the ropes. He quickly grabs an arm...]

JD: Irish whip...

[As Hashimoto rebounds, Strong sets to deliver an elbowsmash but the big man hurls himself into a front flip, his heel cracking off the cheek of Strong with a koppo kick in the middle of the ring!]

JD: OHHHHH MY! KOPPO KICK CONNECTS!

[With both Strong and Hashimoto down, both men turn their attention towards their respective corners again, looking to escape the ring and get their fresher partner into the fray.]

JD: Both men down on all fours, on their hands and knees as they crawl, crawl, crawl their way towards Kenji Nakamura and Aaron Anderson respectively...

[Strong front rolls across, slapping his partner's hand quicker than Hashimoto.]

JD: The Axeman back in!

BW: Get him, kid!

[Anderson rushes in, running across to throw a forearm at Nakamura...

...who blocks it and then CRACKS a surprised Anderson with a high kick to the head!]

JD: OHHHHHHH!

[Anderson staggers back as Hashimoto gets back to his feet, hooking a rear waistlock...

...and DUMPING Anderson on the back of his head with a released German suplex!]

JD: GOOD GOD!! RELEASED GERMAN SUPLEX!!

BW: I was about to say that! I'm not used to calling the action with someone who knows the names of the moves, Dane.

JD: The pleasure is all mine, Bucky. And this gives Hashimoto an opening as he- TAG!

[The crowd ROARS as Nakamura quickly scales the turnbuckles, standing tall as Aaron Anderson rolls to his stomach...

...and Nakamura SOARS off the top, tucking his legs up...]

JD: DOUBLE STOMP!

[Anderson's face gets DRIVEN into the mat with a double stomp to the back of the head off the top. Nakamura flips him over, diving into a lateral press.]

JD: ONE!! TWO!! THR-

[The crowd JEERS as Lenny Strong rushes in, hammering Nakamura with a forearm to the back of the head to break up the pin.]



JD: Strong saves his partner right there for sure!

[The referee protests as Strong yanks Nakamura off the mat, hammering away with short elbows to the jaw. He backs off, going into a full spin...]

JD: ROLLLLLLING ELLLLLBOOOOOOOO-

[Nakamura sidesteps, hooking the arm as Strong goes by, snaring both arms in a double chickenwing!]

JD: He's going for the Tiger Suplex!

[But Anderson is back up, slamming a double axehandle into the back of the head of Nakamura!]

JD: Ohh! Come on, referee!

[Anderson grabs the arm, whipping Nakamura into the ropes. He leans down, shoving Nakamura up into the air...

...where he gets CREAMED with a rolling elbow on the way down by Lenny Strong!]

JD: OHHHHHHHHH!

[Strong dives on top as Anderson sprints across the ring, leaping up to knock Hashimoto off the apron with an elbow strike!]

JD: ONE!! TWO!! THREEEEEEEE!!!!

"DING! DING! DING!"

JD: Wow! What an upset!

BW: I told ya, Dane! I told the world that this is the Shane Gang's year and they just knocked off the Global Tag Crown champions to prove it! They beat the best tag team in all of Japan to move into the second round!

JD: There was an illegal doubleteam there at the end that's sure to cause some controversy but the record books will show exactly what you claim - the Lights Out Express defeated the Shadow Star Legion by pinfall in the center of the ring!

BW: They should be awarded the Global Tag Crown titles too!

JD: This was NOT a title match for those particular titles... unlike later tonight when Skywalker Jones and Hercules Hammonds intend to put their titles on the line in every match they're in. So, Aaron Anderson and Lenny Strong will have to be happy with moving on to the second round where the War Pigs await them.

BW: And don't forget Miss Sandra Hayes! Look at her! She's ecstatic!

JD: She got a step closer to a million dollars, the World Tag Team Titles, and immortality! She's got every right to be excited. You know who else has a right to be excited? Someone like Justin Gaines who still hasn't celebrated his first year anniversary in this sport yet tonight, he has a chance to become a major superstar in one night. Can he do it alongside his Hall of Fame father or will the motivation behind Dichotomy be enough to carry those two former preliminary wrestlers to glory? We caught up with both teams earlier tonight so let's hear what they've got to say!

[Crossfade to the backstage area in footage marked "EARLIER TONIGHT." In front of a Rising Sun Showdown logo stands former World Champion Colt Patterson in a red feathered vest over his still muscular shirtless chest. Black leather pants round out the ensemble if you ignore the red-tinted sunglasses and black leather beret.]

CP: It's Rising Sun Showdown and the whole country is JACKED to see what happens here tonight. Everyone wants to see who is gonna climb the mountain to look way down on everyone else as the best tag team in the world. Joining me right now is a team who hopes to do exactly that... one of the brightest young stars in the AWA and certainly the youngest star in the AWA... the man who calls himself the Scion of Greatness, Justin Gaines as well as his Hall of Fame daddy, Gunnar Gaines!

[The shot widens a touch as the 6'7" Justin Gaines walks into the shot. He's clad in black trunks and a warm-up jacket that's unzipped about three fourths of the way down, to reveal a well-oiled, slender but muscled, mildly tanned, hairless chest. Colt nods but looks around Gaines, peeking behind him. He throws up his arms in confusion.]

CP: Where's your father?

JG: I don't know, Colt, but that's OK. We're a team. That means we trust each other to handle business. He'll be along later. In the meantime, anything you would have asked Gunnar ... you can ask me.

[Colt shrugs.]

CP: Alright then... what's your outlook for this tournament here in the Tokyo Dome tonight?

JG: A great question. Very imaginative. What the hell do you THINK our outlook is? You've got the original Baddest Thang Running and a legend in this business in my dad. Then you've got me, the Scion of Greatness, the man who shaved Ryan Martinez bald, possessor of the most dangerous and crippling finishing move in all of professional wrestling, that being none other than the Justifier.

These are potent ingredients all on their own but when you put us together, father and son, third-generation legend and fourth-generation megastar, you get teamwork that can't be taught. We're not a "dichotomy," we're a unity, because we're on the same page. And speaking of pages, when you turn

them all and you get to the end of the book, the Baddest Thangs Running will be your next Stampede Cup champions.

[Colt nods.]

CP: You sound like you got it all planned out but some might point out your old man's age and your inexperience as...

[Colt's words trail off as the shot widens and a large figure steps into the shot opposite Justin. This man is dressed in all purple from head to toe — a form-fitting purple bodysuit, a purple ninja mask, and even ninja footies. This figure glares imposingly through his ninja mask at the young Justin Gaines. The shot zooms back in to fill the frame with Colt, Justin ... and the ominous, purple-clad figure.]

JG: Who ... who ARE you!?

[The figure steps an inch or two closer, holding his glare at the youngster as Colt Patterson steps back, extending his arm to continue to hold the microphone out in front of himself.]

Purple Figure: Someone ... you know all too well.

[The man in purple reaches up to his own head and grasps the purple mask, lifting it off to reveal the face of ...

Gunnar Gaines.]

JG: Oh, geez, Dad! You had me going there! What the hell is that get-up you're wearing? We've got a serious match about to start and you're playing around.

GG: Well, Justin, not to belabor the obvious, but we're in Japan. And when we're in Japan, I must assume the persona for which I'm very famous here ... that of the Purple Samurai.

In the United States and all over the world, I'm Gunnar Gaines. But in Japan, they called me the Purple Samurai, a legend of the Japanese squared circle, owner of the famous Samurai Splash and Samurai Slam.

[Justin glances down, shaking his head and laughing.]

JG: I don't get it. This is nonsense. Samurais don't dress like Ninjas. You don't even understand Japanese culture.

GG: No, YOU don't understand Japanese culture, evidently, because they go wild for this here. In fact, I still have Japanese endorsement deals as the Purple Samurai. Whisky ads, billboards, the works. Even my own pachinko machine.

Now, these contracts are very lucrative, but also very binding. Contractually speaking, I couldn't wrestle here as Gunnar Gaines even if I \_wanted\_ to.

Legally, I have to be Purple Samurai whenever and wherever I appear in Japan. I'm even on sketchy ground taking this mask off, but I had to show you it's me. Sorry I didn't tell you before, I figured you'd just roll with it ... like a good son.

[Justin takes a deep breath, rolling his eyes slightly ... then exhales.]

JG: Fine. Then let's get to the ring as Purple Samurai and Justin Gaines and take care of business.

[Justin starts walking out of the shot ... when a purple hand clasps him on the shoulder and pulls him back.]

GG: Not so fast.

[Gunnar reaches down and grabs a black gym bag. He hands it to Justin.]

JG: No. Don't tell me.

[Gunnar just looks at his son ... then nods slowly, a modified, closed-mouth Grizzly Grin forming on his bearded face.]

GG: Tonight, you're not Justin Gaines, but Red Dragon Ninja. Trust me, there'll be big money in this for you down the line. The Japanese public, they eat this up like a rice noodle. Your costume is in the bag. You know what to do. Now go and change. Then come back and show us.

[Reluctantly, Justin walks out of the shot, muttering to himself.]

CP: I didn't know about your Japanese gimmick, Gunnar.

GG: Oh sure. It was a huge hit. I even used it in America a few times, just to mix things up, keep them guessing. Just like tonight, when we face the team of Dichotomy.

CP: Keep them guessing? I never would have guessed this.

GG: Indeed, you wouldn't have, Colt Patterson. You wouldn't have. But you know, it doesn't matter if we dress up in ninja outfits or we walk down to the ring in our street clothes. We could walk down there in any outfit you like, we're still the Baddest Thangs Running.

Our opponents call themselves Dichotomy? It's gonna be more like tracheotomy when I Grizzly Slam Matt Ginn through the canvas, and Justin hits the Justifier on Mark Hoefner. We'll rip their silly heads off, cover for the pin, and advance to the second round. And speaking of which ...

[Justin walks back into the shot, dressed head to toe in red. Red ninja mask, red bodysuit and even red ninja footies. But the suit doesn't fit him well — it's a bit loose in some areas, and a bit tight in others, like it was made for someone else. Gunnar immediately breaks out in uproarious laughter.]

JG: What?

[Gunnar continues laughing, practically unable to speak, until finally, he can.]

GG: You look like a Rajneeshee in a body cast!

JG: Cram it, Barney, it's your costume, I'm just wearing it because evidently I have to. Now tell me. Who the hell am I, again? Red something ...

GG: Red Dragon Ninja.

JG: Great. My lifelong dream was to be a Power Ranger and now I've fulfilled it.

[Justin walks off in a huff.]

CP: Somehow I sense sarcasm. Any last comments, Gunnar?

[Gunnar reaches down, picks up the hood, and places it over his head. He speaks now as Purple Samurai. The camera slowly centers on his face, coming in for a moderately paced Monster Heel Zoom as he utters the following words.]

PS: Dichotomy, I say to you here and I say to you now, you are no match for the speed of Red Dragon Ninja and the power of the Purple Samurai. Fate decrees that you must fall at the feet of the Gaines Clan. May lotus blossoms and bricks fall gently upon your craniums, striking you in your respective external occipital protuberances, and may you walk the path of loserdom the rest of your days on this Earth, as we fulfill our destiny to win the Stampede Cup for the state of Alaska as well as the Empire of Japan.

[The long Monster Heel Zoom onto the purple mask has completed, and we see Gunnar's blue eyes through the eye holes.]

PS: I hope that when, not if, but when you lose, you do so with honor, for lose you must to Red Dragon Ninja and Purple Samurai. For you cannot overcome ... the way of the Samurai.

[He bows...

...and we slowly fade to a table in front of a Rising Sun Showdown banner.

Seated behind the table, as if giving a press conference, are Matt Ginn and Mark Hoefner of Dichotomy. The very tall Ginn has reddish-brown hair in a Caesar style, a thin-cut goatee and mustache, and is wearing glasses. To our right is Hoefner, who has light brown skin and short black hair in a slightly receding hairstyle. Both men are wearing dress shirts and ties; Ginn's shirt is clean white with a dark red tie (striped with navy blue), while Hoefner's is a violet-blue with a black tie (with coppery-grid pattern).]

MH: Everyone loves an underdog story. Don't they?

MG: A fabrication.

MH: No. If you people really loved your underdogs, the Yankees wouldn't keep making money, the Heat wouldn't keep selling out after selling out, and the place would go dead quiet for Juan Vasquez instead of everybody screaming like idiots.

MG: I assume that these sports analogies are accurate, but I could not say for sure as the watching of sports is a pastime for the intellectually bereft.

MH: If you people really loved your underdogs, you'd stop voting for the two parties that already rule the entire country. You'd vote for unconnected people who wanted to make a change, instead of for career thieves who want to keep their gravy train rolling by leeching off of you all.

MG: But then again, you're all sports fans and thus intellectually bereft. So that's not truly surprising.

MH: The myth of the underdog. The lie of "March Madness". In the end, you're all frontrunners. You might support your locals, even when they stink, but that's just your ego talking. You want your local team to be the Yankees or the Heat. You want your local athlete to be Juan Vasquez or Alex Martinez. You don't want an underdog. You hate them. You hate US.

MG: Because if an underdog achieves, then that underdog has done what you cannot. They have risen off of their couch, set down their remote control, and accomplished something. You only identify with losers for as long as they remain losers... you would never want them to win in the end. Struggle and fail. You want the underdog to stay as they are so that you can spit on them. So that you feel better knowing you're not the only failure in existence. So your heroes, the ones who were never underdogs, have someone to crush for your amusement.

MH: By the time you see this footage, it'll be almost time for Dichotomy to go play the underdog. Nobody thinks we can win. Beat the Gaines family? Hall Of Fame Dad and Hall Of Nepotism Son? Nobody would bet five dollars on us. And that's just how we want it.

MG: Because the general populace is comprised of imbeciles. If a group of intellectually sterile drones believes us to be inept, in the same sense that they believe in the illusion of "fairness" and the lies of representative government, then I, for one, take comfort in that. The greatest compliment that a fool can give someone is his doubt, because they're wrong about everything else in their lives.

MH: This is the toughest first round draw we could have gotten. We know the Gaines family is tough. And we know that the Gaines family is dangerous. But the Gaines family is not the "baddest things running".

MG: Because in moments, they won't be "running" any more. And if they don't like it, that's just too "bad".

MH: And to those AWA officials who set this up so that either us or the Gaines' would be exhausted by the time we got to face your gravy train? We want you at ringside for the second round. Show your faces. We want to see your tears when your plans come tumbling down around your ears.

MG: And the next time you try to manufacture some heroes, try not to make the path to defeating them that obvious.

[The scene fades out, to a perplexed Dane and a smiling Wilde.]

JD: Huh? "Try not to make the path to defeating them that obvious"? What was that supposed to mean?

BW: Remember, last Saturday Night, Dichotomy said that SkyHerc had an obvious weak link.

JD: Isn't it putting the cart before the horse to talk about that before even getting that far?

BW: Yup. But one sentence mentions aside, they didn't sound like they were overlooking the Baddest Thangs Running.

JD: No, and that will be an interesting matchup coming up here right now. Let's go back down to the ring to Megumi Sato for our next first round matchup!

[We crossfade back to the ring where the same woman we saw earlier is standing once again, smiling at the camera. The subtitles appear as she begins to speak.]

SUBTITLES: The next match is a first round match in the Stampede Cup. It has a twenty minute time limit. Introducing first...

PA: # WE! ARE! IN! CON! TROL!

[The analogue-recorded rock open of "Vengeance" by The Protomen plays, as the lighting in the Tokyo Dome switches to a single bluish-white spotlight shining on the entranceway from the area over the ring. The exact spotlight that is shining switches in time with the music, creating an unusual strobe effect. Once the opening section is finished and the speed picks up, bluish-white lighting appears along the entrance and rampway along with the now rapidly-changing spotlight, so the effect becomes more background and less eyestrain inducing. The video wall begins with a montage of Dichotomy highlights, incorporating a team logo (the triangle-biohazard symbol).

It's at that moment that Matt Ginn and Mark Hoefner walk out from the back, striding down the long ramp. The six-seven Ginn takes point, wearing black trunks with large white triangular patterns on each hip, running from waist to legline, and black-and-white boots, elbowpads, and kneepads. The

JD: Ginn knows a bit of Japanese. He does have an impressive educational background, until he threw it out the window by breaking the law. Knowing him, he came prepared with the phrases he wants to use, and knowing him, they're not going to be worded with any measure of respect.



[As Hoefner enters the ring, satisfied that there are no traps or ambushes, the music changes to some horribly generic "ninja" music. The subtitles appear again.]

SUBTITLES: Their opponents... from the Land of the Rising Sun...

[Are those cheers? Oh brother. The curtain parts to reveal the two clad "samurai warriors.]"

"REEEEEEEEED DRAAAAAAGONNNN NINNNNJAAAAAAAAAA!"  
"PURRRRRRPLLLLLLE SAAAAAMUUUUURAAAAAAAAAAAAAI!"

[Yes. Those are cheers. Somehow, the silly gimmick seems to have worked on the Tokyo Dome crowd. Either that or Dichotomy are just really reprehensible people and the Gaines are less so. The two masked men make their way down the ramp. The Purple Samurai is playing to the crowd while the Red Dragon Ninja definitely is walking with some fire in his step.]

JD: I can't say that I understand this at all.

BW: Did Gunnar not speak slow enough for ya? He explained it! He's got marketing contracts to live up to!

JD: This is... well, you'd have to argue that this is likely the biggest night of Justin Gaines' career so far. A night to really make a major impact on the wrestling world... and his father seems to be throwing that away for a joke.

BW: It's money! Cash rules everything around me!

JD: It's ridiculous is what it is. If the Baddest Thangs Runnin' are taking Dichotomy lightly, they could be in for a rough night. A lot of people have overlooked Ginn and Hoefner because of their former status as preliminary wrestlers but they are not those men anymore. They have looked very impressive as a tag team for some time now and-

[As the Gaines family steps through the ropes, Ginn and Hoefner rush across the ring. Hoefner throws himself at the knee of Gunnar Gaines, driving his shoulder into the front of the kneecap, forcing the knee to bend in a way it's just not meant to bend before he falls to the mat, screaming in pain.]

JD: Whoa! Sneak attack before the bell!

[Justin Gaines steps in, throwing bombs to try and fight off Matt Ginn who uses his size advantage to push Justin back against the turnbuckles, holding him there as Hoefner straightens up, throwing a big right hand to the jaw!]

JD: Dichotomy have attacked before the bell! Gunnar Gaines has rolled out to the floor and the same knee that arguably cost Gaines and Ryan Martinez the Stampede Cup a year ago just got clipped out from under him by Mark Hoefner.

[Hoefner drops to his back, rolling out to the floor as Ginn drives his shoulder into the midsection of Justin Gaines, holding him at bay as Hoefner moves around the corner, grabbing Gunnar by the leg...

...and SLAMS the back of his knee down into the edge of the ring apron!]

JD: OHH!

BW: Dichotomy is showing why they're my sleeper pick to win this whole tournament!

JD: I thought it was just so you could take the credit if they win.

BW: That doesn't hurt things.

[Hoefner again attacks the leg as the referee shouts at him to back off.]

JD: The match hasn't started yet... we haven't heard a bell so I believe Hoefner and Ginn will keep going after the leg until-

BW: He's got a chair!

[Hoefner winds up with the chair, DRIVING the edge of it into the kneecap. Gunnar Gaines cries out in pain again as Hoefner slams the chair into the leg a second time.]

JD: The fans are all over Dichotomy as is our official, Koji Tanaka.

BW: But like you said, Dane, the match hasn't even started yet so they can do pretty much whatever they-

[The chair smashes into the knee a third time as Matt Ginn throws Justin Gaines through the ropes and out to the floor, slamming down hard on the barely-padded floor. Hoefner shoves Gunnar Gaines back into the ring where Matt Ginn pulls him up quickly, waving for the official to start the match.]

JD: Oh, NOW they want it started!

[Ginn slams Gaines' face into the top turnbuckle, allowing him to stumble back as Ginn spins, throwing a big discus lariat that topples the Hall of Fame veteran!]

JD: Discus clothesline - the first cover of the match!

[But the referee waves it off, shouting at Ginn to break the pin.]

JD: The referee says he hasn't started the match yet!

[Ginn is quickly to his feet, shouting at the official as Hoefner slides around the ring, pulling Justin Gaines off the floor...

...and SMASHING his head into the steel ringpost!]

JD: OHH! Cheapshot on Justin Gaines out on the floor!

[Justin Gaines is sprawled out on the floor, drawing the referee's ire again as Matt Ginn pulls Gunnar Gaines into a spinning toehold.]

JD: Look at the execution on this painful hold!

BW: Ginn's a heck of a technician in there, Dane. He's got this hold slapped on tight and he's cranking on that leg. If the referee would go and check, this match might be over already.

JD: The referee seems resistant to even start the match as long as this assault is going on. He's ordering Ginn to break the hold.

[Ginn suddenly breaks, backing off with his hands raised. The referee kneels down next to the purple-clad Gunnar Gaines, checking to see if he's able to start the match.]

JD: The referee's checking on Gunnar Gaines to see if he can continue at all. I can't think that's a good idea, Bucky. He's hurt and his partner, his young son, is laid out on the floor after having his head slammed into the steel ringpost!

BW: Ginn is pacing around, anxious to get this thing started.

JD: Such a dastardly move, an attack like that before the bell.

BW: It's the smartest move we've seen tonight, Dane... and you can thank Jones and Hammonds for it.

JD: What?!

BW: It's simple, you goof. Jones and Hammonds brought this on when they decided to lay down a challenge and defend their titles in every match they're in - including against the winner of this match. You don't think Dichotomy wants that title shot? You don't think they want this match over as quickly as possible so they're fresh for it?

JD: You could be right but-

BW: Of course I'm right!

[Gunnar Gaines pushes up to a knee, nodding to the official who swings around to signal for the bell...

...which is Ginn's cue to tear across the ring, booting Gaines right in the cheek and knocking him back down!]

JD: Matt Ginn showing no mercy as he continues the attack on Gunnar Gaines, kicking and stomping at that injured knee!

[Ginn grabs the ankle, hauling him back across the ring where he slaps his partner's hand.]

JD: Dichotomy makes the tag...

[Hoefner steps in, rushing to the ropes as Ginn leans down, still stretching out the leg...

...and Hoefner leapfrogs his own partner, dropping his weight down on the knee!]

JD: Oh! An impactful doubleteam by Ginn and Hoefner as they continue to target the knee of the Hall of Famer.

[Hoefner abandons any attempt at a submission hold, stomping the knee repeatedly as he circles around Gaines, keeping him back in Dichotomy's half of the ring. He grabs the leg, winding up his arm and dropping an elbow down on the knee joint, causing Gaines to cry out in pain again.]

JD: Mark Hoefner may not have the sweet science of Matt Ginn in his arsenal but he does have some very effective offense that he can use to further break down the body of Gaines.

[Climbing back to his feet, Hoefner holds the foot, kicking the leg viciously. He pulls the foot, jerking hard and stretching out the knee. He throws the leg down to the mat, quickly dropping a knee on the leg!]

JD: Right down on the knee again!

[A smirking Hoefner grinds his knee back and forth, digging into the injured leg before reaching up to make the tag.]

JD: The tag is made and back comes Matt Ginn...

[Ginn takes his partner's place, dropping a knee down on the side of the leg. He switches to grabbing Gaines' ankle, tugging it up against the planted knee. Gaines cries out again sitting up to try and free himself...

...but a stiff headbutt to the masked skull sends the Hall of Famer flopping back down on the mat.]

JD: Ginn's trying to isolate the leg, torment it a bit more, see if he can force a submission out of Gaines before his son can get back into the mix.

BW: It's a brilliant strategy, Dane. Admit it.

JD: Oh, I do. It's completely brilliant. But will it work? They're torturing the leg but I don't think Gunnar Gaines is close to submitting... not yet at least.

[Ginn breaks the hold, slamming his elbow down on the knee. He does it again... and again... and again... and again before climbing back to his feet,

soaking up the jeers of the crowd. He leans down, pulling Gaines up by the arm as he tags his partner back in.]

JD: Both men in... double whip into the corner...

[Gaines stumbles the few feet back, Ginn slamming him high with a back elbow in the chest as Hoefner goes low with a back elbow into the ribs. Hoefner climbs back to his feet, shoving Gaines into the ropes where the veteran flops down over the middle rope.]

JD: Hoefner's choking him!

[The referee steps in as Hoefner plants his shin on the back of Gaines' neck, choking the air out of him as the referee counts to four...

...and then catapults over the top, stomping the back of Gaines' head!]

JD: Oh! Hoefner with the big attack over the top!

[He backs off, Hoefner measures Gaines...

...and then hops off the apron, smashing his elbow down in the back of Gaines' head! Gaines snaps back down to the mat, clutching his throat now.]

JD: A pair of impressive assaults by Mark Hoefner has Gunnar Gaines down on the mat and really in some serious jeopardy.

[Hoefner stands on the floor, shouting at the ringside fans...

...and then rushes over towards a rising Justin Gaines, hammering him with a forearm to the back of the head. He spins him around, grabbing him by the arm...]

"CLAAAAAAAAAAAAANG!"

JD: IRISH WHIP INTO THE RINGSIDE RAILING!

[Hoefner cackles at the crowd's reaction before climbing back up on the apron...

...where he gets POPPED with a right hand on the jaw by the former World Champion!]

JD: Gaines caught him!

[Gaines reaches back, hooking a three-quarter nelson, dropping down to his rear and snapping Hoefner's throat down on the top rope, sending him falling off the apron to the barely-padded floor!]

JD: DOWN GOES HOEFNER! DOWN GOES HOEFNER! Gunnar Gaines found an opening and he managed to turn it around!

[The Grizzly One leans against the ropes, lifting his injured leg off the mat. He tugs at his purple mask, moving it into place as he steps out through the ropes to the apron...]

JD: Hold on right here! Gunnar Gaines is out on the apron!

[Gaines backs down the apron, leaning against the ringpost. He slowly raises his right arm, giving a shout as he lumbers (slowly) down the apron, hobbling with each step...

...and HURLS himself off the apron, slamming his elbow down into the chest of Mark Hoefner!]

JD: OHHHHHHHH!

[Gunnar rolls to his side, reaching down to grab at his knee as Hoefner winces in pain, clutching his chest as Matt Ginn looks on in disbelief from the ring apron. He shouts to his partner as the referee starts a count on both men.]

JD: Gaines took a big chance right there... took a shot and it looks like it may have paid off! He might have laid in a big shot while Hoefner had his guard down.

[Gaines crawls on his hands and knees towards the guardrail, dragging himself up to his feet. He leans against the railing as the count gets to four.]

JD: The Hall of Famer sees a window of opportunity here to get he and his son to the second round of this tournament. Remember, Gaines went to the Finals last year with Ryan Martinez at his partner. Believe me when I say he wants to get there again this year more than anything else.

BW: After the bad split that he had with Martinez, he wants to prove that Martinez was the weak link in that particular team.

[Gaines shoves himself forward, rolling under the ropes into the ring as the count gets to six.]

JD: Gaines beats the count and... so does Hoefner!

[As Hoefner gets in, Gaines shoves the rising former Marine back into the turnbuckles. The Hall of Famer squares up, lashing out with stiff jabs to the jaw, rocking Hoefner...

...and then CRACKS him with an uppercut, snapping Hoefner's head back and sending him falling into the corner!]

JD: What an uppercut!

BW: He loosened the man's teeth with that for sure!

[Grabbing an arm, Gaines whips Hoefner across, sending him crashing into the neutral corner. The Grizzly One falls back into the corner, shaking out the injured leg.]

JD: Ginn from behind!

[Trying to seize the moment, Ginn drops off the apron, yanking Gaines' legs out from under him...

...and SLAMS the inner knee into the steel ringpost!]

JD: KNEE TO THE POST!

[A grinning Hoefner slips back out to the middle of the ring, grabbing Gaines by the arms and dragging him out of the corner to the center. Hoefner moves to the neutral corner, climbing up on the middle rope...

...and leaps off, burying an elbow in the heart!]

JD: ELBOW OFF THE SECOND ROPE!

[He rolls over, making a cover.]

JD: ONE!! TWO!! TH-

[Gaines uses his upper body strength to power out of the pin attempt, breaking it up.]

JD: Two count only for Dichotomy!

[Hoefner gets back up, marching to the corner where he tags in Matt Ginn.]

JD: The tag is made!

[The duo tees off, hammering Gaines with forearms and double axehandles on the downed Gaines, smashing him into the canvas. The referee steps in, forcing Hoefner out of the ring as Ginn hooks the leg under his arm, flipping Gaines over into a half Boston Crab.]

JD: The half Crab applied by Matt Ginn! Leaning back, putting more pressure on the injured knee!

[Gaines claws at the canvas, crying out in pain as he tries to drag himself towards the ropes...

...where at long last, his son appears, having ripped the red mask off, throwing it down to the floor. The crowd cheers the arrival of Gunnar's partner as Gaines looks to get out of the ring.]

JD: Justin Gaines is on the apron and he's hot under the collar! He's-

[Not wasting a moment, a pissed-off Justin Gaines enters the ring, rushes across and SLAMS a forearm to the back of Ginn's head, breaking the submission hold.]

JD: Justin breaks the hold! That half Boston Crab was expertly applied by Matt Ginn but Justin Gaines made short work of it. The referee is shouting at Justin Gaines but he's ignoring him, screaming across the ring at Ginn and Hoefner.

[Ginn climbs to his feet, pointing at Justin Gaines and shouting back at him. He shakes his head, pulling Gunnar off the mat as he slaps his partner's hand.]

JD: Hoefner back in off the tag... Ginn throws Gaines back into the corner...

[Moving across, real close to Justin Gaines, Ginn grabs Hoefner by the arm, whipping him across where Hoefner leaps up, throwing a big right hand into the jaw of the stunned Gunnar Gaines!]

JD: FLYING HAYMAKER!

[Hoefner grabs Gaines by the hair, throwing him down to the mat for another pin attempt...

...and in comes Justin Gaines again, showing no hesitation as he stomps Hoefner in the back of the head to break the pin!]

JD: Justin Gaines didn't wait a bit to do that! He didn't wait a single second to get in and break that pin.

BW: That's some inexperience though. There's only so many times the referee's going to let you get away with it so you've gotta save them for when your partner is REALLY in trouble. That leaping haymaker was a heck of a punch but I don't think Gunnar Gaines was really at risk of getting pinned, Dane.

JD: Justin Gaines obviously disagreed with you there as he gets forced back out of the ring by the referee again.

[Hoefner looks furious at Justin Gaines as he drags Gunnar off the mat again, throwing a few short forearms to the jaw. He grabs two hands full of hair, runs towards the neutral corner, and SLAMS Gaines facefirst into the top turnbuckle...

...and then uses the same grip on the hair to yank Gunnar Gaines off his feet, throwing him down hard to the mat!]

JD: DOWN GOES GAINES AGAIN!

[Hoefner again goes down to make a cover...

...and again has it broken before the one count by Justin Gaines!]



JD: This is getting a bit ridiculous, Bucky. The referee is shouting at Justin Gaines, warning him about this repeated interference.

BW: How do you know that's what he's saying?

JD: I'm fluent in Japanese, Bucky.

BW: Okay, but how the heck is JUSTIN supposed to know what he's saying?!

[Hoefner pulls Gunnar off the mat again, burying a knee into the midsection as he glares at Justin...

...and then spits at the hot head youngster!]

JD: Oh!

[Justin Gaines comes through the ropes again, furious as can be but the referee steps in to block his path. Justin is all sorts of angry, shouting and screaming at Hoefner.]

JD: It occurs to me that Dichotomy just might be trying to get Justin Gaines worked up like this so that makes a mistake.

[Ginn slips in illegally as they each grab an arm on Gaines, whipping him in...

...but the Grizzly One pulls up short of a double backdrop attempt, dropping down to his knees...]

JD: ALASKAN UPPERCUT!

[...and SLAMS his arms up into the groins of Dichotomy!]

BW: OHHHHHHHHH!

JD: And Gunnar takes advantage of his hot-headed son distracting the referee!

[Gaines crawls across as the two Dichotomy members writhe in pain on the canvas, looking up at his son who has retaken his spot on the apron, stretching out his arm...]

JD: THE TAG IS MADE!

[The crowd cheers as the Purple Samurai rolls out and his young son comes in, rushing across the ring to level the rising Dichotomy members with a double clothesline!]

JD: JUSTIN GAINES TAKES THEM BOTH DOWN!

[Justin pulls Ginn off the mat, whipping him into the ropes, and cracking him across the throat with a knife-edge chop!]

JD: CHOP TO THE THROAT!

[A gasping and coughing Ginn rolls out to the floor, leaving his partner in the ring with Justin Gaines who grabs the rising Hoefner, looping his leg over the back of the neck, leaping up...

...and DRIVES him facefirst into the canvas!]

JD: LEG LACE BULLDOG!

[Justin hops to his feet, throwing his arms apart in a "IT'S OVER!" gesture. He grabs Hoefner off the mat, tugging him into a standing headscissors...

...and Hoefner leans away from it, pulling him back towards the ropes.]

JD: Hoefner trying to counter! Justin's looking for the Justifier!

[The sneaky Hoefner yanks the legs out from under Justin, jackknifing one leg into a pin...

...while the wily Ginn slips an arm under the ropes, grabbing Justin's other leg and holding it down.]

JD: Wait a second!

[The referee drops down to count...

...and Hoefner throws his feet up on the middle rope!]

JD: Referee, look up! Referee!

[But the referee fails to see Hoefner's illegal leverage AND Ginn's illegal assist, counting to three.]

"DING! DING! DING!"

[The fans are DEAFENING in their disapproval of the finish of the match as Hoefner rolls from the ring, joining Matt Ginn in celebrating out on the floor!]

JD: They got it! Dichotomy scores what I have to think is an upset of sorts!

BW: And they're gonna get a shot at the titles! We're gonna have new champions, Dane!

JD: Seriously? What makes you think that?

BW: Dichotomy has TWICE mentioned that they know who the weak link in SkyHerc is. They know something that none of the rest of you know.

JD: The rest of us? Do YOU know something about what they're talking about?!

BW: I'm not at liberty to say. Let's just say that if you're a fan of history being made, you won't want to miss that match between the champs and Dichotomy coming up later tonight.

JD: Dichotomy scores a surprise - and highly controversial - victory over the family Gaines and now they're heading into the Elite Eight of this tournament where the World Tag Team Champions await them!

[Fade to black.

The commercial begins with some melancholy piano music, and a slow motion pan of a group of happy, playing children on a playground.]

Voice-Over: Human beings begin life so full of hope and promise.

[Several images flash of young people in grade school, high school, a prom, graduation...]

VO: They have the potential to become anything at all.

[And then the music stops, the screen goes black, and we then see a photonegative clip of someone being loaded into an ambulance via stretcher.]

VO: Even a victim.

[The next scene is a slightly voice-distorted, silhouette figure speaking interview style. The chryon text at the bottom reads "ACTUAL VICTIM OF THE IRON CLAW".]

Figure: I was sure that I'd be a champion someday, if I could just get through the rookie years and learn by example. But then... it all ended in a tragic instant. That Iron Claw cracked my skull and I will never wrestle again.

[As darker, more ominous background music plays, this statement is interspersed with very brief clips of a wrestler being loaded up on a stretcher, but they go by too fast to see who it is. A second person then speaks, also voice-distorted and silhouetted with the same chryon.]

Figure 2: My days and nights are filled with agony. I cannot eat solid food. I have migraine headaches that won't go away. The Iron Claw has destroyed my life.

[More clips of a different stretcher job play with that figure. Then we get a third figure, and though she's also distorted and silhouetted, the voice is clearly female.]

Figure 3: That scumbag put me in the Iron Claw because I wouldn't touch his saggy biceps in the bar. Now I see double and have been diagnosed with brain cancer.

[The clips that accompany her are of an ambulance leaving a bar at night, rather than a wrestling ring (and a subtle clip of someone holding a sign in a crowd that reads #ScumbagTravis, because why not). The fourth voice is distorted, but probably recognizable by some.]

Figure 4: My beautiful face is ruined! Ruined! Millions of dollars of revenue lost, my lifeyhood... I can't read that cue card, bring it closer... NO KEEP HER AWAY FROM M...

[And then we cut that off to see Demetrius Lake seated in a chair, wearing a beige sport jacket, earth-toned dress shirt, and brown slacks with leather shoes. The dark-skinned self-proclaimed King Of Wrestling has a somber look on his face, ringed by his round afro and his mustache-conical beard combination.]

DL: There is no greater tragedy than a life cut short because of an illegal move. As the King Of Wrestling, I urge all my subjects to do what is right, and sign the petition to Ban The Iron Claw. Go to the website on your screen, right now. Ban The Iron Claw. It is the right thing to do, no question about it.

[The URL for the petition site is shown on screen as he speaks. The final shot is one that follows the broken and bleeding preliminary wrestler that Lake put in the Claw for an example on the March 15 SNW, being carried away from the ring toward an ambulance. And then the commercial ends with one last voiceover.]

VO: PAID FOR BY THE ALLIANCE TO BAN THE IRON CLAW. DONATE TODAY.

[We fade back to live action where we cut backstage and see the two members of Strictly Business, "Money Driven" Mike Sebastian and Andrew "Flash" Tucker standing next to Mark Stegglet, already clad in their wrestling attire. Tucker's blond hair hangs down past his shoulders and his chest glistens with water. Sebastian, meanwhile, jars his head side in an attempt to crack his neck as he readies himself for action. He can't help but run both hands through his platinum blond hair in nervous anticipation. Both men have a steely resolve on their faces as Stegglet begins.]

MS: Fans, I'm backstage here at the Tokyo Dome with Strictly Business, who are preparing for their first round match with Air Strike. Gentlemen, how does it feel to see an arena this full?

MS: If it weren't for the plane ride over, I'd have said we took the DeLorean back to '99.

AT: It reminds me of our heyday. When we were sellin' out arenas all over the world; flyin' all over the place and knockin' heads of Hall o' Famers. It's almost like a home field advantage, to be honest with you, Marky Mark.

We're used to the pressure that comes with keepin' tens of thousands o' people on the edge of their seats for 30 minutes at a time.

MS: Are you insinuating that Air Strike isn't used to that kind of pressure?

AT: I'm not insinuating anything. I'm flat-out sayin' it.

MS: This isn't anything new for us, Steggs. We wrestled in front of packed houses for a whole lot of years so we feel right at home hitting the ring with the place filled to the brim. Standing-room-only crowds don't get the butterflies rumbling in either of our stomachs the way I'm sure they do for our counterparts.

MS: The young duo you're facing tonight have made it clear what big fans they are of yours and have been since they were kids. How does that change your approach?

AT: It doesn't make a bit o' difference. We were big fans of Brody Thunder and John Wesley Hardin over a decade ago and it didn't stop us from makin' sure those two legends were lookin' up at the lights at the end of the match. I figure Air Strike, if they're anything like we think they are, will be preparin' to do the same to us. So we'll be ready, Mark; don't worry 'bout that.

MS: It makes for a great story and all. Two budding upstarts stepping in the ring with the two guys they idolized when they were growing up as little tikes. We can haggle with Spielberg and Tarantino at a later date. While Aarons and Mertz were doing planchas off pops' La-Z-Boy recliner, they watched us defiantly stand up to the best this sport had to offer and tell 'em all we were there to stay. Sure, we took the wrong end of a Cattle Buster a time or two along the way, but you see where it got us. All those tough hombres who told us we'd never amount to a thing? Might want to check the senior centers and the retirement homes because they're long gone. But us? We're here, front and center. Same place we'll be tonight when the man in stripes hands over a briefcase full of greenbacks after we win this whole shebang.

MS: Any final words for Air Strike before you head down to the ring?

MS: Just that the postcards in the hotel gift shop are five for 100 yen. At those prices, you can tell even your third and fourth cousins what a great time you had over here taking a first-round exit at the hands of Strictly Business.

[Tucker stares deliberately at the camera.]

AT: Boys, you may have seen every one of our matches on TV when you were knee-high to a grasshopper. You may think you've got us scouted. You may think you've got the speed and youth on your side. You've been thinking about this match your whole lives. You've seen it every time you closed your eyes to go to sleep...

But thinking it... seeing it... dreaming it... It's all very different from actually \_doing\_ it. Strictly Business has \_done\_ it.\_

And tonight we do it again.

[Strictly Business walks purposely off-camera as we cut to footage marked "EARLIER TONIGHT" where we again see Mark Stegglet.]

MS: My guests at this time... Air Strike.

[Into the picture walks Cody Mertz and Michael Aarons of Air Strike. Aarons is wearing long red tights with a white vertical stripe down each leg and he has on a white Air Strike Fan Club tee short. Mertz is wearing an orange TPP shirt with long white tights with a red vertical stripe going down each leg. They stand at either side of Stegglet.]

MS: Gentlemen, you are moments away from the biggest event of your young career. Your thoughts?

CM: Mark, it seems like every event we walk into is the biggest event of our career. First match, SuperClash and now the Stampede Cup. There are eleven other great teams here in Japan tonight all trying to be the greatest. We're facing a team later tonight that some might have argued were the greatest team around for a period of time.

[Mertz shakes his head.]

CM: But here, now, none of that matters. Its true Air Strike doesn't have the hardware that sits on the mantle of a team like Strictly Business; no one's ever called us legendary. We aren't the champions of AWA or even Tiger Paw Pro. We don't have what a lot of these teams may have. But we have this...

[Cody taps his chest.]

CM: We have heart, we have the support of arenas full of fans and we have the motivation to do the people who taught us proud. To go out there and make the very most of this opportunity. It's an honor and privilege to face a team as great as Strictly Business. But while there may be awe, there's also determination. Determination to go out there each and every night and prove it.

[Stegglet nods before turning to Michael Aarons.]

MS: No doubt how you feel about this moment Michael as we all saw two weeks ago

[Aarons turns a collective shade of red and pink.]

MA: Steggy it's not every day you can get your moms to embarrass you like that on national television. But I've said it before; I've been a mega-fan of

Strictly Business for a long, long time. Almost from the time of diapers. If I'm singing that song you know what kind of fan I was.

[All three men share a quick laugh as Aarons shakes his head and continues.]

MA: Whether he was or is Money Driven or the Cerebral Assassin Mikey Sebastian and Flash Tucker are the standard of tag team wrestling! Their Hall ceremony is a when not an if. But this...

[Aarons looks over at his partner.]

MA: This here is the Stampede Cup. And us...

[Aarons points back and forth at himself and Mertz.]

MA: ...we ain't the Machines, the Epitome, the Frats, Team Canada, the Outlaws, and any of those teams from yore.

[Smirking, Aarons shakes his head back and forth.]

MA: No, we are the high flying, death defying, awe inspiring, never tiring, teenage dream team... Air Strike!!

[Fist bump!]

MA: Those teams were great but they're in your past... we're the team in your future. And while your greatness will never be questioned, Air Strike is looking to soar way past that and be even better!

[Aarons winks and slaps his partner on the back as the two head off camera and we crossfade back to the ring where referee Ricky Longfellow is standing alongside the ring announcer. Cue the subtitles.]

SUBTITLES: Next is a first round match. Coming down the aisle...

[The sounds of Powerman 5000's "When Worlds Collide" kick in to a big reaction from the crowd. After a moment, "Money Driven" Mike Sebastian and Andrew "Flash" Tucker appear, wearing what they had on in their promo moments earlier.]

SUBTITLES: At 205 kilos in total...

[And then comes loud, extended, accented English.]

"ANDREWWWWWWWWWW TUUUUUUUUUCKERRRRRR!"

"MIIIIIIIIIIIIIIKEEEEEEE SEEEEBAAAAAASSSTIAAAAN!"

"STRIIIIIIIIICTLYYYYYYYY BUSSSSSSINESSSSSSSSSSSS!"

[The cheers pick up for Tucker and Sebastian as they continue to make their way down the elevated ramp, nodding their heads at the reaction as they slowly head towards the squared circle.]

JD: Strictly Business are former World Tag Team Champions in more than one territory and are widely considered as potential Hall of Famers but tonight, they're not looking to make the Hall of Fame... tonight, they're looking to add their names to a short list of teams that can call themselves former Stampede Cup winners - teams like Violence Unlimited, the Blonde Bombers, and the Lynch Brothers.

BW: Tucker and Sebastian rolled themselves out of the old folks' home back in 2009 to compete in the Stampede Cup but they only got to the second round before Rough N Ready sent 'em packing. Tonight may be no different, Dane.

JD: We're about to find out.

[Tucker and Sebastian step in as the subtitles kick in again.]

SUBTITLES: Their opponents... at 191 kilos...

["Can't Hold Us" starts up to another big cheer as the English rings out.]

"COOOOOOOOOOODYYYYY MERRRRRRRRRRRTZ!"

"MIIIIIIICHAAAAAELLLLLLLL AAAAAAAAAAAAAARONSSSS!"

"AAAAAAAAAIIIIIIIRRRRRRRR STRIIIIIIIIIIIIIIIIIIIIKE!"

[The cheers grow louder as Mertz and Aarons, the Teenage Dream Team, walks through the curtain, jogging down the ramp in the same attire we saw them in moments ago. Mertz drops to a knee, pointing to the crowd as several blasts of pyro go up behind he and a posing Michael Aarons.]

JD: Air Strike came on the scene, fresh out of the Combat Corner, in 2013 and quickly became one of the most popular tag teams in the entire industry.

BW: Popular, yes. But they're young, they're inexperienced, and they've got a rough night ahead of 'em if you ask me.

JD: You're picking Strictly Business?

BW: I don't know about that but whether it's in the first round, the second, or whenever, I'm guessing Air Strike is going to find themselves in a match that's too much for them to handle.

JD: What do you say to the people that are picking Air Strike to shock the world here tonight and win the whole tournament?

BW: That it's past their bed time and those kids should go to bed.



[Mertz and Aarons step in, quickly heading to the same corner, both stepping up on the second rope and pointing out to the roaring crowd.]

JD: It seems like Air Strike's popularity is worldwide, fans!

[They continue to stand on the ropes for a few moments, soaking up those cheers and getting blasted with camera flashes. Tucker and Sebastian are huddled up in their corner, gesturing across at Air Strike.]

JD: This promises to be a very fun and exciting match and I know a lot of people have really been looking forward to this one here tonight in the first round. Remember, the winner of this one is heading to the second round to meet the former World Tag Team Champions in the Blonde Bombers.

BW: Right there, Dane. Right there.

JD: Huh?

BW: No matter who wins this match between these four goofs, right there is where that night ends. Neither one of these teams is good enough to get past the Blonde Bombers.

[Mertz and Aarons hop down, huddling up as they look across the ring at Strictly Business.]

JD: Some final pieces of strategy being discussed by both teams.

[After a few moments, Michael Aarons stays in as Cody Mertz steps out on one side of the ring while Mike Sebastian steps out on the other.]

JD: It appears it will be Michael Aarons starting things off in there with Andrew "Flash" Tucker. The butterflies have gotta be flipping through the stomachs of all four of these men here tonight. For Air Strike, as they said, it's once again the biggest night in their young careers. For Strictly Business, if this comeback is going to have any legs at all for them, they need a good showing here tonight in my estimation.

[Ricky Longfellow signals for the bell as the two men come out of their respective corners, circling one another.]

JD: Michael Aarons offers his hand to Andrew Tucker. A nice show of sportsmanship to start this match off... and Tucker accepts.

[There's some polite applause for the handshake as the two men circle one another again...

...and then lunge at one another, tangling up in a collar and elbow as Aarons quickly pulls Tucker into a side headlock. He holds it for a few moments, keeping Tucker stationary in the center of the squared circle before spinning around behind him into a rear hammerlock.]

JD: Aarons quickly transitions to the hammerlock, cranking up on that left arm, perhaps trying to feel out his opponent a bit. You can bet that Air Strike's done plenty of scouting on Strictly Business but this is the first time they'll be in the ring with them.

[Aarons cranks up on the arm again as Tucker reaches back with the free arm, looking for an escape but Aarons reaches up with his right arm, slipping into a half nelson, using the arm to spin Tucker around into a cravate!]

JD: Wow! Another nice transition to another submission hold by Michael Aarons! Air Strike are certainly known for their high flying talents but Aarons is showing he's got more than that in his playbook.

BW: He certainly does. But so does Andrew Tucker so Aarons should wipe that stupid grin off his face.

JD: He's smiling at the idea of being in there with his childhood hero, Bucky!

BW: Sure he is, Dane. That's the story they want to tell so they can sell more t-shirts but the fact is, these two punks have been rubbing Strictly Business' age in their face for weeks now!

JD: That's not true at all from where I'm sitting.

BW: You must be sitting behind a wall then 'cause it's as clear as crystal to me.

[Aarons grits his teeth, twisting the head and neck of Tucker in the cravate again, wheeling him around as Tucker looks for an escape...

...and backs to the ropes where he loops an arm over the top.]

JD: Tucker gets to the ropes and the referee calls for a break.

[Aarons breaks clean, spinning back to the middle of the ring as Tucker rushes forward, throwing out his arm...]

JD: The veteran looks for an opening, Aarons ducks the clothesline! Tucker hits the far side...

[And as he rebounds, Aarons lashes out with a kick to the back of Tucker's knee, causing his legs to fly out from under him, dropping down hard to the mat!]

JD: Legsweep by Aarons!

[Tucker promptly rolls to a knee, fists at the ready as he rises, looking a bit steamed. He looks over to Sebastian who nods, pointing at Aarons. Tucker rushes forward again...

...and Aarons sidesteps, flipping him over with a hiptoss!]

JD: Hiptoss by Michael Aarons... and an armdrag takes him down as well!

[Aarons hangs on to the arm, slipping into an armbar as a frustrated Mike Sebastian kicks the bottom rope, shouting at his partner.]

JD: Sebastian's trying to encourage Andrew Tucker to get out of this armbar. Michael Aarons is using his speed advantage to take Tucker off his feet repeatedly in the early moments of this one.

[Tucker manages to get to his feet fairly quickly, promptly burying a knee into the midsection of Aarons. "Flash" grabs Aarons by the hair, dragging him towards the corner where he slams his head into Sebastian's raised knee, making the tag.]

JD: In comes Mike Sebastian off the tag... big boot to the gut... and another one!

[Sebastian hauls Aarons out of the corner by the arm, whipping him across.]

JD: Irish whip shoots him in... big right hand!

[But Aarons drops into a baseball slide, going through the legs of Sebastian. He climbs to his feet, scooping Sebastian into the air, and slamming him down to the canvas!]

JD: Big scoop slam by Aarons!

[Aarons rushes to the ropes, rebounding back, and dropping a hard elbow down into the chest of Sebastian!]

JD: Lightning quick elbowdrop out of Aarons! And Sebastian didn't like that one bit.

["Money Driven" rolls out to the floor, clutching his chest. He looks up at Aarons, glaring at the young man from Carson City, Nevada. Sebastian takes his time walking around out on the floor, moving himself over towards Strictly Business' corner. Sebastian leans in as Tucker kneels down, talking amongst themselves as Aarons waves his opponent back into the ring.]

JD: Sebastian rolls in... and tags in Tucker...

[Tucker slingshots over the top rope, barreling across the ring towards Aarons who had turned to say something to Mertz, smashing him with a forearm to the back of the head, sending Aarons falling towards his own corner.]

JD: Oh! Sneak attack by the veteran!

[Tucker grabs Aarons by the arm, hauling him out of the corner.]

JD: I think there was a tag right there.

[Tucker hits Aarons with a pair of short forearms, dazing the Air Strike member before dashing to the ropes...]

...and rebounds back into a waiting Air Strike, each lifting Tucker by a leg...]

JD: Look out below!

[They DROP Tucker facefirst on the mat with a flapjack! Tucker flails about on the mat, grabbing at his face as the Air Strike members get back to their feet.]

JD: Mertz with the cover! One! Two!

[But that's all he gets as Tucker lifts the shoulder at two. Aarons steps out as Mertz pulls Tucker up, throwing an elbow down across the back of Tucker's neck.]

JD: Irish whi- reversed!

[Tucker sends Mertz into the ropes, rebounding back. He goes right up into a headscissors, spinning around and around Tucker over and over to the cheers of the crowd...]

...and flings him down to the mat with the satellite headscissors!]

JD: Cody Mertz grew up as a self-described gym rat at an old gym near the Mexican border that was steeped in lucha libre tradition. Mertz loves the world of lucha libre and just showed us that right there.

[Tucker rolls out to the floor as Mertz front rolls, flipping up to his feet and pumping a fist to another cheer. Sebastian joins Tucker on the floor, huddling up and discussing their failed efforts so far as Mertz steps up on the second rope, leaning to shout "COME ON!" at the fans.]

JD: Cody Mertz isn't used to the reserved Japanese fans who hold their reactions for the biggest and best moments. He's trying to get them rallied behind him while Strictly Business tries to rally THEMSELVES out on the floor.

BW: Mertz is making a big mistake here. They've got Tucker and Sebastian off their gameplan and he's in there trying to get the fans to clap. He should be out on the floor putting those two into the barricade!

[Mertz grins at the crowd, shaking his head at the size of it before slapping his partner's hand.]

JD: Mertz tags in Aarons and the exchange is quickly made again.

BW: Tucker's back up though.

[Tucker gets back up on the apron, giving a shout at the official.]

JD: Tucker back on the apron, Aarons coming towards him...

[Tucker uses the ropes to slingshot himself UNDER the ropes, sliding between the legs of the incoming Michael Aarons. The veteran pops up, rushing to the far ropes.]

JD: Tucker off the far side, leapfrog up and over and keeps on running.

[Tucker hits the far ropes, rebounding back again. He leaves his feet, leaping up and turning to deliver a leaping back elbow up under the chin of Aarons, taking him off his feet!]

JD: Oh! Tremendous impact on the leaping back elbow! Tucker to the ropes again...

[And again leaves his feet, this time spinning around into a spinning leg lariat that takes Aarons off his feet a second time, sending him rolling across the ring where he tags in Cody Mertz!]

JD: TAG!

[Mertz slingshots over the ropes, rushing towards Tucker who ducks down, causing Mertz to sail past him where he deadleaps up, landing with his rear end on the top turnbuckle. A shocked Mike Sebastian can't even react as Mertz rolls back, ending up trapping the incoming Tucker's head between his legs, spinning once, and taking him down with another headscissors!]

JD: Mertz takes him down again! Cody Mertz is the master of the headscissors... the master of the rana. He'll hit moves like that from anywhere at any given time!

[Tucker pops up, slapping Sebastian's hand. Sebastian comes in fast, rushing at Mertz who leaps back up, taking him down with a high-leaping rana!]

JD: Mertz is on fire, fans! Cody Mertz is absolutely on fire!

[Mertz springs back up as Sebastian scrambles up to his feet, burying a knee into the gut of Cody Mertz.]

JD: Sebastian goes downstairs!

[Sebastian grabs a handful of trunks and LAUNCHES Mertz through the ropes, sending him crashing down to the floor in a heap!]

JD: OHHHHH! Man oh man, he launched him like a javelin through the ropes and Mertz went down VERY hard on that barely-padded floor.

BW: Sebastian ain't done, Dane!

[Sebastian looks out at the crowd, nodding as he jogs in place before dashing to the far ropes, rebounding back across the ring...

...and DIVES through the ropes onto a stunned Cody Mertz!]

JD: A TOPE DIVE THROUGH THE ROPES TO THE FLOOR! HE WIPED OUT CODY MERTZ!!

[Michael Aarons looks on in a bit of disbelief at his partner being floored by the veteran. Andrew Tucker smirks in the corner, clapping his hands together as he shouts out.]

BW: Tucker just asked Aarons if an old man can dive like that. You think they didn't take some of that stuff personally, Dane?

JD: Perhaps they did but I do not believe Air Strike meant any offense by any of it.

BW: You're as big of an idiot as Gordon is. I thought I'd get away from that here in Japan. I guess not.

[Sebastian climbs to his feet on the floor, pulling the rising Mertz off the mat and chucking him under the ropes.]

JD: Sebastian puts Mertz back in... he's up on the apron now...

[Sebastian waits as Mertz gets up, leaning down to bury a shoulder into the midsection. He slingshots over the top, taking Mertz down in a sunset flip!]

JD: ONE! TWO! T-

[Mertz claps his legs together on the ears of Sebastian, breaking the pin attempt. He rolls back to his feet as Sebastian does the same but Sebastian catches him with an elbow smash between the eyes, grabbing an arm and dragging him to the corner.]

JD: Strictly Business makes the exchange...

[Sebastian hooks a front facelock as Tucker slingshots over the top, smashing a forearm down across the back of Mertz' neck. Tucker promptly grabs a front facelock of his own, snapping Mertz over in a suplex!]

JD: Snap suplex! That'll shake you from head to toe!

[Tucker pulls him right back up, standing him against the ropes where he lashes out with a series of stiff right hands to the jaw. He grabs an arm...]

JD: Irish whip shoots him in...

[Tucker leans down for a backdrop but Mertz turns his back, using Tucker's own back to flip over the top. He backs quickly into the ropes...

...where Sebastian reaches under the ropes, tripping him up!]

JD: Sebastian trips him from the floor!

[Sebastian uses the legs to swing Mertz all the way around so that his torso is under the apron...

...and Sebastian CRACKS Mertz with a right hand to the jaw!]

JD: OHH!

[Tucker nods, leaning down to grab the legs of his opponent, dragging him away from the ropes. He muscles him up in a wheelbarrow as Sebastian climbs up on the apron, grabbing Mertz by the back of the head...]

JD: What in the...?

[Sebastian drops off the apron as Tucker drops him from the wheelbarrow, snapping Mertz' throat down on the top rope!]

JD: OHH! A BRUTAL DOUBLETEAM BY STRICTLY BUSINESS!

[Mertz drops to the mat, gasping for air as he clutches his throat. Sebastian soaks up some jeers from the crowd as he settles back up on the ring apron, stepping into the corner. Tucker walks around the downed Mertz, staring down at him as Michael Aarons shouts encouragement from the corner.]

JD: Tucker drags the smaller man to his feet, scoops him up... and DOWN into a backbreaker!

[Tucker smirks at the camera, nodding his head as he lifts the much-smaller Mertz right back up into his arms, dropping him down a second time gutfirst!]

JD: Tucker with a backbreaker and a gutbuster and Cody Mertz is in some serious trouble, fans!

["Flash" shoves Mertz off his bent knee, attempting a lateral press but only getting a two count.]

JD: Two count only for Strictly Business as Andrew Tucker again stands over Cody Mertz, watching as Mertz tries to drag himself towards his corner to make a tag.

[Tucker shakes his head, wagging a finger at Michael Aarons as he steps in front of Mertz to cut off a tag effort. He boots Mertz in the head, stopping him dead in his tracks.]

JD: A big stomp down between the eyes puts Mertz back down on the mat and Tucker's going to try to take advantage of this situation.

[The California native drags Mertz off the mat by the arm, wheeling him around and launching him towards the neutral corner where Mertz leaps up to the second rope...]

JD: Mertz leaps...

[...and SNARES Tucker's head between the legs, dragging him down in a double leg cradled rana!]

JD: RANA! RANA! ONE!! TWO!! THR-

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

JD: A near fall right there! Cody Mertz almost got him and that's his window! That's his chance!

[Mertz comes out of the rana, heading towards the corner where an anxious Michael Arons has his arm stretched out.]

JD: Mertz is looking for a tag here...

[But Andrew Tucker has other ideas, climbing to his feet and grabbing the ankle of the fleeing Mertz. Mertz struggles against the grip, trying to reach his corner but Tucker drags him back, dropping an elbow down on the back of the head to cut off the effort once more.]

JD: Tucker cuts off the tag!

[He hauls him back to the corner, slapping the hand of Mike Sebastian.]

JD: The tag is made...

[Tucker hauls Mertz off the mat, waiting as Sebastian enters. A double whip sends him across and a double back elbow knocks him down to the mat]

JD: Nice doubleteam by Strictly Business!

[With Mertz down, Sebastian drops a fist down between the eyes just as his partner leaps up with a knee to the ribcage!]

JD: And again with the doubleteam. The referee forces Tucker out as Sebastian makes the cover... one... two... but that's all. Two count only for Strictly Business as they attempt to spoil the dreams of Air Strike here tonight in Tokyo.

[Tucker steps out to the apron as Sebastian hauls Mertz off the mat, burying an elbowsmash down between the eyes. A second one sends Mertz falling back into the ropes where he makes a desperate lunge towards his partner before a boot to the gut cuts him off.]

JD: Mertz was SO close right there but again, Strictly Business is having none of it.

BW: They're doing an excellent job of cutting the ring in half which is an essential part of tag team wrestling.



[Sebastian pulls Mertz to the center, tugging him into a front facelock. He slings Mertz' limp arm over his neck, leaning down to hook a leg...]

JD: Fisherman suplex on the way!

[Sebastian brings him up, snapping him all the way over with the suplex, hanging onto the leg with a textbook bridge.]

JD: ONE!! TWO!! TH-

[Mertz kicks hard, breaking the pinning combination to the obvious frustration of Mike Sebastian who holds up three fingers to Ricky Longfellow who shakes him off, showing two in response.]

JD: A close call there for Air Strike but it was only a two count according to Ricky Longfellow. Sebastian slowly pulling Mertz back up, staying on the weakened opponent.

[He fires Mertz in, catching him on the rebound in a sleeperhold!]

JD: SLEEPER! HE CALLS IT THE CASH FLOW!

BW: He's got it expertly applied too, Dane! Look at the position of the arms, constricting those blood vessels in the neck. Look at the stance, nice wide base to keep his footing. Right out in the center of the ring to boot and this might be it for Air Strike!

[We can hear the ring announcer in Japanese in the background.]

JD: The ten minute call of the match. Only ten minutes remaining in the time limit of this first round match.

BW: Larry Doyle is liking the idea of another bye, I can promise you that.

JD: We're a long way from even considering that, Bucky, and if Cody Mertz can't quickly find a way out of this sleeperhold, we might be finished right now!

[Mertz' rapidly pumping arms start to slow as he slumps down to a knee. Sebastian takes advantage of it, moving in closer and leaning on the back of Mertz' neck, putting more pressure and leverage on the hold.]

JD: Sebastian's got this hold on and Mertz is losing daylight to get out of it! His arms have slowed down, he's fallen down to a knee. Sebastian's in a perfect position to put this away right here and now.

[Michael Aarons is screaming at his partner, begging him to find a way to escape this effective hold...

...when Mertz suddenly pops up to his feet, throwing himself forward...]

JD: OHO! WHAT A LEVERAGE MOVE BY CODY MERTZ!

[...and Sebastian goes sailing through the ropes and out to the floor as Mertz collapses facefirst to the canvas!]

JD: Cody Mertz with a fantastic leverage move to save himself - and this match for his team.

BW: Sebastian hit hard out there on the floor!

[Tucker kneels down on the apron, shouting across at his partner as Aarons does the same towards Cody Mertz.]

JD: Mertz needs to make that tag! Michael Aarons is waiting for him, the fresh man and looking to take advantage of what his partner just did to Mike Sebastian!

BW: Mertz is crawling towards the corner...

[There's a slight cheer as Mertz tags Aarons who quickly scales the turnbuckles...]

JD: What in the...?! He's going up top!

[As Sebastian climbs to his feet, Aarons hurls himself off the top, wiping out "Money Driven" with a huge dive!]

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

JD: MICHAEL AARONS TOOK A CHANCE AND IT PAID OFF RIGHT THERE!

[A dazed Aarons climbs to his feet, pulling Sebastian up with him and shoving him under the ropes.]

JD: Sebastian gets rolled in... Aarons rolls in after him...

[Aarons throws himself into a cover.]

JD: ONE!! TWO!! TH-

[But Sebastian fires a shoulder off the mat!]

JD: Two count only! Sebastian kicks out after that mammoth dive from the top to the floor by Michael Aarons!

[Aarons pulls Sebastian up, lifting him up and putting him down in an inverted atomic drop. He charges the ropes behind Sebastian, leaping up to grab two hands full of hair, and SLAMS him facefirst into the mat!]

JD: FACESLAM! Another cover! ONE!! TWO!! TH- again, he gets the shoulder up!

[Aarons claps his hands in frustration as he climbs to his feet, looking at the official who raises two fingers.]

JD: Only a two count and Michael Aarons can't afford to lose his focus here.

[With Sebastian down, Aarons turns towards the corner, pointing to the top turnbuckle.]

JD: Aarons is going up top! He's looking for the big fat pitch and he wants to hit the home run!

[Michael Aarons steps out on the apron near the neutral corner, climbing up to the top rope slowly but steadily...

...but when he reaches his peak, he finds Mike Sebastian on his feet and approaching quickly.]

JD: Sebastian with a right hand! And another!

[But Aarons manages to keep his balance...

...until Sebastian simply shoves one of Aarons' legs out from under him, causing him to crotch himself up top!]

JD: OHH!

[Sebastian falls back, leaning on the ropes to catch his breath for a few moments before he too starts the climb to the top.]

JD: Sebastian's going up there with him!

[The crowd starts to buzz with anticipation as Sebastian throws another pair of right hands from his place standing on the middle rope.]

JD: Sebastian trying to keep Aarons from fighting back! Another right hand! And another!

[He reaches out, pulling Aarons into a front facelock. Sebastian quickly slings Aarons' arm over his neck.]

JD: Sebastian's looking for a superplex!

[But now Aarons starts to fight back, using his free arm to hammer away at the exposed ribs of Sebastian.]

JD: Aarons going to the ribs! Trying to fight his way out of this!

[A hard overhand elbow catches Sebastian between the eyes, rattling "Money Driven" as he slips, catching the top rope to keep from falling as Aarons straightens up...

...and HURLS himself over, hooking Sebastian on the way, and DRIVING him down with a thunderous sunset flip powerbomb to a big cheer from the crowd!]

JD: POWERBOMB!! POWERBOMB!!

[Aarons jackknifes the legs, pushing the shoulders down as he runs in place, looking to get more leverage.]

JD: ONE!! TWO!! THREE-

[The crowd ROARS its disapproval as Andrew Tucker sprints across the ring, leaping into the air, and just BARELY manages to break up the pin in time!]

JD: TUCKER BREAKS THE PIN! OH MY! How close was that, Bucky Wilde?!

BW: It was incredibly close, Dane! Tucker just barely got there in time to break it up and avoid going home in the very first round!

[Tucker pulls Aarons up, drilling him with a pair of right hands before the referee steps in, forcing him back as Sebastian starts crawling across the ring towards the corner.]

JD: Andrew Tucker's trying to buy his partner enough time to get across to make the tag but I don't know if he did it, Bucky.

BW: He's trying, Dane! Sebastian's crawling with all he's got!

[Aarons climbs to his feet, leaning against the turnbuckles...

...and then rushes across the ring, throwing a dropkick at the surprised Tucker, sending him sailing off the apron and crashing down hard on the barely-padded floor!]

JD: DOWN TO THE FLOOR GOES TUCKER!

[Michael Aarons gives a triumphant whoop as he turns back towards the downed Sebastian, leaning over to pull him up in the center of the ring. He gives another shout as he snares Sebastian in a front facelock...]

JD: What's he going for here?

[Aarons looks out at the crowd...

...then seems to second-guess himself, hesitating just long enough for Sebastian to lift Aarons into the air, dropping him in an inverted atomic drop as Tucker slides into the ring, rushes across...]

JD: OHH! SWINGING NECKBREAKER BY TUCKER! Blatantly illegal and the referee's letting Andrew Tucker hear it!

[Tucker backs out as Sebastian wobbles towards him, tagging him in.]

JD: Tucker's in off the tag...

[The crowd buzzes as Tucker strikes a pose, setting for the Chronic Jumble Jaw!]

JD: Tucker's setting for that superkick! If he hits this, it might be good night for Michael Arons!

[Arons wobbles back up to his feet, totally unaware as he slowly turns to face a waiting Andrew Tucker...

...who surges forward, swinging the leg up!]

JD: CHRONIC JUMBLE JAW- MISSED!

[Arons dropped down to his back, avoiding the superkick completely. He kips back up, ducking a clothesline from a running Tucker back the other way...

...and makes a LUNGING tag!]

JD: MERTZ! MERTZ!

[Mertz scrambles up to the top rope, waiting as Tucker charges...

...and takes flight, soaring through the air to knock Tucker off his feet with a high cross body!]

JD: HIGH CROSS OFF THE TOP!

[Mertz rolls out of it, getting back to his feet as Tucker scrambles to get off the mat on the other side of the ring. A running dropkick to the chest sends Tucker falling back into the corner.]

JD: Shotgun dropkick to the heart puts Tucker back in No Man's Land - he's in the corner of Air Strike as Mertz leans down, setting Tucker down up on the top rope... and he's climbing up again!

[There's another callout in Japanese from the time keeper.]

JD: Five minutes left! Only five minutes to go and this is when both of these teams need to kick this into another gear!

[Mertz gets to the second rope, landing a pair of right hands to the ear before stepping up top...

...and leaping up, catching Tucker's head between the legs, and SNAPPING him down off the top with a rana!]

JD: OFF THE TOP!! The stars are falling from the sky right now... and Mertz with a lunging cover!

[The referee dives to the mat as well!]

JD: ONE!! TWO!! THRE-

[Mike Sebastian rushes in, stomping the back of Mertz' head to break up the pin.]

JD: Oh! Get in there, referee! Get Sebastian out of there!

BW: He's got a five count to get out!

JD: He's using it all right now, arguing with the official as Mertz climbs to his feet...

[Mertz rushes to the ropes, rebounding off as Tucker pushes up to all fours. Mertz springs off the back of Tucker, hooking Sebastian in a front facelock, twisting around to DRIVE him skullfirst into the canvas!]

JD: TORNADO DDT OFF THE BACK OF TUCKER!!

[Sebastian rolls out to the floor, grabbing the top of his head as Mertz turns his focus back to Tucker, catching him on the chin with a right hand!]

JD: Uppercut by Mertz and Tucker's dazed!

[Mertz scoops Tucker up in his arms, spins around once, and slams him down hard in the corner of the ring...

...and then points to the corners to a huge cheer!]

JD: These people know what's coming!

[Mertz leans down to drag Tucker, looking to pull him out to the middle of the ring...

...but Tucker swings a leg up, catching Mertz on the ear with a kick!]

JD: Ohh! Tucker caught him with the kick!

[Tucker climbs to his feet, grabbing a handful of hair, and SMASHING him headfirst into the turnbuckles. He hooks him from behind.]

JD: Tucker's got him hooked for the belly-to-back suplex! He lifts- MERTZ OVER THE TOP!

[Mertz leaps up, driving his feet between the shoulderblades, sending Tucker sailing chestfirst into the corner. Tucker staggers back as Mertz leaps up again, hooking his feet under the armpits of Tucker, and rolling him back into a cradle!]

JD: ONE!! TWO!! THRE-

[Tucker kicks out with desperation at the last moment, sending Mertz sailing forward, his head flying through the ropes where Sebastian SLAMS a right hand into his jaw! Sebastian stumbles away, shaking his hand in pain as Tucker gets to his feet, dragging Mertz out by the back of the trunks.]

JD: Sebastian's back on the apron... there's the tag!

[Tucker grabs Mertz, whipping him across to the far corner.]

JD: Mertz hits the corner...

[Sebastian slips in, dropping down in all fours near the corner. The crowd buzzes in anticipation as Tucker sprints across the ring, stepping off the back of his partner to launch himself into the air...

...and DRILLS Mertz with a spinning leg lariat that carries Tucker over the top rope, putting him all the way down to the floor!]

JD: LAUNCHPAD! ONE OF THE SIGNATURE MOVES OF STRICTLY BUSINESS!

[Another shout in Japanese.]

JD: Three minutes left! Three minutes to go in this time limit. Remember, a draw eliminates both teams and-

[While Jason is still running down the ramifications of a time limit draw, Sebastian grabs the staggering Mertz in a bodylock, hoisting him up, twisting his hips, and DRIVING him down with a belly-to-belly suplex!]

JD: BELLY TO BELLY IN THE MIDDLE!!

[Sebastian hooks the leg, holding tight as the referee dives down.]

JD: ONE!! TWO!!! THREE-

[Mertz' shoulder FLIES off the mat just in time to break the pin!]

JD: HE KICKED OUT! CODY MERTZ KICKED OUT!!

[Sebastian again looks up in disbelief at the official as he climbs to his feet, looking over to check the condition of his partner who has retaken his spot in the corner.]

JD: Sebastian's talking to Tucker and- yes, another tag!

[Sebastian shoves Mertz in Tucker's direction as he heads towards the corner.]

JD: This might be it! I think they're looking for Flash And Cash right here!

[Tucker buries a knee into the gut of Mertz, dragging him to the center of the ring where he loops a leg over the back of Mertz' neck as Sebastian places a foot on the top rope, shouting to his partner...]

JD: Tucker's set for the Trendsetter! That's his part!

[But just before Tucker can drive him down, Mertz slips his head free, coming out and SHOVING Tucker towards Sebastian, causing Sebastian to crotch himself up top!]

JD: SEBASTIAN GETS DROPPED!

[Tucker stumbles out after hitting the corner, falling down to all fours. Mertz backs to his corner, rushing across, springing off the back of the downed Tucker...

...and SNARING Sebastian's head between his legs, whipping him over and down to the canvas!]

JD: MERTZ EXPRESS! MERTZ EXPRESS!!

[Mertz pops back up as Tucker pushes up off the mat...]

JD: But Tucker's the legal man and-

[Tucker surges forward, attempting the Chronic Jumblejaw again...

...and Mertz bottoms out, allowing the superkick to go sailing past him!]

JD: HE MISSES AGAIN!

[And as Tucker turns, Mertz leaps up, snaring the head, yanking him over into a rana with the double leg cradle!]

JD: RANA! RANA! ONE!!! TWO!!! THREEEEEEEEEEEE!!!

"DING! DING! DING!"

[Mertz falls out of the cradle to the mat, breathing hard as Michael Aarons rushes in to help his partner up, celebrating their victory.]

JD: A big win for Air Strike and they're heading to the second round where the Blonde Bombers, the former World Tag Team Champions, are waiting for them!

BW: So is elimination so enjoy this moment while you can, boys!

JD: Mertz and Aarons are overjoyed, having triumphed over their childhood idols to win this big first round matchup.

[The camera cuts to a disappointed Andrew Tucker who is down on his knees on the canvas, shaking his head in disbelief. Mike Sebastian is a few feet



away from him, sitting on the mat as he looks up at the celebrating Mertz and Aarons.]

JD: And there's the other side of the coin. Disappointment. Disheartened. Those two came back a long ways from the world of retirement to try and get into the second round of this tournament and beyond and on multiple times, they seemed on the verge of victory but just couldn't quite overcome the youthful duo.

BW: Again with the age thing. You saying Tucker and Sebastian are too old to hang with Air Strike?

JD: No, that's not what I meant at all.

[Mertz and Aarons finally turn to face their vanquished heroes, extending their hands to them.]

JD: And just as it began, Air Strike with a show of sportsmanship, trying to help their heroes back to their feet.

[But Tucker and Sebastian get up without accepting the hand, staring the few feet towards the team that just defeated them. Tucker stands, hands on hips, exhaling heavily as Mike Sebastian stares down at the mat, shaking his head.]

JD: Strictly Business is still in shock at losing this match here tonight. They had visions of that million dollar check and the Stampede Cup going back to the States with them... the World Tag Team Titles too perhaps.

BW: Maybe they're running through their heads all the things that Air Strike did to insult them over the past couple of months.

JD: I highly doubt that.

[Sebastian steps forward, putting an arm around Tucker's shoulders. He gestures at the two men standing before them, whispering to his partner...

...and with a nod from Tucker, they reach out and accept the handshakes to cheers from the crowd.]

JD: Yeah! There it is! A show of sportsmanship for these two fan favorite tag teams.

[The two teams embrace one another, congratulating each other on their hard-fought match. Tucker and Sebastian step to the side, raising their opponent's hands to another cheer.]

JD: How about that? Tucker and Sebastian pointing to Air Strike, telling these fans to give them the love they deserve... and you better believe that Cody Mertz and Michael Aarons will have the support of their idols as they move in this tournament.

[The two teams turn to the other side of the Tokyo Dome as Sebastian gives a shout of "LET'S HEAR IT!" as he points to Michael Aarons. Aarons breaks away, grinning as he steps up to the second rope, celebrating Air Strike's victory. A grinning Andrew Tucker applauds Aarons, pointing to him from the center of the ring. Sebastian is cheering on just like his partner, pointing to Cody Mertz who waves at the cheering crowd.]

JD: What a moment this is for these two teams!

[Sebastian grins, grabbing Mertz by the wrist, lifting his arm again and gesturing to him...]

JD: That's right! Air Strike are your winners and they're moving on the second round for-

[Michael Aarons had just pumped a fist, turning to hop down off the middle rope...

...when Andrew Tucker lashes out with a Chronic Jumble Jaw, superkicking the heck out of him!]

JD: OHH! WHAT THE-?!

[The crowd erupts in jeers as a shocked Mertz looks down at his partner...

...and Sebastian yanks him into a Bad Credit DDT!]

JD: OH! COME ON!

[Sebastian sits up on the mat, smirking at the motionless Cody Mertz as Andrew Tucker stands over the laid out Michael Aarons.]

JD: Strictly Business has just stabbed Air Strike in the back! They laid 'em both out, Bucky!

BW: I saw it! Heck, I never thought Sebastian and Tucker had it in them, Dane. I'm a little bit impressed right now.

[Sebastian climbs to his feet, trading a high five with his partner before he wipes the sweat off his brow, flinging it on a motionless Mertz. He smirks at the jeering crowd as he steps through the ropes. He gestures to Tucker who nods, pulling Mertz off the mat...]

JD: Oh, come on! Haven't they done enough?!

BW: Apparently not!

[Tucker hooks his leg over the back of Mertz' head and neck, grinning at the camera before he leaps up...

...and DRIVES Mertz' face into the canvas!]

JD: TRENDSETTER!

BW: That ain't all, Dane!

[Tucker rolls clear as Sebastian skies through the air off the top rope, tucking his arms and legs once...

...and CRASHES down on the ribcage of Cody Mertz!]

JD: FLASH AND CAAAASH!

[Mertz crumples up, clutching his ribcage as Sebastian climbs to his feet, pointing to his partner who glares down at Aarons, shaking his head before slingshotting over the ropes, landing on the entrance ramp. Sebastian steps through the ropes as well. They wave off their fallen victims as they make their way back up the ramp towards the locker room.]

JD: Strictly Business has struck and now they're walking out! They're leaving Mertz and Aarons behind and... you just have to wonder how this will affect Air Strike moving into their second round match against the Blonde Bombers both physically and mentally!

BW: They didn't stand a chance against the Bombers anyways. Now it's just a foregone conclusion that the Blonde Bombers are heading straight to the Semifinals with very little trouble.

[Mertz and Aarons are still down on the mat, the camera lingering on their battered forms for a few long moments...

...and then we fade to a scene prerecorded earlier in the week.

The camera is set up in a fairly plain room. Two large padded chairs are set up in the view of the camera, and there's a dark cloth backdrop providing background. An endtable is set up between the chairs, to provide some symmetry and possibly a bit of distance.]

We open up with two men on the left side of the screen, in the middle of a conversation. One of them is Jason Dane, wearing the usual clothing one would expect to see him wearing on an AWA telecast. The other man is wearing a dark charcoal-grey dress shirt, light silvery-gray tie, black slacks, and expensive dress shoes. He is a Japanese man with a short black brushcut, cleanshaven face, and very intent eyes which are glaring distrustfully at the camera.

It would take most people a moment to digest the fact that this man is Nenshou. No paint, no robe, no hood... dressed like a normal man, albeit in perfectly-pressed business wear. He is speaking to Dane in halting English, slowly, so that he makes as few mistakes as possible. He hates mistakes.]

N: Why? This serves no purpose. For me.

JD: It's already very clear why you're so anxious to wrestle on the Japan tour and to appear in Rising Sun Showdown. A sitdown interview is the best way to...

N: It is not.

JD: Look. How many times have I been over this with you? We have the same enemy now.

N: If you had my enemy. You would be dead.

JD: I mean IN the AWA, and you're being melodramatic again! You overreact to everything, Nenshou. I'm interested in the Wise Men. You're...

N: I will trust you. For now. Short interview. Short.

[Nenshou reluctantly steps into full view, and seats himself in the chair on the left side of the screen. His expression is a very stern, distrustful glare. Dane walks over to the right side to seat himself. He looks back past the camera, and speaks to the operator.]

JD: Are we ready?

N: Camera is already on.

JD: We'll start it right here. \*pause\* Hello, AWA fans. Jason Dane here with a prerecorded sitdown with the man known as the Asian Assassin, Nenshou.

N: [\*abruptly\*] I am not an assassin.

JD: It's a Red Baron, Nenshou.

N: ...explain.

JD: A nickname. You've been called the "Asian Assassin" because you're ruthless and try to take down most opponents as efficiently as possible.

N: Real assassins use guns. Or poisons. And kill. Your name makes no sense.

[Dane is already reaching a frustration point, but is holding it as best as he can.]

JD: Be that as it may be, just days from now, you will be teaming up with two of the the hottest young commodities in Japanese wrestling, TORA and Super Solar, to face two members of the group known as ACHILLES and a legendary partner. The dangerous duo of LION Tetsuo and Nijikon, captained by the highly decorated veteran, Nov....

N: [\*interrupting\*] They are not commodities. They are men. Men are not objects, women are not objects.

JD: It is an expression meaning that their skills are highly valued.

N: It is a. Demeaning. Expression.

JD: Are you going to interrupt me every time I use a word you don't like?

N: Yes.

JD: That... was a rhetorical question.

N: ...explain.

JD: No. Instead, I'm going to ask you about ACHILLES. When you agreed to help TORA and Super Solar, you didn't even so much as mention their names. Did you agree to this match without knowing who was in it?

N: No.

[There is a short awkward pause, as Jason is clearly expecting that answer to be explained. Most wrestlers love to talk, after all.]

JD: Ah, most people elaborate on their answers when given a quest...

N: Be more exact next time.

JD: OK. Exactly why did you agree to help TORA and Super Solar, and then say nothing about the people you would be fighting?

N: I do not speak to my enemies. There is no purpose. I know about them. November. LION. Nijikon. If they were worthless I would not bother. Only strong enemies are worth fighting. They are strong enemies. My partners are strong partners. This fight is worth fighting.

JD: Do you feel that way about Gibson Hayes?

N: No.

JD: Yet you want to fight him.

[The topic of Gibson Hayes gets Nenshou's demeanor to go from "aloof" to "obviously aggravated". He is leaning forward, to the edge of his seat, clenching and unclenching his fists.]

N: I will not. Tolerate. Offense. He is a child. He speaks and acts as if there are no. Consequences. But everyone must know. Everyone must know. There are. Consequences. Only children act as he acts.

JD: He's in your head.

N: ...explain.

JD: He's gotten to you. Gibson Hayes is a master of psychological manipulation. And it is working on you, Nenshou.

N: I know a man who tested me once. You remember, Jason Dane.

[Dane's eyes betray a mix of startled and angry.]

JD: We've discussed that! You know why I dug into your past!

N: And you know the pain of doing so.

JD: And YOU know the pain of...

N: We will not discuss this.

JD: Fine, fine. Back to Gibson Hayes.

N: We will not discuss Gibson Hayes. He will suffer defeat. That is all.

[Nenshou seems to calm down, settling back into his aloof, proper posture.]

JD: Back to Rising Sun Showdown. What can you tell the wrestling fans about your desire to wrestle in Japan?

N: Nothing.

JD: That's... not really the answer you're supposed to give.

N: Then ask a question that gives you your answer. I do not lie.

[Dane has finally gotten frustrated with how stubborn Nenshou is, and he stands up.]

JD: I guess this was a mistake after all. Why are you being so stubborn? You say that Hayes is childish, and yet you quibble over the smallest detail, you demand explanations for everything you don't like, you get defensive and you get aggressive for no reason, you find fault with literally everything, and...

[Nenshou's response is to stand up and get right in Dane's face. His expression is a disapproving glare, and it stops Dane cold.]

N: Challenges.

JD: What?

N: You say I am an assassin. I challenge this. Because my father is a murderer and I will not be a murderer. You say men are commodities. I challenge this. Because I am treated as a commodity by my family, by Percy Childes, by AWA, by you. You say you want me to answer questions you did not ask with your words. I challenge this. That is Percy Childes way. That is the Wise Men way.

JD: Are you going to look for your demons everywhere, in everything anyone says?

N: Demons are not real things.

JD: Then stop acting like they are.

[The two men glare at each other for a moment.]

N: I will try to do better.

JD: Thank you.

N: And so will you. Interview ran too long. I said short!

JD: ...you have got to be kidding me!

[And we fade, back to the arena. Bucky is chuckling as Jason shakes his head.]

BW: Ha, ha... you two should get a room! Like an old married couple!

JD: That would literally be at least three of my worst nightmares.

BW: That demanding attitude reminds me of a couple of my ex-wives. I need to try to hook him up with one of them.

JD: Anyway, he's certainly looking forward to tonight's matchup, much moreso than giving an interview.

BW: I dunno, Dane. I think you were right that Gibson Hayes is in his head.

JD: This will be an excellent opportunity for him to focus on his career, and not the world's most annoying human being. No offense, Bucky, but that's somehow not you.

BW: None ta... HEY!

JD: Coming up next, fans, is the final first round match of this Stampede Cup as Raya Oscura and The Banshee, a legendary team in their own right, take on a late entry - but an impressive one - as two of Tiger Paw Pro's top singles competitors team up to challenge that duo. What do you think of the team of Noboru Fujimoto and the Tiger Paw Pro Global Crown Champion, Yoshinari Taguchi?

BW: Like you said, it's an impressive team... on paper. You're talking about the champion and the man who many consider the #1 contender to his crown. But they don't like each other, Dane. It'd be like Supreme Wright and Dave Bryant teaming up in this tournament. What would that be like?

JD: A disaster most likely.

BW: Exactly. Why should this be any different? Often times, we hear that a great tag team will always beat two great singles wrestlers in a tag match. I think that's a crock personally but tonight, it'll be put to the test.

JD: Of course, Oscura and the Banshee haven't teamed together in years.

BW: Which is the wild card in this match, Dane. If you think a great tag team beats two great singles wrestlers, that's one thing... but what happens when the tag team is a couple of fossils who need radioactive dating on their birthdays to know how many candles to put on the cake?

JD: You're ridiculous. Fans, let's go down to the ring for the final first round match!

[Cut to the ring where our ring announcer begins speaking in Japanese with English subtitles.]

SUBTITLES: What follows is the final match in the first round of the Stampede Cup tournament!

[Cheers from the crowd.]

SUBTITLES: First... at a total weight of 198 kilos...

[Cue the screaming, drawn-out name call.]

"RAAAAAAAAAAYAAAAAA OSSSSCUUUUUUURRRRAAAAAAAAA!"  
"THE BANNNNNNNNNNNNSHEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEE!"

"LOOOOOOOS TECHNICOOOOOOOS DELLLLLLL VUELLLLLOOOOOOO!"

[The arena lights cut to black for several moments. The fans cheer, flashbulbs firing as they cut through the dark. Soon, a hellacious cry is heard over the PA system as the word "BANSHEE!" appears on the left screen. A smattering of spotlights hit the left side of the aisleway as a loud "THWOOOM!" is heard, propelling Michael Keening up into the air in a big somersault, landing on his feet on the ramp to a huge cheer as the name flies across the screens before "burning" away.

A second later, "OSCURA!" appears on the right screen just before the man formerly known as Stripe goes sailing through the air in a backflip, landing on the ramp as well before his name burns up to huge cheers.

The lights kick back on in a tremendous burst of pyro from right in front of the screens, illuminating Oscura and Keening standing on opposite sides of the v-shaped rampway. They point to one another as the crowd roars for the popular duo, making their way to the junction of the ramps to a big embrace. "Hornet's Nest" by Los Straitjackets kicks in to a big reaction.]

JD: One of the most popular tag teams in the history of our great sport - The Banshee and Raya Oscura - together known as Los Technicos Del Vuelo, the



Flying Technicos. These are legitimately two of the best high flying competitors this sport - and this country - have ever seen, Bucky.

BW: They've made a big name for themselves all over the world - the US, Japan, Europe, Mexico, you name it. Anywhere they've laced boots to wrestle, these two are big stars. But it's been a while, Dane... a long while.

JD: It certainly has. It remains to be seen if these two can manage to pull off some of the high flying moves they once did in their prime but if they can, they may be the sleeper team of the tournament, coming out of retirement to win the whole thing.

[The duo reaches the ring, catapulting over the ropes into the squared circle. Oscura wears a full bodysuit which is predominantly black and continuously 'watermarked' down his body with a design which is wholly reminiscent of a likeness to Tlaloc, the ancient Aztec God of celestial fire and rain. Wrestling boots of a dark shade adorn his feet, while upon his head there does reside a "featureless" raven-tinted 'full head' mask. A set of two short Batman-esque 'horns' rise from either side upon the crown of his head, to complete the full presentation of his facial covering. Tight-fitting gloves stretch to his lower forearms as he waves to the crowd.

The Banshee is wearing white wrestling boots and green bicycle shorts with thick white stripes down each side. He wears a green and white wrestling mask with thin white leather straps around each wrist. On the right side of his chest can be seen a large colorful tattoo depicting the face of a screaming female ghost.

The duo is saluting the cheering crowd as the lights fade again.]

SUBTITLES: And their opponents... at a total weight of 225 kilos...

[The sounds of the theme to The Good, The Bad, And The Ugly kick in over the PA system as a single spotlight comes up on the gap in the v-shaped entrance. A platform slowly rises, showing a giant silhouette on all three screens of a man in a cowboy hat.

As the platform reaches its peak, the music switches to something from the same movie - "The Ecstasy Of Gold" - as the arena is bathed in a golden light, now showing Noboru Fujimoto dressed as an "American cowboy", ten-gallon Stetson, leather duster over his well-toned bare torso, a pair of faded blue jeans, and a pair of red cowboy boots with white leather "spurs" etched into the red.]

JD: These fans in Japan love the spectacular entrances as we've been seeing all night so far. Noboru Fujimoto is one of the most spectacular competitors in all of Tiger Paw Pro so it's only fitting that he has one of the most spectacular entrances as well.

[The Japanese voice calls out.]

"NOOOOOOOBBOOOOOORUUUUUUUUU FUUUUUJIMOOOOOOOTOOOOOOOOO!"

[Fujimoto walks halfway down the ramp, staring down at the ring as the lights die out again. A few moments in the black get the crowd ready and waiting until the video walls light up, one screen at a time with the champion's name. The crowd chants along with the screens.]

"TA!" "GU!" "CHI!"

[The screens light up again, a little faster this time as the crowd chants again.]

"TA!" "GU!" "CHI!"

[The screens repeat the pattern, faster still. It happens over and over, building to a faster pace as the crowd chants faster.]

"TA!" "GU!" "CHI!"

"TA!" "GU!" "CHI!"

"TA!" "GU!" "CHI!"

"TA!" "GU!" "CHI!"

"TA!" "GU!" "CHI!"

"TA!" "GU!" "CHI!"

[With the crowd chanting his name repeatedly, the arena lights up with a red and white strobe light, flashing quickly to illuminate the rising platform as Yoshinari Taguchi appears before the Tokyo Dome crowd, the Grand Crown title belt slung over his right shoulder. He raises his left hand in a fist, getting a returned salute from the giant crowd as his name is cried out. There is some Japanese before it, presumably announcing him as the champion.]

"YOOOOOOOSHIIIIINAAAARRIIIII TAAAAAAGUUUUUUUCHIIIIIII!"

[Taguchi strides down the ramp, joining his partner who has now shed the duster, hat, and somehow, the jeans, standing in a pair of electric blue trunks and the hideous red cowboy boots. Taguchi is in full length tights, one leg red and one leg white. There is a very brief staredown.]

JD: Uh oh. This might get ugly before it even gets started.

[A touch of knuckles follows before the duo makes their way down the ramp to a tremendous ovation from the crowd.]

JD: Two of the biggest stars in all of Japan are about to square off against two of the biggest stars in Japan's history. This is going to be something for the history books, fans.

[Taguchi wastes no time in offering a handshake to Keening and Oscura, both of whom accept to cheers. Fujimoto on the other hand is glaring at the two opponents, making a dismissive gesture with his hand as referee Tiger Takada steps in between, making sure a fight doesn't break out before the bell.]

JD: Fujimoto is showing some of that trademark arrogance that has solidly split the fans in Japan between loving him and hating him. He's got talent, he's got charisma, he's a superstar for sure... but he's also regarded by many in the company as a bit of a punk, Bucky.

BW: I like that, Dane. You gotta have an ego to succeed in this business and from what I'm told, this kid's got ego to spare. He already impressed me by refusing to shake hands with these old men.

JD: Of course he did.

[Raya Oscura steps out to the apron after one more embrace with his partner, leaving Michael Keening to start the match. On the other side of the ring, there seems to be a heated argument between Taguchi and Fujimoto.]

JD: Problems already between the Global Crown Champion and one of his top contenders.

[Taguchi shakes his head after several moments, stepping to the apron as Noboru Fujimoto smirks, turning to face their opponents...

...when The Banshee comes tearing across the ring, leaving his feet with a Japanese-style dropkick to the chest that sends Fujimoto falling back into the turnbuckles as the referee signals for the bell!]

JD: The final first round match is underway and Michael Keening apparently took offense to Fujimoto not accepting his handshake!

[Keening grabs an arm, shooting Fujimoto across the ring to the opposite corner. He sprints across, stepping up on the middle rope, lashing out with a kick to the ear!]

JD: ENNNNNZUIIIIGIIIRIIIII!

[A stunned Fujimoto finds himself snapmared over to a seated position on the canvas...]

"WHAAAAAAAAAAAAAP!"

JD: HARD KICK TO THE SPINE!!

[Keening jams his knee into the middle of the back, dropping down to his other knee and reaching over to cup his hands under the chin, yanking back in a chinlock!]

JD: Keening slows it down right off the bat.

BW: Which is unusual for him, Dane. Keening and Oscura usually want the face pace... the go-go-go speed. This could be the first sign of their age. They may no longer have the gas in the tank to go at that speed.

[Keening hangs on for a few moments before Fujimoto overpowers him, turning it into the chinlock and working back to his feet where he slams a quick forearm into the jaw. He switches his stance, lighting up Keening with a chop across the chest before grabbing an arm.]

JD: Whips him back the other way...

[The Banshee leaps up to the middle rope, throwing himself backwards, twisting around to catch the incoming Fujimoto across the chest with a crossbody!]

JD: TAKES HIM DOWN!! ONE!! TWO!!

[Fujimoto powers out at two, scrambling up to his feet and getting caught with a thrust kick to the sternum, knocking him back into the ropes. Keening approaches, throwing three quick chops to the chest.]

JD: Keening's got him on the ropes... another whi- reversed!

[Keening gets shot into the ropes, rebounding back into the arms of Fujimoto who hoists Keening up, spins him around...

...and DROPS him down across a bent knee!]

JD: BACKBREAKER! QUEBRADORA!

[The Banshee rolls to his side, reaching around to grab at his back as Fujimoto gets up, throwing his arms out and gesturing arrogantly for a crowd reaction. The Japanese superstar steps in, dropping a knee down into the lower back... and again... and again.]

JD: No elevation on the kneedrops. Just dropping down.

BW: Reminds you of Demetrius Lake, doesn't it, Dane?

JD: It certainly does. You can be sure Lake would've been in action on this huge Tokyo Dome show here tonight - as would a lot of AWA superstars AND Tiger Paw Pro stars for that matter - but there just wasn't enough room for everyone on this already jam-packed show.

BW: No, but they found room for has-beens like Oscura and Keening. If I was left off this show for one of them, I'd be in a dull rage right about now.

[Fujimoto waits and watches as Keening struggles to get off the mat, catching him with a kick to the gut as he does. He grabs a handful of Keening's trunks from behind, yanking him into a hard forearm into the lower back!]

JD: Fujimoto turning his attention to the lower back of Keening, trying to take some of the wind out of his sails... a hard elbow down across the kidneys!

[Fujimoto lifts Keening up for a belly to back suplex, holding him high...

...and then stepping out, dropping Keening across a bent knee!]

JD: OHHHH! Another backbreaker! Unusual offense out of Noboru Fujimoto right there!

[The flashy grappler climbs to his feet again, smirking in the direction of Raya Oscura who shouts at Fujimoto, swiping at the air in front of him as Fujimoro stalks Keening who is attempting to crawl away from him.]

JD: Michael Keening's looking to create some space, to get away from Fujimoto and attempt to recover...

[Fujimoto rushes towards the rising Keening, delivering a boot to the side of the head that sends Keening falling through the ropes and out onto the apron.]

JD: Keening falls out to the apron...

BW: Well, there's his space.

JD: Certainly is. Fujimoto might have played right into the Banshee's hands right there.

[The Japanese grappler reaches over the ropes, leaning down to grab Keening by the mask, dragging him up to his feet. Fujimoto pulls him closer as Keening leans back, grabbing the top rope, and leaping up to drive a kick into the side of Fujimoto's head!]

JD: OHHH!

[Keening, still holding the top rope, catapults himself over the top rope, snaring Fujimoto's head between the legs, and snapping him down to the canvas with a hurricanrana!]

JD: KEENING TAKES HIM DOWN!!

[As Fujimoto struggles off the mat, Keening lights him up with a series of stiff roundhouse kicks to the chest...

...and then leaps up, taking Fujimoto down hard with a spinning leg lariat!]

JD: DOWN GOES FUJIMOTO AGAIN!!

[The Tiger Paw Pro star bails out of the ring, dropping to a knee and grabbing at his jaw as Keening climbs back to his feet, moving to the corner to tag his partner.]

JD: The tag is made to Raya Oscura, Stripe, Callan Greenway - call him what you will but he's one of the most spectacular high fliers this business has ever... SEEEEEEEEEEN!

[Dane flips out at the sight of Oscura bouncing off the ropes, charging across the ring, flinging himself over the top rope in a somersault plancha onto a surprised Fujimoto!]

JD: OSCURA WIPES OUT FUJIMOTO!! OHHH MYYYY!

[Oscura climbs to his feet, saluting the cheering crowd as Oscura drags Fujimoto off the barely-padded floor, shoving him under the ropes into the ring.]

JD: Oscura's an even six feet tall and a hair over 220 pounds...

[Oscura climbs up on the apron, grabbing the top rope with both hands. He leaps up, springboarding off the top...

...and CONNECTS with a high flying clothesline on a stunned Fujimoto!]

JD: Fujimoto gets taken out with the springboard lariat off the top and he needs to make the tag to Yoshinari Taguchi!

BW: He does... but will he? Fujimoto wants this spotlight all to himself and I'm not so sure he's willing to let Taguchi in there.

JD: He's not going to have a choice in the matter fairly soon.

[As Fujimoto struggles to his feet, Oscura lashes out with a kick to the upper thigh. A second one hobbles Fujimoto before three stiff shots to the ribs has him falling back into the turnbuckles.]

JD: Oscura's bringing the fire with those kicks... and he shoots him across!

[Fujimoto slams hard into the buckles as Oscura leans back into the opposite corner, charging across...

...and THROWS himself into a dropkick that connects right in the stomach, causing Fujimoto to push up onto the second turnbuckle.]

JD: Raya Oscura's got him trapped in the corner... big chop! And another! A third!

[The crowd roars as Oscura tears into Fujimoto with a flurry of knife edge chops as the referee calls for the man formerly known as Stripe to back off.]

JD: Oscura backs away, giving the clean break...

[But he moves right back in, whipping Fujimoto into the opposite corner again. He charges across, tumbling as he does, cartwheeling across the ring...]

JD: HANDSPRING ELBOW!

BW: I bet that sent Nenshou into a fit backstage.

JD: A breathtaking athletic move out of Oscura who sends him across a second time.

[This time, Fujimoto hits the buckles so hard that he staggers out as Oscura goes for another handspring elbow...

...and pops himself up, landing on the shoulders of Fujimoto!]

JD: WOW!

[The crowd cheers for the show of athleticism as Fujimoto stumbles out to the middle, getting dragged down in a Victory Roll!]

JD: ONE!! TWO!! TH-

[Fujimoto kicks out hard, breaking the cradle attempt. Both men scramble, trying to get up before the other...]

JD: HIGH KIC-

[But the high kick ends up caught, slipped onto the shoulder by Fujimoto who reaches around Oscura's head, clasping his other wrist...

...and HURLS Oscura up and over with a capture suplex!]

JD: HIGH CAPTURE SUPLEX BY FUJIMOTO!

[And the brash youngster marches to the corner, slapping the Global Crown Champion's hand.]

JD: Taguchi's in off the tag... coming in quickly on Oscura...

[He yanks Oscura off his knees into a rear waistlock...

...and ELEVATES, dumping Oscura on the back of his head and neck!]

JD: RELEASED GERMAN!! That might do it!

[Taguchi makes a quick cover, hooking the far leg.]

JD: ONE!! TWO!! TH-

[Oscura lifts the shoulder to cheers!]

JD: A lightning-quick pace in this one almost every moment from the outset.

[Taguchi pulls Oscura up, blasting him with a series of short forearms to the jaw. He grabs Oscura by the arm, slinging him out...

...and then YANKS him back into a short-armed clothesline, taking him off his feet!]

JD: Short-arm clothesline and a beauty!

[Taguchi gives a shout in Japanese, drawing cheers from the fans as he grabs Oscura by the leg, twisting it and flipping Oscura over to his stomach.]

JD: He's looking for the STF! One of the signature holds of the Global Crown Champion!

[But Oscura rolls back the other way, promptly kicking Taguchi off with his free leg. Oscura scrambles up off the mat, ducking a running high boot from Taguchi.]

JD: Oscura ducks the big boot!

[A dropkick to the back sends Taguchi crashing chestfirst into the corner, staggering back into a schoolboy!]

JD: ROLLUP! ROLLUP! ONE!! TWO!! THR-

[Taguchi just narrowly gets his shoulders off the mat as Oscura falls to the side. Both men again are scrambling, trying to get up...

...and Taguchi greets Oscura with a stiff forearm shot to the jaw!]

JD: Ohh! Taguchi caught him coming up!

[A side kick to the gut doubles up Oscura as Taguchi steps in, leaning over the clasp his hands...]

JD: HE LIFTS!

[Taguchi pauses, holding Oscura high...

...and DRIVES him down with a powerbomb, hanging on to flip into a double leg cradle!]

JD: ONE! TWO!! THRE-

[Oscura again manages a kickout. Taguchi tries to push up off the mat as Oscura lashes out with a kick, sweeping Taguchi's arms out from under him. He pushes off the mat, diving through into an Oklahoma Roll!]

JD: ONE! TWO!! THRE- again a kickout! These two are going back and forth, back and forth as Taguchi pulls Oscura off the mat by the arm, whips him in...

[Oscura runs up the turnbuckles, flipping backwards with a twist, and wipes out Taguchi with a twisting moonsault!]



JD: OH MY GOODNESS! TWISTING MOONSAULT OFF THE TOP AND-

[The crowd ROARS!]

JD: TAG!

[Keening steps in, helping Oscura pull Taguchi off the mat. Each man underhooks an arm, clasping their hands together...

...and muscle Taguchi up in unison, flipping him over and driving him down with a double underhook powerbomb!]

JD: OHHH! WHAT A DOUBLETEAM!!

[Keening points to the corner as Oscura exits the ring. A nodding Banshee approaches the corner, stepping up on the middle rope. He steps one foot up on the top, lifting his arms in the air before stepping to the top...]

JD: MOOOOOONSAULLLLLLLLT!

[...but Taguchi rolls aside, causing Keening to SLAM chestfirst into the canvas!]

JD: HE MISSED!! HE MISSED!!

[The crowd roars as Taguchi moves in quickly, tying up both of Keening's legs with his own. He delivers a hard double slap to the ribs, causing Keening to jerk his arms back...

...which allows Taguchi to hook both arms in a double chickenwing before rocking back into a submission hold!]

JD: OH! HE CALLS THIS THE FOUR LEAF CLOVER! THE FOUR LEAF CLOVER IS LOCKED IN!!

[Keening struggles to escape, looking for an exit. Raya Oscura steps in, trying to save his partner...

...but he runs right into Fujimoto who hooks him around the head and neck from the front, swinging to the side and DRIVING him facefirst into the canvas!]

JD: FALLING LASER LASSO ON OSCURA!!

[Keening still tries to hang on...

...but nods his head just before the bell sounds!]

JD: He gave up! He quit!

"DING! DING! DING!"

[As the bell sounds, Taguchi immediately releases the hold, allowing Keening to slump down to the mat. The Global Crown Champion climbs to his feet, allowing the official to raise his hand in victory as Fujimoto mounts the midbuckle, celebrating the big win himself.]

JD: Taguchi and Fujimoto with an impressive victory and just like that, the second round matches are set. We'll see the War Pigs versus the Lights Out Express, Jones and Hammonds will defend the World Tag Team Titles against Dichotomy, The Blonde Bombers will meet Air Strike, and Violence Unlimited will take on Fujimoto and Taguchi!

BW: That's a heck of a second round, Dane.

JD: It certainly is and it'll begin in just a short while! But before it does, we've got our huge six man tag team showdown ready to go down. Earlier tonight, we heard from Nenshou... now, let's hear from one of his tag team partners!

[We open backstage to a locker room. Dressed in an AWA t-shirt and his eye blinding design emblazoned wrestling pants is TORA. The American youngster is in the midst of squats, warming up for his match to come. He keeps his eyes ahead, acting unaware of the camera. Focused on the task at hand, up and down, up and down, up and down... pause.]

Rolling his neck and taking a deep, annoyed inhalation, he stands slowly up, putting one foot backwards slightly, adjusting his stance. His eyes refocus. Defensive.]

TORA: What?

?: SHUT UP!

[The bizarre and volatile veteran known only as Nijikon enters the shot to confront TORA. Flying ACHILLES' colors tonight, his ever present black tank top is coupled with a white version of his antennae mask. With a swagger in his step and swing in his shoulders, the treacherous rudo approaches his new but already wary foe. Seemingly intending at first to go chest to chest, Nijikon abruptly stops. Apparently crossing one of his own fleeting boundaries, he hits reverse... swaggering backwards a couple of steps with the same exaggerated (if unconvincing) confidence.]

N: I said SHUT!

[He points at TORA's face and begins to rant in his badly broken English.]

N: What are you?! Before I hear they say a new TORA, he is a LOSER! You all ready lose the mask!

[Nijikon clutches one of his antennae in each hand and gives his headgear a shake for effect.]

N: Now they can not say who is a mystery... You are American, name is John or Bob. We know! Real TORA Wanizame say "Niji, Americans call it a John when they crap on it."

[He slaps his belly and barks with forced laughter.]

N: HAHA! You a crap fighter, John no mask! Boy, you need a history learn...

[The rudo shakes a fist in TORA's face.]

N: Nijikon...

[He flicks out his index finger.]

N: Wanizame...

[Then the middle finger.]

N: Ka\$h Money...

[Skipping the ring finger, he finishes with the pinky.]

N: Zokugun Sangai, baddest daddies EVER!

[Nijikon flings his arms out and looks from side to side in mock confusion.]

N: But we did not know, Wanizame was a fake secret! He say to all fans "You did not like me... But now really yes, we are friends!" I make a hero of a fake secret LIAR! Akuma-san so sad, he can not stay. But Nijikon angry...

[He shakes his head with solemn purpose.]

N: Nijikon still follow and say "No at this! Get away, TORA Wanizame!" I kick him like a butt hole! TORA run to America... I say "But no, you can not run! Visa is easy before nine eleven!" So I go to America, kick him like American butt hole!

[Nijikon looks TORA up and down, sneering with derision.]

N: You... You? When I kick you, you are not even American butt hole! TORA Wanizame... Tiger and shark, he say. You... You? Little neko-chan... but smelling of a fish!

[He chuckles, wafting the air between them around them with both hands... which settle on his hips as he prepares to deliver the knockout.]

N: Tonight you learn, this bad daddy... gonna make you his MOMMA!

[He sneers once again, completely and utterly satisfied with the verbal smackdown just delivered.]

T: You know... I once looked up to you, Nijikon. I once made sure I could find every tape and DVD of you. And now? Now I am ashamed I did.

[Niji looks quite flustered, puffing his cheeks out as TORA continues.]

T: But you aren't the man I wanted you to be. You AREN'T TORA Wanizame. You AREN'T AKUMA. You are NOT Macht Kraftwerk or Juvenil Infierno or Banshee or Raya Oscura. You.. you're...

...shameful.

[TORA goes from really fired up to almost sad.]

T: I saw you Nijikon. Match after match. I loved the things you did. You were a bit weird, a bit off, but in the ring... man, you were amazing. But this... all this act, this anger, this... whatever. That's all you are. Tonight I am going to go out there, in front of this crowd, in my last match in Tiger Paw Pro and I am going to do everything my heroes did. I am going to live up to THEIR reputations. Legends in the business. Men I grew up watching.

So go ahead, mock me. Make your silly jokes, do your little act.

This isn't an act.

What I do... I do because I love.

[His voice raises.]

T: I do because I love this sport!

[And raises.]

T: And because I love the fans. I love going out and dancing for them, high fiving them. The smiles on kids faces. Cameras flashing everywhere. Fans cheering. THAT is what matters.

[And quiets.]

T: So... just... be you. Do your thing. One last time. Because tonight, Nijikon, I am erasing my disappointment at meeting you and seeing the man you've become. I am going to erase it with a one...

[He begins to mock Nijikon's early counting method, even if subtly.]

T: Two...

Three...

And I am going to make sure it's YOU I am pinning.

[With that said, Nijikon stands face to masked face with his opponent, his chest raising and lowering rapidly as he processes this outrage. It appears

doubtful, in fact, that much of TORA's spirited rebuttal was understood. The tense moment drags on. At a loss and needing to save face, the eternally juvenile Nijikon falls back to what he knows best - for a fraction of a second and a fraction of an inch, he lunges forward. TORA is completely unmoved by the weak fake out attempt. Nijikon, however, interprets the under reaction as a decisive victory. He takes a couple of steps backwards, recalling his swagger, before turning away... and cackling off into the distance.

We cut back to the entrance way as the guitar opening to Black Strobe's "I'm A Man" plays over the PA system. The crowd reacts accordingly. Mixed, but very loud for the well travelled veteran.]

# Now, when I was a little boy  
# At the age of five  
# I had somethin' in my pocket  
# Keeps a lot of folks alive

[The very strange Japanese superstar known as Nijikon steps out into the entranceway. Looking lean and athletic, Nijikon nevertheless paces with a lumbering gait, shoulders hunched and elbows stuck out to his sides as if his arms were displaced by monstrous lats. Tonight his notably chubby face is half obscured by a white mask, antennae protruding from each temple and spiky bleached blonde hair poking up through a hole cut in the top. He also wears a black tank top - almost his trademark - featuring a manga style drawing of himself in classic green and black, hands resting on hips. Rounding this out is a pair of black shorts, white boots and kneepads.]

# Now I'm a man  
# Turnin' twenty one  
# You know, baby  
# We can have a lot of fun

[Bristling with belligerent confidence, Nijikon scrutinizes the fans to his left... and then to his right. His top lip, covered by a dark but wispy mustache, curls up into a sardonic sneer. Nijikon then squeezes his eyes shut and slightly leans back. He suddenly beats his puffed out chest with both fists, then snaps his hands to his hips, mirroring the pose made on his tank top just in time for- ]

# I'M A MAAA-ANNN!

[Eyes still forced shut and teeth gritted, Nijikon nods along to the chorus...]

# I spell... M (M!)

# A (A!)

# N (N!)

# WHOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOAH I'M A MAAA-ANNN!

[Having radiated enough testosterone, he snaps out of it. Nijikon groans as he powers his arms into a decidedly average crab pose before beginning his menacing approach towards the ring. He doesn't engage with the audience sitting by the aisle, save for arrogantly dismissing them with a few flicks of his wrists. Nijikon passes a camera, revealing his current vital statistics published on the back of his tank top- ]

#### NIJIKON

HEIGHT	178cm
WEIGHT	93kg
DOB	1980.4.1
BLOODTYPE	B
AKB48	YAGURA
MONSTER	KERAMATSU
SUBETA	TORA

[Upon reaching ringside, Nijikon climbs up onto the apron near one of the corners. He paces the full length of the apron towards the adjacent buckle and then halfway back again before halting. Leaning backward against the ropes with his pelvis tilted conspicuously forward, he casts another very general sneer across the audience. One open hand is held high above his masked head, quivering in anticipation of delivering a mighty semi crotch chop. Fake out! The arm drops loose, swinging harmlessly by his side. Nijikon quickly twists around, steps between the ropes and into the ring.]

BW: This is one heck of a partner for ACHILLES! We are looking at one of the most successful wrestlers of this style in the world!

JD: The crowd might not like him, but they definitely respect his accomplishments, Bucky. He is a former EMWC Pacific champion amongst his other accolades.

[Every light in the arena turns off. The Dome falls to darkness. Camera flashes ignite with blue explosions, fans OOOOH'ing with the effect. It is the screen coming to life that chases the darkness away. It's the familiar scene of a fog enveloped graveyard that enters first. Music faintly in the background. Yes, it is indeed the famous "Thriller" video. Vincent Price's voice crawls over the speakers. The creepy scene continues, zombies coming out of graves. The enraptured fans are further shocked as figures shamble from entrances all over the arena!]

JD: I... I have no idea what is going on!

BW: I think this is where we flee for our lives.

[The video continues to play, Vincent Price's iconic tone highlighting the horror of the moment. More figures appear... dozens and dozens of shambling corpse like figures, going down the stairs around the arena. Coming from backstage areas. Appearing from entrance ways leading to the concourse. They fill out around the arena, hissing at fans, reaching out with moaning despair.]

JD: This is just strange, folks!

[The video on screen shows the undead wobbling down a nighttime street, mirrored as figure after figure, the ashen grey of death, embossed in tattered attire, come from the entrance way of the ringside. They fill the ramp one after another, moaning... reaching... shambling...]

BW: Aim for the head! If I know anything, it's always aim for the head!

[The beat on screen increases to a horn's silence. Michael Jackson and his on screen girlfriend, Playmate Ola Ray stand back to back, fright creasing their faces as they are surrounded by the flesh eating non living. Hands reach out, grotesque faces surrounding them. And then, he is gone. She fears... she turns...

...and from the shadows turns November!

The crowd boos as "Thriller" hits into force. Parting the crowd of now dancing zombies, the entire arena joining in with them in perfect synchronization, comes first Miyuki Ozaki. The Queen of all that is women's wrestling is wearing blue pants, a design etched blue jacket and red shirt underneath. She staggers out, mocking the zombie walk before bursting out into a loud, shrieking laughter.

The zombies continue to dance along with their on screen likeness as the next member comes through, this one being LION Tetsuo. He wears the traditional ACHILLES black and white, though his lion themed mask is designed to look like a skull half stripped of skin. His mane is black/white striped, mangy and aged in appearance. His body suit sports a tattered designed, "claw marks" scratched into it in deep red.

Finally, parting the crowd in full force come the ashen skin painted Junya Toroyama and Bull Shindo. White contacts contrast with their dusted faces and tattered ACHILLES gear. They look around the crowd and as one with the entire arena of zombies pause.

They all stand still, a hundred unmoving bodies. Then... as one.. roar! Fans back off in fright as every zombie roars out loud, towards the sky. From the entrance ramp crowd, parting the way, sitting on the massive shoulders of the beast, Brody, comes an open red leather jacket wearing November. Black leather pants and black wrist tape finish the ensemble. He too is painted ashen grey, head lolling in zombie mimicry. His head is one side shaven, the rest worn long and raven dark and draped over to one side.]

JD: This is about an elaborate an entrance as we've ever seen, Bucky!

BW: Welcome to Japan! When they go big, they go big! Just look at this stadium!

[November zombie shoots to life, his head snapping up. He shoots water up into the air, the mist washing down over his painted face as he hops off

Brody's shoulders and onto the ramp, stepping between the ropes and spinning over and over and over before coming to a pause in the middle of the ring. Around him, arrayed to both sides, are his team mates one and all. They pause and pose in unison, each in their own unique way as more cameras flash and the lights slowly come back on in the building.]

JD: We are looking at ALL of ACHILLES here, Bucky. November, Miyuki, The Bull Rush, Brody... all of them. This cannot bode well for their opponents, not those numbers! Not to mention Nijikon joining in!

BW: I am sure it'll be fair. They are just hear to watch.

JD: Riiiiiiight.

[Darkness envelops the Tokyo Dome as "Touch the Sun" by Instrumental Core begins to play throughout the dome. Slowly, a yellow sun begins to rise upon the central video screen. After a few moments, a yellow spotlight shines towards the entrance way and the spotlight reflects back towards the audience.]

BW: Now here's someone who had no real reason to be in this match.

JD: Are you kidding me? He and TORA were having a great match before ACHILLES interfered. I, for one, am glad he is getting some measure of revenge.

[Slowly, golden pyro falls from the ceiling of the dome, backlighting a figure, who is holding a staff that spotlight is reflecting off. The spotlight is moved to illuminate the figure and the camera zooms in upon him. The staff in his hand is in the shape of a snake, which wraps around the top around a large mirror. The figure itself is attired like the Aztec God Huitzilopochtli, wearing a mask with yellow and blue stripes as well as a blue-green helmet shaped like a hummingbird and a yellow cape. The lone spotlight is replaced by a series of criss crossing yellow and blue lights as he begins the long walk down the entrance way.]

JD: Super Solar is another wrestler here in Tiger Paw Pro headed to the AWA very soon. As a matter of fact, it is going to be his first ever full-time tour on American soil.

[Super Solar ascends to the top rope and thrusts the staff into the air, the mirror reflects the yellow and blue lights in all directions. Super Solar places the staff to the mat and pulls off the hummingbird helmet and yellow and blue mask, revealing his bright yellow mask underneath. He turns around to face the crowd and thrusts both of his into the air and then backflips into the ring. He pulls the cape off revealing a giant yellow sun tattoo that covers his back.]

JD: We are in for one helluva contest here, Bucky!

BW: Everyone shall... HEEL!



[A peal of distant thunder is heard over the PA as Bucky and Jason speak... low enough so that only some of the fans catch it. There is a subtle lighting effect, where the brightness of the lights briefly increases in the corner of the arena, in time of the thunder.]

JD: What was that?

[The second peal is much louder, and the lights brighten in one corner... then in the middle, then in the opposite corner. And in the same pattern, after the flash of brightness, the lights dim down... first in one corner, then the middle, then the other. The third peal has the lights flash on the same way, going corner-to-corner in a perpendicular direction to the last... and this is the familiar peal that transitions into "Raijin's Drums" by George Sakalis. The fans cheer loudly, because one of their own has come home.]

JD: Listen to this reaction!

BW: What?

[The only lighting that is up at full is a reddish-white light near the entranceway. Digital fire is displayed on the big screen, along with two symbols. That would be, in Japanese, "Nenshou".

From the back, clad in a red robe with a huge kabuki-style demon's head mask, Nenshou strides towards the ring. The robe is adorned with black reflective material forming tassels and designs. As he walks down the aisle, pairs of reddish-white lights flare up on each side of him as he goes, leaving an illuminated trail behind him. The lighting ripples like fire, and the crowd cheers the arrival of the young superstar who has spent so long in the United States.]

JD: Nenshou getting a hero's welcome here in Tokyo!

BW: I don't know why! He went to the US to become the World Champion. Is he bringing the World Title back home to Japan? No.

JD: Not everything revolves around whether or not you've won a championship, Bucky.

BW: In this sport?! Yes, it does! That's literally the stupidest thing you've ever said, Dane. And that bar has been set real high for a long time. [Nenshou gets to the ropes, catapults himself over the top rope. The ring lighting is now up in the same harsh, guttering reddish-white glare. The fans give one more cheer as Nenshou stands in front of his corner, his imposing mask glaring at the other team.]

JD: What a scary, scary figure!

[Black.]

[Complete darkness minus the bright white flashes from cameras or the reflective blow glow of activated cellphones. The crowd falls into a hush

slowly, ruckus turning to hushes turning to murmurs turning to silence. The it hits. The first beat. The long note. The fading up electronics.

Blue lights start flickering. Red. White. Yellow. Blue. A cacaphony of lights hit right in tune with Darude's "Sandstorm" to a loud pop and cheer from the audience in the Tokyo Dome.

Spotlights ignite on the entrance, each one further revealing a bobbing form. Hands reach out from the unknown person's side, swaying and waving to the beat. One final one shows him standing there in full gear, white headphones on as he dances in place. He being...

...TORA

The high flying spectacle steps out of the entrance way, hands holding the headphones as he dances in place, feet flying to the rhythm. He pauses... tears off the headphones... and throws them into the crowd as he starts making his way down towards the ring. TORA is a definite athlete. He is super toned and strong looking though more like a track athlete or gymnast then a bodybuilder or pro wrestler. He's well proportioned and full of energy. He's also fairly handsome in a young college kid sort of way with a clean shaven face.

He wears half red/half white tight wrestling pants with red and white kickpads. His pants have a variety of stripes, zig zags, dags and dragons down the side in print opposite to the side they are in, a collected kaleidoscope of chaos on each. He wears a haphazardly striped red and white vest over top his nary a percentage of fat upper body. He dark hair is worn in a messy fashioned faux hawk the tips dyed sharp light blue.]

JD: TORA is loved by the Tiger Paw Pro fans. I've heard from many fans this weekend how sad they are to see him, a crowd favorite, be leaving Tiger Paw Pro from the AWA. Their loss is our gain!

BW: We'll see. He's a small man in a big man's world, Dane. Who knows if he can even cut it!

[Continuing to bob and jive, TORA reaches off the long ramp out to every fan who asks, slapping hands, high fiving and fistbumping. A fan's dancing? He dances right along with them. Fans want pictures? He stops, kneels down, leaning right in and lets them take the selfie. He even takes a fan's camera, runs back up the ramp to the entrance way and swings it wide for a panoramic video of the stadium before running full speed back down, handing it off and sprinting ahead, only to stop for another series of outreached hands.]

JD: Look at the adoration and TORA is returning each and every bit of it! No wonder he's so loved!

[TORA makes sure to hop off the ramp and do a full round of the ringside, every hand reached out getting slapped back. He dances the entire way, taking the ringsteps in a single hop and getting onto the apron, dancing

along as lasers shoot out behind him. They flicker in wild combination, TORA urging the crowd out of their seat to dance along (which many kids and women and even some young men do!).

Then he pauses, turns and points and runs over, pulling a mask out of his pocket and puts it on a smiling kids face. The child is in joy, a Juvenil Infierno mask converging his small head. He high fives the kid, hopping up on the apron, dancing, keeping it up as he steps on the outside turnbuckles to the top. He waves his arm in beat, popping his hands into peace signs to the crowd, drawing them down so the finger tips touch making a mask like gesture. One final step and he backflips into the ring and dances along with the music until it starts fading out and the lights come back on. He discards his vest, throwing it to an attendant as he heads to his corner and greets his partners as the subtitles begin.]

SUBTITLES: Introducing first... from The Wicked City, weighing in at ninety three kilos...

[A lady's voice kicks in... and I mean kicks in!]

[illegible]

[Back to the subtitles.]

SUBTITLES: And his partners, representing ACHILLES, first, weighing in at ninety five kilos...

[Again, the lady announcer.]

```
"...LI00000000000000000000000000000000nnnnnnnnNNNNNNN...
TEEETSSSUUUU0000000000000000000000!"
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[Jeers pour down on the former fan favorite.]

SUBTITLES: And finally, the team captain, weighing in at ninety kilos, from Seattle, Washington, U-S-A...

[Cue:]

"NoooooooooooooveemmmmbbbbERRRRRRRRRRRRRRRRRRRRRRRRRRRRRRRRRRRR  
RR!!!!"

[The crowd boos once again as the entirety of ACHILLES mugs for the camera. The subtitles reappear.]

SUBTITLES: Annnnnnd... their opponents! First, from Cancun, Mexico, weighing in at eighty six kilos...

SOLAAAAAAAAAARR  
RR!!!"

SUBTITLES: And his partner, from Shinagawa, Tokyo... weighing one hundred and six and one half kilos... he is known as the Asian Assassin...

[illegible]

SUBTITLES: And finally, weighing in at seventy seven kilos, he is the team captain...

[illegible]

N: TORA... Why so serious?  
AAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAHAHAHAHAHAHAHAHAHAHAHAH!

BW: Mind games! Brilliant, brilliant mind games!

JD: Are we finally getting things under control here, Bucky? This is a fired up group out here, there are going to be some fireworks tonight!

[The referee finally calls for the bell and we are IMMEDIATELY off to the races. The two masked men stare at each other for nary a second before Solar hits the ropes and comes back with a shoulder tackle that levels Tetsuo. Hitting the other ropes he leaps over Tetsuo, ducks a back elbow on the return, ducks under the leaping legend and ducks a clothesline, coming in with a final leaping back elbow!]

JD: And we're off to a pace like few others we will see here at Rising Sun Showdown already!

[Tetsuo doesn't stay down for long, brought up by Super Solar and stunned with not one, but two overhand chops to the chest driving him to the rope. Solar whips him across the ring but LION stands his ground and reverses, looking for a back body drop. Solar catches him with a kick, ducks a swing and catches LION with an arm drag on the turn around.]

JD: The action is lightning quick right out of the gates!

[Tetsuo rolls up and catches a charging Solar with his own arm drag, sweeping his legs out from under him and going for a lateral press only for the Mexican star to kick out at one. Both get up, LION faster, but falling into the trap of a Solar leg sweep putting him down for a pin and he kicks out. LION rolls off and to a kneel, Solaripping right up and squaring off to polite applause from the crowd!]

BW: Alright, seriously. How are we supposed to call this?

JD: Sometimes you just have to watch and admire! LION Tetsuo is one of the most accomplished Japanese junior heavyweights. He knows the lucha style that Super Solar is known for, Super Solar knows the speedy Japanese junior style. This pairing is a treat!

[This time it is Tetsuo taking advantage first, laying a kick to Solar's stomach before snapmaring him down, scooping him right back to his feet and laying him out with a bodyslam.]

JD: LION Tetsuo is the oldest competitor in this match. You are seeing it in his style. While not as fast or athletic, he knows his way around a ring, how to conserve energy and how to take it from his opponents.

BW: Everyone one of those slams drives the wind out of an opponent. Wind a flip-di-do like Solar and you are going to be a step ahead. Plus, LION Tetsuo is a major superstar here in Japan, Dane. We saw a glimpse of his talent last year at the Cup when he teamed with November but he's won the Junior SkyStar Crown in Japan, one of the world's most prestigious championships, on three occasions.

[Tetsuo continues the offense with a quick elbow drop that draws only a one count on the following pin. He picks up Solar and grabs him by a wrist, whipping him across the ring. He goes for a hiptoss... only Solar turns and catches him around the waist by his legs, pushing off the mat and back up, reaching to hook an arm and take LION over with an arm drag. Tetsuo rolls

up, shakes his head and charges, catching another arm drag... and a third! He takes this one as a reason to roll out of the ring. Solar... he doesn't take this as a time to rest.]

JD: A series of armdrags sends LION Tetsuo rolling from the ring but... Here we go!

[Solar hits the ropes and goes charging to the other side for a dive...

...stopping as Brody quickly hops up onto the apron and in the way, his imposing and intimidating structure a hate drawing road block.]

BW: I thought the fans in Japan were respectful. This booing isn't respect!

JD: ACHILLES is as hated as they come, Bucky. Watch tapes sometime!

BW: People still watch tapes? Youtube, baby!

[Solar backs off at the referee's instructions, tagging in a requesting Nenshou. The crowd once again Oooohs as he steps into the ring, spinning to glare at his entering opponent, Nijikon. Nenshou rubs a taped hand over his kanji marked head.]

JD: Nenshou's shaved message on his head is different tonight, Bucky.

BW: I bet it says "Please take me back, Percy."

JD: It says "free man".

BW: Ha. He's still under Percy Childes's contract. He's lucky Percy has given him as much latitude as he has!

JD: That's not what he's referring to, and I don't think that message is targeted at Percy Childes.

BW: What?

JD: Look at Nijikon! He doesn't care about any size difference! He's right in Nenshou's face!

[And immediately pays for it as Nenshou just WASTES him with a straight hand to the throat. Nijikon is planted, gets back up and is taken down with a fingers thrust to the throat!]

JD: Nenshou dominating Nijikon here, early in this match! He's a wrestler that you do NOT want to allow to get ahead.

BW: This weirdo is going to pay for it if he doesn't make a better move.

[Nenshou shakes off a hand before hitting the ropes and coming right back into a Nijikon dropkick that sends him staggering to a corner. The alien

masked former Pacific Champion charges right back in and launches with a second dropkick connecting to the jaw!]

JD: That one hit the mark!

[Nenshou gets to safety, pushing away from the corner. Nijikon stays with him with a couple kicks to the legs before whipping him across the ring. The bigger AWA star is able to reverse Nijikon and sends him across the ring. "Niji" slides under with a baseball slide... but is caught and brought back up into a rear waistlock!]

BW: There's the size difference right there!

[Heaving him to his feet, Nenshou looks for an overhead belly to back suplex, only the smaller JHW legend flips out, lands on his feet and looks back up... right into a back elbow to the jaw!]

JD: Sorry if we aren't more vocal folks, but this action is at lightning speed right now! It's really hard to keep up with!

BW: I can. I just feel I don't need to... since apparently you want to keep secrets yourself.

JD: About what?

BW: Nenshou. Quit acting coy!

[Nenshou assaults Nijikon with a forearm to the back, pulling him up and nearly felling him with a shot to the jaw. The smaller masked man staggers back, hits the ropes and ducks a Nenshou strike, hitting a knee to the gut. The moment allows him to strike a muscle pose before hitting the ropes and racing back, taken wayyyyyyy over with a back body drop that draws a loud applause!]

JD: And there goes Nijikon, sliding out of the ring. Nenshou tags out... and that leaves us the pairing a LOT of people were looking forward to seeing!

BW: Myself included. This TORA kid really grinds my gears. I don't know what it is, but he just makes me feel gross.

JD: Our fans back in the States may be a bit caught off-guard by the lack of tags so far but this match is conducted under lucha libre trios rules that says when a man hits the floor, it's as good as a tag for his team if they choose to use it. It allows for some really fast-paced action as November steps in for his squad.

[TORA slingshots himself into the ring, spinning as he lands to face the leader of ACHILLES. November is quite different, asking Toroyama to get up on the apron and hold the ropes for him. He takes his time, checking his nails before sliding in and leaning back against his own turnbuckle lazily, acting as if he is the only one in the ring.]

JD: This is NOT the same wrestler who was a fan favorite in the AWA and the EMWC. This is not the same man and competitor we all knew. Something really changed in him.

BW: Now he's not moody, he's just a complete nut.

[November continues to be ignorant of the moment, wiping his hair back before finally stepping out at request of the referee. TORA stands in the middle of the ring, bouncing in anticipation, urging the crowd to boo his opposite team captain. And they do.]

JD: There is absolutely no love lost between these two. For those who don't know, November was once a member of the AWA. We were proud to have him, but Japan has changed him in a drastic way. With the signing of TORA to an AWA contract, he's taken a turn for the even worse and has seemingly lost it, taking all his frustrations out on this young man.

[November rolls his neck, cracking his fingers as he slides around the ring, keeping out of reach of TORA. The young man tries to go for a lock up but the wily vet ducks between the ropes to avoid it, the referee in between to back off TORA and get the match back underway.]

BW: This is the difference between a rookie and a veteran of this sport. TORA wants to immediately engage and fight. November? He knows he can win this without even throwing a strike.

JD: He is not locking up, not engaging, he is certainly playing the mind games with TORA.

[Again, TORA goes to get things physical, November backing between the ropes. It takes the referee to physically push TORA back. Outside the ring, Bull Shindo comes over and massages the shoulders of November, hopping onto the apron and mocking TORA's teammates.]

JD: This match is a powder keg, Bucky. When it blows up, watch out!

[Finally, November does step out and into the ring. He circles, reaching in, lunging for a single leg before stopping, standing straight up... and offering TORA a hand.]

BW: He's not all bad!

JD: He's pants on head crazy if he thinks ANYONE believes this.

[TORA looks at him with a tilted head, exasperated look and resigned slump of his shoulders. He shakes his head in disapproval, November shrugging and launching out with a kick to the stomach.]

JD: TORA caught that!

[And then catches an enzuigiri to the side of the head, sending him down and towards the ropes.]



BW: And he caught that!

JD: November definitely caught him unaware and stomps him hard. He knows how to battle a high flyer, having been one of the best ever at it. TORA could be in early trouble here if the ACHILLES leader manages to keep TORA grounded and keep him isolated in his corner.

[Squatting down, November picks up TORA, lacing him with a forearm to the jaw before putting him against the ropes.]

JD: Irish whip...

[And on the return, November turns and catches TORA, only the young star rotates over and then overrotates past a normal headscissors, grabbing November's arm and taking him down onto his stomach! He grabs the arm, but November is instantly out of there, thanks to Brody pulling him out by an ankle to a chorus of boos.]

JD: Talk about numbers being the advantage here! That was a trademark TORA move and Brody simply pulled his boss out and to safety.

BW: We have a ring full of some of the best high flyers in the world. Is it \_really\_ safety?

JD: Great point, Bucky... because that looks exactly like what is gonna happen!

[Getting up, TORA grabs the top rope looking to slingshot over. He does, turns and lands on the apron. He goes to leap, but November grabs his legs and sweeps them out, TORA crashing HARD on the edge of the apron spinefirst, flattened there.]

BW: Veteran instincts once again! For all the crap November gets, don't forget he is one of the longest reigning junior heavyweight champs of all time. He's been in there with THE absolute best in the world. Mark Langseth, Caleb Temple, Devon Case... and that was in ONE match alone!

JD: He's showing his savvy right now, directing traffic and keeping on the offensive against a man who considered him one of his idols at one point.

[LION and Nijikon suddenly rush into the ring, knocking Nenshou and Solar off the apron. They slide right out, getting into a brawl: LION intercepted by Nenshou and Nijikon trying to take on Super Solar.]

JD: And now things are out of control!

[On the other side, November hits TORA with a pair of forearms to the chest, telling Brody to get on all fours. The big man does and November backs off, using him as a launch pad to leap up... way up... and then down with a double stomp to TORA's chest! The crowd groans in sympathy, booing as

the ACHILLES leader yells right back at them, posing as he does, shoving TORA back under the ropes before he follows him back in.]

BW: Cover!

[And TORA kicks out at one and a half, rolling away and trying to get to his feet. November keeps on him, stomping him in the back. That doesn't last long though, as a now free Nenshou rolls in, turns him by a shoulder and lays him out with a hard SMACK of a knife edge chop!]

JD: Nenshou back to his corner now. The referee is TRYING to get control of this match but with almost a dozen people in the ring or around it... well, he's only one man.

BW: No one is envying this assignment, but at least it's not the Demon Boy deathmatch later on tonight as that crazy loon takes on Juan Vasquez.

JD: Juan accepted that match. Who's the crazy one?

[TORA and November start getting up at the same time, but TORA makes the first move, leaping straight up with a knee to the jaw!]

JD: November down... standing moonsault! COVER!

[And November kicks out at one and a half himself, rolling right away to his corner. TORA grabs his foot though, reaching way over to tag in Super Solar. Doing so allows the Moody One to roll away and tag in his own partner, this one being LION Tetsuo.]

JD: The Japanese legend is in!

[And rushes straight ahead with a koppo kick, Solar rolling out of the way quite easily.]

BW: They are NOT slowing down, at all!

JD: Both right back up, lucha passby... OH!

[Jason exclaims the OH as Solar catches the bigger LION with a tilt a whirl backbreaker. He goes for a quick cover, rolling off and to his feet as Tetsuo kicks out.]

JD: The twenty year vet, LION Tetsuo, kicking out but Super Solar is staying right on him.

BW: Tetsuo used to be a hero here in Japan. He was on lunchboxes, in video games, had his own action figure... heck, he even was on a morning cartoon!

JD: But all that has changed now as Tetsuo has become one of the most reviled men in all of Japan thanks to his association with ACHILLES. The two

masked men coming to their feet, Solar hitting a big overhand chop... and another. Into the corner they go!

[Solar whips LION across the ring and he hits the turnbuckles HARD, staggering out right into a deep arm drag, Solar holding on and transitioning perfectly into an armbar.]

BW: And here comes Nenshou. The biggest man in this contest for sure. You cut me off earlier askin' about Nenshou's hair. You know, for a guy that blinded you, you and him been talking an awful lot lately.

JD: We've discussed that. I now understand why he did what he did. He'll never apologize for that, and I certainly don't agree with it, but at least I see where he was coming from.

BW: Wait, what? Dane, spill it! You know something about the guy!

JD: I know quite a lot about him, and I won't apologize for what I did to him after he blinded me. But he seems to understand why...

BW: What YOU did to HIM?! You can't just say that and not explain it! What happened?!

JD: Quick elbow drop by Nenshou! And he pulls LION back up to his feet, snap mare...

[And then hits the ropes slowly, coming ripping back with a driving elbow to the chest, going for a pin... and LION kicks out.]

BW: You know, Dane, I'm a broadcast journalist. I could find out what's going on with Nenshou like that. [\*snap\*]

JD: Uh huh.

BW: You don't believe me, do you? I'm the, what, I-lost-count times Announcer Of The Year!

JD: Three. And no.

[Nenshou gets slowly back to his feet, pacing around his downed victim.]

JD: We are seeing some unique match ups here tonight. For all the time LION Tetsuo has been in the business, I am not sure he's faced Super Solar OR Nenshou in the ring, especially in such a high profile match.

BW: Really? Right back to calling the match?

JD: That's what we are getting paid for.

[Grabbing Tetsuo by the mane of his mask, Nenshou leads him to a corner, tags in TORA (to a cheer!) and then scoops up the masked man, slamming him down. TORA wastes no time, hits the ropes at breathtakingly lightning

speed and comes back with a rapid fire leg drop, up, ropes, leg drop. Up, ropes, leg drop. Up, ropes, leg drop. After the third he pops up and glares right at an uneven tempered November.]

JD: No love lost here.

[At ringside, Miyuki screams for the referee to stop the blatant cheating... of which there is none. Brody slams the mat, TORA grabbing LION and tagging in Nenshou. The two whip him into a neutral corner and Super Solar comes in, turning and charging in with a HIGH flying crossbody. Nenshou is next leaping, cartwheeling and hitting a big back elbow to the chest. LION slumps and team captain TORA is the final part of the equation, charging in and somersaulting, connecting right into the seated LION full force! The three get up and mock ACHILLES with a pose of their own, drawing their opponents ire and cheers from the crowd!]

BW: Oh come on. I am all for a little action, but the referee is letting these three get away with murder.

JD: ACHILLES is actually getting some of their own medicine. It looks like Nenshou is the legal man here, picking up LION Tetsuo again. The veteran is in trouble here. He's been isolated for a bit now.

[And it continues as Nenshou snapmares him to a seated position, smacking a shin kick to the spine. LION arches in pain, Nenshou hitting the ropes and coming back in with a dropkick right to the face.]

JD: Trademark move from Nenshou on the two time SkyCrown Tournament Champion!

[And he goes for a cover himself, getting a good two count before Tetsuo kicks out.]

BW: Super Solar tagged in now. This is starting to be a mugging.

[Solar comes in with swagger too, slingshotting over and hitting a splash onto his prone victim.]

JD: Fantastic move and a cover! ONE! TWO! NO! LION Tetsuo kicks out!

[The rest of his team mates seem on edge as Solar rolls off and pulls Tetsuo back to his feet. He hits the full suited Tetsuo with a thud of a knife edge chop to lead him to the ropes. An irish whip follows but Tetsuo is able to dig down and reverse it. Solar never returns though, grabbed by each ankle and yanked HARD outside!]

JD: Come on! Uncalled for!

BW: Justice!

[Bull Shindo and Junya Toroyama, heavyweights both, continue their assault on Super Solar as Nijikon grabs the referee and swings him away from the

action. This brings TORA and Nenshou into the fray and they are the his target of attention, turning to them and getting them back into the corner despite protests.]

JD: Super Solar is in SOME trouble here!

[Grabbing an ankle and wrist each they lift him right up... and slam him right back down chest first on the light ringside padding to a HEEL POP!]

JD: Even the normally somewhat subdued crowd here in Japan is outraged by that! TORA and Nenshou need to quit protesting and let the referee see what's going on.

[Nijikon gets in the action as Shindo pulls Solar up. He runs, hits the ropes and baseball slides out, planting both feet into the chest of Super Solar. The referee finally turns around, a minute too late, as the rest of ACHILLES back up, arms up in defense, claiming they did absolutely nothing.]

BW: The referee sees nothing, it's perfectly legal. Trust me, I made a career over it!

JD: Nijikon is much the same in your boat. He is just mocking TORA, calling him a cry baby? Nijikon is one of the strangest characters I have ever seen. He is as crazy as they come.

[Grabbing Solar by a shoulder to balance him, Nijikon suddenly drops, extends a leg and spins gracefully, connecting with the back of the luchador's knees, putting him down. That done, Nijikon gets back up, hands on hips and parades around as proud as can be, hands out to his sides.]

JD: Look at him!

BW: It WAS a very nice leg sweep.

JD: Nijikon needs to ... I... I don't know what he needs.

[What he apparently needs to do is mock TORA some more.]

JD: We saw these two with quite the heated exchange prematch. This is about to boil over any time.

BW: Instead he is tagging in November!

[Who also joins in the mocking, rubbing his eyes with his knuckles in mockery.]

JD: I cannot believe this is the same man that had a Match Of The Year candidate match with Skywalker Jones.

BW: Maybe this is the man he needed to be. His success in Tiger Paw Pro speaks for itself. Look at the group he leads. He might be one of the most dangerous man in this building not named Demon Boy Ishrinku.

JD: There is no doubt he's etched his own little kingdom here in Japan.

[Still swaggering, he goes to pull Super Solar to his feet, but is snatched and rolled up!]

JD: SMALL PACKAGE! ONE! TWO! KICKOUT! That was CLOSE, Bucky!

BW: He needs to be way more careful!

[The two try and scramble to their feet but the fresher November is much faster, diving in with a single foot dropkick to the side of Solar's head. Angry at the near pinfall, he grabs the Mexican and pulls him up, hitting a round house kick to the stomach before hitting the ropes and leaping with an axe kick to the back of the neck!]

JD: Dangerous feet by November and he goes for a cover! TWO... NO! Solar is showing some real heart right now as ACHILLES isolates him. ACHILLES is a team, that's for sure.

[And as a team they enter the ring, the referee stopping TORA and Nenshou once again as Nijikon mocks them and urges them on in for a fight. This time it's November and LION whipping Solar into a corner. LION goes first, charging in with a HARD palm strike to the jaw, sliding out of the ring right after. November follows with his own running palm strike!]

JD: METEOR PUNCH TIMES TWO!

[And Nijikon is the third, charging in with a leaping back elbow! Solar hits the corner, is taken down with a snapmare and without pause, Nijikon leaps off the second turnbuckle with a moonsault!]

BW: Wow! What a series there!

[Nijikon rolls out once again, but gets right back in as November tags him to make him truly the legal man. Immediately he goes to Solar and grabs a leg, twisting him over into a half crab.]

JD: And Nijikon brings the speed of the match down. Not a bad move here. He can keep Solar grounded, stretch his leg and catch his own breath.

BW: Look at the combined experience on ACHILLES' side. Twenty years for LION and both November and Nijikon have been active since at least 2000 if not longer. The other side really has nothing compared to them.

JD: Super Solar is an eight year veteran, Nenshou has seen some battles. But TORA has only been around a few years. It's quite true, ACHILLES easily has the experience edge here.

[Solar continues to grunt in pain, reaching out for a rope to try and get the hold broken. He gets close, but Nijikon pulls him back using one foot to grind the back of Solar's head!]

BW: Talk about a brutal way to do that move... oh! He slipped!

[Letting go of the hold to keep his balance, Nijikon goes from grinding to a stomp.]

JD: Nijikon pulling up Super Solar and whips him into the corner. Charge... RIGHT INTO A BOOT!

[Nijikon staggers back, clutching at his jaw in highly exaggerated agony. He turns just as Super Solar leaps, snares his head and kicks his legs into a spin, spiking the alien masked man! CHEERS!]

JD: TORNADO DDT OUT OF NOWHERE! NOW IS THE TIME TO MAKE THE TAG! This is Super Solar's chance to make the tag to a fresh man and turn this match right around!

[And he starts crawling, the beating he's taken definitely showing in his slower movements.]

BW: If he can make the tag, it could change the face of everything!

[And he keeps crawling, as does Nijikon, but he's fresher and tags in November... who instantly charges and dropkicks TORA off the apron! BOO!]

JD: There goes the tag! November knocks off Nenshou and he's right back, trying to get back in this match!

[And of course the referee is distracted, this time by Miyuki as she hops onto the apron. ACHILLES takes full advantage, sliding into the ring one after another. The crowd is jeering LOUDLY as they do, Solar in a corner.]

JD: This is not good! This is not good at all!

BW: All a matter of perspective, buddy.

[One by one ACHILLES charges in. Bull Shindo first with a corner clothesline, then Junya Toroyama, then November, then LION Tetsuo and finally, with a roar, Brody...

...WHO MISSES!]

JD: Solar moved! He moved out of the way! Here is his chance for the tag!

[He reaches out as ACHILLES slides out of the ring, reaching for a tag. He reaches... and tags in TORA... only the referee's back is turned and he doesn't see it! TORA starts lacing the much larger Brody with kicks to the legs... pulled away by the referee when he sees TORA "illegally" in the ring. This gives ACHILLES one more chance and this time it's Miyuki who slides into the ring, stands right in front of Solar...

...and punches him right where you think she would. HUGE HEEL POP!]

JD: Referee! Turn around!

BW: November back in for the cover! This is going to be it! What a way to lose, beaten by a woman!

JD: COOOOVVVEEERRRRRRRRRR! ONE! TWO! NO! NO! NO! Super Solar kicked out!

[A kneeling November snaps his head up in shock, grief written on his face. He pounds the mat, yelling at the referee as he gets to his feet and argues. He threatens the official, pushing him back into a corner. The referee tucks at his shirt, warning an immediate disqualification is in queue. Shaking his head, snorting in derision, November backs off and goes after Solar, only to be taken down with a drop toe hold that sends him staggering to lands chest first on the middle rope!]

JD: I think we all know what's coming!

[Screaming out in Spanish, an empowered Super Solar charges in for a Sayama Feint kick, spinning between the middle ropes, only November has seen this one before and ducks out of the way and back into center ring. Solar lands on his feet back in the ring, just in time to duck down and send a charging November OVER the top rope and onto an unsuspecting Junya Toroyama! POP!]

BW: Super Solar is going to fly!

JD: Solar...

[...slingshots himself right off, stretching his entire body out into a horizontal plane, coming down on November and the recovering Toroyama!]

BW: Here comes the troops!

[The crowd boos as Bull Shindo and Brody both come to their teammates aid and start attacking Solar. This prompts... a big cheer?!]

JD: TORA is in the ring! Get those cameras ready!

[Running in place, he waits for all of ACHILLES to group up before running towards a corner, leaping to the middle rope, then to the top, then leaps off, springing way up and flipping forwards as he does with a shooting star press onto the ENTIRE group, crashing down hard over the ringside fence as he does! Everyone goes down... and the crowd GOES WILD!]

JD: OHHHHHH MIIIIOOOOS DIOS!

BW: OH MY STARS AND GARTERS!! That one was for you, Gordo!

[The crowd is on their feet, not even a bit subdued after the insane risk taking by Solar and followed by TORA!]



JD: Shades of November by TORA with that absolutely death defying springboard shooting star press to the outside! If this is what we have to look forward to in the AWA, I cannot wait!

BW: It is just pure chaos at ringside. I don't even know who the legal men are at this point!

JD: I think it was Super Solar and November, but that might not matter if we can't get some separation and the competitors back into the ring. The referee is counting these men out. They need to get back in.

BW: And quick.

JD: Wait... I think I see November moving, he's climbing back in... and there's Super Solar.

[Bodies start clearing and it's at eight that November slides back in and nine that Super Solar gets barely into the ring. Both men lie there, trying to get some amount of energy in them. The rest clear out and start heading back towards their corners or away from the mess.]

JD: Both men are recovering here. Trying to get up. If you ask me, they just need to make a tag!

BW: November's up!

[And instead of reaching for a tag, he launches a forearm into Solar's jaw. Staggered but not down, the lucha star fires back with a chop to the chest. November hits a slow follow up forearm, Solar staggering back and then forwards with another chop... then a second... then a third putting November to the ropes.]

JD: They're trading shots with all they've got left!

BW: Which ain't much by the looks of things, Dane.

JD: They're barely able to stay on their feet and-

[Both exhausted from the dives, Solar sucks a deep wind and whips November across the ring. November reverses and sends Solar to the ropes, leaping with a HIGH dropkick at the same time... only Solar stops, holds the top rope and November crashes down!]

JD: Solar... rolls... TAG! TAG! HE TAGS IN NENSHOU!

[The crowd cheers as their native star enters the ring in a rush! November manages to tag Nijikon who enters the ring and is immediately taken down with a thrust to the throat, followed by a second. LION Tetsuo enters, charges and runs right into a shot of his own!]

JD: Nenshou is a proverbial house on fire right now!

BW: He's taking on ACHILLES all on his own.

[Seeing both Nijikon AND LION Tetsuo getting up, Nenshou takes out the masked Tetsuo with a leaping back kick to the jaw!]

JD: Nenshou has turned a new leaf lately. He's shed some weight and is moving with a whole new energy.

BW: Did you just call Percy fat?!

JD: ...maybe?

BW: Before this night is over, you are going to clear up this Nenshou business!

[Nenshou is stunned as Nijikon comes flying in with a desperate forearm to the spine. Another one staggers him further, Nijikon hitting the ropes and finally flooring him with a bulldog!]

JD: Nijikon showing some fire of his own!

[Proud as can be, Niji goes for a leaping elbow drop... only Nenshou moves!]

JD: Never count Nenshou out, never!

[Both men get to their feet, but Nenshou is faster. Nijikon hits the ropes, running right into a waiting Nenshou who simply ducks, grabs Nijikon by the waist and throws him straight up! Nijikon comes straight down, landing on his chest and bouncing to a kneeling position. Nenshou wastes no time hitting the ropes and returning with a straight kick to the face!]

BW: Ouch!

JD: Cover by Nenshou!

[ONE! TWO! THR-- Before it gets to three November is in there, breaking up the pin. He pulls up Nenshou and wastes no time whipping him across the ring. Nenshou handsprings into the ropes and back, leaping with an elbow that connects right in the jaw! The ACHILLES king slides out of the ring, clutching at his jaw.]

JD: Nenshou has cleared house... TETSUO! From out of nowhere comes LION Tetsuo! Irish whip... no... countered!

[But instead of whipping Tetsuo at the ropes, Nenshou stops and dropkicks his knee out from under him!]

BW: Shades of...

JD: SHINING WIZARD! SHINING WIZARD BY NENSHOU!

[The celebration is cut short though as Nijikon comes flying out of nowhere with a koppo kick to the skull that floors Nenshou!]

BW: DANGEROUSSSSS!

JD: He knocked out Masatoshi Niwa with that very move at J\*TOP!

[Super Solar doesn't let the celebration even start, let alone continue as he is next in the ring, grabs Nijikon and kicks him in the stomach before lifting him up over a shoulder, hands under his armpits. He lifts upwards and forwards, Nijikon flying down onto his shoulders and back as Solar sits out!]

JD: BLACK TIGER BOMB!

[November is next in the train of insanity, coming in and flattening the still sitting Solar with a kick to the chest, spinning on the spot and leaping forwards with a standing shooting star press!]

JD: RAIN DANCE! THAT IS HIS MOVE!

[November gets right back up, hands out and spinning in celebration... that is until TORA comes running in and leaps, snaring November by the head with his legs and snapping backwards at rocket speed, spiking him right on his head!]

BW: Jesus!

JD: A SPIKING HURRICANRANA!

[TORA is still sitting on November, going to hook a leg when LION Tetsuo grabs him, pulls him up by his hair and LEVELS him with a palm strike!]

JD: My lord! What a shot! WHAT A SHOT! TORA could be out!

[And it's finally now that someone actually gets a pinfall off, LION covering TORA and hooking a leg!]

BW: ONE! TWO! ALMOST! He ALMOST had TORA right then and there! I don't know how he is conscious after that palm strike. That was something absolutely brutal!

JD: Now I don't know who's legal. I don't even think the referee does.

BW: I think it's still Nijikon and Nenshou!

JD: At this point, we are just seeing some amazing action! LION Tetsuo and TORA seem to be the two up, LION grabbing TORA, whip... reversed!

[Tetsuo, instead of returning, baseball slides out of the ring. TORA looks shocked, Miyuki pointing for him to turn around as she laughs. He does and November is there, slapping him HARD across the face! The ACHILLES

leader hits the ropes and returns... stopped by TORA who reaches out a hand and yells just that!]

TORA: STOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOP!

BW: Wha...

[Smack! Enzuigiri!]

JD: Innovative move by TORA!

[November takes the kick to the jaw, turns shakily, giving TORA the chance to leap up and grab him by the shoulders, putting both knees to the back and dropping backwards! OHHH!]

JD: LUNGBLOWER ON NOVEMBER!

BW: Nijikon! He's back!

[And leaps at the still on his back TORA, landing on his chest with a seated senton! He gets up... and hits another... then another... then another before standing back up and holding his breath. He then immediately goes for the cover, sitting back down and grabbing both legs!]

JD: Paizuri drop after Paizuri drop! LEGS ARE HOOKED!

BW: And deep!

[ONE! TWO! THR--NO! And not because TORA kicked out, but because Nenshou hit the ring and pulled Nijikon off, chopping into him with a knife edged hand.]

JD: Nenshou may have very well saved TORA there... and you know, Bucky, I think we are down to the legal men.

BW: Time for ACHILLES to finish this off then!

JD: Nenshou with another knife edge chop, stuns Nijikon. He's turning it up another notch here.

BW: Everyone's down, he has to! This is his chance to win, if he has a chance.

JD: Nenshou... catches a kick!

[And hits a riptide fast dragonscrew leg whip, holding the leg and immediately going into a figure four leg lock in the middle of the ring to a loud POP!]

JD: This could be it! Figure four in the middle of the ring and Nijikon has nowhere to go and no one to help him!

BW: There might be no escape. He's not even near the ropes. Look at him! Look at the agony he is in!

[Nijikon screams in pain, trying to escape but to absolutely no avail. He reaches out one way, but isn't close. Reaches out the other, not close. He even tries to reverse it but Nenshou has the hold on perfectly!]

JD: He's going to tap! HE IS GOING TA--MIYUKI!

[The Empress of Joshi hits the ring, stomping at Nenshou with vicious intent. He lets go of the hold and rolls away under the assault. Miyuki, fearless, targets him as he does get up and goes for a kick... only Nenshou catches it and throws it down.]

JD: This is a face off she does NOT want!

[Still unperturbed she gets right in Nenshou's face, yelling at him in Japanese. She pokes him in the chest... and then slaps him HARD across the face drawing tens of thousands of OOOOOOH's. Nenshou's face turns from the impact and he continues to look away, a hand coming up to rub his cheek and jaw his only move.]

BW: Get out of there RIGHT NOW, Miyuki. Trust me. Get out of there!

[Nenshou slowly turns his head back and her faces turns sour. She refuses to back down, goes for another slap...

...when green mist comes from Nenshou and hits her full force in her face!]

JD: GREEN MIST! BLINDING GREEN MIST!

[The Queen of ACHILLES drops to the mat, clutching at her face. She rolls out of the ring, Bull Shindo and Junya Toroyama checking on her, as does the concerned referee. While this is going on the crowd OOOOOH's once again, this time because Brody has entered the ring!]

BW: Now Nenshou is in trouble! Look at the size of this beast!

JD: The powerhouse of ACHILLES is in and challenging Nenshou. He's daring him to do the same!

[Brody clobbers his own chest, roaring a challenge... when from out of nowhere comes Super Solar, connecting with a missile dropkick to the side of Brody's head to a HUGE POP!]

JD: Where did he come from! Super Solar came flying off screen, I never saw him come... WOW! WHAT A MATCH!

BW: This is just getting out of hand!

JD: Here comes LION Tetsuo now!

[But he is IMMEDIATELY taken down as TORA comes flying in like Superman, vertical rocket of a spear flattening the man he watched so many takes of!]

JD: ACHILLES is getting theirs... SOLAR DIVES!

[And takes out the entire rest of ACHILLES as he ascends to the top turnbuckle and leaps wayyyyyyyy up and off, coming down in a somersault to take them all out! In ring, Nenshou reaches out to TORA and pats him on the back.]

BW: Everyone's down! That just leaves Nijikon and Nenshou! The legal men.

JD: Wait... are they?

[Nijikon turns with fright to see Nenshou before him... only Nenshou starts backing away. This prompts Nijikon to start smiling, hands slowly changing from a defensive stance to going onto his hips. Nenshou backs away, waving him off. Nijikon takes this as victory and puffs out his chest...

...which deflates as soon as Nenshou motions for him to turn around.]

JD: You know Bucky... I am pretty sure Nenshou tagged TORA!

BW: Wait... what?!

[TORA does not smile... at all. He stares a hole in Nijikon who can only take a swing.. that is ducked. TORA grabs him, ducking under a shoulder and heaving him up, spinning as he does and sending Nijikon out to a horizontal position, driving him down with a seated powerbomb! The infamous move gets BIG POP! from the crowd!]

JD: ZOKUGUN BOMB! ZOKUGUN BOMB!

[Fired up to all high heavens, TORA pops up and quickly steps onto the apron, heading to the top rope. He pauses, looks out to the approving crowd and flashes double peace signs before leaping off, spinning, twisting and coming down right onto and across Nijikon, bouncing from the impact!]

JD: FIRE... IN... THE... SKY!

[TORA hooks a leg, pulling it tight for the cover. Nenshou counts along with the crowd and referee... ONE! TWO! THREE!]

JD: HE DID IT! TORA DEFEATED NIJIKON, DEFEATED ACHILLES AND WITH HIS PARTNERS HAD A BARN BURNER OF A MATCH HERE AT RISING SUN SHOWDOWN!

["Sandstorm" hits as TORA rolls off, joined in the ring by Super Solar and Nenshou. Outside the ring, the scattered bodies of ACHILLES collect themselves, November nearly teary in shock from the loss. He all but

ignores the blinded Miyuki (who is aided by Shindo and Toroyama), instead fixated on the ring and the fact that he lost.]

BW: I am completely exhausted after that match.

JD: You're not the only one.

[In the background, we hear the official announcement of the winners in Japanese as the three collect hands, all being raised at the same time. Nenshou leaves quickly after though, breaking away first and heading back up the ramp. Super Solar pats TORA on the back who goes to the turnbuckles and starts once again dancing with the crowd, waving, thanking, doing a heart symbol with his fingers over his real one as he points out towards the gathered fans.]

JD: TORA... with the winning pin in his last match in Tiger Paw Pro as he makes his way to the AWA. He's going to be a fantastic addition to our roster, him and Super Solar both.

BW: We'll see about that.

JD: We certainly will. Fans, let's go backstage where I'm told that Colt Patterson is standing by with AWA Head Doctor - Dr. Bob Ponavitch who has an update on the condition of Air Strike.

[We cut backstage where Colt Patterson is standing next to Dr. Ponavitch. The doctor has a very serious look on his face.]

CP: Thanks, JD, and you called it right. I'm here backstage with Dr. Ponavitch, the head sawbone for the AWA, who just got done examining Air Strike after their match and beatdown at the hands of Strictly Business. Doc, what's the story?

[The doctor nods.]

DR: Well, it's a preliminary assessment Colt, but at this time Michael Aarons was tested for a concussion based on protocols and procedures in place by the AWA. I am happy to say that Michael Aarons has passed all impact testing done and he is clear to compete. Cody Mertz however sustained a rather serious injury to his ribs and it is undetermined at this time whether he will be cleared to compete until further testing is done.

[Colt nods.]

CP: Thanks for the scoop, doc.

[Dr. Ponavitch nods and then heads back into the door behind him.]

CP: You heard it, sports fans. This time, it's all up in the air... no pun intended... whether or not Air Strike will be able to compete in the second round of this tournament against the former World Tag Team Champions, the Blonde Bombers!

[Just before Colt can throw it back to wherever he planned on throwing it, a rather annoyed Michael Aarons strides out of the same door that Ponavitch disappeared into. Aarons is still dressed in his ring gear from earlier in the night as he shuts the door.]

CP: Michael Aarons, we just heard from the Doc who says it's still undetermined if your partner, Cody Mertz, will be cleared to compete tonight. We know what he's saying... but what is Mertz saying? What's the condition of your partner right now?

[Aarons grimaces as he looks up.]

MA: Colt, I'll be honest with you... Cody... he's in pain. Regardless of what I think of those two cowardly jerks right now one thing I know from watching them all those years is that getting hit with the Flash and Cash hurts. But Cods is in there demanding they tape him up and compete and if he says he's fine that's good enough for me.

[Patterson shakes his head with a sneer.]

CP: All competitors... real competitors... want to compete and Cody Mertz, like him or not, is a tough kid to want to go back out there tonight and fight but he's still gotta get cleared by the Doc. What does it mean if he can't get clearance to compete?

[Aarons shakes off the question.]

MA: Let's cut to the chase here, Colt. Air Strike didn't come here to quit. There is no quit in Air Strike. We weren't raised to quit; we weren't trained to quit; so quitting... it's not happening! Because you see this here...

[Aarons jacks his thumb at his chest, pointing at himself.]

MA: There a member of Air Strike right here. And as long as one of us is standing then the match is happening... you better believe that.

[Patterson looks surprised.]

CP: You're saying you'll take the match YOURSELF?!

[He shakes his head.]

CP: Fair enough. One more question though. For months, we've heard all about how you look up to Strictly Business and you guys idolized them as kids and all that. How does it feel to be stabbed in the back by them and to have what you worked so hard for to be at risk now?

[A look of annoyance flashes over Aarons as he looks at Patterson. He opens his mouth to say something but then he closes his mouth and shuts his eyes shaking his head. Without saying a word, he turns around and goes right back in the door he came out of, slamming it shut behind him.]



CP: Sometimes no words say more than a bunch of words ever can. Michael Arons says with or without Cody Mertz by his side, Air Strike will compete in the second round of this tournament against the Blonde Bombers. Take it, Mark Stegglet!

[We reopen on Mark Stegglet standing beside the three individuals just as he did over an hour ago. To his immediate right, in order, are Lenny Strong, Aaron Anderson, and Miss Sandra Hayes. Hayes grin is a fascinating bright pink and it's stretched from ear to ear like a giddy teenager on prom night. Her talent? They are a bit more poised and straight faced. Still dressed in their ring gear with their green, white, and gold track jackets unzipped are the Lights Out Express, fresh off their win over Japan's Global Crown Tag Team Champions.]

MS: I am backstage at this time with a team who continues their hot-streak through the tag division. What started with a second consecutive victory in the tag team gauntlet has now been followed with an impressive win over one of the most decorated tag teams in all of Japan. With their win over Shadow Star Legion, it is now the Lights Out Express that find themselves going toe to toe with the War Pigs. Gentlemen, I am going to get straight to the point...how in the world do you plan to take down the unstoppable force known as the War Pigs here in Japan?

[Strong and Anderson stare at Stegglet. There's a long pause...

...a very awkward and uncomfortable long pause at that. Stegglet shifts his collar and then Strong sneers and slaps Stegglet across the back.]

Lenny Strong [LS]: Unstoppable? Try unforgettable, jack! Cause the last time I YouTube searched the War Pigs, it filled my laptop speakers with painful war cries of Ozzy Osbourne and ain't shown me bo-diddily-squat about tag team wrestling! How many times have we heard the stories? The tall tales? The LEGEND of the mighty War Pigs? Hrm?! How many times have people spoke the names of Hammer and Sabre in hushed tones only to watch them leave just as quietly as their names were whispered?

We've all been force fed spoonfuls of white LIES and OVER exaggerations of how wonderfully insane the 'Pigs are in Japan. How they have torn down roof after roof against the likes of Violence Unlimited, the Bombers, and Shadow Star Legion. But the last time I checked, Mark. The last time I took a good solid look around...this may very well be the land of the Rising Sun...

...but we are WRESTLING in the heart of AWA tag team territory. And in the AWA?

[He snickers.]

LS: Pigs. Get. Slaughtered.

MS: You can't be serious. These men are some of the most ruthless animals-

AA: Let me stop you right there, Mark. That's ALL they are... Animals. You know what happens to animals? They get house broken. Taught how to beg to take a crap. Fed a bowl of processed rat feed with a cute label on it once a day. Even the mighty lion gets locked in a cage and paraded around like a peacock.

LS: Fact is, jack...we ain't impressed. Not now, not ever. To us? The War Pigs are the same pair of guys who left with their squiggley wiggly tails tucked between their tiny little legs. You can paint their faces up any which way you want but it don't change a single thing 'bout them. 2014, as our dear ol' friend Bucky Wilde put it, is the Year of the Shane Gang and a year ain't made without three hundred plus days in it.

Two weeks ago it was Ryan Martinez and Eric Preston.

Today it was Shadow Star Legion.

And tonight...

...we GUT and BLEED the Pigs dry.

Don't like it?

[He \*SMACKS\* his elbow.]

LS: Don't care.

AA: This is our moment, Mark. Our time. OUR Stampede Cup. What started as a stance against garbage wrestling has evolved into a revolution of not just stopping it but DESTROYING it. Richard E. Lee will lead his War Pigs into battle tonight like he has done so many times before but tonight he runs them into a high-speed runaway train turning and burning three hundred and three miles per hour.

LS: That's a record, Mark. You can look it up.

[Strong mouths, "seriously". Stegglet rolls his eyes.]

AA: And when they look up with that dumbfounded deer in the headlights look they have gotten every single time they have stepped foot into an AWA ring it's going to end the same way it has for everyone else who has stood in OUR tracks.

LS: LIGHTS....

[Strong slams his elbow into his palm of his other hand, creating a loud \*SMACK!\* sound.]

LS: ....OUT!

AA: Ain't no way else around it.

[Fade away from the LOE...

...and fade in on the solitary Richard Eric Lee, his salt-and-pepper hair framing reflective sunglasses that both clash and contrast with his apparel. Below the neck his navy blue suit jacket and crimson tie say he's all business and above the neck his toothy grin just screams "up to no good". Running his right thumb and forefinger down from mustache and over his goatee his other hand strokes the banner behind him one time as he looks down and to the right, heaving a heavy sigh. That banner is, naturally, one for the AWA promoting the current event; Rising Sun Showdown.]

REL: Welcome, AWA, to my home ... Japan. Toe-kee-yo Dome is a place that I and mine often hang our hats, such as they are, and so I ask you kindly to remove your shoes before entering ... as is the custom. Even in America it's considered polite and here, in Japan, it can cause a real problem if you dishonor someone's home by tracking in dirt off the streets.

Dirt in the ring, on the other hand, is quite welcome.

[Soak up that contradiction for a moment. Then move on.]

REL: My boys, they know dirt, they come from dirt and they know how it thinks. They've since bettered themselves. As you all, doubtless, know the city of Detroit, Michigan is where we all hail from but not what we'd call home. It's a post-apocalyptic wasteland and the apocalypse was a financial meltdown that began long before it hit the rest of the nation and shows no sign of abating. Used to be that if you were an honest man in Detroit you'd get a job in a plant, work 30 years, and then resign yourself to a comfortable retirement that lasted another 20. Then the car companies all pulled up anchor and headed for greener pastures.

Then there's the other aspect, the one that was always there and the one that formed myself and my boys; violence. The kind of nastiness that rocked the city between the dusk and the dawn and left everyone wondering how such a thing could happen just a few blocks down on 8 Mile. People would wonder at night, gun under the pillow, thinking "what was that sound?", and "am I safe?"

The answer then, as now, is "no".

[Removing his sunglasses and tucking them into a breast pocket Lee fixes his eyes hard on the camera lens and his eyes scowl as he sneers.]

REL: Then it would all fade in the light of day and people would go about their lives imagining that it was okay while all the time their city melted beneath them. Daytime would come and the yuppies and the groupies would run around having happy little lies while the likes of us slept but when the streetlights came on they ducked indoors and we played.

When I met these boys they were huckin' drunks out the front door of the Pandemonium Nightclub, a place now most well-known for the number of

deaths that happen on it's doorstep. They were always on the verge of being fired for roughin' up the crackheads and gangbangers a little too much but never quite let go because nobody else could handle the clientele. I said to 'em, I said "you boys have got to get out of this town" and they asked me "why? We like it here". And it was true.

[Stepping in from either side come a pair of bulky powerhouses in leather jackets; Sabre and Hammer. They're already painted for war; Sabre in a red-and-white bird of prey that runs from forehead to chin and Hammer with a similarly-colored bat.]

REL: But, I said, if they wanted to bust heads ... "why not do it where everybody else can see?"

Sabre: Everybody could see! They looked at us all the time, hopin' we would never look back!

Hammer: It was true. Even then we wore our letters, our cut, and whenever anybody saw the War Pigs comin' they'd get out of sight.

REL: So I said "You could make a lot of money!"

Sabre: And we were making money. Fifteen bucks an hour plus whatever we took out of punks pockets that were dumb enough to throw down.

Hammer: Life was good.

REL: They had a counter to every point ... until I started counting out the numbers, showed them what they could make--

[Raising up a copy of Fortune magazine, Lee taps it twice in his palm before unrolling it.]

REL: --and explained how there was this whole sport, big business, where a whole lot of people were claiming to be the toughest; saying they were badder than the War Pigs.

Sabre: And that could not stand.

Hammer: Oooh ... I get mad even NOW thinking about it!

REL: So we trashed some indies while Sabre sharpened his teeth and Hammer blunted his; but it wasn't wrestling. Night in and night out it was a MASSACRE! The whole affair was sad. The boys were bored, sick as hell and tired with taking apart this and that no-name geek. I didn't want my boys bored so, the very instant it became clear those indies weren't helping them hone their skills any longer we went to the one place in the world that knows professional wrestling better than any other; Japan.

From Gunryo Pro back in the day to Tiger Paw now nobody knows better how things should be in this business. Puroresu competitors and their "Strong Style" were just what the boys needed to really become the

consummate professionals and flawless wrecking machines that they are today! They didn't crumple on the first hit from Hammer and, when they hit back, Sabre actually felt something.

[Pause. The 'Pigs crowd in on either side of Lee as the camera zooms in on him.]

REL: So, when we call you "dirt", don't be offended because, frankly, it isn't our opinion; it's an informed fact. When the comparison is made between the stars of Japan and the stars of the US, well, there is no comparison. Tonight the War Pigs sweeps the dirt under the rug then piles on six feet extra for good measure on it's way to the Stampede Cup. When we get that cup it's gettin' filled to the brim with beer just to toast all those other teams' demise. We'll be sad, we'll drink, we'll get happy and, in the end, we'll still be rich and you'll still be dead. Bank on it.

[Smirk from Lee while the 'Pigs snarl. Cut.

We slowly fade back into the interior of the Tokyo Dome where the crowd is still buzzing over the super-athletic six man tag they saw a little earlier and in anticipation of what is still to come on this epic night of action. We fade again, this time back to the ringside table where Jason Dane and Bucky Wilde are seated.]

JD: While there's so much tremendous action going on here tonight in Tokyo, make no mistake that the biggest attraction is the Stampede Cup tournament itself. We began this night with twelve teams looking to write their own page of the history books but now we're left with eight.

BW: That's right, Dane. Eight teams remaining with visions of a million bucks dancing through their heads.

JD: Four matches make up this second round of action and what a tremendous four matches it'll be. First off, the War Pigs - one of the biggest tag teams in all of Japan - will take on the Lights Out Express who backed their way into the tournament but now find themselves just a few wins away from the biggest night of their lives.

BW: The War Pigs are one of the best tag teams in the world - there ain't no doubt about that. They're bigger than Anderson and Strong, stronger than them, fresher than them thanks to the bye, and with Richard E. Lee in their corner, you can call the manager situation a draw. But with all that in their favor, I'm still pickin' the LOE, daddy.

JD: How? How could you possibly make that prediction after everything you just said?

BW: I've said it time and time again - 2014 is the Year Of The Shane Gang! And I'm puttin' down all my chips on the LOE to make that begin right here tonight.

JD: You heard the man. It's time to find out if he's right. Let's go up to the ring to Megumi Sato for the introductions!

[The lights dim to cheers as the booming voice of Sato erupts and the subtitles fill the screen.]

SUBTITLES: ROUND TWO... STAMPEDE CUP... NOOOOOOOOOOW!

[Lights; Out! A loud whistle screeches over the airwaves...]

V/O: ALLLLLLL ABOOOOOOOOooooooooAAAAARRRRD!

[We hear the slow clanking of train wheels churning that quickly heightens into hard grinding noises just as the hard hitting lead guitar riff kicks in for the "Kundalini Express" by Love and Rockets. The rapid banging of drums and synthesizers fire up next before the methodical and monotone voice of Daniel Ash is cued.]

BW: Here they come, Dane! The odds-on favorite to win the Stampede Cup!

JD: Not at any sportsbook that I've seen. They weren't seeded. They had a very hard first round matchup against the Shadow Star Legion. Now they've gotta take on a very fresh War Pigs. If the Lights Out Express thinks they're going to win this one, it's going to take one heck of a gameplan.

[Smoke screens the entrance portal but soon enough the silhouettes of three figures are lit up by neon green flood lights and spiraling lasers. Miss Sandra Hayes slithers out first and the catcalls soon follow. Hayes struts out, platform white heels and all, whipping her navy blue dress around before coming to a pause with her florescent pink branding iron pointed towards the entrance. In unison, the Lights Out Express step into view.]

SUBTITLES: First... at a combined weight of 229 kilos...

"AAAAAAAAAAAAAROOOOON ANNNNNNDERRRRSONNNNNN!"

"LENNNNNNNNNNNNYYYYYYY STRONNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNG!"

"THE LIIIIIIIIIGHTS OUUUUUUUUUUUUUUT EXPRESSSSSSSSSSSSSSSS!"

[Lenny Strong's brown mullet is slicked back over his head and down to the bottom of his neck. The sides are shaven real tight, and his green, white, and gold track jacket is unzipped half way down revealing his muscular frame which is peppered with hair.

Beside him Aaron Anderson stands, stone-eyed, jacket zipped up to the throat. His thighs have white wraps around them just above the black knee pads. As the trio begin their ascension to the ring the ground fills up with smoke clouds underneath them creating this almost floating visual which is illuminated with light beams and dancing green lasers.]

JD: Aaron Anderson and Lenny Strong look no worse for wear from their first round matchup but they've gotta be fatigued. And now, going into the

Quarterfinals where all the matches have a thirty minute time limit, they've got their work cut out for them.

[The trio steps into the ring, looking out on the jeering crowd as Anderson and Strong mount the midbuckle, both making the "belt gesture."]

BW: Hah! And the L-O-E takes a minute to remind all these idiots that if they win this one, they might have a World Tag Team Title shot awaiting them in the Semifinals!

[The duo hops down, preparing for action as they huddle up with their manager for a last minute strategy session.

The lights drop to nothing to a big cry from the crowd. A raucous electric guitar starts in, drawing bigger cheers. Just before the lyrics kick in, the lights kick on to reveal a battle-worn tank standing atop the v-shaped gap in the entrance platform, having been raised by the rising lift. The cannon faces the ring as the fans roar!]

JD: What in the...? Is that a tank?!

#GENERALS GATHERED IN THEIR MASSES!#

"BOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOM!"

[The cannon fires, a huge fireball and a pillar of smoke erupting in the Tokyo Dome sky to an enormous reaction. The lyrics continue as "WAR! PIGS!" flash repeatedly on the side video walls. The middle screen is filled with shots of battles - cruise missiles destroying buildings, machine guns being fired, bombs being dropped from aircraft, warships firing their heavy deck guns...

...before slowly being overtaken by the painted faced of Sabre and Hammer, the War Pigs. Sabre lets loose a growl as Hammer shouts, "IT'S TIME FOR WAR!" to another loud reaction.

The hatch on the tank flips open as Richard E. Lee climbs out, camouflaged helmet on his skull. He's wearing dark sunglasses and chewing on a cigar as he steps out onto the front of the tank, pointing a rolled up newspaper towards the ring where Anderson and Strong are standing.

Hammer follows behind him, climbing out of the tank hatch in a camo tanktop that he rips off, throwing it into the crowd to reveal his thick physique. He's sporting long black tights, boots, and wrist wraps. "HAMMER" is printed down the left leg of his tights. His hair is cut into a mohawk and his face is splashed with some camo warpaint in the shape of a bat. He shouts to the crowd as he climbs off the tank.

Sabre brings up the rear in a similar attire. His hair is in a reverse mohawk with a Fu Manchu mustache. His paint looks like a bird of prey as he raises a muscular arm, pointing to the ring and spewing some words not fit for air on television.

The trio stands at the top of the ramp as they are introduced.]

SUBTILES: At 254 kilos...

[Cue the booming voice.]

"HAMMMMMMMMMMERRRRRRRRRRRRRRRRRR!"

"SAAAAAAAAAABRRRRRRRRRRRRRRRRRE!"

"THE WAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAR PIIIIIIIIIIIIIIIIIIIGS!"

[Lee points to the ring with his rolled-up paper again, sending Hammer and Sabre sprinting down the ramp towards the ring as fast as their powerful legs will carry their massive bodies.]

JD: HERE THEY COME AND THEY'RE READY FOR WAR!

[Hayes bails from the ring as Hammer and Sabre come through the ropes, charging across and immediately engaging with Anderson and Strong as the bell sounds!]

JD: Marty Meekly's the man in the middle for this one and he's running for cover too! Hammer and Sabre are all over them!

[Hammer easily gets Anderson down to his knees, clubbing him across the back of the head and neck with forearm smashes, chopping him down to the canvas!]

JD: The powerhouse - six foot three and 295 of solid muscle - is doing a number on Aaron Anderson as Strong and Sabre trade shots on the other side of the ring... WHOOOOOA MY!

[The crowd cheers as Sabre uses a big clothesline to take Strong over the ropes, dumping him down on the floor where Sandra Hayes rushes to his side, kneeling down next to him.]

JD: Sabre takes Strong out... and here comes the doubleteam!

[With Meekly loudly complaining, Sabre and Hammer each grab an arm on Strong, firing him across the ring...

...and with their hands joined, they flatten him with a double clothesline as Strong sails into the air, crashing down to the canvas!]

JD: Strong gets dropped with the double clothesline!

[Strong tries to roll from the ring but Sabre cuts him off, shaking his head as he hauls Strong to his feet off the mat. Meekly finally gets Hammer to step out as Sabre grabs an arm, firing him across...]

JD: Strong off the far side, ducks a clothesline...



[The King of KOs comes racing back...

...and gets his feet wiped out from under him with a big boot to the jaw, knocking Strong flat again. Strong tries to sit up but Sabre shoves him back down before leaping into the air, twisting his body to the side, and smashing a fist down between the eyes!]

JD: Leaping fistdrop... cover!

[It's not an impressive cover as Sabre plants his palms on the chest, shoving Strong down as he sticks out his tongue and growls at the nearest camera, earning just over a one count before Strong slips out, rolling as quickly as he can to escape the ring...

...but Hammer cuts him off this time, stomping him from the apron and forcing him to roll back to a waiting Sabre who hauls him back up by the arm, giving it a big twist...]

JD: Clubbing forearm across the back of the neck! And another knocks Strong down to a knee... a third puts him down on the mat!

BW: Strong hits hard with great accuracy. I'm not sure Sabre cares WHERE he's hitting you as long as he clubs you a good one.

[With Strong down, Sabre reaches out to tag his partner.]

JD: The War Pigs make the exchange, Hammer coming in as Sabre pulls Strong up...

[A whip to the corner slams Strong back into the buckles as Hammer grabs Sabre by the arm, whipping him into pursuit...

...where Sabre crushes Strong in the corner with a running clothesline!]

JD: Big clothesline...

BW: Here comes the Hammer!

[And Hammer follows his partner in with another running clothesline, this one taking Strong off his feet and dropping him into a seated position on the mat against the turnbuckles.]

JD: Sabre exits the ring, leaving the big man in there with Strong.

[Hammer grabs the top rope, repeatedly stomping Strong in the chest as the referee steps in to protest.]

JD: Marty Meekly's trying to get Hammer to back off... to let Lenny Strong up out of the corner...

[As the official gets Hammer's attention, Aaron Anderson reaches under the ropes from his spot on the floor, yanking Hammer's legs out from under him as Strong gets up, grabs the top rope, leaping into the air, and DOUBLESTOMPS Hammer's chest!]

JD: OHH!

BW: Now THAT'S a team, Dane!

[Strong scrambles into a lateral press, shouting at Meekly to count.]

JD: ONE!! TWO!!

[Hammer presses out of it, shoving Strong between the middle and bottom ropes and sending him falling out to the floor.]

JD: What a kickout! Hammer is one of the strongest men you'll ever run across in this business. He may not have the upper body definition of his partner, Sabre, but he's thick as a bull moose.

[A steaming mad Hammer rolls under the ropes to the floor, shouting at the fleeing Strong. He grabs him from behind by the trunks, pulling him back. Strong desperately swings around, smashing a forearm into the side of Hammer's head!]

JD: Oh!

BW: That'll knock whatever few brain cells Hammer has loose!

JD: Will it?!

[Hammer glares at Strong who winds up, throwing a second forearm to the jaw. Hammer shakes his head in response, hammering his chest with his fists and sending a panicked Strong backpedaling away.]

JD: Strong's making a run for it!

[But Hammer is in hot pursuit, swinging around the ringpost and following Strong who rolls under the ropes into the ring, scrambling to his feet as Hammer slides back in...

...and DROPS a leg down across the back of Hammer's head!]

JD: And- ohhh! Strong cuts him off coming back in!

BW: Brilliant move, Dane. You're sitting here thinking that Strong's running for it but he was luring that knucklehead into a trap! Now he's going to go to town on him! Get him, Lenny!

[Strong pulls Hammer up, dragging him towards the corner where he lifts him and drops him with a backdrop suplex before slapping his partner's hand.]

JD: The tag is made to Aaron Anderson!

[Anderson steps through the ropes, winds up, and drops a hard double axehandle down into the chest of Hammer, keeping him down on the mat before applying a two-handed choke!]

JD: He's choking him, fans! Marty Meekly needs to get in there and break this up!

[Anderson holds his choke until the count of four before breaking, rising to his feet and sneering at the official...

...before STOMPING Hammer's sternum, knocking him down again. A second and third stomp keep him in place as Anderson backs up, hopping up to the middle rope. He slowly rises, standing tall with his arms raised as Sandra Hayes mimics the pose from her spot on the floor.]

JD: Anderson's setting him up, measuring his man...

[Hammer slowly rises as Anderson takes flight, aiming a double axehandle at the big man's head...

...but gets SNATCHED out of the sky by the powerhouse who surges forward, smashing Anderson against the turnbuckles!]

JD: OH!

[Hammer straightens up, grabbing Anderson by the throat. He shouts at him...]

"I'M GONNA RIP OFF YOUR HEAD AND SPIT DOWN YOUR THROAT!"

[...before HURLING him end over end across the ring with a biel, bouncing him off the mat. Anderson wobbles up, standing in the corner where Sabre rushes down the length of the apron, dropping him with a running clothesline!

A furious Strong rushes in, charging towards Hammer who scoops, pivots, and DRIVES Strong into the canvas with a powerslam! Strong promptly rolls out as Anderson does the same, leaving the War Pigs to celebrate their physical dominance to the roar of the crowd.]

JD: THE WAR PIGS ARE RULING THE ROOST IN THE TOKYO DOME!

BW: These people really love these painted-up goofs, Dane!

JD: They're one of the most dominant gaijin tag teams in the history of pro wrestling here in Japan. They may not play by the rules but they're incredibly popular for sure.

[Out on the floor, Anderson, Strong, and Hayes come together again, trying to rally themselves as Hammer climbs onto the second rope, pointing at the trio and shouting threats as Sabre throws his arms apart, giving a roar to the Japanese fans.]

JD: You're going to see the Japanese fans really throw their support behind the teams representing Tiger Paw Pro still remaining in the tournament - teams like the Pigs, like VU, like Taguchi and Fujimoto. They know how much honor and prestige it would bring to their home promotion to win one of the biggest prizes in the whole sport - the Stampede Cup. You might even see them support a team like the Blonde Bombers who were, once upon a time, major stars here in Japan.

BW: They've got three teams from Tiger Paw still in the tourney. That ain't bad odds, Dane.

JD: It certainly isn't as you see the Lights Out Express huddling up again. You have to imagine that Terry Shane and Donnie White are watching this match somewhere with great interest to see if their teammates can achieve major success here tonight.

[Finally, Hammer grows tired of waiting, stepping through the ropes to the apron. He hops down to the floor, coming off Aaron Anderson who backs off, raising his hands and begging for mercy...

...which allows Lenny Strong to charge in from behind, connecting with a running forearm to the back of the head, sending Hammer pitching forward into an Anderson European uppercut!]

JD: OHH!

[Anderson stands over the downed Hammer, taking the chance to hammer his own chest and gesture to the big man who is down on the barely-padded floor. The Combat Corner graduate drags Hammer off the mat by the arm...]

JD: Aaron Anderson, the very first man to ever graduate from the Combat Corner, is hoping to make headlines all over the wrestling world here tonight by helping his partner capture the Stampede Cup and perhaps the World Tag Team Titles in the process.

[Turning slightly, Anderson puts all his 245 pounds into an Irish whip, collapsing to his knees as he rockets Hammer spinefirst into the elevated wooden ramp, causing Hammer's head to snap back in a whiplash-style motion!]

JD: HAMMER GETS \_FIRED\_ INTO THE WOODEN RAMP!!

[Hammer slumps down to his knees as Anderson pushes up off the mat, shaking his head and wagging a finger at the downed War Pig. Sandra Hayes, standing nearby, is screaming at Anderson to get over there and

"finish him off!" He nods to his manager, pursuing Hammer who pushes up to just one knee in time to get drilled with a forearm shot to the jaw!]

JD: Big forearm by Anderson, pulls Hammer up... ohh! He slams his skull down into the wooden ramp! Is the referee even counting at all?!

BW: He's tied up with Lenny Strong!

JD: And in the meantime, Anderson is having his way with Hammer out on the floor, pulling him off the mats again... ohh! Facefirst into the ring apron!

[Anderson shoves Hammer back under the ropes into the ring, using the same ropes to pull himself up on the apron. He gives a shout as he raises his right arm...

...and then slingshots his six foot five frame over the ropes, throwing a European uppercut up under the chin of a staggered Hammer who had just managed to get back to his feet before getting floored!]

JD: Wow! Aaron Anderson with a tremendous show of athleticism right there!

[Anderson pops up to his feet, gesturing at himself, drawing cheers from Sandra Hayes outside the ring and Lenny Strong out on the ring apron. A grinning Axeman pulls Hammer up by a powerful arm, setting to whip him into the corner...

...but Hammer holds his ground!]

JD: Uh oh! Anderson wants the whip but Hammer's not gonna give it to him!

[Hammer pulls Anderson back the other way, using his tremendous power to hoist Anderson off the mat, pivoting and DRIVING him down with a powerslam! He pops up to his knees, throwing his arms apart and looking towards the corner where Sabre is offering a tag.]

JD: Big time counter by Hammer of the War Pigs and now, he's looking to get the heck out of there and give his partner a chance to take this to the next level. Richard E. Lee, out on the floor, shouting encouragement to the big powerhouse as he crawls... crawls... crawls...

[Hammer pushes up to his knees again, falling forward as he slaps the hand of his partner.]

JD: Here comes Sabre!

[Sabre comes in quickly, pulling Anderson off his knees by the arm...

...and FLATTENS him with a short-arm clothesline!]

JD: Anderson goes down... but Sabre pulls him right back up!

[He fells the Axeman again with a second short-arm clothesline, putting Anderson back down on the mat. The faster member of the War Pigs hauls Anderson up a third time, tugging him into a front facelock.]

JD: He's got him hooked! Slowly turns him over... and DOWN in the neckbreaker!

[Sabre settles back, making a sloppy cover.]

JD: ONE!! TWO!!

[Anderson easily lifts the shoulder to break the pin. Sabre shouts something thankfully off-mic as he climbs back to his feet, stalking after Anderson who is crawling for the corner where Lenny Strong is waiting...

...until a leaping right forearm from Sabre sends Strong sailing off the apron to the floor!]

JD: Ohh! Sabre clears out Strong! Anderson got to the corner but he's got no one to tag into the ring!

[A smirking Sabre grabs Anderson from behind, slamming his forearm into the back of the head and neck. A second blow knocks him down to all fours where a trio of double axehandles puts him chestfirst on the mat as Sabre gives a big roar to the Tokyo Dome crowd.]

JD: Sabre points to Hammer! He's calling for the WMD!

BW: If they hit that, it's gonna be a rough flight back to the States for the Shane Gang, daddy!

[As Sabre grabs Anderson by the hair, hauling him to his feet, Miss Sandra Hayes pulls herself up on the apron, shouting at the ring and waving her pink branding iron back and forth. Sabre turns to glare at Hayes, allowing Anderson to fall down to the mat. The face-painted powerhouse has a few well-chosen words for Hayes who shouts back in response.]

JD: Sabre's losing his cool in there with Sandra Hayes.

BW: Which is exactly what she wanted. She wanted to rile him up and see if she could get him distracted long enough to buy her men some time to get away from that WMD.

[With Sabre looking the other way, Lenny Strong slides into the ring, winds up and clubs him in the back of the head with a forearm smash!]

JD: Oh! Lenny Strong off the blindside!

[Anderson drags himself up, helping his partner batter Sabre back into the ropes. The referee swings around, shouting at Strong to exit the ring as the duo whips Sabre into the ropes...]

JD: The Lights Out Express with the double clothesli- ducked by Sabre! He hits the far side!

[And leaps into the air, aiming for a double clothesline of his own...

...but Anderson and Strong bail out to the side, splitting apart to cause Sabre to miss his target.]

JD: WHOA! THEY CAUGHT HIM! THEY CAUGHT HIM!

[Anderson and Strong struggle under the weight, each holding an arm and a leg on the wiggling Sabre. They lift him up... and lower him down... then lift him higher... and lower him down, repeating the action to build momentum as they finally HURL Sabre towards the sky, bailing out as he CRASHES chestfirst to the canvas!]

JD: An incredible counter and an incredible doubleteam to boot by the Lights Out Express. Strong's out of there... Anderson with the cover! ONE!! TWO!!!

[But Sabre powers out at two, causing Anderson to slam his hand down into the canvas in frustration.]

JD: Anderson thought they had him there, fans.

[He climbs to his feet, repeatedly stomping Sabre as he turns to his corner, looking at Lenny Strong who wants a tag.]

JD: The tag is made and the Lights Out Express make the exchange again. Look out here though, another doubleteam is on the way.

[Strong and Anderson each grab an arm, pulling Sabre back into their corner. They pull him out...

...and then SLAM him back into the buckles! Referee Marty Meekly delivers a warning as the duo does it again... and again... and again...]

JD: This is getting ridiculous, Bucky!

BW: Hey, the referee can count if he wants. Right now, he's just standing there and shouting and that doesn't do anyone any good... except the Lights Out Express.

[The referee finally starts counting, allowing a few more whiplash-inducing throws to the corner before Strong and Anderson step out, walking to the center of the ring...

...and allowing Sandra Hayes to get back into the mix, slipping the branding iron around the throat of Sabre and choking relentlessly, swinging her hair back and forth as she tries to strangle her team's opposition.]

JD: Hayes is choking Sabre with that damned branding iron!

BW: But the referee's tied up with Anderson and Strong and hasn't seen a lick of it! Brilliant move by the Shane Gang and the War Pigs are in some serious trouble, Dane!

[Hayes drops down out of the referee's view as he turns around, forcing Anderson to exit the ring as Strong takes aim on a wobbling Sabre who is falling from the corner. He dashes in on him, leaving his feet, falling back into a dropkick position and lashing out with a knee to the jaw!]

JD: OHH! A flying knee strike connects!

[Strong promptly attempts a cover, earning another two count. He wastes no time after the kickout in taking the mount, grabbing the back of Sabre's head...]

JD: Big elbow from the mount position! And a second one!

BW: A little sneak preview of that Shoot Fight later tonight, Dane.

JD: It could be, for sure. Kolya Sudakov is a big fan of those elbowstrikes from the mount as fans of his work inside the world of Mixed Martial Arts will tell you.

[We hear some words shouted in Japanese in the background over the PA.]

JD: We've hit the ten minute mark in this one as these two teams battle it out to see who can advance to the Semifinals to either meet Dichotomy or the World Tag Team Champions, Skywalker Jones and Hercules Hammonds.

BW: WITH the tag team titles on the line!

JD: Thanks to the bold challenge by Jones and Hammonds that very well could be true. However, if Dichotomy were to capture the titles, I'm told the decision would be up to them if they want to continue defending the gold throughout the tournament. That holds true for any team who might defeat Jones and Hammonds here tonight. They do NOT have to continue defending the titles since that challenge was made by Jones and Hammonds.

[Strong breaks at the four count, climbing to his feet and raising his deadliest weapon - the right elbow. He gives it a loud slap before backing across the ring, giving himself room to work. He slaps the elbow a second time... and a third... and a fourth...]

JD: It's pretty obvious what Strong's looking for here, fans.

BW: And if it's obvious to you, it's obvious to Sabre too most likely. I'm not a big fan of tipping off your moves but Strong's looking to make a big impact right here.



[Sabre staggers to his feet, some of the facepaint wiped clean as Strong goes into a full spin, cocking the right arm back...

...and spinning right into a surprising standing dropkick out of Sabre!]

JD: Dropkick! Sabre saw him coming and hit the counter that Lenny Strong DIDN'T see coming! And that just might give Sabre the chance to get to the corner and make the tag to Hammer who is waiting with great anticipation.

[Hammer slams his hand down on the top turnbuckle a few times, shouting at his partner to get to the tag. Sabre rolls to all fours, turning towards the sound of his partner's voice. Richard E. Lee takes the same spot in the corner, shouting and slamming his hands into the canvas to cheer on his man.]

JD: Hammer's calling for the tag! Lee's calling for the tag! But can Sabre get to the corner and-

[But before he can make another move towards it, Sabre is cut off by Strong grabbing the ankle, yanking him back to the middle of the ring where he drives a knee down between the shoulderblades!]

JD: But Lenny Strong cuts him off!

[Strong shakes his head as he grabs the ankle, dragging Sabre back across the ring to the corner of the Lights Out Express, reaching out and slapping Aaron Anderson's hand.]

JD: Another tag by the LOE. Strong pulls Sabre up, fireman's carry!

[Anderson steps out to the middle, clapping his hands together and waving for Strong to move Sabre towards him...]

JD: The crowd is buzzing... they know what's coming! They've seen it on YouTube!

[Strong upends Sabre, flipping him towards a waiting Strong who catches Sabre's legs on his shoulders, both men holding for a moment before Strong bails out and allows Anderson to sitout in a powerbomb!]

JD: DEMOLITION DRIVER!

[Anderson shouts at the referee to count and Marty Meekly dives to the canvas.]

JD: ONE!! TWO!! TH-

[The crowd cheers as Sabre's shoulder SHOOTs off the mat in time!]

JD: No, no, no! He's out in time!

[Anderson again slams his hands down into the mat, shouting at Marty Meekly who insists it was a two count. A fuming Anderson climbs to his feet, looking down at Sabre who rolls to his stomach, avoiding a further pin attempt.]

JD: The Lights Out Express were perhaps a half a count away from a trip to the Semifinals of this tournament, fans.

[Nodding to his partner, Anderson reaches down towards Sabre who has pulled himself up on all fours to secure a gutwrench.]

JD: You've gotta be kidding me! Aaron Anderson is going to try this lift on a 265 pound man!

BW: This kid is freakishly strong, Dane, and it's all tendon strength. He doesn't look like your typical musclehead but he's got power for days.

[With a grunt, Anderson hoists Sabre off the mat, dangling him in the gutwrench for several moments...

...and then lifts one more time, flipping him over and dumping him down across a bent knee!]

JD: TOBACCO ROAD BREAKER!!

[Anderson swings his arms apart in a "it's over!" gesture as he settles in for a cover.]

JD: ONE!! TWO!! TH-

[But again, Sabre kicks out in time. Anderson fumes as he glares at Marty Meekly who again holds up two fingers. The former Combat Corner student climbs to his feet, shoving Meekly with both hands hard in the chest.]

JD: Whoa!

BW: He needs to be careful about something like that. I know he's fired up, I know he's frustrated. But the wrong move in a match like this costs you so much. If he'd gotten disqualified over that, they'd be out of the tournament and what an awful way to go out!

[Meekly points to the AWA logo on his chest, telling Anderson something similar.]

JD: Marty Meekly's not going to tolerate that - despite the last name. He's telling Anderson that if he does it again - if he lays his hands on him - he'll stop the match right there.

[A furious Anderson snatches Sabre off the mat, spinning him around as he grabs hold of his left wrist...]

JD: He's looking for the Cobra Clutch!

BW: Yeah, but he ain't lookin' for the crossface. Anderson wasn't one of the few that Michaelson decided to teach the crossface to... and you better believe that eats at him every day.

JD: The Cobra Clutch Crossface has become synonymous with the Combat Corner as men like Eric Preston and Supreme Wright were taught it and have used it to great effectiveness but for Anderson...

[Anderson yanks Sabre up into the air and SLAMS him down with a cobra clutch slam!]

JD: FINAL COMBAT!

BW: A little message to Michaelson and all the rest of the Combat Corner students!

[Anderson again covers.]

JD: ONE!! TWO!! THREE-

[This time, the shoulder BARELY makes it up in time as Aaron Anderson flips out, kicking the ropes repeatedly, threatening to backhand the official who dives out of the way.]

JD: Anderson's snapped! He thought he had him for sure right there!

BW: He's gotta be careful though. I dig the intensity but if he goes too far, Meekly will ring him up for it.

JD: And Miss Sandra Hayes is explaining that to him right now from her place at ringside.

BW: The lovely Miss Sandra Hayes, Dane.

JD: Beauty is only skin deep, Bucky, and underneath the skin, that woman is a terror on heels.

[We cut to a closeup of the beautiful Sandra Hayes shouting to her charge from out on the floor as Anderson pulls Sabre up, dragging him to the corner where he tags Lenny Strong back in.]

JD: Another tag by the LOE...

[Anderson scoops Sabre up, slamming him down near the ropes as Strong grabs the top rope, slingshotting up and over...

...and DOWN onto a prone Sabre with a senton!]

JD: OHHH! Nice doubleteam by the Lights Out Express!

[Strong rolls over, about to make a cover when he discovers that Sabre has rolled under the ropes out to the safety of the ring apron.]

JD: Sabre rolls out! He knew a pin attempt was coming, he wasn't sure if he could kick out but he had the presence of mind to get out of the ring and give himself a chance to recover.

[Lenny Strong shakes his head at the referee as he leans over the ropes, pulling Sabre up to his feet...

...where Sabre connects with a right hand!]

JD: Big right hand!

[A tired Sabre sucks wind for a moment before delivering a second haymaker!]

JD: Another right hand!

[Strong stumbles back as Sabre grabs the top rope with both hands, still sucking wind as another announcement is made over the PA system.]

JD: Fifteen minutes expired! We've reached the halfway point in the time limit... another right hand out of Sabre!

[Grabbing the stunned Strong by the back of the head, Sabre drops down off the apron, snapping Strong's throat down on the top rope!]

JD: OHH! Sabre with the big attack and Strong's down!

[Sabre rolls under the ropes, crawling across the ring again towards his partner's outstretched hand...]

JD: Hammer's ready and waiting for his partner to make that tag!

BW: Sabre's been in there a long time now, Dane.

JD: He certainly has but he's on his way! He's looking to get out of there and let his partner get them back into this thing.

[Strong rolls to his knees, grabbing at his throat as he spots Sabre on a direct trajectory towards the corner and his partner...]

JD: Sabre's looking for the tag! Hammer's waiting for it and-

[Strong makes a diving attempt to stop it as Sabre lunges...]

JD: THERE'S THE TAG!

[The crowd cheers as Hammer steps in, racing across the ring and drilling a surprised Aaron Anderson with a right hand that sends him off the apron.]

Hammer turns his back to the corner, slamming a meaty fist into his chest a few times, stomping the mat repeatedly as Strong climbs to his feet...

...and gets FLIPPED INSIDE OUT with a running leaping double sledge to the chest!]

JD: HIIIIIIIGH IMPACT!

[Hammer throws his arms apart with a roar as Strong lies stunned on the canvas. The big man throws a glance to the corner, seeing if his partner is recovered yet.]

JD: Fans of the War Pigs know that move often leads directly into the WMD but right now, Sabre's in no condition to deliver that flying bulldog off the top rope so Hammer's going right back after Strong, dragging him to his feet...

[The big man pulls Strong into a front facelock, slinging an arm over the back of his neck...]

JD: Suplex coming up... up goes Strong!

[But Hammer has no intention of making it go that easy, holding Strong upside down for an extended period of time.]

JD: Look at the power! The blood all flowing down into the head of Lenny Strong!

BW: He's walking with him, Dane!

JD: How in the world do you manage to do that?!

[Hammer walks out to the middle of the ring, holds him high for a few more seconds...

...and brings him down HARD on the canvas! Strong sits up on the impact but flops back down as Hammer strikes a big double bicep pose.]

JD: Hammer again checks the corner to see if his partner is ready but Sabre is STILL down.

BW: He was in there a long time and took a tremendous amount of punishment.

[The big man walks around the downed Strong a couple of times before settling back into a neutral corner, watching and waiting as Strong tries to climb off the mat to his feet...]

JD: Strong's struggling back up to his feet...

[And as he gets there, Hammer comes barreling out of the corner, arms crossed over his massive chest...

...and then CONNECTS with a king-sized shoulder tackle, flinging his arms apart for dramatic effect as Strong goes up into the air, spiraling before slamming down onto the mat!]

JD: Have you EVER seen a tackle like that?!

BW: The War Pigs are one of the best tag teams walking the planet and they're showing the entire world why they deserved that Top 4 seed in the tournament! The LOE is in serious trouble right here!

[Hammer turns to the corner...

...and gets a thumbs-up from his rising partner to a HUGE reaction from the crowd!]

JD: And NOW Sabre is ready!

[Hammer walks to the corner, aggressively slapping his partner's hand before turning back to Strong. The slowly rising Strong gets muscled around as Hammer leans over, lifting him into electric chair position...]

JD: HAMMER'S GOT HIM UP! SABRE IS CLIMBING THE TURNBUCKLES!!

[A wobbly Sabre reaches the top, steadying himself as Hammer gets into position near the corner...

...and takes flight, snaring Strong in a side headlock...]

JD: WMD!

[...and DRIVES him facefirst into the canvas with the flying bulldog!]

JD: BULLDOG OFF THE TOP!!! THE COVER!!! ONE!! TWO!!! THRE-

[The crowd roars as Sandra Hayes strikes, yanking Marty Meekly from the ring by the ankle!]

JD: HAYES! HAYES SAVES THE MATCH FOR THE LOE!

[Meekly shouts at Hayes, repeatedly screaming at her as Sabre staggers to his feet, looking puzzled. His partner is already on the move, reaching over the ropes as Meekly climbs up on the apron...

...and lifts Meekly over the ropes, hands under his armpits as he sets him standing back down on the mat!]

JD: Hammer brings him back in!

BW: The War Pigs are HOT! Hammer is shouting at Meekly!

JD: Can you blame them?! They had the match won!

[Meekly shouts back at Hammer, waving him out of the ring as he turns to shout at Sandra Hayes who is up on the apron now...

...when Aaron Anderson comes rushing across the ring, throwing himself into the air as he leaps off one leg, swinging the other one up right into the jaw of Hammer!]

JD: OHHHHHHH!

[The blow sends Hammer falling backwards...

...right into the back of Marty Meekly, sending him falling forwards into the ropes!]

JD: Down goes the referee!

BW: Hammer attacked him!

JD: He did not! Aaron Anderson knocked Hammer into the official!

[Anderson grabs Sabre by the arm but gets it reversed, sending him SAILING over the top rope to the floor!]

JD: ANDERSON GOES OVER THE TOP!

[Hammer yanks a barely-moving Lenny Strong off the mat, shoving him towards Sabre as Hammer steps up onto the second rope, sitting down on the top turnbuckle. Sabre pulls Strong into vertical suplex position, lifting him up and setting him down on Hammer's shoulder.]

JD: Wait a second! Hammer stands! He's got him set!

[With a howl, Hammer leaps off the second rope...

...and DRIVES Strong into the canvas with a thunderous powerslam!]

JD: POWERSLAM OFF THE SECOND ROPE!! THAT'S IT!!

[Hammer bails out to the floor, tying up Aaron Anderson as Sabre crawls over the downed Strong. Marty Meekly drops down to his knees, lifting his hand into the air...

...and tapping Sabre on the back three times before turning to signal for the bell.]

JD: What the...?!

"DING! DING! DING!"

JD: What is going on here?! Why are they ringing the bell?!

BW: We're nowhere near the time limit, right?

JD: Not at all. I can't figure out... Marty Meekly is conferring with the ringside officials, explaining what's going on and-

[Dane pauses, listening.]

JD: Oh, I can't believe this!

[Meekly marches back into the ring as the ring announcer shouts something in Japanese that seems to enrage the Tokyo Dome crowd.]

JD: He's disqualified the War Pigs!

[Meekly raises the hand of a motionless Lenny Strong, pointing to him as Sandra Hayes screams with joy out on the floor.]

JD: The Lights Out Express are advancing to the Semifinals thanks to a questionable decision from Marty Meekly who - all I can imagine is that he believes Hammer hit him from behind.

BW: He did! Open your eyes, Dane. Didn't you see that?

JD: I saw the Lights Out Express knock him INTO the referee! And I'm sure that's what you saw too. But when Marty Meekly turned his back, Hammer was behind him arguing with him and the next thing he knew, he was being hit from behind. It's an easy mistake to make but... well, in my opinion, referees should only be calling what they see. But regardless if you agree with the decision or not, Anderson and Strong are heading to the Semifinals to take on the winner of our next match - the World Tag Team Title showdown between Dichotomy and the champs! Let's hear from both teams right now!

[Back in the bowels of the facility, where the Rising Sun Showdown logo backdrop is located, Mark Stegglet is standing next to the odd couple known as Dichotomy. They've already showered and changed into fresh attire from their first round appearance. The wrestling gear is identical to their normal gear, Ginn now wears an N7-logo black polo shirt, and Hoefner now wears a black T-Shirt with "There are two kinds of people in the world: those who can extrapolate from incomplete data" printed on it. They both seem to have surprisingly sour expressions, given the circumstances.]

MS: With me at this time, the team known as Dichotomy. This had to be a best-case scenario for you gentlemen; you got past the Baddest Thangs Running with some chicanery in the first round, and are relatively fresh for a matchup with the World Tag Team Champions, Skywalker Jones and Hercules Hammonds, with not only a trip to the Semifinals, but the richest prize in our sport on the line.

MG: Negative. A "best case" scenario would have involved our esteemed champions having to wrestle in the first round like everyone else. But it is hardly surprising that they consider themselves above everyone. And since



everyone else also seems to believe the same, we have decided to emulate them in the one aspect that truly causes them to stand out from everyone else.

MH: We hired some random guy to stand around and yell during our interview.

[With that, former AWA preliminary wrestler Kyle Houlder steps into the background, behind everyone. He's been wrestling in Japan, you see. The long-haired bushy-bearded grappler is wearing a white T-shirt, white coat, and cheesy clip on tie. He yells out "STEALING YOUR GIMMICK!" Ginn winces, because this was very much not his idea... Hoefner is the one smirking.]

MG: I am sure that you consider the World Tag Team Championship more valuable than the Stampede Cup, correct?

MS: Of course. While different organizations have backed World Tag Team Championships over the years, if you take the history of our sport as a lineage, the bearer of the championship joins a list of the all time greats. The Fraternity Boys, the Outlaws, the Epitome Of Cool, the Machines, the Prophets Of Rage, Strictly Business, the Down Boys, Dynasty, and the list goes on.

MG: In what way will meager sentiment improve our lives?

[Houlder yells, "IN THE ABSTRACT!"]

MH: How many tag team champions have you forgotten over time?

["ALMOST ALL OF THEM!"]

MH: How many 'great moments' that a team had, where they were crowned after giving their all, where they had this great match that people were sure would be remembered forever, and barely twenty people remember their names?

["PRETTY MUCH EVERYONE!"]

MG: No, your championship equates to only one thing, and that is increased revenue.

["SHOW THEM THE MONEY!"]

MS: This is the history and the legacy of our sport you're talking about!

MH: And no matter what we do, no matter who we beat, we'll never fit in to your little Cliffs Notes version of it. We came here for the money, Stegglet. For the money.

["THE MONEY!"]

MH: They say money can't buy happiness? Give me a hundred dollar bill and watch me smile. You keep your history books; they get rewritten all the time. We'll take the cold hard cash.

MG: We do appreciate that the championships will in fact grant us a significantly advanced financial intake. Perhaps enough to keep us involved after procuring the million dollar prize. But spare us your hyperinflated opinions and nostalgic distortions. The only pride we will carry from holding those belts is the satisfaction of silencing the droning masses who proclaim Skywalker Jones and Hercules Hammonds the greatest things to come along since the development of non-embryonic pluripotent stem cells over in Kyoto.

MS: I... don't think I've ever heard that worded quite that way.

MG: Because you're an uneducated imbecile. You probably don't even see the glaring flaw in Jones and Hammonds.

MH: That's a ship with one sail. Burn that down and it's going nowhere.

["NOWHERE!"]

MS: You've made several references to this now. You say that Jones and Hammonds have a weak link. Then, in your opinion, which one is it?

MH: Opinion?! Try fact! And it is so obvious, that it's like asking which member of the Jackson Five was going to be the star.

["ALL THE YOUNG KIDS KNEW!"]

MG: We'll expose 'SkyHerc' for what they are in moments, assuming that the far more talented of the two does decide to tag out at any point. And then won't all of the pundits who laud them feel foolish. Of course, they were half right. That's a fifty percent increase from their usual efficacy.

["DO THE MATH!"]

MH: Yeah, we know what they can do.

["YELL A LOT!"]

MH: We know it won't be easy. But we didn't fly all the way to Crapan to roll over and die. It's about time somebody took an axe to that hype machine, and when we're done here, the only gold those two will have will be in their teeth.

[Dichotomy leaves, and Stegglet wraps up.]

MS: Alright, Dichotomy is focused...

["FOCUSED!"]

MS: ...if nothing else, on their second round match with Skywalker Jones and Hercules Hammonds, with the World Tag Team Titles on the line.

["WHAT A DUMB MOVE!"]

MS: Let's go back to ringside.

["WHERE'S GORDON?!"]

MS: Will you stop?!

["NO."]

[Stegglet stomps off screen, and we go back to Dane and Wilde.]

BW: Heh, I always wondered where he went.

JD: The important thing is that we're moments away from our first World Tag Team Title match, out of potentially three.

BW: It'll be the last. Dichotomy's not dumb enough to put the belts up for nothing, like SkyHerc is. That kind of lack of foresight is what's going to cost them.

JD: We've heard from Dichotomy... now let's hear from the champs!

[We open back to a shot of Mark Stegglet, standing by with Skywalker Jones and Hercules Hammonds. Jones is dressed in a white and gold ring robe, with his half of the AWA World Tag Team titles held up high in the air behind him by Buford P. Higgins. Meanwhile, Hammonds is no frills, dressed in color matching white wrestling trunks and boots with gold and black trim. His title belt rests over his massive right shoulder. Stegglet turns to the camera and begins to speak.]

JS: Hey there, folks! I'm standing by with the number one seed in the Stampede Cup and the reigning and defending AWA World Tag Team champions, Skywalker Jones and Hercules Hammonds! Gentlemen, tonight, you've vowed to win the Stampede Cup and defend your AWA World Tag Team titles an unprecedented THREE times in order to do it. However, your first test comes in the form of the team known as Dichotomy, who have stated that they have a plan to defeat you two, by exploiting your so-called "weak link." Your thoughts going into this match?

[Jones raises an eyebrow at the mention of a "weak link".]

SJ: "Weak link"?

JS: Well...that was their words, not mine.

SJ: Lemme ask you something, little man...Are these the faces of two men that are worried about some jiggadolts runnin' around shootin' their mouths off talking that mess about a "weak link"?

[Jones points to himself and to a stern-faced Hammonds.]

SJ: Do we look like two men worryin', shakin', and QUAKIN' in our boots, 'cause two baseheads think they've cracked the code to the greatest mystery in all of wrestling: How to defeat Hercules Hammonds and Skywalker Jones?

[The high-flyer frowns.]

SJ: Do we look like two men sweatin' it out and panickin', 'cause those a couple of geeks off the street, think they've got the blueprint, the master plan, the Rosetta Stone, the keys to the kingdom right in the palm of their hands, that'll open up the gates to paradise and hand'em the Tag Team titles?

[Jones shakes his head defiantly.]

SJ: HEEEEEEEELLLLLLLLLLLLLLLLLLLLLLLLLLLLLLLL NO!

HH: Those words are nothin' but the desperate hopes of two desperate men.

[Stegglet is startled by Hammonds' suddenly speaking, the big man's booming bass voice demanding full attention.]

HH: Lemme tell you, they WISH it could be that easy. They want nothin' more in the world than to BELIEVE that it's that easy. They'll say any stupid, over-exaggerated, controversial, mind-blowin', eye-rollin', headshakin' damn foolish thing on their minds just to gain one...ONE possible advantage.

[Jones jumps in front of Hammonds.]

SJ: But there AIN'T no blueprint! There AIN'T no big secret! There AIN'T no shortcuts to gettin' the AWA World Tag Team Titles!

[Hammonds nods in agreement.]

HH: Me and Jones put the titles on the line in the Cup, 'cause we're aimin' for greatness. 'Cause we're aimin' for glory. 'Cause we're willin' to risk everything and give the performance of our damn LIVES, to prove that there ain't NO doubt who the very best tag team in the world is.

[Hammonds' eyes open wide and he flares his nostrils.]

HH: And then there's Dichotomy, starin' straight at the biggest match of their careers comin' right at'em, layin' all \_their\_ hopes...

...on some cheap parlor trick.

[The strongest man in all the land rolls his eyes with disgust.]

HH: That's exactly why some people will always be underdogs...

[He readjusts the title belt hanging over his shoulder.]

HH: ...and why some people will always be champions.

[Jones pulls Stegglet by the wrist, bringing the microphone back to him.]

SJ: They can climb to the top of Mount Fuji and shout it to the heavens! Put it up in twenty feet high neon letters in Harujuku! Tattoo it on the back of Godzilla and it still wouldn't matter!

Everyone always thinks they got a plan! Everyone always thinks they can exploit a weakness! Everyone is always so damn sure they've got it all figured out!

HH: And then...

...they actually have'ta step into that ring.

[Jones nods, before turning his attention directly at the camera, a more serious look on his face now.]

SJ: One million dollars. The Stampede Cup. The AWA World Tag Team Titles.

Immortality.

[A beat.]

SJ: THAT is what is on the line.

[Jones lets it all sink in, before continuing on.]

SJ: Dichotomy.

[He tilts his head slightly.]

SJ: Do you think for one second, that weakness that you think you found, no matter how big or small, will be enough?

[He tilts his head to the other side, leaning in just a bit closer to the camera.]

SJ: Do you think for one second, that me and Herc, the two men that brought down Royalty....the two men that went life and death with The Blonde Bombers not once, not twice, but THREE times...the two men in this tournament with EVERYTHING to lose and EVERYTHING to gain...

...are gonna' just lay down and die?

[He closes his eyes and gives a short laugh, before turning his head towards Hammonds.]

SJ: Lemme' ask YOU, Herc...

Do we look like two men worried about a weak link?

[Hammonds contemplates that question for a second, before shaking his head slowly.]

HH: Nah, Jones.

[He looks straight ahead, directly into the camera, staring hard.]

HH: We look like two men...

...ready to win The Stampede Cup.

[Jones smiles at Hammonds' answer, giving a quick clap, before patting Mark Stegglet on the shoulder and walking off. Hammonds and Buford follow close behind as we fade back to another panning shot of the Tokyo Dome crowd.]

PA: # WE! ARE! IN! CON! TROL!

[For the second time, "Vengeance" by The Protomen plays, and again the lighting in the Tokyo Dome switches to a single bluish-white spotlight shining on the entranceway from the area over the ring. The exact spotlight that is shining switches in time with the music, creating an unusual strobe effect. Once the opening section is finished and the speed picks up, bluish-white lighting appears along the entrance and rampway along with the now rapidly-changing spotlight, so the effect becomes more background and less eyestrain inducing. The video wall begins with a montage of Dichotomy highlights, incorporating a team logo (the triangle-biohazard symbol). The voice of Megumi Sato is heard as subtitles appear.]

SUBTITLES: This is the second match in the second round! Introducing first... at 221 kilos...

[The subtitles disappear as the voice is heard bellowing over the PA system.]

"MAAAAAAAAAAATT GINNNNNNNNNNNNNNN!"

"MAAAAAAARRRRRRRRRK HOOOOOEFNER!"

"DIIIIIIIIIIIIIIIIICHOTOMYYYYYYYYYYYYYYY!"

[The duo known as Dichotomy again emerges, taking their time heading down the aisle to be as rested as possible for this second-round match. Both men have showered and changed in the long period between matches, but wear wrestling gear similar to what they wore in round one: black trunks with large triangular patterns on each hip in a secondary color (white for Ginn, red for Hoefner), running from waist to legline, and black-and-secondary boots, elbowpads, and kneepads. The boots, pads, and triangular parts of the trunks feature the three-circle biohazard symbol. The duo wears the respective shirts that they wore in the interview spot we saw played moments ago.]

JD: The pressure is really ratcheted sky-high for Dichotomy in this one. This is a World Tag Team Title match that they otherwise might not have gotten, so not only is the Stampede Cup on the line, but so is the gold.

BW: But gold's all they care about... as in the spendable kind. I know Stegglet was upset about it, and even I question that attitude. But if you think about it, that is a big advantage in this match.

JD: How so?

BW: Pressure. The weight of history is not on their shoulders. All they came here to do is to make a ton of money. The belts just add to the money you get in the long run, from their perspective, so it changes nothing for them. Yes, it is still the biggest match of their lives, but it's nothing they're not prepared for. They won't be awed by the moment, and they've already shown that they're not awed by the crowd.

JD: I suppose that makes some sense, but I am not sure how I would feel about having the World Tag Team Titles around the waists of men who don't care about it. That would be a slap in the face of a whole lot of people.

BW: They'd slap their grandmothers in the face for a payout, so I'm pretty sure they don't care. I'm more interested in who the weak link is.

[Upon reaching the ring, Hoefner and Ginn go through the same ritual as before. Ginn hassles the referee while Hoefner scans the area. We cut back to Megumi Sato.]

SUBTITLES: Introducing now, Skywalker Jones and Hercules Hammonds' personal ring announcer, Buford P. Higgins.

[The Japanese crowd cheers for the internationally renown Higgins, who struts his way down to the ring, not wearing his usual all-white suit, but instead upgrading it to a much fancier all-white tuxedo complete with top hat. He steps in between the ropes and refuses the microphone from Megumi Sato, instead reaching into his jacket and pulling out his trademark gold microphone.]

SUBTITLES: Thanks, but no thanks, little mama! I brought my own microphone!

[The crowd gasps in surprise at Higgins, who just spoke in near perfect Japanese. Higgins turns his attention to the crowd, cackling.]

SUBTITLES: Don't act so shocked, people...it's the duty of the world's greatest ring announcer to spread the gospel of greatness in any language!

[The crowd roars!]

JD: Buford P. Higgins speaks Japanese!?

BW: For all the money Jones and Hammonds must be paying him to sing their praises, you have to believe that's not the only language he speaks. Then again, I'm pretty sure "Jooooooooonnnnnneeees" sounds the same whether it's in English, Japanese, Spanish, or Martian.

[Buford clears his throat and begins to speak.]

SUBTITLES: Tokyo, Japan, we've traveled across the world, just to show you the best tag teams in the world...and here is the greatest! Tonight, they step into the ring at an unbelievable, undeniable, simply unstoppable...FIVE HUNDRED AND FIFTEEN POUNDS!!!

First, there's the man who can bench press Tokyo Tower! He is the undisputed strongest in all the land! Ladies! Keep yourselves decent! Men! Make sure your women can still be brides after they see him! He is the pride of Tupelo, Mississippi...

HERCULES!

HERCULES!

HERCULLLLEEEEEEESSSS....

[Buford suddenly sticks the microphone in Megumi's face and she doesn't miss a beat...]

"HAAAAAAAAAMMMMMMMMMMMMMMMMMMOOOOOOOOOOONNNNNNNNNNDDDD DDSSSS!!!"

[The crowd explodes with cheers, as Buford take the microphone back and continues on.]

SUBTITLES: And his partner! He is hotter than wasabi! Spicier than your mother's curry! And more electrifying than Kabukichō at night! He is professional wrestling's very own "Mr. Steal the Spotlight!" I'm talking about the greatest athlete, entertainer, showman, and wrestler of all-time! He is the one and only...

Sky. Walker.

[Buford takes a deep breath, but pauses and turns to Megumi, making a "come hither" motion with his finger. She walks up to Buford and the two then scream in unison...]

"JOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOONNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNEEEEEEEEEEE EEEEESSSS!!!"

[The lights then dim, as "The Show Goes On" by Lupe Fiasco begins to play and spotlights on the ramp flicker on and off in time to the music. Suddenly, a throng of Japanese girls dressed as cheerleaders burst through the entrance, surrounding the two men that emerge with them, the AWA World Tag Team champions, Hercules Hammonds and Skywalker Jones.



Jones is dressed in a white ring robe with gold trim. He is a young, good-looking African- American male with a mini-fro and neatly trimmed goatee. One lone spotlight hits him, as he lays his half of the world tag team title belts on the ground in front of him at the point where the v-shaped ramp meets and drops to his knees, holding out his arms, as the massive Hammonds, a stern-faced, African-American male in matching white wrestling trunks and white boots with gold trim, stands behind him, raising his title belt over his head. At that moment...

"OHHHHHHH!!!"

...Jones and Hammonds "make it rain", showering the crowd with flakes of gold and dollar bills that float down from the ceiling! The two then proceed to walk down the rampway, with the cheerleaders following. Stopping about halfway down the rampway, Jones stops. He hands his tag title to Hammonds and removes his robe, revealing white leg-length wrestling tights with gold trim. He then takes a step back, suddenly breaking out into a sprint running the rest of the way towards the ring, before leaping over the top rope in a somersault, landing on his back and rolling backup to his feet to a roar from the crowd!

Jones snatches the mic away from his personal ring announcer, turning towards Dichotomy who is out on the floor.]

SJ: NOW... I want the two of you listen to what I have to sa-

[The sound goes away, leaving Jones speaking into a dead mic. He looks agitated, tapping the top of the mic, testing it again. He shouts into the mic to no avail. We cut to the floor where Matt Ginn is holding the end of an audio cord in his hand.]

JD: Hey! They cut the sound! Somehow, Dichotomy managed to cut the sound on the house mic and-

[A furious Skywalker Jones comes charging across the ring, HURLING himself over the top rope onto Ginn with a somersault plancha that wipes him out!]

JD: DOWN GOES DICHOTOMY OFF THE DIVE OVER THE TOP!

BW: Not both of 'em!

[With Ginn down and Jones on the floor, Hoefner grabs Jones by the arm...]

"CLAAAAAAAAAAAAANG!"

JD: HE SENDS HIM TO THE STEEL!

[Hoefner throws kick after kick to the torso as referee Johnny Jagger prevents Hercules Hammonds from following his partner out to the floor.

Jagger signals for the bell as Hammonds steps out of the ring and Hoefner shoves Jones under the ropes into the ring.]

JD: Mark Hoefner puts Skywalker Jones back into the ring after getting the early edge out on the floor.

BW: Hey, Jones put himself in that position! Maybe he's the weak link!

JD: Do you really believe there's anything to this "weak link" garbage or is it Dichotomy just playing mindgames with the World Tag Team Champions?

BW: Even if it is a mind game, that means that there's something to it, daddy.

[Back on his feet in the ring, Hoefner launches into a series of hard stomps to the back of Jones' head before dropping to his knees, grabbing two hands full of hair...

...and SLAMS Jones' face into the mat!]

JD: Faceslam by Mark Hoefner! Six foot one, 229 out of Shenandoah, Pennsylvania... ohh! Into the canvas a second time!

[The dirty pool tactics of Hoefner show up immediately as he rubs Jones' face back and forth on the mat, burning his skin with the canvas. The referee jumps in, laying in a count that Hoefner obliges, breaking at four as he gets back to his feet, leaping up to drop an elbow into the kidneys!]

JD: Leaping elbow connects and Hoefner's trying to immobilize Jones, keep the high flyer down on the mat where he can punish him with the same sort of offense we've seen out of him so far.

BW: Brilliant strategy. I wonder who came up with it for 'em.

JD: Bucky Wilde, are you implying that you helped Ginn and Hoefner scout the World Tag Team Champions and adopt this gameplan?!

BW: I ain't implyin' nothin', Dane. I'm just sayin' that they've got a heck of a strategy so far and it'd take a real good wrestling mind to come up with it.

JD: Like yourself?

BW: I'm flattered that you think of me as a real good wrestling mind, Dane.

[Hoefner hauls Jones off the mat by the hair, waving for his partner to lift his lengthy leg up on the top rope...

...and SMASHES Jones' head into the raised boot!]

JD: Hoefner with the tag... in comes Matt Ginn...

[Each man grabs an arm, shooting Jones across as they look for a double clothesline.]

JD: Jones ducks under...

[He leaps up to the middle rope, springing off with a double back elbow but Ginn and Hoefner block it, catching Jones before lifting him up...

...and dropping him down in a double atomic drop!]

JD: Ohhh! Big time double atomic drop!

BW: That'll send a jolt down your spine!

[Hoefner steps out as Ginn slowly raises his left leg up as high as he can and DROPS a knee down into the chest of Jones, settling into a lateral press but only getting a two count.]

JD: Hoefner and Ginn are battling for a trip to the Semifinals to face the Lights Out Express AND for the World Tag Team Titles.

[Ginn promptly gets up, walking to the corner where he tags his partner back in.]

JD: That was a quick time in the ring for Matt Ginn right there.

BW: Intelligence.

JD: Huh?

BW: Intelligence is Matt Ginn's greatest weapon and he knows that one of his biggest weaknesses is trying to deal with high flying tactics like he's likely to see out of Skywalker Jones. It's smarter for Dichotomy to have Hoefner in there when Jones is in there.

JD: That sounds like something that a manager might say.

BW: Well, I am a former multiple time Southern Manager Of The Year, Dane.

JD: I meant THEIR manager.

[Hoefner pulls Jones off the mat, shoving him back into the neutral corner where he opens fire with a series of hard kicks into the torso as Hercules Hammonds shouts encouragement across the ring at his championship partner. Turning his back on the corner, Hoefner snapmares Jones down into a seated position on the mat...

...and then leaps up, throwing a dropkick to the back of the head!]

JD: Hoefner with the dropkick from behind... and a cover!

[Again, Dichotomy only gets a two count before Jones slips out of the pinning predicament. Hoefner throws a leg over the top, dropping big bombs into the jaw of Jones as the Human Highlight Reel attempts to cover up to no avail. The referee's count again breaks off the attack as Hoefner climbs to his feet...

...and leaps up, dropping an elbow down into the ribcage!]

JD: Another elbowdrop!

[Hoefner sits up on the mat, grinning towards his corner where Ginn is offering to come back in. Hoefner climbs up, gesturing for Ginn to raise the leg again...]

JD: Hoefner dragging him to the corner a second time and-

[But this time, Jones catches Hoefner with a flash back elbow to the jaw, stunning him long enough for Jones to slam Hoefner's head into Ginn's raised boot!]

JD: Jones uses Dichotomy's plan against them!

[A pair of well-aimed right hands sends Hoefner stumbling back as Ginn grabs Jones by the hair, holding tight as Hoefner charges back in...

...and Jones lands another snap elbow to the chin, sending Ginn falling back as Hoefner smashes into the empty turnbuckles when Jones bails out!]

JD: Jones is fighting them both off single-handedly!

[Jones hops up to the midbuckle, ready to fly off onto a stunned Hoefner...

...but Hoefner throws himself towards the corner blindly, causing Jones to leap high into the air, soaring over Hoefner with a front somersault, rolling across the ring to...]

JD: HERE COMES HERC!

[Hammonds comes into the ring, barreling across at top speed and crushing Hoefner in the corner with a running clothesline. The big man leans over, grabbing the middle rope...]

JD: Big shoulders to the body - over and over again in the corner!

[He straightens up, grabbing Hoefner by the head and neck...

...and LAUNCHES him halfway across the ring, bouncing him off the canvas before Hoefner rolls out to the floor, shaking his head at what just happened.]

JD: Jones and Hammonds are SO explosive. Mark Hoefner had Skywalker Jones trapped in the corner, working him over with his partner's aid but just

like that, Jones escapes, tags out, and in comes the big man full of fire and impact!

[Out on the floor, Ginn and Hoefner huddle up, looking up in the ring where the big man is walking around, slamming a fist into his chest a few times as Buford P. Higgins talks him up from the floor.]

JD: Hercules Hammonds, standing six foot five and weighing nearly three hundred pounds, is a second generation star out of Tupelo, Mississippi. Fans in the Gulf Coast region back home know the original Hercules Hammonds as a fighting man of the people. Well, Hammonds and Jones may have become one of the most popular duos in the AWA but no one would ever argue that Hammonds is a working man's wrestler.

[Hammonds climbs up on the middle rope, bellowing at the opposition as he waves them back into the ring. After a few more moments (and the referee's count of eight), Hoefner climbs up on the apron...

...where Hammonds quickly approaches, using another biel throw to take Hoefner over the top, throwing him down to the canvas.]

BW: Well, Dane... who would you call the weak link so far?

JD: No one! I wouldn't... ever! That whole thing is ludicrous!

[Hammonds stalks towards the downed Hoefner who is sliding back on his rear towards his corner...]

BW: Look at this! Look at this!

[Getting the over-eager Hammonds where he wants him, Hoefner springs forward, hooking a handful of Hammonds' trunks, and YANKS him towards the corner where Ginn connects with a right hand between the eyes!]

JD: Oh! Cheapshot with the closed fist by Matt Ginn!

[Hoefner climbs to his feet, tagging in his partner.]

JD: Dichotomy makes the exchange... both men in now...

[Ginn and Hoefner each grab Hammonds by the arm, tying him up...

...and SNAPPING him back down to the canvas with a double side Russian legsweep!]

JD: Nice doubleteam by Dichotomy!

[Hoefner rolls out as Ginn attempts a cover, hooking the far leg and earning a two count before Hammonds powers out.]

JD: Two count only for Matt Ginn.

[Ginn doesn't allow Hammonds to get off the mat, promptly securing a rear chinlock down on the canvas, leaning on the back of Hammonds' neck to try and wear him down.]

BW: And this is a matchup that Dichotomy should take advantage of. Matt Ginn is an accomplished mat wrestler and he certainly has the ability to outwrestle Hercules Hammonds, Dane.

JD: He can't overpower him though so it's important for Ginn to keep him on the mat and punish him with his arsenal of submission holds.

[Ginn takes a knee, squeezing the hold tightly as he pushes his weight down on the neck, using his six foot seven frame and near 260 pounds of leverage to push Hammonds down.]

JD: This isn't the kind of match that neither Jones nor Hammonds wants. Jones likes the fast-paced, high-flying style that he excels at while Hammonds wants to be on his feet, throwing people around like bags of flour.

[Hammonds wriggles around, slipping a leg underneath him as he tries to force his way up off the mat. Ginn breaks the hold, smashing an overhead elbow down on the crown of the skull a few times before grabbing a side headlock, using it to take Hammonds over and down to the mat again.]

JD: Headlock takeover puts him down...

[Ginn plants his feet on the mat, bridging back to apply more pressure to the head and neck of Hammonds as Jones and Higgins shout encouragement from the corner.]

JD: Hammonds is down on the mat, perhaps wishing he'd paid more attention to teacher Todd Michaelson during those mat wrestling drills back in the Combat Corner.

[Hammonds wraps his powerful arms around the torso of Ginn, breaking the bridge with ease. He uses the momentary lapse in pressure to push up to a knee before Ginn cranks down on the hold again...

...and then spins into a front facelock, again leaning on the hold to force Hammonds to carry his weight.]

JD: Ginn's trying to wear down one-half of the World Tag Team Champions by making him carry him around the ring.

BW: It's another excellent strategy.

JD: You sound so proud.

[Hammonds grits his teeth, hooking his arms around the torso again, pushing up to his feet where he lifts Ginn up in the air...

...but as Ginn cranks down on the hold, he sets him back down on the mat. Ginn keeps the front facelock applied as he lays in a quartet of hard knee lifts into the upper chest.]

JD: Ginn trying to take some of the fight out of Hammonds with those knees!

[He abruptly breaks the front facelock, driving a forearm down into the kidneys. A double axehandle across the back follows, putting Hammonds down on his knees...

...where a well-placed running boot to the face drops him flat on the canvas!]

JD: Ohh!

BW: Hammonds might need a dentist after that kick to the teeth!

[Ginn applies another quick cover, getting another two count before Hammonds muscles out. He grabs Hammonds by the arm, twisting it around into a wristlock. He jerks the arm a few times, stretching out the ligaments...

...and then backpedals to his corner, tagging in Mark Hoefner.]

JD: The tag is made... Hoefner steps in, steps up to the middle rope... and drops off with an elbow across the arm!

[Hoefner watches Hammonds stagger away, clutching at his bicep as Hoefner winds up to bury a forearm shank into the kidneys, causing Hammonds to fall down to his knees.]

JD: Dichotomy is working very well together against one of the strongest men in the entire wrestling business.

[Hoefner slips around, putting himself between the kneeling Hammonds and the corner where Skywalker Jones is slapping the top turnbuckle, trying to cheer his partner on.]

JD: Mark Hoefner making sure there's no clear path to the corner as he winds up...

[The paranoid Hoefner lashes out with a double arm Mongolian chop into the shoulders of Hammonds. A second double-handed chop connects before Hoefner turns to the other corner, giving Jones a little lip service.]

JD: Hoefner's talking some trash in the direction of Skywalker Jones who gives it right back to him!

[Hoefner turns back to Hammonds who slams his head into the midsection of the opposition.]

JD: Hammonds surges forward!

[Hoefner winds up again, swinging his arms down for another Mongolian chop but Hammonds reaches up, catching the arms in his powerful grip, yanking them down under his armpits!]

JD: Hoefner's trapped!

BW: Get him out of there, Matt! This isn't the matchup we want!

JD: We?!

[Hammonds turns slightly before lifting his leg, slamming his skull down into the chest of Hoefner once.. twice... three times... four times... five times... and a final sixth blow coincides with releasing the grip, leaving Hoefner to fall back into the champions' corner where Jones subtly hooks the back of the trunks, allowing Hammonds to barrel in and connect with a king-sized clothesline!]

JD: OHHHH! The ring SHOOK on that one!

[Hammonds bounces back out to the center of the ring, turning back towards the other side where Matt Ginn lets loose a stream of insults at Hammonds...

...and the Mississippi strongman rushes him!]

JD: HAMMONDS COMING HARD!

[But Ginn drops off the apron, pointing to his head as Mark Hoefner rakes his fingers across Jones' eyes, freeing him from his grip as he rushes forward, grabbing Hammonds by the back of the head, keeps on running, and SLAMS Hammonds facefirst into the corner turnbuckle!]

JD: HEADFIRST TO THE CORNER!

[Hoefner uses the same grip on the head to throw Hammonds backwards, crashing down to the canvas before he slaps his partner's hand.]

JD: The tag is made... Matt Ginn slips in...

[Ginn grabs the arm that he was attacking earlier, stretching it out, pushing it down on the mat, and then pushes his legs up into the air, dropping a knee down on the bicep!]

JD: Down on the arm!

[Kneeling on the arm, Ginn controls the wrist, twisting it viciously as Hammonds grits his teeth in pain.]

JD: Matt Ginn looks to be isolating that arm, trying to punish it.



BW: Nah, nah... he's trying to make it useless. What's the best way to get a power guy to be completely ineffective? Take away his ability to lift ya up and throw ya around.

JD: Hercules Hammonds may be stronger with one arm than many a man would be with two, Bucky.

BW: Heh. We might be about to find out if that's truth or hyperbole.

[Ginn climbs to his feet, stomping the outstretched arm a few times before ducking through the ropes, dropping down to the floor as he reaches under the ropes to grab the arm again...]

JD: NO!

[...and SLAMS the back of the elbow down on the ring apron!]

JD: My oh my, that's a heckuva way to break an arm.

[Hammonds rolls back into the ring, clutching his elbow in pain as Skywalker Jones looks on with concern from the other part of the ring. The big man gets to a knee, looking towards Jones who stretches out his hand, screaming for the tag...]

...but Matt Ginn rolls back in, rushing forward to nail Skywalker Jones with a running right forearm, sending him down to the floor before he wheels around to connect with a sliding clothesline on Hammonds, dropping him in the middle of the ring!]

JD: Down goes Hammonds again!

[Ginn applies another cover, getting a bit more than a two count this time as Hammonds has trouble shoving the body off of him.]

JD: The arm is hurting Hercules Hammonds for certain. He obviously had some trouble kicking out at two right there.

BW: The plan is perfectly being executed right now by Dichotomy. They're looking history - and a ton of money - right in the face right now.

JD: Money. It disgusts me to hear that Dichotomy is only in this for the money. Especially when the World Tag Team Titles come into the picture. When you think of all the great tag teams who've been able to wear that honor over the years - not in the AWA but all over the wrestling world... teams like the Fraternity Boys, the Epitome of Cool, the Outlaws, the Down Boys, Rich And Infamous, Kentucky's Pride... and so many others, it makes me sick to hear them chalk up the titles to just another payday.

[Ginn slips in behind Hammonds who rolls to his stomach, trying to crawl across the ring again. He applies a straddle armbar from behind, cranking back on the limb...]

...until an angry Skywalker Jones rushes in, leaps up, and CRACKS him with a right hand on the jaw!]

JD: SUPERMAN PUNCH!!

[Ginn collapses to the canvas, clutching at his jaw as Mark Hoefner rushes in on Jones...

...and gets caught on the war with a leaping head kick!]

JD: ENZUIGIRI!

[Jones pops up, ready for more but quickly gets pushed back out of the ring to the apron as Hoefner rolls from the ring and Ginn lies on the canvas, rubbing his chin. A cry goes out in Japanese over the PA system.]

JD: Ten minutes gone in this one as these two teams battle for a trip to the Semifinals and the World Tag Team Championships. Hercules Hammonds is again trying to get across the ring for the tag... but Ginn staggers up, cutting him off again with a stomp to the back of the head.

[A furious Ginn shouts at Jones who again starts to enter the ring before the referee stops him. Ginn smirks at Jones as he grabs Hammonds by the arm, dragging his near-three hundred pound frame across the ring. He again stretches out the arm, dropping a leg over it...

...and hooks the arm in a short-arm scissors!]

JD: Short-arm scissors applied by Matt Ginn! When's the last time you've seen this?

BW: In the training gym where he was showing me how he was going to win this match!

JD: Bucky, how ensconced ARE you with this team?!

BW: No idea what you're talking about. I was just doing a good job as a reporter, helping them with- err, finding out about their strategy going into this match.

[Hammonds waves his other arm in the air, crying out in pain as Ginn pushes down on the wrist, really tormenting the arm that he's worked over for the better part of ten minutes of action.]

JD: Could this be it? Could Hercules Hammonds be on the verge of submitting away the World Tag Team Titles?

BW: AND their trip to the Semifinals? Boy, he'd really be the weak link then!

JD: Would you knock it off with that weak link garbage?!

[Hammonds rolls to a knee, wincing in pain with each movement that jostles his trapped arm. Ginn keeps the hold applied, hanging on for dear life as the big man throws some weak blows to the ribs, trying to break the submission hold.]

JD: Hammonds is trying to fight his way free but Matt Ginn refuses to let go!

[The big man from Mississippi slips his other leg under him, taking a standing position as he reaches down with his free arm...]

JD: Oh my god... oh my god... look at this!

[Hammonds claps his trapped arm with his free hand...

...and gives a tremendous roar as he hoists the six foot seven Matt Ginn up into the air, holding him high...]

JD: HE GOT HIM UP!

"THUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUD!"

JD: POWERBOMB!! POWERBOMB!! AND THAT BREAKS THE HOLD FOR SURE!

[The Tupelo Tower slumps back down to his knees, clutching his arm in pain as Skywalker Jones gives another shout, calling his partner to the corner to make the tag. Buford P. Higgins is slapping the mat repeatedly, trying to inspire his ally to make the necessary tag!]

JD: Hammonds got the powerbomb but can he get the tag?! Skywalker Jones is ready and waiting to get in there and turn this thing around for his team!

BW: Get in there, Mark! Don't let him make the tag!

JD: I am staggered by your impartiality, Bucky. Hammonds on his knees, looking across the ring.

[Reaching down with his good arm, Hammonds begins a one-handed crawl, pulling himself across the ring towards his partner's outstretched hand...]

JD: He's drawing closer! Can Hammonds get there and make the tag?!

[Hoefner is shouting at Ginn from the corner, trying to get him off the mat to make his own tag.]

JD: Ginn got rocked by that powerbomb! He needs to make the tag too and he knows they need to make it before Hercules Hammonds can!

[Hammonds draws a foot closer to the corner as Matt Ginn rolls to his stomach, crawling towards his own corner...]

JD: Both men looking for the tag! Both teams need to make the exchange!

[Jones is in one corner, his hand outstretched. We cut to the other where Mark Hoefner is in the same position, begging for the tag.]

JD: TAG! HOEFNER'S IN!

[Hoefner comes in fast, sprinting across the ring...

...where Hammonds collapses into the corner, making his own tag!]

JD: TAG ON THE OTHER SIDE!!

[Jones catapults over the top rope, throwing a one-legged kick to the chest of the incoming Hoefner, sending him falling backwards where he rolls right back up to his feet...

...and gets DROPPED by a big running flying knee from Jones!]

JD: WHAT A KNEE!!

[Jones promptly pulls Hoefner off the mat, hurling him into the ropes where he rebounds off...

...as Jones takes to the air, swinging his leg up and out and catching Hoefner on the chin with a leaping sidekick!]

JD: OHH! Jones takes him down again!

[The former Combat Corner student steps up next to the downed Hoefner, brushing imaginary dirt off his shoulder...

...and deadleaps sky high into the air, driving his elbow down into the heart of his opponent!]

JD: SKY! HIGH! ELLLLBOOOOW!

[Jones rolls into a cover, getting a two count before Hoefner slips out from under him!]

JD: Two count only for Jones as he looks to keep the World Tag Team Titles around their waists and keep this dream of a Stampede Cup victory alive!

[Back on his feet, Jones watches as Hoefner rolls under the ropes out to the apron where he pulls up to a knee. Jones races to the ropes behind him, rebounding back...

...and drops into a front dropkick, hitting Hoefner square in the chest and sending him falling out to the floor!]

JD: Hoefner's down to the floor... and somebody call air traffic control at Narita! Skywalker Jones is gonna fly!

[Jones walks back to the center of the ring, waving his arms upwards, and shouting "ER'BODY GET UP!"]

JD: Jones wants them on their feet here in the Tokyo Dome! He's trying to fire up these fans... Buford P. Higgins doing the same, getting over 40,000 fans on their feet!

[Jones starts jumping up and down, pumping his arms repeatedly as a strong buzz builds all over the arena...

...and sprints to the far ropes, rebounding off towards the side of the ring where Hoefner has stumbled back up to his feet...]

JD: CLEAR THE RUNWAY!

[As Jones approaches the ropes at top speed, he deadleaps into the air, twisting around to land backwards on the top rope where he springs off, flipping backwards...

...and WIPES OUT a surprised Hoefner with a moonsault to the floor!]

JD: AAAAAABUUUUUNAAAAAAAII!

[The crowd ROARS for the death-defying dive as Jones and Hoefner lie motionless on the floor. The referee starts a double count on both men as Buford P. Higgins races around the ringpost, kneeling down next to Jones.]

JD: It was a daredevil dive to the floor by Skywalker Jones - his trademark athleticism being put to dangerous but effective use as he takes Mark Hoefner down hard on the floor!

BW: But did he take himself out of the match at the same time? They're both down! They're both laid out! Skywalker Jones might've just taken BOTH teams out of the tournament!

JD: Hercules Hammonds is down on the apron... Matt Ginn as well. Higgins is trying to get Jones to get up... get up and get back inside that ring to finish this off.

[A staggered Jones climbs to his feet, soaking up a big cheer from the crowd as he drags Hoefner off the floor, shoving him under the ropes into the ring near the corner.]

JD: You've gotta be kidding me!

BW: Jones is going up top again?!

JD: He's trying to finish this off!

[Jones grabs the top rope, climbing step by step up the ropes. He steps a foot on the top, taking a few deep breaths before pushing up to the top rope, shaking his head as he does so.]

JD: Jones is trying to clear the cobwebs as he reaches the top!

[Jones leans over, grabbing the top rope to steady himself...

...and Hoefner EXPLODES off the canvas, throwing a leaping haymaker to the skull!]

JD: OHHH! WHERE DID \_THAT\_ COME FROM?!

BW: He was playing possum! Brilliant!

[Hoefner steps up to the second rope, hooking a front facelock and looping an arm under one of Jones' arms...

...using the leverage to flip Jones off the top, bouncing him off the canvas with a single underhook superplex!]

JD: Jones get DROPPED with the superplex!

[Hoefner desperately dives across Jones, reaching back to hook both legs.]

JD: ONE!! TWO!! TH-

[A shoulder just BARELY flies up off the mat to break the pin! A call goes out in Japanese.]

JD: Fifteen minutes! The halfway point in the time limit has been reached as Hoefner pulls Jones off the mat by the hair, faceslam in the corner!

[Spinning Jones around in the neutral corner, Hoefner shoots him across, following in quickly...

...and SLAMS both knees into the chest!]

JD: SHOTGUN BLAST IN THE CORNER!

[Hoefner bounces out, charging across the ring...

...and then rushes back in towards a stumbling Jones, wiping him out with a high impact crossbody!]

JD: CROSSBODY!! ONE!! TWO!! THR-

[The shoulder FLIES up off the canvas again!]

JD: Jones just barely got the shoulder up! We were a half count away from having new World Tag Team Champions!

[Hoefner climbs back to his feet, breathing heavily as he looks out at Matt Ginn who is back on his feet as well.]

JD: Hoefner pulls Jones off the mat by the hair...

[He uses an open hand to lightly slap Jones across the cheek a few times before winding up...]

JD: Big right- ducked!

[And as soon as Jones steadies himself, he blindly lashes out backwards with an outstretched leg...]

"WHAAAAAAAAAAAAAACK!"

JD: SUPERKICK!

BW: The Dufresne Destroyer! The Vasquez Vanquisher!

[Jones wheels around, spotting the downed Hoefner...

...and throws himself into a standing shooting star press, crashing down across the chest as he tightly hooks both legs!]

JD: ZERO G CONNECTS!! ONE!! TWO!! THRE-

[A diving save from Matt Ginn breaks the pin!]

JD: Ginn breaks it up!

[Matt Ginn climbs back to his feet, stomping and kicking the downed Jones on the canvas...

...when Hercules Hammonds comes bouncing off the ropes into the camera's frame, connecting with a massive running shoulder tackle that sends a surprised Ginn sailing towards the camera, crashing to the mat as we quick cut to a shot of Hammonds throwing his arms apart with a roar!]

JD: TUPELO TORPEDO TAKES OUT MATT GINN!

[Hammonds turns his attention back towards Hoefner but the referee cuts him off, forcing him back towards the corner as Jones pulls Hoefner off the mat. He buries a knee to the gut, doubling up Hoefner. Jones reaches under, hooking one arm... then going for the other...

...but Hoefner spins out, yanking Jones into a short clothesline!]

JD: OHH! What a counter!

[Hoefner pulls Jones up, booting him in the gut.]

JD: Hoefner fires him in...

[He drops down, using a drop toehold to hang Jones over the middle rope!]

JD: Ohh! Jones got the wind knocked out of him there and-

[Hoefner leaps over the top rope, stomping Jones on the back of the head. He sneers at the protesting referee before dropping off the apron, smashing an elbow down on the head!]

JD: Hoefner with some innovative offense and he's got Jones in trouble again.

[Mark Hoefner climbs up on the apron, laying the smack-talk on Higgins, Hammonds, and the referee as he settles in, standing over Jones in a makeshift standing headscissors...

...when Jones suddenly stands up, flipping Hoefner over the ropes.]

JD: SUNSET FLIP!

[But Hoefner scrambles his legs under him, slipping his feet up on the middle rope as the referee dives to count.]

JD: NOT LIKE THIS! NOT LIKE THIS!!

[The referee counts one... two...

...and then straightens up, having spotted the feet on the ropes.]

JD: He caught him! He caught Hoefner trying to steal the win!

[Hoefner breaks the pin, getting to his feet to shout at the official.]

JD: The referee is standing his ground! It was an illegal pin and he did the right thing in stopping the count!

BW: Says who?!

JD: Says every wrestling rulebook I've ever read!

BW: Those actually exist?!

JD: I'm not the least bit surprised that you've never read-

[And as Hoefner turns around...]

"WHAAAAAAAAAAAAAAP!"

JD: METEOR PUNCH! METEOR PUNCH! SHADES OF NOVEMBER!

[The rising palm strike blow spins Hoefner away from Jones, giving the high flyer the chance to leap up, throwing a dropkick to the back that sends



Hoefner sailing across the ring to the champions' corner. Jones scrambles up, rushing the corner...]

JD: Jones charges in... runs right up the back!

[He slaps the hand of Hammonds before backflipping through the air, landing on his feet several feet out of the corner. A hard clothesline to the back of the head by Hammonds sends Hoefner staggering out into a leaping Superman punch from Jones!]

JD: OHHH!

[Hammonds steps in, ducking down as he powers Hoefner WAAAAAY up in the air, sending him plummeting down facefirst towards the canvas...

...and as Jones leaps into the air, raising both legs over him as Hoefner CRASHES down facefirst on the raised knees!]

JD: OHHHHHH!

[Hoefner straightens up, out on his feet from the doubleteam as Hammonds swings him around, booting him in the gut. He hooks a gutwrench, powering him up over his shoulder...

...and swings him down facefirst to the canvas!]

JD: HAMMONDS HAMMER!

[Hammonds flips him over, applying a cover as Jones charges across, throwing himself into a tackle, keeping Matt Ginn from breaking the pin!]

JD: ONE!! TWO!! THREEEEEEEEE!!!

"DING! DING! DING!"

JD: The champs retain! Jones and Hammonds keep the titles... and they're moving on to the Semifinals!

BW: Gaaaah.

JD: It was a heck of a try for your boys, Bucky, but ultimately they didn't have enough to get past the World Tag Team Champions. Jones and Hammonds are heading to the Semis with the titles still around their waists!

BW: It may not have been Ginn and Hoefner winning the titles tonight but you know what this means, right?

JD: What's that?

BW: It means the Shane Gang has a chance to strike gold here tonight in the Tokyo Dome!

JD: It certainly does. If Skywalker Jones and Hercules Hammonds are advancing to the Semifinals, it means that Aaron Anderson and Lenny Strong now have an opportunity to win the World Tag Team Titles when they collide in the next round! So, the first of our Semifinals is set... but what about the other one? Who will be the next team to advance to the Semifinals? Will it be the former World Tag Team Champions, The Blonde Bombers, or will it be the scrappy underdogs, Air Strike? We're about to find out but before we do, let's hear from Michael Aarons of Air Strike!

[We cut to the backstage area where Colt Patterson is once again standing with Michael Aarons of Air Strike. Aarons is still wearing his same ring attire from earlier in the evening.]

CP: I'm here in the locker room area where Michael Aarons of Air Strike is just moments away from heading down to the ring to face the Blonde Bombers - arguably the odds-on favorites to win this whole thing. They're the former World Tag Team Champions... they were the team to unify the titles... they're the current #1 contenders AND one of the top seeds in this tournament... not to mention the winners of the 2013 Stampede Cup.

[Colt takes a deep breath.]

CP: After hearing all that, Michael Aarons, how do you feel about your odds right about now?

[Michael Aarons, who has been looking down, snaps his head up to look at the interviewer.]

MA: How do I feel?

[Aarons turns his head sideways.]

MA: How do I feel?

[Aarons shakes his head and smiles wide turning to his left and saying something to someone off camera.]

MA: How do we feel, Cody?

[The camera pans out to show Michael Aarons' tag team partner, one half of Air Strike, Cody Mertz. Mertz is dressed to wrestle and is bandaged pretty heavily in the rib area.]

CM: Sore.

[Weak smile from Cody who shows obvious discomfort with every deep breath.]

CM: But as I heard my partner here say earlier, Air Strike didn't come here to quit... we came here to belong. To show that we belong to something bigger and better. To show we have the tools, talent and training to be

considered among the best. And you don't get there by running from adversity.

MA: Just like you can't show that the Combat Corner was where the best of the best and the baddest of the bad came from when you pack up and leave when things don't go your way.

[Cody nods in agreement.]

CM: Yeah my ribs are banged up, and Strictly Business, there will be a time and a place for you but now we have the Blonde Bombers. Colt, you ran down their resume.

[Cody looks at Michael.]

MA: It's impressive, stacked high.

[Cody nods again.]

CM: True. Look there's no argument who's the more accomplished. There's not even an argument now over which team is freshest. But we're just two dumb kids from the Combat Corner; we're not that into the odds. We came here to prove a point. Todd, I hope you're watching and I hope you're proud that what you taught us is the point we're trying to make.

MA: Colt, we can sit here and talk about underdogs and always believing and counting stars and blah blah blah blah blah. It's boring... no one wants to hear about it. Air Strike is here and Air Strike is here to win! You want some facts? Air Strike won their last match and the Bombers lost theirs! And that's a streak we are certainly looking to continue.

[Aarons smirks at his partner and holds out his fist. Mertz needs a little more effort but grimaces his way to the fist bump exchange.]

MA: Because we are the high-flying, death-def—

[Aarons is cut off by two figures jumping him from the right of the shot. As the shot pans out, we can now see that Mike Sebastian and Andrew "Flash" Tucker have knocked Aarons down to the ground. Tucker and Mertz begin to trade blows as Sebastian lays the boots to a downed Aarons. Mertz fighting through the pain begins to get the upper hand on Tucker but that quickly changes with a well-placed knee to the ribs of Mertz, doubling him over in extreme pain. Tucker calls Sebastian over and the duo stand at either side of Mertz. They each duck under an arm of Mertz lifting him up and running...

...before spearing him into the concrete wall!

Mertz immediately howls in pain and clutches his ribs as security and several wrestlers come in to stop the situation from getting any worse. Sebastian and Tucker get led away peacefully but the damage is done. Medical staff rushes over to Cody's side and soon Michael Aarons makes his way over,

hands in his hair in disbelief and shock as the medical staff try to tend to his tag team partner as we slowly fade back to Jason Dane and Bucky Wilde at ringside.]

JD: I'm disgusted by what I just saw, Bucky. Absolutely disgusted.

BW: I tried to warn everyone - I told you all that Air Strike was going too far by poking Sebastian and Tucker with the old man stick. That footage from Aarons as a kid... the t-shirt from when they were growing up. They crossed a line and Strictly Business made them pay for it on the biggest night of their careers. Now they go from a Stampede Cup Quarterfinalist, three wins away from being in the history books... to a footnote as the team who had to forfeit because they couldn't compete.

JD: That remains to be seen. Obviously, Cody Mertz will NOT be cleared to compete after that attack but Michael Aarons was willing to go it alone earlier tonight. What makes you think he won't do it now?

BW: Aarons has always struck me as a little bit smarter than Mertz. When he stands back there and considers the future of his career, climbing in there for a handicap match with The Blonde Bombers can't be the best move for your future, daddy.

JD: We're about to find out exactly what Air Strike will do about this shocking turn of events as we head to the ring for the third of our Quarterfinal matchups!

[We crossfade to the ring to Megumi Sato as the subtitles return anew.]

SUBTITLES: The next match is a second round tournament match.  
Introducing...

[The lights drop to black. The crowd buzzes as we can hear what passes for radio communication between military units over the PA system.]

"We've got heavy fire! We need assistance now! Send in the Bombers!"

[A barrage of uplights hit the metal framing above the entryway to reveal a very large mockup of a military bombing plane. The crowd grows louder at the revelation as a burst of flames appear behind the "engines" of the plane. The lights drop again, really letting the fire light up the Tokyo Dome before the flames go out and we get the sound effect of a plane in flight...

...followed by a series of huge pyro explosions down the length of the entrance ramp, simulating a bombing run before one final burst of pyro from all four corners of the ring to a huge reaction.

The lights come back up to find "Hollywood" Larry Doyle down on one knee at the top of the aisle. Kenny Stanton stands to his right, flexing his well-tone physique in a double bicep pose. Brad Jacobs stands to his left, glaring stoically down the aisle.]



over the building as they see Michael Aarons - and Michael Aarons alone - jogging out on the ramp. He looks incredibly disappointed and more than a bit concerned as he stands on the ramp, ignoring the exploding pyro behind him.]

JD: Michael Aarons is all by himself out there on the ramp and that's gotta be the loneliest place in the world right now.

BW: Maybe it is right now but in a few minutes, the loneliest place in the world is going to be inside that ring with nothing but the Blonde Bombers awaiting one single man! This is going to be a massacre!

JD: Michael Aarons is a talented young man with his entire career ahead of him but not even he can stand alone against the Blonde Bombers. If he's thinking of doing that, he needs to seriously reconsider it right about now.

[Aarons quickly makes his way down the ramp, seemingly considering all possible scenarios in his head as he steps through the ropes. The referee, Ricky Longfellow, immediately cuts him off and shakes his head.]

JD: The official doesn't look too excited about this plan.

[Longfellow points to the Bombers, holding up two fingers... and then back to Aarons as he holds up one.]

JD: Ricky Longfellow may not let this match even happen.

BW: I hate to say it but that's a good call. There's no reason for this kid to risk his career in a no-win situation.

JD: What if he won though? What if he pulled off a miracle?

BW: Then he'd go on to the Semifinals still without a partner to face either Violence Unlimited or Taguchi and Fujimoto... two teams you DEFINITELY don't want to face on your own. Aarons should pack it in and call it a night. They got close but they couldn't get the job done.

JD: Thanks to Strictly Business and-

[The crowd jeers as Stanton and Jacobs sprint past the referee, assaulting a protesting Michael Aarons with a barrage of fists and forearms, knocking the smaller man down to the mat where Jacobs puts the boots to him. Larry Doyle grabs the official, shouting at him to ring the bell to start the match.]

JD: Doyle's trying to get the referee to start the match after his boys have attacked Michael Aarons before the bell! Don't do it, Ricky! Don't you dare ring that bell!

BW: What choice does he have? The Bombers are already putting a beating on this kid.

[Jacobs pulls Aarons off the mat, holding his arms back as Stanton tees off on him with right hands to the jaw while the protesting referee shouts at all three men. Doyle continues to insist for the match to start as Jacobs and Stanton each take an arm, whipping him across...]

JD: Double clothesli- ducked by Aarons!

[Aarons leaps up to the middle rope, blindly springing back with a twist and taking both men down with a crossbody!]

JD: Oh my!

[Aarons springs to his feet...

...and throws a dropkick to the jaw of a shouting Larry Doyle, knocking him down to the mat where he promptly rolls out to the floor. Aarons looks at the official, nodding to the timekeeper...]

"DING! DING! DING!"

JD: A reluctant Ricky Longfellow calls for the bell and this match is officially underway, fans!

[Aarons pulls Stanton off the mat, lighting him up with a pair of knife-edge chops that sends him toppling back into the ropes...

...where Aarons whips him into a rising Brad Jacobs, knocking the big man off his feet where he rolls out to the floor.]

JD: Jacobs rolls out and Aarons is in there with Kenny Stanton...

[Stanton staggers back towards Aarons who ducks down, launching him up and over with a big backdrop.]

JD: Up goes Stanton into the rafters!

BW: The Bombers need to regroup. This kid has them thrown off their gameplan and he's taking advantage of the surprise element.

JD: You mean the surprise of when the Bombers attacked him before the bell?!

[Aarons throws himself on a prone Stanton in a loose side headlock, hammering him repeatedly with right hands to the skull. He spots Brad Jacobs climbing up on the apron out of the corner of his eye, springing to his feet...

...and throwing himself into a dropkick to the skull through the ropes, knocking Jacobs back down to the floor!]

JD: Aarons is trying to keep Stanton isolated... trying to keep Jacobs out of the picture so he can focus on the smaller man.

BW: It's a great strategy but he can only fight off two men for so long, Dane.

[As Stanton rises up off the mat, Aarons greets him by lifting him up, dropping him down in an inverted Atomic Drop!]

JD: Ohh! That'll rattle the spine of Kenny Stanton... Aarons hits the ropes...

[And leaves his feet, cracking Stanton on the forehead with a flying forearm smash!]

JD: Aarons makes a cover! ONE!! TWO!!

[But Stanton slips out at two, breaking the pin. Aarons quickly takes a mount, grabbing a handful of hair and hammering Stanton with right hands to the skull!]

JD: Michael Aarons is absolutely dripping with desperation as he tries to pummel Stanton into the canvas. This kid is going to need to dig way down if he hopes to walk out of this one the winner of a two-on-one battle.

[At the four count, Aarons breaks off the attack, turning back to the floor where Brad Jacobs is back on his feet. The Carson City native approaches, grabbing the top rope with both hands...

...and slingshots himself over the top onto a stunned Jacobs who snatches him out of the sky!]

JD: HE CAUGHT HIM! HE CAUGHT HIM!

[Jacobs pivots...

...and DRIVES the middle of Aarons' spine into the steel ringpost!]

JD: OHHHHH! An absolutely brutal attack by Brad Jacobs and he dumps Michael Aarons down on the floor like a sack of garbage!

BW: I told ya, Dane. He couldn't keep it up forever and Jacobs just made him pay for all those cheapshots.

JD: Cheapshots?! They attacked the man before the bell! A two-on-one attack on Michael Aarons so if you ask me, they deserved everything they just got and then some!

[Jacobs stomps the lower back several times before the official slides out to the floor, forcing Jacobs to back off as Stanton rolls out the other side, pulling Aarons up by the arm...]

"CLAAAAAAAAAAAAANG!"

JD: IRISH WHIP INTO THE BARRICADE!



[Aarons collapses against the steel, arms draped back over the top to stay on his feet as an incensed Larry Doyle shouts at Stanton, ordering him to finish off Aarons.]

JD: It would be in the best interest of the Blonde Bombers to finish this match as quickly as possible.

BW: Yeah but after what Aarons did to them, they might punish him a bit.

JD: What he did to...?! You're unbelievable, Bucky Wilde.

BW: Don't I know it.

[Stanton drags Aarons by the hair towards the ring, shoving him under the ropes as he climbs up on the apron. He gives a shout to his allies as he scales the turnbuckles, measuring the stunned Aarons...

...and leaps off as Aarons begins to rise, smashing him with an overhead elbow between the eyes, knocking him back down to the canvas.]

JD: Big elbow off the top... and now it's Stanton putting the boots to Michael Aarons.

[Stanton leans down, dragging Aarons off the mat and slaps the hand of his much larger partner.]

JD: The tag is made to "Big" Brad Jacobs... they fire him across to the corner...

[Jacobs grabs an arm, whipping his own partner into a leaping splash in the corner, crushing Aarons against the buckles...

...and then Jacobs picks up the spare, crushing his arms together on the sides of Aarons' head while delivering a running avalanche!]

JD: OHHH!

[Jacobs drags Aarons out by a handful of hair, tugging him into a front facelock. He hoists the smaller man in the air...

...and waits.

...and waits.

...and waits.]

JD: Look at the power on display out of Brad Jacobs!

BW: One of the strongest men in the entire AWA - no diggity, no doubt!

[Jacobs continues to hold him up, lowering his other arm to leave a one-armed vertical suplex in place...

...and then brings him CRASHING down to the canvas with the spine-rattling slam!]

JD: Delayed vertical suplex out of Brad Jacobs and Michael Aarons will be feeling that one for days, fans!

[Jacobs stands over the downed Aarons, gesturing at him before making the "belt gesture."]

JD: No secret what Brad Jacobs is hoping for. He wants to become a two-time World Tag Team Champion right here tonight.

[The big man turns to the corner, giving a shout to his partner who nods as Jacobs lifts his right arm, striking a single bicep pose...

...and drops the heavy elbow down into the kidneys!]

JD: Big elbow... and another... and another! Jacobs just keeps getting up and dropping that elbow in again.

[After a half dozen elbows, Jacobs climbs to his feet, standing over Aarons again. He looks out to Doyle who makes a gesture in his direction.]

JD: Brad Jacobs taking some instruction from "Hollywood" Larry Doyle.

[Jacobs slowly reaches up, clasping his hands together as he looks out on the crowd...

...and SLAMS a double axehandle down between the shoulderblades of a rising Michael Aarons!]

JD: Big sledge hammer blow by Jacobs... and another!

[The big man opens fire, hammering away with double axehandles that leave Aarons laid out on the mat.]

JD: The Blonde Bombers are physically dominating Michael Aarons at this point in the matchup. Jacobs just hammering him down like a pesky nail.

[Jacobs glares at the crowd who doesn't seem to be reacting like he was hoping, leaning down and pulling Aarons up to all fours...

...and SLAMS a brutal crossface forearm across the bridge of the nose!]

JD: What a shot!

[Jacobs hangs on to the hair, throwing forearm after forearm across the face before finally shoving Aarons back down to the mat, walking away and

gesturing for the crowd to cheer... or jeer. He walks back to the corner, slapping Stanton's hand.]

JD: The tag is made and in comes Kenny Stanton... slingshots over the top...

[Stanton does a little jig, swaying from side to side as he struts towards the rising Aarons, cracking him with an uppercut that sends Aarons falling back into the turnbuckles.]

JD: Stanton shoots him across...

[The former champion goes downstairs with a right hand to the breadbasket, doubling up Aarons before hitting the ropes, bouncing back, and snapping Aarons down to the mat with a running neckbreaker!]

JD: Stanton takes him down hard! And there's a cover!

[Stanton hooks the far leg as the referee drops down to count.]

JD: ONE!! TWO!!

[Aarons lifts the shoulder, breaking the pin!]

JD: Two count only! Michael Aarons is taking a pounding at the hands of the former World Tag Team Champions and the defending Stampede Cup champions yet he keeps on fighting. This kid has tremendous heart... tremendous fighting spirit.

[Stanton drags Aarons off the mat, pasting him with a right hand that sends him back against the ropes. The Texan grabs an arm, winging him across the ring...]

JD: Irish whip... Stanton hits the ropes as well!

[The Blonde Bomber rebounds off, leaving his feet, stretching out, and extending his arm for a lariat...

...but Aarons drops into a baseball slide, causing Stanton to whiff the clothesline, slamming into the canvas!]

JD: AARONS DUCKS! STANTON HITS THE MAT!

[Aarons rolls over to all fours, pushing up to his knees, looking towards the corner... the empty corner.]

JD: Michael Aarons needs a tag but there's no tag to be found! He's got no partner! Cody Mertz is injured and he's not-

[Suddenly, the crowd begins to buzz in confusion.]

BW: There's someone at the top of the ramp, Dane.

JD: I can see that... but who is...?

[The camera cuts to reveal "who is" there. The young man in question is tall, lean, and lanky. His dirty blond hair is pulled back into a loose ponytail. Below the waist, we see Muay Thai style boxing shorts - black on the left side, white on the right.

Above the waist?

A black t-shirt with the words "Claw Academy" written in gold across the chest with a stylized orange and black tiger emblazoned on the back.]

JD: It's Brian James! The son of the Blackheart has arrived!

BW: WHAT?! What the heck is HE doing here?!

JD: I have no idea! We've been hearing for weeks now that Brian James was coming soon to the AWA and it appears that "soon" is now! Brian James is the son of Casey James... the student of Tiger Claw... he has one of the strongest pedigrees you can ever imagine a pro wrestler having.

[James throws a few shadow punches with half black/half white MMA style gloves with white tape underneath extending to mid-forearm. He gives a nod to the surprised crowd...

...and comes tearing down the aisle, sprinting towards the ring as the fans begin to cheer!]

JD: BRIAN JAMES IS COMING TO THE RING!

[Reaching the ring, James takes a spot firmly on the apron, stretching out his hand towards the downed Michael Aarons. He wipes his boots back and forth a few times on the ring apron, ripping off his t-shirt to reveal a bare torso as he stares into the ring.]

JD: Fans, Brian James has put himself on the apron! He's going to team with Michael Aarons!

BW: Is this more of that Combat Corner crap?! These two trained together in the Corner and now they're allies?!

JD: It could very well be that, Bucky! Air Strike has been talking about trying to make Todd Michaelson proud for weeks now. Brian James may be here to do the exact same thing here tonight in Tokyo!

[James slams his hand repeatedly into the top turnbuckle, shouting at Aarons to "get there!"]

JD: James is ready! He's ready to make his AWA debut in major fashion!

[Aarons inches towards the corner as Kenny Stanton staggers up to his feet, turning towards the corner where he spots Brian James. He rushes forward...

...but is a step too late as he smashes Aarons in the head with a forearm!]

JD: THE TAG IS MADE! IN COMES BRIAN JAMES!

[The Portland, Oregon son of a Hall of Famer comes in hot to a big ovation from the respectful crowd. Stanton raises his hands, ready to strike but James proves too quick, throwing a quick series of stinging jabs to the jaw followed by a right cross and a left hook that leaves Stanton wobbly.]

JD: Look at the lightning quick hands of Brian James!

[A big elbow uppercut rounds out the combo, sending Stanton snapping backwards, collapsing to the canvas...

...when Brad Jacobs steps through the ropes, rushing at the rookie!]

JD: Jacobs comes in!

[But James sidesteps the charge, spinning to throw a hooking kick to the back of the knee, putting Jacobs down on one knee. James grabs Jacobs by the faux-hawk, snapping his left shin up repeatedly into the forehead of "Big" Brad.]

JD: Jacobs got caught! He had no-

[James spins again, this time CRACKING Jacobs in the back of the head with his right shin!]

JD: OHHHH!

[Jacobs drops to the mat, promptly rolling out as Kenny Stanton staggers to his feet. Brian James steps forward, grabbing Stanton around the head and under the armpit, clasping his hands...]

JD: You've gotta be kidding me!

[...and LAUNCHES Stanton overhead and down to the canvas with a head and arm suplex!]

JD: He BOUNCES Stanton off the canvas!

[James quickly moves to pull Stanton back off the mat, hooking a leg and looping an arm around the neck this time...]

JD: EXPLOOOOOOOOIIIIIDAAAAAAAAAAH~!

[Stanton bounces off the canvas again, lying still on the mat as Larry Doyle is losing his mind out at ringside.]

BW: What the HELL is going on here, Dane?! This rookie came out of nowhere - he's not even supposed to BE in this match - and he's throwing around the former World Tag Team Champions!

JD: They weren't expecting him! He's thrown them off their gameplan!

[James gives a big war whoop to the Japanese fans as he approaches the corner where Stanton has curled up, trying to regain his footing. As James steps in, Stanton cracks him with a right hand on the jaw!]

JD: Oh! Big right hand by Kenny Stanton!

[Stanton grabs James by the back of the head, smashing him facefirst into the neutral corner. He hooks him from behind, looking for a back suplex...

...but shockingly, James switches to a standing Muay Thai clinch!]

JD: Oh my word!

[The crowd cheers as James unleashes a series of brutal knee strikes to the skull, each landing with extreme precision and maximum impact on the head. Stanton tries to wiggle away, looking for an escape but James ragdolls him back the other way, continuing to hit the heavy knees before throwing him back into the corner...

...and steps up on the second rope, throwing a big kick to the back of the head!]

JD: OHHHHH!

[Stanton collapses to his knees, eyes rolled back in his head as if he's out cold. James climbs back to his feet...

...only to get bumrushed from behind by Brad Jacobs, clubbing the rookie over the back of the head with a forearm smash, knocking him into the corner. Jacobs swings him around, throwing heavy shots to the ribcage.]

JD: Jacobs is opening fire on Brian James in the corner!

[Grabbing an arm, Jacobs ignores the protests of the official, firing James to the opposite corner...

...where James brings up a leg, blocking his smash to the buckle. He swings around as Jacobs comes charging across...]

JD: POWERSLAM!! POWERSLAM BY BRIAN JAMES!!

[Jacobs again rolls out, having been driven down to the canvas. James pops back to his feet...

...and points across the ring where Kenny Stanton is starting to stir, using the ropes to climb to his feet...]

JD: James comes in!

[Charging across, the son of the Blackheart swings his left up, looking for a running Yakuza kick...

...but Stanton front rolls out of the corner, causing James to slam into the buckles. Stanton pops up, leaping into the air, snaring James by the head...]

JD: OHHH! Leaping neckbreaker!

[Stanton dives across James' chest.]

JD: ONE!! TWO!!

[But James slips the shoulder, breaking the three count...

...as Brad Jacobs slides back in, pulling James off the mat as Stanton grabs the other arm.]

JD: Double whip...

[Jacobs catches the returning James, lifting him up in a low-gripped bearhug, crouching down as Stanton rebounds off the ropes at top speed, leaping into the air in a spinning leg lariat...

...and nearly takes James' head off!]

JD: STANTON DELIVERS!

[The referee forces Jacobs out to the apron as Stanton applies another cover.]

JD: ONE!! TWO!! TH-

[A diving save from Michael Aarons breaks the pin attempt!]

JD: AARONS BREAKS IT UP!!

[Aarons climbs back up, greeting an incoming Brad Jacobs with a right hand to the jaw...

...and then throws a standing dropkick, sending Jacobs through the ropes and back out on the apron.]

BW: Get him out of there, referee!

JD: He's trying but- to the ropes!

[Aarons races to the ropes, leaping up to the middle rope, and springing back to connect with a dropkick on Jacobs who is on the apron, sending him crashing down to the floor...

...a split second before Kenny Stanton connects with a running forearm to the back of the head, sending Aarons through the ropes to the floor!]

JD: Aarons is out! Jacobs is out!

[A voice rings out over the PA in Japanese.]

JD: Ten minutes expired in this one! Ten minutes gone!

[Suddenly, "Hollywood" Larry Doyle is up on the apron, screaming and shouting to the referee...

...and with a bare foot quite obvious.]

JD: Doyle's up on the apron! He's got-

[From the other side of the ring, we see Van Alston scoop up the cowboy boot of Larry Doyle, flinging it over the ropes to a waiting Kenny Stanton who catches it, winds up with it...

...and gets caught with a rolling sole butt to the midsection, causing him to slump over.]

JD: James to the ropes...

[He comes back fast, stretching out his right arm...

...and THROWS himself into a high impact lariat that flips Stanton over completely before dumping him down to the canvas!]

JD: LAAAAARIAAAAATOOOOOOO!

[James scrambles to make a cover, throwing himself across the downed Stanton.]

JD: ONE!! TWO!! THR-

[From outside the ring, Brad Jacobs grabs a leg, yanking Brian James off his partner...

...and a slugfest erupts on the floor between "Big" Brad Jacobs and Brian James!]

JD: WE'VE GOT A FIGHT ON THE FLOOR!!

[The two big men are trading haymakers to the cheers of the crowd as Van Alston retrieves the cowboy boot from inside the ring, handing it back to



Larry Doyle who is shouting at Kenny Stanton to get back to his feet and finish off the makeshift duo of Aarons and James.]

JD: Doyle is screaming at Stanton...

[Stanton has crawled to the ropes, being violently shaken by Doyle now who is gesturing out to the floor where Michael Aarons has gotten into the mix, helping Brian James in this brawl.]

BW: It's two-on-one out there! That ain't fair, Dane!

JD: Stanton's climbing to his feet, trying to clear the cobwebs...

[Stanton backs up, shaking his head in a daze as he reaches the middle of the ring...

...and breaks into a dash, hitting the far ropes. He rebounds back at top speed, barreling across the ring with his sights set on the opposition...]

JD: TOOOOOOOPE DIIIIIIIIIVE!

[But Stanton overshoots Michael Aarons, his momentum carrying him past the brawling competitors and just past the thin mats on the floor. He raises his left arm at the last moment, trying to shield himself...

...and SLAMS his arm right into the ringside railing!]

JD: OH!

[Stanton collapses in a heap, clutching his arm and screaming in pain as he rolls back and forth on the concrete. A concerned Larry Doyle rushes to his man's side, kneeling down next to him as Van Alston steps in, forcing Michael Aarons back towards the ring. Aarons rolls in, James doing the same as Jacobs kneels down next to his partner.]

JD: I think... fans, I think Kenny Stanton may have just suffered a severe arm injury on that dive. He's grabbing his arm and-

[It doesn't take long for Dr. Bob Ponavitch to appear at the top of the ramp, moving quickly down the aisle towards the ring as Stanton's screams fill the suddenly-silent arena.]

JD: Kenny Stanton is obviously in a lot of pain.

BW: Those high risk moves like that... they're just not worth it in my book. He may have broken his arm there. Can we get another look at that?

[There's a bit of a delay as we watch a concerned Doyle and Jacobs down on the floor. Referee Ricky Longfellow joins them, talking to both men as the ringside doctor arrives.

Then we cut to a slow-mo instant replay where Stanton is bouncing off the ropes, gritting his teeth as he barrels across the ring as fast as his weary body will carry him.

He hurls himself through the ropes, turning his body into a missile as he sails between the top and middle strands, aiming for the brawling men on the floor...

...but flies right over Michael Aarons, sailing on towards the steel railing. Stanton lifts his left arm up, stretching it out to try and deflect the impact. But upon hitting the steel, his left arm simply crumples, sending him falling to the floor screaming in pain.]

BW: Man, you hate to see something like that.

GM: The doctor is out there... the referee is out there...

[The referee kneels down next to the doctor who is checking the arm. Larry Doyle is down as well, speaking to both men...

...when suddenly Brad Jacobs breaks for the ring, diving under the ropes. He pops up, throwing a right hand at a surprised Brian James. A second one staggers the Oregonian. And a third knocks him back through the ropes to the apron...]

JD: Jacobs is back in! He's picking up the fight where his partner left off!

BW: I don't think Kenny Stanton can continue, Dane.

JD: He's still on the floor... and it looks like the doctor is calling for a stretcher...

[Jacobs turns to Michael Aarons, full of fire as he batters Aarons back against the ropes, throwing knees into the ribcage before grabbing an arm. On the back side of the ring, we see the referee slide back inside the squared circle, trying to restore order to no avail.]

JD: Irish whip! Backdrop on the way... no! He set too soon and Aarons cracked him on the jaw with a boot!

[Aarons falls back into the ropes as James starts to get back on the apron on the same part of the ring. Jacobs rushes forward...

...and gets caught with a low dropkick to the knee, taking him down to a knee.]

JD: Aarons goes downstairs and-

[Suddenly, Brian James catapults himself waaaay over the rope, floating through the air, and dragging Brad Jacobs down in a sunset flip!]

JD: SUNSET FLIP! SUNSET FLIP!

[The referee dives to the mat!]

JD: ONE!! TWO!! THREEEEEEEEEEEEE!!!

"DING! DING! DING!"

JD: WHAT AN UPSET! WHAT A MAJOR UPSET!

BW: I can't believe this! This shouldn't stand! Brian James had NO right to get involved with this match. The referee had NO right to count a James/ Aarons team as the team of record for this match. The AWA had NO right to screw over the Blonde Bombers like this!

JD: Kenny Stanton is down... he's hurt. The Bombers were NOT moving on to the Semifinals after he hit the railing anyways, Bucky.

BW: That may be true, Dane... but what IS true is that the Bombers should've won by forfeit and they should be sitting in the locker room right now to see who is gonna be their opponent in the Semis. But the referee made a bone-headed call and now Kenny Stanton is hurt... the Bombers are out... this whole thing stinks to high heaven and I'm done talkin' 'bout it, Dane!

JD: Alright. The celebration is on inside the ring as Michael Aarons and Brian James are victorious... but what does this mean? Are Aarons and James moving to the Semis? Is Cody Mertz still eligible to come back into this thing? Brian James is victorious in his AWA debut and- fans, we're going to head backstage to hear from the two teams battling it out to see who will move on to take the final spot in our Final Four!

[The words "Recorded Earlier Tonight" flash on the screen as the scene opens up to a shot of Violence Unlimited, standing inside their dressing room. Danny Morton is wearing his "PROFESSOR PAIN" t-shirt w/ huge airbrushed picture of his own face on it and a pair of jeans. Jackson Haynes is dressed in his floppy tri-cornered cowboy hat and his "THE HAMMER" t-shirt w/ huge airbrushed picture of his own bug-eyed ugly mug on it. Morton, as usual is filled with nervous energy, pacing around back and forth, while Haynes stands there, mean mugging the camera.]

DM: It's finally here, Jack! It's finally here! It's the greatest time of the year! It's finally time for the Stampede Cup! Can you even contain your excitement!?

[Haynes raises his head, rubbing his chin in thought.]

JH: Ya' know, they say we've got an unfair advantage 'cause the Cup's takin' place right here in Violence Unlimited's backyard; right here in Japan, Danny.

[Haynes chuckles...briefly, before he places his hand over his hat and gets a wild look in his eyes.]

JH: ARE YA' KIDDIN' ME!?

[Haynes whips off his hat and begins fanning himself with it, looking distressed.]

JH: 'Yer tellin' me that we got an advantage 'cause these are our stompin' grounds? 'Yer sayin' that we got an advantage 'cause this is where we dominate?

Newsflash, people!

EVERYWHERE is our stompin' grounds! EVERYWHERE is where we dominate!

[Haynes throws down his hat angrily and stomps on it as Morton takes his place in front of the camera.]

DM: It could be Tokyo! It could be Osaka! It could be Berlin! It could be Paris! It could be Dallas! It could be Mexico City! It could be Santa's Workshop up in the North Pole! It could be ice planet Hoth or the pulverized remains of Alderran drifting in the vacuum of space!

IT DOESN'T MATTER!

[Morton shoves Haynes in the back and spins him back towards the camera.]

DM: We came to Japan over a decade ago and we dominated!

[He slaps himself hard in the chest three times in rapid succession.]

DM: We went back to the states, showed up in the AWA...

AND.

WE.

DOM-IN-ATED!

[He punctuates each syllable with a hard slap in the chest.]

DM: HERE...THERE...

...EVERYWHERE!

[He points off into several directions, before doing a full spinning point that stops right towards the camera.]

DM: "But Danny!" I hear some people say..."Danny! We know you and Jack are the toughest dang team we've ever seen! Danny! We know you and Jack are like a force of nature! We know you raise holy hell wherever you go! We know you've won the Cup and we know you can do it again even if the AWA thinks you're only the third best team in the world!"

[Morton clasps his hands together, almost as in prayer.]

DM: "But you're facing Fujimoto and Taguchi! Aren't you concerned? Aren't you the least bit worried?"

[His voice becomes airy, filled with mock concern.]

DM: "After all...they beat Oscura and The Banshee! They're legends!"

[The Oklahoman's bearded visage turns into a serious frown.]

DM: Now, no disrespect meant to Oscura or Keening, 'cause they've entertained the heck out of me and my family for years...but I think that's selling us a little short. I mean, Jack, if they're legends, then what the heck are we?

[Haynes picks his hat off the ground, dusting it off and putting it back on.]

JH: Danny, I believe, that makes us...

[A slight smile forms on Hayne's grizzled face.]

JH: ...damn near IMMORTAL.

[The Madman from Moscow, Tennessee, ruminates on the subject.]

JH: Ya' see, what'cha got in Taguchi and Fujimoto are two fine wrasslers. What'cha got in Taguchi and Fujimoto are two talented INDIVIDUALS.

[His voice slightly raises.]

JH: But what'cha DON'T got...is a TEAM.

[His voice slowly but surely, begins to fill with anger, becoming almost a shout.]

JH: What'cha DON'T got...is VIOLENCE UNLIMITED.

[And then it grows slightly quiet into a soft, measured, barely contained rage.]

JH: And what'cha DON'T got...

...is a single hope or prayer.

[Fade out to a backstage shot of Yoshinari Taguchi and Noboru Fujimoto still dressed in the ring attire from earlier tonight. Both are covered in a sheen of sweat, obviously having gone through a pre-match workout to get warmed up for competition. Their words are in Japanese but are subtitles for the American fans at home.]

TAGUCHI SUBTITLES (TS): People of America, you have learned much already tonight. You have learned that the warriors of Japan...

[He slaps himself in the chest and then jerks a thumb to his partner.]

TS: ...are proud, brave, and honorable men who live every breath with the fighting spirit that drives us all. We are the descendants of the samurai... of the ronin... of true warriors.

[Taguchi holds up his Global Crown Championship.]

TS: This means that I am the top warrior in all of Japan.

[Fujimoto interrupts with some subtitles of his own.]

FUJIMOTO SUBTITLES (FS): For now.

[The implied threat is not lost on Taguchi who turns to face his partner.]

TS: Our battle is for another day. Tonight is not about us as rivals, Fujimoto. Tonight is about us as allies. As partners. As men who represent the greatest pro wrestling promotion on Earth.

We have our entire careers to fight over this...

[Taguchi slaps the title belt.]

TS: But only one night to work together to show the world we are the best. Not Jones and Hammonds. Not Anderson and Strong.

Not Violence Unlimited.

[Fujimoto interrupts again.]

FS: Morton and Haynes. Big. Tough. Strong.

Loudmouthed.

[Fujimoto sneers.]

FS: Arrogant. Unskilled. Overblown.

They tell the whole world how much they will hurt us. How they will punch us, kick us, throw us around, drop us on our heads.

[Fujimoto waggles a finger at the camera.]

FS: But we are not afraid of Violence Unlimited. We are not afraid of what they bring to the battle. Because of one simple truth...

[A pause as Fujimoto spreads his arms to gesture at himself and his partner.]

FS: We know that we are better. And we plan on proving it tonight.

[The shot fades back to the ring where Megumi Sato is standing as the lights dim.]

SUBTITLES: It is now time for the final Quarterfinal match. Introducing first... at a total weight of 225 kilos...

[The sounds of the theme to The Good, The Bad, And The Ugly kick in over the PA system as a single spotlight comes up on the gap in the v-shaped entrance. A platform slowly rises, showing a giant silhouette on all three screens of a man in a cowboy hat.

As the platform reaches its peak, the music switches to something from the same movie - "The Ecstasy Of Gold" - as the arena is bathed in a golden light, now showing Noboru Fujimoto dressed as an "American cowboy", ten-gallon Stetson, leather duster over his well-toned bare torso, a pair of faded blue jeans, and a pair of red cowboy boots with white leather "spurs" etched into the red. The Japanese voice calls out.]

"NOOOOOOOBOOOOOORUUUUUUUU FUUUUUJIMOOOOOOTOOOOOOOOO!"

[Fujimoto walks halfway down the ramp, staring down at the ring as the lights die out again. A few moments in the black get the crowd ready and waiting until the video walls light up, one screen at a time with the champion's name. The crowd chants along with the screens.]

"TA!" "GU!" "CHI!"

[The screens light up again, a little faster this time as the crowd chants again.]

"TA!" "GU!" "CHI!"

[The screens repeat the pattern, faster still. It happens over and over, building to a faster pace as the crowd chants faster.]

"TA!" "GU!" "CHI!"

"TA!" "GU!" "CHI!"

"TA!" "GU!" "CHI!"

"TA!" "GU!" "CHI!"

"TA!" "GU!" "CHI!"

"TA!" "GU!" "CHI!"

[With the crowd chanting his name repeatedly, the arena lights up with a red and white strobe light, flashing quickly to illuminate the rising platform as Yoshinari Taguchi appears before the Tokyo Dome crowd, the Global Crown title belt slung over his right shoulder. He raises his left hand in a fist, getting a returned salute from the giant crowd as his name is cried out. There is some Japanese before it, presumably announcing him as the champion.]

"YOOOOOOOSHIIIIINAAAARRIIIII TAAAAAAGUUUUUUUCHIIIIII!"

[Taguchi strides down the ramp, joining his partner who has now shed the duster, hat, and somehow, the jeans, standing in a pair of electric blue trunks and the hideous red cowboy boots. Taguchi is in full length tights, one leg red and one leg white. The duo doesn't even acknowledge one another this time as they start making their way down the ramp.]

JD: Two of the greatest singles competitors in the entire nation of Japan - some would argue in the entire world. And they've both got something to prove tonight. You better believe that both of those men are extremely upset that Kenta Kituzkawa is getting the shot at the AWA World Heavyweight Title later tonight and not one of them.

BW: Especially Taguchi. The Tiger Paw Pro Global Crown Champion sees the World Heavyweight Champion walk into Japan to defend the title but it ain't against him? As my mama would say, that dog don't hunt, Dane.

JD: Taguchi and Fujimoto have taken the ring. Let's take a look at the entrance of their opponents!

[Megumi Sato is subtitled again.]

SUBTITLES: They are the 2010 winners of the Stampede Cup! Tonight, they weigh in at a combined weight of 270 kilos...

[Cue the name screaming.]

"THE HAMMER! JACKSON HAAAAAAAAAAAYYYYYYYYNNNNNEEEEESSSSS!!!!"

"DANNY MORTOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOONNNNNNNNNNNNNNN!!!!"

"VIOLEEEEEENNNNNNNNNNNCCCCCEEEE  
UNLIMMMIIIIITTTTTTEEEEDDDD!!!!"

[The sounds of Motley Crue's "Shout At The Devil" suddenly fills the air. The Japanese crowd, familiar with this entrance, sing along to the opening lyrics.]

"SHOUT!"

"SHOUT!"

"SHOUT!"

"SHOUT AT THE DEVIL!"

[The arena lights cut to black as the Japanese crowd then ROARS as huge columns of fire spout forth from the top of the rampway like the flames of hell!]



\*WOOOOOOOOOSSSSHHHHH!!!\*

"AHHHHHHHHH!!!!"

[When the flames disappear, the crowd roars once more at the sight of Danny Morton and Jackson Haynes, standing at opposite sides of the v-shaped rampway, illuminated by spotlights, both wearing frightening Japanese Daikijin (great devil god) Noh masks. Beneath the masks, Morton is dressed in his traditional red boxer's robe. Meanwhile, Haynes is in his leather duster, revealing Confederate flag-style wrestling trunks underneath. In his right hand, he carries his infamous bull rope.]

JD: There they are! The 2010 Stampede Cup winners... former AWA National Tag Team Champions... former multiple-time Global Tag Crown Champions! One of the odds-on favorites to win this entire tournament. Violence Unlimited is... IN... THE... HOUSE!

[The house lights return as they make their way down to the ring. Morton jogs down the aisle, ready to get the match started ASAP, while Haynes takes his sweet time, moving at a glacial pace and threatening various sections of the crowd by swinging his bull rope at them, causing the fans to wisely scatter away from him in fear.]

[Morton is in the ring, shouting as he points at Taguchi and Fujimoto, bouncing from foot to foot...

...when Fujimoto suddenly breaks away from his partner, rushing at Morton and shoving him back to the corner as referee Masa Fujiwara signals for the bell!]

JD: It's breaking down here in Tokyo!

[Fujiwara steps back as Fujimoto leans over, grabbing the middle rope to slam his shoulder into the ribcage of the Oklahoma powerhouse. Jackson Haynes reaches the ring and promptly has to be blocked from entering the ring. He's livid, screaming and shouting as he stalks down the apron, watching his partner be worked over by Noboru Fujimoto!]

JD: Haynes wants in there! The wildman from Moscow, Tennessee is burning hot with rage and wants back inside that squared circle to take his shot at Fujimoto and Taguchi.

[Fujimoto straightens up, grabbing Morton by the back of the head. He gives a roar as he races across the ring, smashing Morton facefirst into the turnbuckle!]

JD: Fujimoto spins him around... here we go again!

[The controversial puroresu superstar slams Morton's head into the buckles again. He wheels around a third time, racing across...

...but Morton pulls up short, grabbing the top rope with his powerful hands and holding himself back at full arm extension!]

JD: He blocked it! Morton blocked it!

[Morton swings his left arm back, slamming his elbow into Fujimoto's sternum. He spins around, throwing a right jab to the chin... and a second... and a third. He grabs a handful of Fujimoto's hair, swinging his head back and slamming it down into the temple!]

JD: Morton drops him with the headbutt...

[Down on all fours, Fujimoto finds himself gripped around the waist...]

JD: Wait a second!

[...and deadlifted up into the air, tossed down violently on the back of his head and neck to a big reaction from the crowd!]

JD: RELEASED GERMAN SUPLEX BY DANNY MORTON!

[Morton climbs back to his feet, giving a big roar as he pounds at his chest with his clenched fists before slamming the fists into his cheeks repeatedly.]

JD: Danny Morton is fired up! He just launched Fujimoto overhead, dumped him on the back of his head, and that completely turns the tide in this match in the opening seconds!

[The Oklahoman gives another war whoop, running in place as he stands, watching Fujimoto try to climb to his feet, holding the back of his neck as Morton hits the ropes, rebounding back...

...and throws himself into a big shoulder tackle, sending Fujimoto falling back down to the mat!]

JD: Big running tackle floors Fujimoto... and he's rolling right out to the floor, trying to find a place to regroup...

[But there's no rest for the weary as Morton races into the ropes, rebounding back off...

...and THROWS himself between the top and middle rope, using his 285 pounds to wipe out Fujimoto on the floor!]

JD: OHHHHH MY! Fujimoto gets flattened by the American Murder Machine!

[Morton climbs to his feet, slamming his powerful arms down on the ring apron, shouting to the fans and then to his partner who smashes his own arm into the top rope a few times.]

BW: I'm not sure of the last time I've seen Violence Unlimited fired up like this, Dane. They look unstoppable right now!

JD: It's still early.

[Morton hauls Fujimoto up off the floor, lifting him into the air, gorilla pressing him high overhead...

...and hurls him through the ropes, putting him back into the ring. Morton climbs in after him, turning to the corner where Jackson Haynes is pacing back and forth.]

JD: The Hammer is waiting for the tag!

[Morton drags Fujimoto back to the corner by the hair, slapping Haynes' hand. Haynes raises his cowboy boot up on the top rope, allowing Morton to slam Fujimoto's skull into the foot!]

JD: Right into that big cowboy boot... and in comes Haynes off the tag. Double whip coming up...

[Each VU member grabs an arm, whipping Fujimoto across the ring...

...and Haynes and Morton drop into three-point stances in tandem, charging in and flattening Fujimoto with a double shoulder tackle!]

JD: Violence Unlimited runs him right down!

BW: Fujimoto and Taguchi are two of the best singles wrestlers in the world. But tag teams? Violence Unlimited is not about to allow these two to advance in a TAG TEAM tournament against them!

[Haynes pulls Fujimoto off the mat, throwing him bodily back into the neutral corner. He moves in on him slowly, snarling at the protesting official...

...but Fujimoto springs out of the corner, smashing a forearm into the jaw!]

JD: Big forearm shot! And again!

[The crowd starts to rally behind the struggling Fujimoto...

...who gets cut off with a big kick to the midsection. Haynes gives a shout as he hammers home a forearm across the shoulderblades!]

JD: Forearm after forearm, clubbing down across the back...

[Another shout comes and the speed of the clubbing blows increases, forearm after forearm connecting with the back, the neck, the back of the head.]

JD: He's beating him down to the mat like a hammer pounding a nail - pun intended!

[He switches to stomps, forcing Fujimoto down to the mat where he rolls out on the apron. A furious Haynes slams his arms into the turnbuckles, shouting at the protesting Fujiwara as he turns back towards his opponent, leaning over the ropes...]

...where Fujimoto reaches up, grabbing Haynes by the wrist, and drops down off the apron, snapping the arm over the top rope!]

JD: Ohh! Nice counter by Fujimoto!

[Fujimoto rolls under the ropes, grabbing Haynes by the wrist, cranking the arm into a wristlock. He tugs the arm under the armpit into an armbar, walking back to the corner...]

JD: Tag! Taguchi in off the tag!

[Taguchi grabs the other arm, joining Fujimoto in twisting both arms around at the same time, lashing out with a pair of kicks to double Haynes up...

...and throw a pair of knees into the temples of Haynes, putting him down on his knees.]

JD: Nice doubleteam by Taguchi and Fujimoto. You wouldn't quite expect that out of this duo who seem to be on a collision course in the very near future over the Tiger Paw Pro Global Crown Championship.

BW: I'd love to be ringside when those two go at it.

[Taguchi hits the ropes, rebounding back into a low dropkick to the face of Haynes, knocking him flat. The champion makes a cover.]

JD: One! Two!

[But Haynes powers out, breaking the pin. Taguchi scrambles to his feet, throwing some lightning quick roundhouse kicks to the arm of Haynes as he pushes off the mat.]

JD: Taguchi's trying to keep Haynes down on the mat. If you can keep him grounded, you neutralize his power.

[Taguchi grabs the arm, executing another quick armtwist before snapping back a hook kick to the face, knocking Haynes back down to the canvas. Still holding the arm, Taguchi scissors it between his legs, throwing himself down to the mat.]

JD: Taguchi's looking for a cross armbreaker! Somewhere in the locker room, Callum Mahoney is watching and hoping he gets Kolya Sudakov in this same position later tonight!

[Haynes immediately grips his hands together, preventing the hold from behind applied. He instantly rolls to his side, pushing up to his feet, keeping his hands clasped...]

JD: Haynes looking to counter... POWERBOMB!

[But as he gets Taguchi up in the air, Taguchi breaks his grip, raining down elbows to the skull...

...and then flips Haynes down to the mat with a rana!]

JD: Taguchi takes him down!

[A spinning back kick catches Haynes in the sternum on the way up, knocking him back into the ropes. Taguchi sidesteps, squaring up...]

"WHAAAAAAAAAAP!"

JD: Ohhh! Big knife edge chop!

[A few more big chops connect, leaving red welts on the chest of Jackson Haynes. Taguchi grabs the arm, whipping him in.]

JD: Irish whi- reversed!

[Haynes fires Taguchi into the ropes, sending him rebounding off.]

JD: Backdr-

[The crowd "oooohs" as Taguchi turns around, using Haynes own back to backflip over the top, racing to the far ropes, springing back, and leaving his feet with a leaping leg lariat! Haynes staggers back towards the ropes as Taguchi gets up, charging in again...

...and gets lifted up around the torso by Haynes who spins to the side, dropping Taguchi throatfirst across the top rope!]

JD: OHHHHHHH!

[Taguchi falls down to the mat, clutching at his throat as he gasps for air. Haynes winds up his right arm, dropping an elbow down on the throat... and again... and again... and again... and again.]

JD: Elbow after elbow down on the throat!

[Haynes grabs Taguchi by the hair with both hands, slamming the back of his skull into the canvas once... twice... three times!]

JD: Hayes is all over him! Right hand... another right hand!

[Grabbing Taguchi by the hair, Haynes hammers home fist after fist into the skull of the Global Crown Champion! The referee dives in, forcing Haynes to back off as Taguchi rolls to his side, covering his head.]

JD: Haynes and the referee are nose to nose, shouting at one another.

BW: Jackson Haynes has a red hot temper. He needs to be careful when dealing with the referees. A DQ here sends... and I can't believe I'm saying this... Brian James and Michael Aarons to the Finals of the Stampede Cup.

[Haynes nudges past the referee, leaning down to grab Taguchi by the arm, hauling him up to his feet...

...and YANKS him into a short-arm clothesline!]

JD: Ohh! Down goes Taguchi off the clothesline...

[The Tennessee native hauls him back up, giving a shout as he yanks him into a second clothesline!]

JD: That's two!

BW: Haynes likes to use these in series of threes.

JD: Haynes pulls him up again...

["The Hammer" delivers the third clothesline, flipping Taguchi over and dumping him down on the mat. He drops down on all fours, applying a lateral press.]

JD: Haynes gets one! He gets two! But that's all! Taguchi lifts the shoulder up off the mat... and Haynes wastes no time in pulling him right back up.

BW: Haynes and Morton are fighting with so much aggression here tonight. You really get the feeling that there's nothing they won't stop at to walk out of the Tokyo Dome as the first ever two-time Stampede Cup winners.

JD: Big whip to the corner of VU.

[Haynes barrels across after him, connecting with a big boot while giving a roar. Taguchi's head snaps back on impact as Haynes reaches out, slapping his partner's outstretched hand.]

JD: The tag is made and Danny Morton's back in!

[Morton steps in as Haynes steps out, winding up and connecting with a big knife edge chop. He follows through on the blow, throwing a right hand to the jaw. The barrage continues - chop, punch, chop, punch, chop, punch until Taguchi is essentially falling off his feet. With his arms draped over the top rope, Morton throws a few boots to the midsection.]

JD: The barrel-chested powerhouse from Oklahoma, battering him down to the mat with forearms!

BW: Morton could earn himself a shot at the Global Crown Championship if he beats Taguchi here tonight.

JD: It's nowhere near that, Bucky. Taguchi's still got plenty of fight left in him.

[Taguchi proves Jason to be accurate as he pushes up to his knees, throwing a big forearm to the jaw. A palm strike to the sternum follows, sending Morton stumbling back. The Japanese superstar hops up to the midbuckle, giving a shout before leaping off, driving both feet into the chest of Morton, sending him sailing backwards and crashing down to the mat!]

JD: MIDDLE ROPE DROPKICK CONNECTS!

[With Morton down on the mat, Taguchi climbs to his feet, looking across the ring to where Fujimoto is waiting to tag in. The Global Crown Champion walks across the ring, his arm outstretched...

...but Morton pushes up to his knees, hooking Taguchi's trunks from behind. He gets to his feet, setting for a potential match-ending Backdrop Driver.]

JD: BACKDROP DRIV-

[The crowd cheers as Taguchi flips over the top, landing on his feet. As Morton turns, Taguchi goes downstairs, lighting him up with a series of stiff kicks to the side of the left knee...

...and then wheels around, throwing a spinning back chop to the side of the neck, staggering Morton who grabs at his neck, falling backwards.]

JD: Taguchi makes a run for it!

[The champion dives towards the corner but Morton snatches him up, holding him under his arm...

...and DROPS him down across a bent knee!]

JD: OHH! He nearly broke him in half with that brutal backbreaker!

[Morton sneers at the referee, lifting Taguchi back up...

...and driving him down over the knee a second time!]

JD: Another backbreaker!

[Morton rises to his feet again, holding a limp Taguchi under his left arm...]

JD: And drops him a third time!

[The Oklahoma native shoves him off his knee, rising to his feet and looking over to Jackson Haynes who nods his head. Morton nods in response, yanking Taguchi off the mat by the hair. He ducks down, swinging him up over his shoulder...]

JD: Uh oh! Morton's looking for the powerslam! The Oklahoma Stampede!

[Morton swings around, turning towards the middle of the ring...

...when Noboru Fujimoto reaches over the ropes, grabbing Taguchi by the ankle, and yanking him out of the hold!]

JD: FUJIMOTO PULLS HIM OUT!

[Taguchi falls back against the buckles as Fujimoto slaps his hand.]

JD: TAG!

[The charismatic top contender slips in, throwing lightning fast rights and lefts to the midsection of Morton. Fujimoto ducks down, hooking his hands under the armpits of Morton, shoving him up into the air...

...and PASTING him with a solid forearm shot to the jaw, knocking Morton down to the mat!]

JD: OH! WHAT A SHOT OUT OF FUJIMOTO!

[Fujimoto leans down, hooking a half Boston Crab. He promptly flips Morton over to his stomach...

...and starts viciously stomping the back of Morton's head, driving his face into the mat!]

JD: Fujimoto's stomping the heck out of- HAYNES!

[Haynes comes lumbering into the ring but the referee dives in, cutting him off. Fujimoto breaks his half Crab, pulling Morton up off the mat. A right forearm lands... then a left. He spins around...

...and then BURIES a mule kick between the legs of Morton!]

JD: OHH! LOW BLOW! Fujimoto kicked him low!

[Barely able to stand, Taguchi shouts at Fujimoto, chastising him for the illegal strike.]

JD: Fujimoto with a blatant infraction of the rules and Yoshinari Taguchi is NOT happy about it! He's letting his partner have it for that low blow!

BW: What's he complaining about?! Fujimoto just turned this thing around. The match was going very badly for them right until that. Fujimoto might be the only one on his team willing to do whatever is needed to win this thing.

[Fujimoto stands over Morton, taunting the downed Oklahoman as well as his partner who is losing his mind out on the apron. A smirking Fujimoto hauls Morton up off the mat, whipping him into the turnbuckles...



...and then charges in after him, leaping into the air and smashing a forearm into the jaw!]

JD: Leaping forearm connects!

[He spins around, pressing his back up against Morton's chest, and throws his elbows back into the side of Morton's head, staggering the barrel-chested big man.]

JD: He's blasting him with back elbows to the skull and-

[Fujimoto throws himself forward into a pushup, kicking his legs up so that his shins rest on the shoulders of Danny Morton. He tucks his head in, flipping into a somersault and flinging Morton halfway across the ring!]

BW: Wow! That was impressive, Dane. To use a headscissors to bring down a man the size of Danny Morton is real impressive.

[Climbing back to his feet, Fujimoto turns towards Jackson Haynes and makes a rude gesture in the direction of his groin.]

JD: Uh oh!

[Haynes rushes through the ropes, racing at Fujimoto with a clubbing forearm to the ear, knocking him to his knees. The referee steps in, forcing Haynes back as Fujimoto climbs to his feet, shouting something disparaging in Japanese in Haynes' direction.]

BW: You speak Japanese, Dane... what did he say?

JD: I'm not sure I can repeat that... even on Pay Per View.

[We hear a call in Japanese over the PA system.]

JD: Ten minutes gone in this one as the official tries to get Jackson Haynes back on the apron.

[With the official trying to force a fired-up Haynes out of the ring, Fujimoto gestures for Taguchi to join him in an illegal doubleteam...

...but the proud and noble Taguchi holds his ground, shaking his head. Fujimoto curses his partner as he pulls Morton off the mat, lifting him for an atomic drop...]

JD: OHH! SITOUT FACEFIRST POWERBOMB!!

[He rolls Morton to his shoulders, sitting astride him with a double leg cradle as the referee hits the mat.]

JD: ONE!! TWO!!!

[But Morton kicks out hard, flinging Fujimoto off of him. An annoyed Fujimoto gets back to his feet, shouting something to the crowd - many of which cheer as he dashes to the ropes, rebounding back towards the rising Morton...

...and drills him with a kick to the ear that spins Morton away from him. Fujimoto quickly hooks him from behind in a half nelson, clenches his teeth...]

JD: You've gotta be kidding me!

[...and HOISTS the 285 pounder into the air, dumping him on the back of his head with a half nelson suplex!]

JD: OHHHHH!

BW: That might do it!

JD: ONE!! TWO!! TH-

[Haynes dives into the ring, smashing a forearm across the back of Fujimoto to break the pin attempt. He rises up, pointing a threatening finger at Yoshinari Taguchi who didn't budge an inch to aid his partner during the pin attempt.]

BW: What the heck is Taguchi doing in there, Dane? He's just watching and letting Fujimoto do all the work!

JD: That's not what's going on at all! Taguchi's not willing to stoop to Fujimoto's level to try and win this matchup. Not even with all the glory and money on the line.

BW: That's ridiculous.

[Fujimoto slowly gets up, glaring first at the retreating Haynes and then over to his corner where a disapproving Taguchi looks on. Pulling Morton off the mat, Fujimoto is running his mouth in the direction of the Global Crown Champion as he ducks down, scooping him up for a body slam...

...but Morton goes over the top, grabbing the arms of the turning Fujimoto and smashing his head into the Japanese superstar's repeatedly!]

JD: HEADBUTT AFTER HEADBUTT AND-

[Morton grabs Fujimoto around the torso, hurling him up, over, and down to the canvas to another big reaction!]

JD: OVERHEAD BELLY TO BELLY... and now Danny Morton is looking to make a tag! He needs to get out of there and get his partner a chance to finish this thing off!

[The Oklahoma native crawls over the downed Fujimoto, heading across the ring to where his partner's arm is stretched out, looking to make the tag.]

JD: Morton's gonna tag him!

[He surges forward, diving to slap the hand of his partner.]

JD: In comes the Hammer once more, pulling Fujimoto up...

[He crowns Fujimoto with a pair of overhead elbows before grabbing an arm, flinging Fujimoto into the neutral corner...

...and stampedes in with a running clothesline!]

JD: BIG CLOTHESLINE IN ONE CORNER!

[Haynes turns, whipping him back across...]

JD: HERE HE COMES... AND A SECOND CLOTHESLINE!!

[Grabbing a handful of Fujimoto's hair, Haynes charges out of the corner to the center of the ring where he leaps into the air, smashing his face into the canvas!]

JD: FACEFIRST IN THE MIDDLE!

[He flips Fujimoto over, diving across him.]

JD: ONE!! TWO!!

[But Fujimoto kicks out at two, breaking the pin. A fired up Haynes grabs Fujimoto by the hair, hammering him with clenched fists to the skull. A barrage of them land before the official is able to break it apart, forcing Haynes back to his feet where he dashes to the ropes, rebounding off, and leaps up, dropping a big leg down on the chest!]

JD: Another cover! ONE!! TWO!! But again, Fujimoto is out at two!

[Haynes claps his hands together as he gets back to his feet, showing a little frustration at the resiliency of the Japanese superstar. He drags Fujimoto up, backing up to throw a big right jab to the jaw... and a second... and a third. He grabs the hair, holding steady as he measures him and opens fire with a big left hand right between the eyes to knock Fujimoto down to the mat.]

JD: Haynes loves that big left hand and he puts it to good use against Fujimoto right there.

[We cut to a shot of the corner where Yoshinari Taguchi has his arm stretched out, looking to tag his partner.]

BW: Oh, NOW he wants in?!

JD: Taguchi is a man of honor. He wants no part of getting into the ring illegally but if he's the legal man, he will fight with great pride and fighting spirit.

[Fujimoto struggles to a knee as Haynes steps to the middle of the ring, pumping his right arm three times before breaking to the ropes behind him, bouncing off.]

JD: Haynes building up a head of steam...

[He runs right past the rising Fujimoto, hitting the ropes behind the Japanese superstar...

...and then BLASTS him with a swinging clothesline to the back of the head!]

JD: ENZUILAAAARIAAAAAATOOOOO!

[Haynes flips Fujimoto to his back, diving across.]

JD: ONE!! TWO!! TH-

[Fujimoto FIRES a shoulder off the mat, drawing big cheers from the fans as Haynes again throws a few clenched fists to the skull in frustration, barking something at the official who begs off, holding up two fingers.]

JD: Haynes thinks it was a slow count but it looked good to me, Bucky.

BW: Of course it did. You're always on the side of these officials even when they're as crooked as my mama's poodle's spine.

[A furious Haynes pulls Fujimoto off the mat, giving a shout as he tugs the Japanese grappler into a standing headscissors.]

JD: He's looking for that powerbomb to the turnbuckles!

BW: That'll send you to the chiropractor!

[Haynes gives a shout as he muscles Fujimoto up into the air...

...but gets snared in a front facelock, twisted around...]

JD: TWISTING DDT TO COUNTER!!

"THUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUD!"

[Haynes' skull gets DRIVEN into the canvas in the center of the ring as Fujimoto bounces free, flipping over to all fours where he begins to crawl towards his waiting partner who is now eagerly stretching out his hand, stomping his feet on the ring apron, driving the fans to cheer on Fujimoto as he attempts to make the tag.]

JD: Noboru Fujimoto is looking to make that tag and get the Tiger Paw Pro Global Crown Champion back into the squared circle!

[Fujimoto inches closer as Taguchi stretches as far as he can, his fingers wiggling as he tries to get his hand within range.]

JD: Jackson Haynes needs to make the tag as well after that magnificent counter.

BW: This one may come down to who can make the tag first, Dane.

[A shout goes in Japanese over the PA system.]

JD: Fifteen minutes. We've hit the halfway point in the time limit for this Quarterfinal matchup. One of these teams is moving on to the Semifinals where they will presumably meet Michael Aarons and Brian James in tag team action and one of them will walk out of here knowing they missed the chance of a lifetime!

BW: Haynes rolls towards his corner too. Morton's standing on the bottom rope, reaching into the ring.

[The referee steps in, forcing Morton to stand on the apron while making his tag attempt as Fujimoto slips closer..]

...and makes a collapsing tag to his partner!]

JD: THE TAG IS MADE!

[Taguchi comes in, sprinting across the ring just as Haynes tags his own partner...

...and connects with a running dropkick to the chest that sends the now-legal Danny Morton falling off the apron to the floor!]

JD: TAGUCHI SENDS HIM TO THE FLOOR WITH THE DROPKICK!

[A fired-up Taguchi pumps a fist as he steps out to the apron, backing down it to lean against the ringpost...

...and then comes charging down it, leaping off to drive his knee up under the chin of the rising Danny Morton!]

JD: BIG KNEE OFF THE APRON!! Yoshinari Taguchi can smell this opening, fans. He knows he's got a window of opportunity here to put away Danny Morton before Jackson Haynes gets his wind back. This is the time for this duo to finish off the former tag team champions.

[Taguchi pulls Morton off the thin ringside mats, muscling him under the ropes into the ring. He climbs up on the ring apron, pointing to the fans before grabbing the top rope with both hands...

...and executes a picture perfect catapult splash!]

JD: ONE!! TWO!!

[Morton muscles out at two, breaking the pin attempt.]

JD: Two count only for Taguchi!

[The Japanese champion scrambles to his feet, grabbing the leg of his prone opponent.]

JD: HE'S GOING FOR THE STF!

[The crowd "ooooohs" as Morton kicks him hard in the chest, sending him sprawling back to narrowly avoid getting locked in Taguchi's signature hold. Morton scrambles up off the mat as Taguchi gets his footing back as well.]

JD: Both men back up...

[Taguchi throws a hard forearm shot to the approaching Morton's jaw. A second one follows... and a third...

...all doing nothing to Danny Morton who simply sticks out his tongue, running in place to taunt the surprised Taguchi who rushes to the ropes behind him.]

JD: Taguchi off the ropes... PRESS!

[Morton catches Taguchi coming off, pressing him skyward in a military press...

...but Taguchi wriggles free, landing on his knees behind Morton. He pops back up as Morton turns, leaping into the air, and lashing out with his right foot to the back of the head!]

JD: EN-ZU-GIIIIIRIIIIIII!

[Morton wobbles before Taguchi who ducks his head under the armpit, muscling Morton up and over in a bridging Northern Lights Suplex!]

JD: NORTHERN LIGHTS!! ONE!!! TWO!!! THR-

[The Oklahoma powerhouse swings his arms together, catching Taguchi on the ribs and breaking down the bridge attempt.]

JD: Taguchi couldn't hold the bridge and Danny Morton keeps the fight coming... ohhh! Stiff kick to the chest by Taguchi!

[With Morton kneeling on the canvas, Taguchi throws a series of hard kicks to the chest. He backs off, measuring his man...]

JD: HEAD KICK!

[...but Morton ducks under, causing Taguchi to spin past him. Morton pops up to his feet, hooking Taguchi's arms behind him!]

JD: HE HOOKS HIM!

[But Taguchi manages to escape, pulling off a standing switch to hook Morton's arms instead.]

JD: Taguchi's looking for the Tiger Suplex but he can't get him up!

[Suddenly breaking the hold, Taguchi stomps hard on the back of Morton's knee, forcing him down to one knee before he stomps the back of the other, putting the Oklahoman down on his knees. Taguchi shoves him forward, crashing chestfirst on the mat as he leans down, tying up the legs around his own.]

JD: He's looking for the Four Leaf Clover!

[But before he can drop down to the mat with it, Taguchi gets his shoulder slapped by Fujimoto.]

JD: Blind tag by Fujimoto! He's back in!

[Taguchi drops down, tying up the arms in a double chickenwing as the Four Leaf Clover gets sunk in...

...and Fujimoto steps in, hooking Morton around the head and neck like he's going for a uranage...]

JD: FALLING LASER LASSO!

[Fujimoto twists to the side, DRIVING Morton's forehead and face into the canvas! He flips him over to his back, lunging across as a disgruntled Taguchi rolls to the floor.]

JD: ONE!! TWO!! THRE-

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

JD: HAYNES BREAKS THE PIN!! A DIVING SAVE BY THE HAMMER!

[Haynes yanks Fujimoto off the mat by the arm, flinging him to the ropes. He races to the same set of ropes, hitting them a split second after Fujimoto does...]

JD: ENZUILARIAT- ducked by Fujimoto!

[Fujimoto hits the ropes again, coming back with momentum as he leaps off one foot, catching Haynes squarely in the chest with the other foot, sending the Hammer falling through the ropes and out to the floor.]

JD: Big pump kick by Fujimoto... to the ropes!

[Fujimoto barrels across the ring, ready to dive through the ropes...

...where a desperate Jackson Haynes swings his arm violently towards Fujimoto as his upper body peeks through the ropes, DRIVING his thumb into the throat!]

JD: WHISKEY LULLABY!

[Fujimoto falls back, clutching his throat...

...and wobbles right into the waiting arms of Danny Morton who muscles him into the air and DRIVES him down on the back of his head and neck, completely folding up Fujimoto. Morton stacks him up, pinning him with a jackknife cradle as the referee dives to count.]

JD: ONE!! TWO!! THREEEEEEEEEE!!!

"DING! DING! DING!"

JD: Wow! What a battle between four of Japan's greatest professional wrestlers but in the end, it's perhaps the greatest tag team in all of Japan who gets the win!

BW: It took the Whiskey Lullaby AND the Backdrop Driver to put Fujimoto and Taguchi away but Violence Unlimited gets the job done and they're heading to the Semifinals!

JD: A huge victory for Morton and Haynes here tonight in Tokyo!

[Haynes rolls back into the ring, embracing his weary partner as they celebrate their victory. Outside the ring, Yoshinari Taguchi looks into the ring, shaking his head back and forth at Noboru Fujimoto.]

JD: You can see an obvious look of disappointment - and perhaps more - on the face of Yoshinari Taguchi who seemed to have the match well in hand until Noboru Fujimoto, who had tagged out just moments earlier after a very long time in the ring, tagged himself in. That result might have gone very differently if Fujimoto would have simply behaved like a good tag team partner.

BW: He almost won the match, Dane! Did you not see him hit that Lasso thing for a near fall?

JD: I saw it... but Taguchi almost had the Four Leaf Clover applied at that moment as well. You can expect that this loss is only going to add more fuel to the fire for the eventual title showdown between Yoshinari Taguchi and Noboru Fujimoto, fans. Our Semifinals are set! The Lights Out Express taking on the World Tag Team Champions, Skywalker Jones and Hercules Hammonds, with the titles on the line! And we now know the other Semifinal will see Violence Unlimited taking on the makeshift team of



Michael Aarons of Air Strike and Brian James who came out of nowhere here tonight to help his Combat Corner ally in his time of need. Those matches will be coming up a little bit later but coming up right now is the Shoot Fight! No pinfalls, no countouts, NO... HOLDS... BARRED! - only KO or submission wins this one. Let's go backstage and hear from the two participants!

[We crossfade backstage to where Callum Mahoney is standing in front of a Rising Sun Showdown promotional poster. He is dressed in a black muscle shirt, with the image of a brown bear, standing on its hind legs and the words "POGUE MAHONEY" below it, across the front; a pair black shorts, with bright green bands down the side, and a pair of black fingerless gloves.]

CM: My opponent says that this time around there will be no quitting. He says that, IF I manage to lock on the armbar, I'll have to break his arm, because there is no way he is tapping out. Barring the fact that I've made him tap out once before, breaking a man's arm is not exactly an easy thing to do. Bones weren't made to break that easily under pressure from another man's arms and it takes a fair bit of rewiring of the brain to allow one man to inflict that kind of damage to another that easily.

See, I like a good fight and I like to find different ways of subjecting the other fella to a world of hurt, but to break a man's arm? No, I don't think I could do that. Rip the arm out of the socket? Maybe. But that just leaves Sudakov with a bum arm and two legs, plus the other arm, to hurt me with. What's the alternative? Take everything he can throw at me till I can take no more?

The choice is clear, then: make you tap out, or break your arm. I can live with those choices, Sudakov. Can you?

[We fade away from a determined Mahoney to a shot of Kolya Sudakov bouncing from foot to foot as Mark Stegglet stands beside him.]

MS: We are just moments away from this much-anticipated Shoot Fight between the Irish brawler, Callum Mahoney, and this man, the Russian War Machine, Kolya Sudakov!

[Sudakov speaks - a harsh, unpolished English spills from his mouth into the microphone.]

KS: The Armbar Assassin. The Irish Brawler. You Americans love your nicknames.

[Sudakov raises an arm, pointing one finger at the camera.]

KS: But there will be no assassinations tonight. There will be no chance for untrained street thug to hook armbar on former Mixed Martial Arts champion.

You have crossed bridge without looking down.

You walk into my world now. My ring. My warzone.

For many years, the people of Japan have seen me fight. For many years, they see pro wrestlers, kickboxers, jiu-jitsu black belts, and many, many other tough guy climb into ring with me.

And for many years, they see the same result... over... and over... and over.

[His right leg swings up rapidly and violently, lashing out and swinging just past the camera lens.]

KS: Head kick. Knockout.

You bring armbar. You bring tough guy reputation.

[He slaps his leg hard enough to leave a red welt.]

KS: I bring head kick. I bring knockout.

[Sudakov's eyes stare dead into the camera lens as we slowly crossfade back into the interior of the Tokyo Dome where the subtitles begin anew.]

SUBTITLES: It is now time for the SHOOT FIGHT!

[The people cheer the announcement.]

SUBTITLES: No countout. No pinfall. No disqualification. NO. HOLDS. BARRED!

[Another big cheer!]

SUBTITLES: This fight will be conducted in three five minute rounds. If the fight does not end by knockout or submission within those three rounds, the fight will be scored by three ringside judges who will declare victory.

Introducing first... fighting out of County Cork, Ireland... weighing in tonight at 109 kilos...

[The subtitles cut off as the shouting takes over.]

"CAAAAAALLLLLLLLUMMMMMM MAAAAAAAHOOOOOOOONNNNNNEY!"

[The Pogues' "The Rocky Road to Dublin" starts to play over the arena speakers. Ten seconds in, Callum Mahoney, an athletically-built man, with a sandy blond crew cut and lightly-tanned skin, strides through the entranceway. He is dressed in a black muscle shirt, with the image of a brown bear, standing on its hind legs and the words "POGUE MAHONE" below it, across the front; a pair black shorts, with bright green bands down the side, and a pair of black fingerless gloves. He is barefoot, with athletic tape around his feet.]

# 'TWAS IN THE MERRY MONTH OF JUNE FROM ME HOME I STARTED #  
# LEFT THE GIRLS IN TUAM NEARLY BROKEN-HEARTED #

# SALUTED FATHER DEAR, KISSED ME DARLING MOTHER #  
# DRANK A PINT OF BEER, ME GRIEF AND TEARS TO SMOTHER #  
# THEN OFF TO REAP THE CORN, LEAVE WHERE I WAS BORN #  
# CUT A STOUT BLACKTHORN TO BANISH GHOSTS AND GOBLINS #  
# BRAND NEW PAIR OF BROGUES RATTLED O'ER THE BOGS #  
# FRIGHTENED ALL THE DOGS ON THE ROCKY ROAD TO DUBLIN #

[As he makes his way to the ring, we see Mahoney's mouth moving, but we are not quite able to catch what he is saying to the fans on either side of the aisle. At some point, it appears as if he is singing along to his entrance theme.]

# ONE, TWO, THREE, FOUR, FIVE #  
# HUNT THE HARE AND TURN HER DOWN THE ROCKY ROAD #  
# AND ALL THE WAY TO DUBLIN, WHACK FOLLLO DE DAH! #

[Reaching the ring, Mahoney steps through the ropes. As the music fades, he paces the ring, awaiting the start of the match.]

JD: Callum Mahoney is dressed a little different than we're used to seeing him, ready for this Shoot Fight in the MMA style shorts and gloves. No boots tonight either. The Tiger Paw Pro representatives really took control of this one, making sure that this fight would be as close to a Mixed Martial Arts showdown as we can manage. Three rounds of five minutes. They brought in an MMA official in Steve Watters from the United States. They also brought in three MMA judges to sit ringside in case this goes the distance.

[Mahoney is still stalking back and forth as the lights in the Tokyo Dome die.]

JD: Lights out here in the Tokyo Dome.

[The overhead lighting splashes a Russian flag down on all four sides of the Dome crowd, slowly rising up to the roof where they come together in a massive display of patriotism from the Russian War Machine.

An intimidating military marching anthem begins to play over the PA system as the sound of boots on the wooden platform are heard. From all available walkways, a sea of "soldiers" dressed in the Russian Army uniform march out onto the elevated platform, forming up around the entryway.]

SUBTITLES: And his opponent... fighting out of Russia... at 123 kilos...

[The subtitles fade as the shouting kicks in.]

"THE RUSSIAN WAAAAAAAAAAAAAR MACHIIIIIIIIIIIIIIIIIIIIINE!"  
"THE PRO WRESTLER HUNNNNNNNTERRRR KILLLLLLLLLLLERRRRRR!"

"KOLLLLLLLLLLLLLLLLLLLLLLLLLLLLLLYAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAA  
SUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUDAKOOOOOOOOOOOV!"

[The Russian National Anthem kicks in as a blast of spotlights hit the V-shaped gap in the platform, revealing Kolya Sudakov being raised up on the platform, standing at attention just like the soldiers all around the entrance.

As he reaches the top, there's a collective shout in Russian as the salutes are dropped all around. The soldiers part, leaving a pathway for Kolya Sudakov who stands in a pair of knee-length MMA style shorts with the Russian flag on them. He is bare chested, looking down the ramp at Mahoney who continues to pace back and forth.

He slams his fists together as a burst of pyro rockets to the sky behind him, drawing more cheers as the Pro Wrestler Hunter Killer makes his way down the elevated platform, being trailed by the members of his fight team.]

JD: Many have speculated that Callum Mahoney, the man who loves a fight, was making a big mistake when he accepted the challenge for this Shoot Fight. They say he's out of his element... that he's losing part of what makes him the Armbar Assassin.

BW: We all know that Mahoney's a tough, tough guy. He likes to fight. He likes to brawl. And most of all, he likes hooking people in that armbar. But he ain't a MMA guy, Dane. He's not used to rules like this. He's not used to this style.

JD: Kolya Sudakov looks very confident coming down the ramp. He's got his fight team with him - the War Machine Corps - while Mahoney came down here all alone. This is Sudakov's fight. This is his world. He came to the world of professional wrestling to prove a point. He proved his point and then returned to the Mixed Martial Arts rings. He's had great success in both realms but tonight, he's gotta prove that the tapout at SuperClash was a fluke. He got caught, he admits it - but tonight he wants to show the world what happens when Callum Mahoney comes to HIS world.

[Sudakov steps into the ring, turning to the corner where one of his cornermen slip in his mouthpiece, giving some final advice. The Russian gives a nod as he turns back into the ring, moving from foot to foot, hopping back and forth as the referee summons both men out to the center.]

JD: Both men go out... getting final instructions from the official...

[He asks them to touch gloves...

...but gets nothing as Sudakov walks back to his corner, not taking his eyes off Mahoney who smirks before heading back to his corner as well.]

JD: Some bad blood in this one. Both men in their respective corners, waiting as...

[The referee signals for the bell!]

JD: Here we go!

[The crowd roars at the sound of the bell!]

JD: The Tokyo Dome has turned into a power station because it is electrifying here inside one of the greatest pro wrestling venues in the world!

[The two men come out of their respective corners to the middle of the ring, raising their gloved hands in defense as they shift their weight back and forth, staying loose as they look for an opening.]

JD: No one rushes into anything. Both men taking their time here, circling one another, trying to measure their opponent.

BW: This is a good sign for Mahoney. I thought he'd just charge across there and start throwing bombs.

[The Irishman is the first to strike, throwing a quick left that Sudakov blocks followed by a huge swinging right that Sudakov spins away from, watching as Mahoney nearly falls forward, spinning around and raising his fists up to defend.]

JD: Mahoney comes in fast but Sudakov is faster, knowing exactly how to avoid those strikes. You have to wonder what the gameplan of Mahoney is going into this match.

[Sudakov throws a pair of jabs, the first one connecting with the bridge of the nose before Mahoney blocks the second, throwing another wild right hand that Sudakov blocks.]

JD: On his feet, you would expect Sudakov has an edge with his Muay Thai and kickboxing backgrounds. Down on the mat, Sudakov's striking is dangerous but he's also got some submission skills. Perhaps Mahoney needs to take him down and look for that armbar.

BW: That's probably his best bet but can he get Sudakov down? Sudakov's got an amateur wrestling background as well, Dane. He might be able to stuff any takedown efforts with ease.

[Mahoney plays the aggressor, repeatedly throwing the right hand out as Sudakov backpedals, making sure the blows do little (if any) damage.]

JD: Mahoney with a big right connects!

[Sudakov steps back as Mahoney presses the advantage but the Russian's precision strikes are better, catching Mahoney with a left on the ear and a right to the temple that knocks Mahoney back into the ropes where he promptly covers up, absorbing a few more hard shots before Sudakov backs off, taking aim...]

JD: Oh! Hard kick to the side of the knee! Mahoney was trying to protect his head but Sudakov went after the leg instead!

[Mahoney drops a hand to grab at his knee, opening himself up to another hard left hand on the jaw that sends Mahoney scrambling back, moving back into the turnbuckles.]

JD: Mahoney's in trouble already!

[The Irishman tries to get out of the corner, throwing a quick left that makes Sudakov back up followed by a wild right hand that Sudakov easily dances away from, not even being touched by either.]

JD: Sudakov's showing his skill at avoiding getting hit when he wants to avoid it. If he wants to tussle, he can do that too.

[Sudakov walks forward, measuring the distance...

...and throws a roundhouse kick to the body, causing Mahoney to wince as he falls back a couple of steps.]

JD: You gotta watch the kicks of Sudakov. He said it earlier - head kick equals knockout.

[Mahoney surges forward, throwing a big left hand that Sudakov avoids before connecting with a right hand of his own. Sudakov throws a left, left, right hook combo, knocking Mahoney in the ropes...

...where he bounces off, throwing himself at the legs of Sudakov in a double leg takedown attempt!]

JD: Mahoney's trying for the legs!

[Sudakov tries to bottom out, looking to avoid the takedown. He falls to his knees, pushing Mahoney's chest down into the mat.]

JD: Sudakov stuffs the takedown attempt... look out here! He's looking for the guillotine!

[But Mahoney pulls out of it, diving in again and knocking Sudakov to his back. Mahoney pushes up between the legs of Sudakov, winding up with his right hand...]

JD: Sudakov got bull-rushed to his back. He's got Mahoney in his guard here as the Irishman tries to tee off on him.

[Sudakov grabs the arm as it comes down, hooking it with both hands. He kicks his legs up, trying to scissor the arm...

...but Mahoney pushes out of it, scrambling back to his feet. He rushes in on Sudakov as he's getting off the mat, throwing a knee into the chest.]

JD: Nice knee out of Mahoney!

BW: Well, he's lasted longer than I thought he would, Dane.

JD: Mahoney lands another knee!

[Pushing Sudakov back against the ropes, Mahoney steps back, throwing a right hand that Sudakov blocks. A left hand is blocked as well as Sudakov slips off the ropes, circling around Mahoney to crack him with a right hand of his own to stun Mahoney...

...and lets the head kick fly!]

JD: HEAD KICK!

[The crowd groans in reaction as Sudakov's kick comes up empty, Mahoney narrowly avoiding it as he falls back and down. He throws himself in a second time, looking for another takedown...

...but Sudakov again pushes him down, pressing his upper body down into the mat.]

JD: Sudakov stuffs the takedown again and-

[Sudakov swings to the side, slamming his knee into the exposed left ribcage of Mahoney!]

JD: Big knee from the mat! Another!

[The knees have Mahoney trying to slip his left arm down to cover up the ribs...

...which allows Sudakov to switch his position, throwing a brutal knee into the side of the head!]

JD: OHHHH!

[A second knee connects, leaving Mahoney sprawled on the canvas as Sudakov gets up...

...and SLAMS a soccer style kick into the side of the head just before the referee dives in, covering up Mahoney as he signals for the bell!]

JD: That's it! It's over!

"DING! DING! DING!"

[Sudakov stands over Mahoney, looking like he's going to deliver another blow as the referee waves him off, ordering him back to his corner.]

BW: I called it, Dane! Mahoney was outmatched, outgunned, and outclassed in a Shoot Fight like this! Stick to fighting drunken bums in the Rusty Spur, ya goon!

JD: Callum Mahoney with a solid showing in his first Shoot Fight but in the end, Sudakov certainly used his experience to get the edge and get the win.

BW: He stuffed the takedown, landed a pair of knees to the head that would be illegal in the MMA rings in the States but perfectly legal here in Japan... all to set up that soccer kick to the head! Also illegal in the States but here, it results in a victory for Kolya Sudakov.

JD: And as we sit here and watch the ringside doctors tend to Callum Mahoney, you have to admit that all those experts, those pundits, those analysts who said that he was making a big mistake by accepting Sudakov's challenge were absolutely right.

BW: Of course they were! And I was one of 'em, daddy!

JD: But at the end of the day, Mahoney tapped out Sudakov at SuperClash... Sudakov gets the big KO here tonight... I'd say they're even.

BW: Even?! Did you even watch what just happened?! You sound like you're trying to lay on the hype for a rematch - for a rubber match! There's NO way that Callum Mahoney wants more of Kolya Sudakov after tonight. Absolutely no way, Dane.

JD: That remains to be seen. I call it one and one and I'd pay hard earned money to see a third match go down between these two... in less advantageous circumstances for the Russian War Machine. The Shoot Fight is over but the fighting here in the Tokyo Dome has reached a fever pitch as we're about to head into the Semifinals of the Stampede Cup tournament. Four teams remaining - each with an equal shot at becoming the 2014 Stampede Cup champions which gets you the trophy, the honor of being called the greatest tag team in all of wrestling, and one million dollars!

BW: AND the World Tag Team Titles if you play your cards right.

JD: Absolutely right... and in mere moments, the Lights Out Express of Aaron Anderson and Lenny Strong will get the chance to play a winning hand and walk out of the Tokyo Dome as the champions as they face Skywalker Jones and Hercules Hammonds. We caught up with both teams moments ago so let's hear what's on their minds just before this big showdown!

[We open back up to a still frame shot of Mark Stegglet surrounded by Lenny Strong, Aaron Anderson, and Miss Sandra Hayes. Strong is readjusting his elbow pad on his right arm while Miss Hayes dusts off the track jacket of Aaron Anderson. Both combatants remain in their green, white, and gold ring trunks with matching jackets and boots while Miss Sandra Hayes has power changed once again into an alluring silver sequined skirt and blouse with bright pink lipstick reminiscent of the electric tape wrapped around the handle of her trusted branding iron.]

MS: Gentlemen, you now find yourselves one match away from the Stampede Cup Finals and standing in your way are the AWA World Tag Team



Champions. Before we get to SkyHerc, I've got to ask about the ending to your match with the War Pigs and --

LS: We toldja, Mark... This ain't the same playpen those hogs were use to rulin' while they cowered away from the best tag team division in ALL of the lands. This is the AWA... this is the Stampede Cup, jack! Richie Lee told the world that his animals knew dirt and came from it and guess what, Mark...

...that's where the Lights Out Express left em'!

MS: So you're proud of how you managed to secure victory?

AA: You're DAMN right we're proud. We're in the Semifinals, Stegglet. We're standing toe to toe with Skywalker Jones and Hercules Hammonds with a chance to not only advance into the Finals but to bring the gold home to the Shane Gang where it belongs.

MS: It's ironic that you mention the Shane Gang yet we have yet to see or hear from the Ring Leader himself. I've got to ask, where in the WORLD is Terry Shane III?

LS: Listen, jack. Shane don't need to hold our hand just like we don't need to hold his. We ain't kids and we ain't scared of nobody. Most of all, we ain't two brown nosed goody two-shoes who sold themselves out and everything they stood for to win these people over. Herc and Jonesy... there was a time and a place where we woulda stood beside them and battled anyone the office threw at us. Them boys are talented, I ain't gonna sugarcoat it and pretend that they ain't. But somewhere in-between their wars with the 'Bombers they lost some'em.

MS: And what might that possibly be because they looked on point earlier.

LS: It wasn't a step that they lost, it wasn't even an ounce of muscle cause that boy Hammonds can go with anyone and we're ready for it. Nah, Mark....

...they lost their swagger.

MS: Their...swagger?

AA: Yep.

[Anderson, arms folded, nods with his statement.]

LS: They became more about outperforming Larry Doyle on the mic then proving people inferior to them in the ring and I ain't just talkin' about Buford. Skywalker Jones use to defy the laws of gravity and Hercules Hammonds use to toss boys out of the ring like rag puppets. Higgins would spice up their presence and Skywalker Jones and Hercules Hammonds would deliver every iota of what he claimed. But the team we're facin' tonight.

[Strong pauses, shaking his head.]

LS: That ain't Skywalker Jones and Hercules Hammonds...

...it's SkyHerc.

And SkyHerc have about as much swagger as Mark Madsen.

SkyHerc strike about as much fear into us as Barney the Purple Dinosaur.

SkyHerc are as terrifyin' as Casper the Friendly Ghost and lemme tell ya straight up, jack...

...we ain't afraid of NO ghosts.

AA: Tonight the charade comes to an end. Tonight we bury SkyHerc in the dirt right next to Hammer and Sabre and leave them and their identity crisis where it belongs. Tonight is about raising a new kingdom in the AWA Tag Division and crowning new champions. This was never about proving ourselves immortal. We'll save that for Jones and Hammonds.

This is about PROVING that we are the BEST tag team in the World in that ring out there tonight!

Have your fabled legacy, fellas...

...we're here for the Gold.

We're here for the Cup.

And you better believe we're here for the one million dollars.

LS: As for you two? I'm gonna break it down real simple.

[Strong gestures with his index finger for the camera to come in closer.]

LS [whispering]: Lights...

[Strong slams his elbow into his palm of his other hand, creatin ga loud \*SMACK!\* sound.]

LS: ...OUT!

AA: Ain't no way else around it.

[We fade from the Lights Out Express...

...and into a shot of one-half of the AWA World Tag Team Champions, the massive Hercules Hammonds, standing before us in front of a Rising Sun Showdown banner. He is a mountain of sculpted muscle, gleaming with sweat, clutching the tag team title belt worn over his right shoulder in his giant hands. He is pure physical intimidation, staring directly at us.

Standing beside him, but nearly obscured by Hammonds' huge form, is his tag team partner, Mr. Steal the Spotlight himself, Skywalker Jones. Like Hammonds, Jones is still dressed in the wrestling gear he had on in from his previous match. Like Hammonds, he has his half of the tag team titles. Unlike Hammonds, Jones is wearing his title around his waist.]

SJ: One down and two to go, Herc! Two more matches and we're not just champions! We're not just Stampede Cup winners! Brotha', we will be LEGENDS!

[Hammonds keeps staring straight ahead, as Jones continues his energetic spiel.]

SJ: But we gotta' keep our eyes on the prize! One match at a time, Herc! We gotta' keep our focus! 'Cause we got The Lights Out Express comin' right for us!

[Herc contemplates this for a moment, his stare never moving away from the camera.]

HH: Anderson and Strong like to think of themselves as some unstoppable locomotive, barrelin' down that track, runnin' over everything that's standin' in their way, headed straight towards one million dollars, the AWA World Tag Team titles, and the Stampede Cup...

[Hammonds pounds both of his fists into his massive chest.]

\*SMACK!\*

HH: ...and that's when ya' run smack-dab into reality.

[He glares into the camera, breathing heavy through his nostrils.]

HH: 'Cause you can talk about the pressure, the stress, the STRAIN of facin' you two all ya' want, but there ain't NO team in this ring or ANY ring, that has the spotlight burnin' HOTTER, burnin' BRIGHTER, and shinin' down on them like Hercules Hammonds and Skywalker Jones.

SJ: This match ain't just like any other match! This match ain't like anything you've EVER experienced before! It ain't anything like a gauntlet match! It ain't a matter of surviving!

[A calm, serious look forms on Jones' face.]

SJ: It's a matter of EVOLVING.

[He leans in close, speaking low like he's sharing a secret.]

SJ: It's a matter of becomin' something greater than you've EVER been before.

[A grin.]

SJ: Beat us...and you're the champions of the world! Beat us...and you ain't just hype! You ain't just Miss Sandra Hayes' errand boys! You ain't just empty words of bravado! Beat us...and for however long you hold the titles, you ARE the greatest!

HH: But can ya'?

[Herc tilts his head slightly, leaning in closer with a taunting tone in his voice.]

HH: Will ya'?

SJ: To do it, you gotta' steal the spotlight...

...from the men that OWN the spotlight.

[Jones points to the title belt wrapped firmly around his waist.]

HH: Been hearin' a whole lotta' talk 'bout you two lately. Got Bucky Wilde beatin' the drum for ya'. It's suppose to be your year. It's suppose to be your chance to step outta' Shane's shadow and shine more brilliant than the Sun.

[A deep, hearty chuckle comes from big Herc.]

HH: And maybe it is. Maybe it's your week. Maybe it's your month. And hell, maybe it IS your year.

But tonight...

...AIN'T your night.

[He hardens his glare.]

HH: The Stampede Cup AIN'T your moment.

SJ: It's OURS.

[We crossfade back up to a live action shot of the interior of the Tokyo Dome as a graphic of the tournament bracket appears on the screen.]

JD: There you see it, fans. Skywalker Jones and Hercules Hammonds defeated Dichotomy in the Quarterfinals to get to the Semis after receiving a first round bye due to their Top 4 seeding position. The Lights Out Express have walked a harder road for sure by defeating the Tiger Paw Pro Global Tag Crown Champions, the Shadow Star Legion in the first round before defeating a Top 4 seed in their own rights, the War Pigs by a controversial disqualification decision. The LOE will likely be fatigued going into a match with a team that just never lets up for a second.

BW: But the thing about the LOE is that they tend to find a way to win big matches, Dane. Two-time winners of the tag team gauntlet... they won that

escape the cage match against The Rave and Shadoe Rage back at SuperClash with Donnie White. The odds appear to be against them tonight but that's the way they like it.

JD: It's Semifinal time here at Rising Sun Showdown so let's head up to Megumi Sato for the introductions!

[The piercing voice of Sato erupts and the subtitles fill the screen.]

SUBTITLES: SEMI-FINALS... STAMPEDE CUP... GO NOOOOOOOOOOW!

[Lights; Out!]

\*Clank... Clank... Clank... Clank-Clank-Clank  
ClankClankClankCLANKCLANKCLANK!!!\*

[A loud whistle screeches...]

V/O: ALLLLLLL ABOOOOOOOOooooooooAAAAAARRRRD!!!!

[The rapid clanking continues, heightening into earsplitting pulses just as the lead guitar riff of "Kundalin Express" by Love and Rockets kick in! Drums beat, synthesizers fire up, the energy in the area builds and builds.]

BW: It's go time, daddy! The Gang is coming for the gold!

CP: And what a mountain they have standing in their way.

BW: More like a molehill! They were born and bred for this moment! We've all heard the stories about how these guys got to this point in their career. Aaron Anderson, the first graduate of the much-hyped Combat Corner. Lenny Strong, a darling of the independent scene who finally got his big break when Terry Shane III plucked him out of the bingo halls and Jewish Community Centers. Miss Sandra Hayes is behind this duo - and as much as I'd prefer to be behind her, that's going to be the difference in this match if you ask me.

[Smoke screens fill the entrance portal as lights beam back and forth through the fogged fill area. Just as Daniel Ash's voice is cued a peculiar vehicle comes strolling out into view. A pump trolley, carrying none other than Aaron Anderson, Lenny Strong, and Miss Sandra Hayes, comes rolling into view. Four comically costumed Japanese men pump vigorously back and forth and begin powering the carriage down towards the ring.]

JD: This is ridiculous.

BW: I heard if they make it to the finals a train track is going to be erected towards the ring and they'll come out on a bullet train.

JD: I stand corrected. THAT'S ridiculous.

SUBTITLES: First... at a combine weight of 229 kilos...

"AAAAAAAAAAAAAROOOOON ANNNNNNNDERRRRSONNNNNNNN!"  
"LENNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNYYYYY STRONNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNG!"

"THE LIIIIIIIIIGHTS OUUUUUUUUUUUUT EXPRESSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSS!"

[Miss Sandra Hayes waves angelically, much like a pageant queen would after winning the title of Miss USA. Every so often she thrusts her mighty florescent pink branding iron into the air which draws a split reaction from the crowd. Despite all the shenanigans, lasers, and smoke Anderson and Strong remain stone-eyed on the ring in front of them.]

BW: Dane, we've seen these guys mentally prepare for some obscure matches over the last year and a half. They tapped into bizarro world to defeat the Rave and now they've dug into a deeper, darker mindset here tonight that has help them blaze a trail into the 2014 Stampede Cup Semifinals and a shot at the AWA World Tag Team Titles.

[The massive handle of the trolley continues to be pumped up and down on either side of the handcar. Just as the vehicle approaches the ringside area Lenny Strong and Aaron Anderson stand up, adorned in their patent green, white, and gold track jackets and ring gear, and then assist the Siren up who has changed into a gold show-stopping style blouse with a matching curve hugging attached, stretch-sequin skirt.]

JD: The challengers, the team who backed into the tournament now stands a chance to make a major impact here in 2014. My partner in crime, Bucky Wilde, has repeatedly said that 2014 will be the Year of the Shane Gang. Tonight, the Lights Out Express can go a long way towards making that happen. Terry Shane III still holds that guaranteed shot at the World Heavyweight Title in his back pocket, biding his time and waiting for the opportune moment... but for Anderson and Strong, their moment is now!

[We cut back to Megumi Sato.]

SUBTITLES: Introducing once again, Skywalker Jones and Hercules Hammonds' personal ring announcer, Buford P. Higgins.

[Megumi looks around in confusion as no one comes out, but suddenly, the lights go out in the arena, leaving us in complete darkness! "The Show Goes On" by Lupe Fiasco then begins to play, as the image of Skywalker Jones and Hercules Hammonds, along with Buford P. Higgins and their entourage of Japanese cheerleaders can be seen walking down the hall and making their way towards the entrance way. Once they go through the curtain, floodlights fill the entrance way, as we see the AWA Tag Team champions emerging through to a huge roar from the crowd! Buford stands at the point of the v-shaped ramp as a spotlight hits him.]

SUBTITLES: Have no fear, because the champs...ARE...HERE!!!

[Two members of the ring crew can be seen rolling a red carpet down the aisle, as Skywalker Jones, wearing his AWA World Tag Team title belt around

his waist and Hercules Hammonds, dragging his title behind him, make their way down to the ring as the cheerleaders follow them down to ringside, leaping and shaking their pom-poms in the air all the while.]

SUBTITLES: The glare of this spotlight is just too bright to ever be put out! Here they are, once again, your reigning and defending AWA TAG TEAM CHAMPIONS OF THE WOOOOORRRLLLLDDDDD...

[The Japanese crowd has caught on quickly, repeating along with Buford.]

"HERCULES!"

"HERCULES!"

"HERCULLLLLLLEEEEEESSS HAMMOOOOOONNNNDDDDSSS!!!"

AND...

"SKY! WALKER!"

[Deep breath now!]

"JOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOONNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNN  
NNEEEEEEESSSSS!!!!"

[The champions step through the ropes as the crowd cheers.]

JD: Skywalker Jones and Hercules Hammonds began their run towards the World Tag Team Titles at the 2013 edition of the Stampede Cup when they shocked the world by eliminating perhaps the greatest tag team in AWA history, The Bishop Boys, from the tournament and went on to have an absolutely thrilling matchup with the eventual winners, the Blonde Bombers. They'd go on to win the titles from the Bombers at SuperClash last year and now look to make history by defending those titles all night long.

[The two teams stand across the ring from one another, engaging in final strategy sessions. Hammonds and Jones exchange a big high five as Jones steps out to the apron, giving a whoop to the crowd as Hammonds rolls his neck, turning across the ring to face Lenny Strong who has opted to stay inside the squared circle while his partner vacates to his spot on the ring apron.]

JD: It's going to be Lenny Strong and Hercules Hammonds starting off for their respective teams... and you can only imagine what's going through the minds of all four of these men right now. So much at stake. So much on the line. The Stampede Cup for certain but also the World Tag Team Titles that Jones and Hammonds worked so hard to capture at the end of last year from the Blonde Bombers.

BW: Look at Strong! Strong is taunting Hammonds from across the ring, flexing his muscles at him, waving him forward.

JD: I'm not sure I'd be playing that game with the Tupelo Tower if I was him.

[Hammonds has seen enough, stalking across the ring towards the corner where Strong is backpedaling. The big man hooks a collar and elbow as Strong tries to drag him back to the corner...]

...but Hammonds is having none of that, pulling Strong in the tieup out to the center of the ring where he promptly scoops him up off the mat, slamming him back down to the canvas.]

JD: Big slam right out of the gate by Hercules Hammonds, showing off that trademark power!

[Hammonds steps back, waving for Strong to get up and bring the fight to him. Strong angrily gets up, rushing into another collar and elbow, trying to shove Hammonds back into the ropes...]

...but the big man simply plants his feet, giving a shake of the head at the struggling Strong, and HURLS him across the ring and down to the mat with a mighty push!]

JD: Wow! Pure power in the form of Hercules Hammonds who quite arguably could be the strongest man in the entire AWA.

BW: There's a few names in that discussion - guys like Tony Sunn and Brad Jacobs... Danny Morton if you include VU in the discussion... Hammer from the War Pigs - but Hammonds' name has to go to the top of every list you make.

[Strong rises to a knee, leaning against the ropes as Miss Sandra Hayes rushes around the ringside area, leaning in to whisper to her charge.]

JD: Miss Hayes with an impromptu strategy session after she watches her man get thrown around with ease in the opening moments in this one.

[Hammonds again waves for Strong to come to him, slapping himself in the chest with an open palm. Strong nods, rising to his feet. The two come together again...]

...but this time, Strong slips a knee up into the midsection, catching Hammonds by surprise!]

JD: Lenny Strong goes downstairs... ohh! Big elbow down across the back of the head takes the big man down to a knee but Strong pulls him right back up by the arm...

[He goes to shoot Hammonds into the ropes but the big man holds his ground, yanking Strong back towards him...]

...and LAUNCHES him up and over in a king-sized backdrop!]

JD: OH MY!! HAMMONDS SENT HIM TO THE SKY WITH THAT ONE!



BW: Strong should've changed the light bulbs while he was up there.  
Goodness gracious, this kid is strong.

[Hammonds waits on Strong, watching him rise up off the mat and yanks him into an inverted facelock, holding it for a moment as he looks out at the crowd...]

...and SLAMS a clubbing forearm across the chest once, twice, three times, four times, five times, and a sixth lands before he pushes Strong back up, swinging him around...]

JD: CLOTHESLINE!

[The muscular arm of Hammonds sends Strong over the top rope, toppling down onto the elevated rampway. A shout from Skywalker Jones takes Hammonds to the corner where he slaps his eager partner's hand.]

JD: The tag is made and look out here!

[Jones steps through the ropes, leaning against them before barreling across the ring at top speed. He leaps from the mat to the top rope in a single bound, springing off...]

...and TAKING DOWN Lenny Strong with a crossbody!]

JD: SPRINGBOARD... PLANNNNNNNNNCHAAAAAAAAAAAAA!

[Jones climbs to his feet, clapping his hands together and giving a whoop to the mammoth crowd. He leans down, dragging Strong off the mat by the hair...]

...and flinging him recklessly over the ropes back inside the ring.]

JD: Jones puts him back in after that breathtaking dive...

BW: He ain't done, Dane.

JD: The Human Highlight Reel grabs the top rope...

[Jones leaps into the air again, springing off the top rope to propel himself high in the air...]

JD: DROPKICK!

[...and connects with both feet in the chest of Strong, sending him falling backwards where he flips over before coming to rest chestfirst on the mat. Jones kips up off the mat, pointing to the corner where the big man is standing.]

JD: Another tag and the World Tag Team Champions are on their game so far in this one as Hercules Hammonds, the son of the Gulf Coast Wrestling legend, steps into the ring once again.

[Hammonds pulls the rising Strong off the mat, whipping him across...

...and holds his ground, allowing Strong to bounce off him as the powerhouse just stands, looking down at him.]

JD: Wow! Strong with a head of steam behind him and Hercules Hammonds didn't even budge!

BW: And Lenny Strong isn't some cruiserweight, Dane. He's six foot four and about 260 pounds. Hammonds is just a beast in there.

JD: He certainly is... and look at this!

[Hammonds pulls Strong off the mat, promptly muscling him up into a gorilla press!]

JD: GORILLA PRESS! HE'S GOT HIM UP!

[The Tupelo Tower stands tall, holding Strong high for one and all to see. He walks around the ring a bit, his arms at full extension as the crowd "ohhhhs" at the show of strength.]

JD: Look at this! Incredible!

[Moving back to the center of the ring, Hammonds steps out from under Strong, causing the former independent wrestling darling to slam chestfirst into the canvas.]

JD: He just drops him like a sack of garbage!

[Hammonds strikes a big double bicep pose with Strong writhing in pain on the mat behind him. Strong instantly starts crawling towards the sound of his partner's voice, trying to get out of the ring to regroup.]

JD: Strong's trying to get out of there... trying to make the the exchange with Aaron Anderson for the first time in this match. The challengers are off to a bad start in this one and they know it.

[The big man turns around, shaking his head as Strong attempts to flee. He leans down, grabbing Strong by the back of the trunks, pulling him back to his feet...

...where Strong catches him with a desperate back elbow to the cheek!]

JD: Ohh! Strong fires back!

[Strong wheels around, throwing his forearm into the jaw of Hammonds. A second blow follows, staggering the big man.]

JD: Lenny Strong, as we've said before, hits as hard as anyone in the AWA locker room. He may be trying to prove that right now against the powerhouse, Hercules Hammonds.

[Strong measures Hammonds, pasting him with an overhead elbow down between the eyes. He grabs him by the back of the head, laying in a series of stiff forearms to the jaw!]

JD: Strong's laying them in good... he's got Hammonds dazed a bit...

[Grabbing Hammonds by the arm, Strong lays in a pair of kicks to the midsection, doubling him up. He twists the arm around, holding it at full extension...

...but Hammonds simply reaches up with his free arm, throwing Strong back into the neutral corner with a toss!]

JD: Whoa! Hammonds hurls him away like it's nothing!

[The Tupelo Tower marches into the corner, leaning over to grab the middle rope. He yanks himself in, slamming his shoulder into the midsection of Strong.]

JD: Big shoulder thrust to the abdomen!

[Hammonds hangs on to the ropes, repeatedly driving the shoulder into the midsection as AWA Senior Official Johnny Jagger steps in, waving him off.]

JD: Johnny Jagger calls for the break.

[The big man straightens up, nodding to the official...]

"WHAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAACK!"

[...and then lays in a massive overhead open handed slap to the chest that echoes throughout the Tokyo Dome!]

JD: Good grief!

[Hammonds smirks as Strong slumps to a knee, clutching his reddening chest in pain. The big man pulls him right back up though, hooking one arm under the armpit and one around the head...

...before HURLING Strong three-quarters of the way across the ring with a biel throw!]

JD: TEN FOOT TOSS SENDS STRONG \_BOUNCING\_ OFF THE CANVAS!

[Strong wobbles back to his feet as an aggressive Hammonds comes barreling in...

...and sidesteps, hurling Hammonds chestfirst into the turnbuckles. He hits hard, falling back...]

JD: OHH!

[Strong uncorks a nasty elbow strike to the back of the head, knocking Hammonds facefirst into the corner where he slumps down to his knees.]

JD: What a shot out of Lenny Strong! He rocked him!

[The Philly native backs off, measuring his man before charging back in with a low dropkick to the back of the head, smashing his face into the corner-length turnbuckle!]

JD: Down goes Hammonds to the canvas!

[Strong gets up, grabbing Hammonds by the ankle and dragging him to the corner where he slaps the hand of his partner.]

JD: The LOE makes the tag...

[Anderson slips in, hopping up to the middle rope as Strong pulls Hammonds up, holding his arms behind him as Anderson leaps off with a double axehandle across the skull!]

JD: The challengers go right into the double team, connecting with that sledge off the middle rope.

[Each man grabs an arm, flinging Hammonds back into their corner!]

JD: Ohh! We've seen that whiplash move several times out of the LOE tonight as they try to work their way through this Stampede Cup tournament.

BW: It's been effective every time too!

JD: It certainly has.

[Strong vacates the ring at the referee's insistence as Anderson grabs Hammonds by the back of the head, cracking him on the chin with a European uppercut!]

JD: OHHH! WHAT A SHOT OUT OF AARON ANDERSON!

[Anderson sneers at the protesting official as he pushes Hammonds back into the corner, connecting with a second uppercut. A third one lands as well before he switches tactics, tugging him into a side headlock, turning away from the referee...

...and SLAMMING an extended thumb into the windpipe, leaving a gasping Hammonds staggering away, hunting for oxygen.]

JD: Hammonds moving away but Anderson's having none of that with a big clubbing blow across the back!

[Anderson grabs Hammonds by the back of the trunks, yanking him into a forearm shank into the kidneys!]

JD: Another shot to the back... and a knee to the back as well sends Hammonds down to the mat.

[The first Combat Corner graduate launches into a stomping attack on Hammonds, causing the Tupelo Tower to roll right under the ropes to the ring apron.]

JD: Hammonds is trying to get a breather but Anderson stays right on him, stomping him on the apron!

[The referee steps in, forcing Anderson back but Strong is right on the scene, picking up with the stomps where his partner left off. Buford P. Higgins shouts at the referee as Miss Sandra Hayes smiles gleefully, applauding the dirty tactics.]

JD: Turn around, referee!

[Strong backs off just before the referee turns around...

...and Aaron Anderson comes dashing across the ring, dropping into a baseball slide to the ribcage that knocks Hammonds off the apron to the barely-padded concrete Tokyo Dome floor!]

JD: Down to the floor goes Hammonds!

[Anderson rolls under the ropes, sitting up on the apron with a big grin on his face. He drops down on his feet, throwing a big soccer kick to the ribs of Hammonds before leaning down to pull him up...]

JD: Irish whip!

[But Hammonds holds his ground, refusing to be whipped into the ringside barricade. A panicked Anderson tries the whip a second time, trying to outmuscle Hammonds but having no luck...

...when Lenny Strong leaps off the apron, smashing a forearm down between the eyes of Hammonds!]

JD: Oh, come on!

BW: Do it!

[Strong and Anderson each grab an arm, using the same whiplash move again...

...but this time, they HURL Hammonds backfirst into the ringside railing, breaking the hinge on it and knocking the whole section of barricade over as Hammonds falls into the front row!]

JD: GOOD GRIEF! HAMMONDS GETS THROWN INTO THE STEEL!!

BW: They broke the railing! Hammonds' three hundred pounds just busted up the railing when he hit it!

[The referee mounts the middle rope, shouting at the Lights Out Express for the illegal doubleteam. A furious Skywalker Jones steps in, hitting the far ropes...]

JD: HE'S GONNA FLY!

[...but the referee steps back to the middle of the ring, cutting him off to jeers from the crowd.]

JD: No! Johnny Jagger prevented it!

BW: Good move by the official. The right move too!

JD: There's an illegal doubleteam out on the floor and you think it's the right move to prevent his partner from getting involved to even the odds?!

BW: You want all rules to be thrown out the window? I'm sure the LOE would be happy to oblige with that one... the rest of the Shane Gang's in the building, right?

JD: I have no idea. What do YOU know?

BW: Nothing... not a thing, Dane.

JD: Right. I'm sure you haven't had any conversations with Miss Hayes about this match.

[Jagger turns away from Jones, moving back to shout at the LOE. He ducks through the top and middle rope, shouting at both men...

...as Jones comes tearing across the ring, leaping into the air, somersaulting OVER Johnny Jagger, and WIPING OUT both Anderson and Strong with a dive!]

JD: SOMERSAULT PLANNNNNNCHAAAA! OVER THE REFEREE!! INCREDIBLE!

[Jones pops up to his feet, shouting at Jagger who is on his case for disobeying his order. Mr. Steal The Spotlight pulls Strong off the floor, bouncing his head off the ring apron!]

JD: Skywalker Jones is fired up out on the floor!

[He pulls Anderson off the mat as well, shoving him under the ropes before moving to his partner's side, trying to get him back to his feet.]

JD: Jones is trying to get Hammonds back up and back into this match. We're approaching the ten minute mark of this matchup - 45 minute time limits in the Semifinals.

[Hammonds staggers over to the apron with the aid of Skywalker Jones, grabbing the middle rope as Jones vacates, moving back to his own corner as Anderson approaches...]

...and WAFFLES Hammonds with a European uppercut, forcing Hammonds to cling to the top rope with both arms to stay on his feet!]

JD: Another brutal shot by Anderson! The man formerly known as the All-American is punishing Hercules Hammonds with those forearm uppercuts.

[The North Carolina native pulls Hammonds into a front facelock.]

JD: Are you kidding me?!

BW: Anderson wasn't in that discussion for the strongest man in the AWA earlier but for a man of his size, he's freakishly strong, Dane!

[With a nod to the crowd, Anderson lifts Hammonds up in the vertical suplex...]

...and drops him down with a spine-rattling fall!]

JD: Wow! An amazing show of power out of Aaron Anderson... and there's the tag!

[Strong steps through the ropes, dashing across the ring to hit the far ropes. He rebounds back towards Anderson who sets, ducking down as Strong leapfrogs over him...]

...and DRIVES his feet down in a double stomp on Hammonds' midsection!]

JD: Leapfrog double stomp!

BW: That'll really take the wind out of someone's sails.

JD: It certainly will and Strong makes the first cover of the match... only getting a two count though.

[Strong pushes up off the mat, backing to the neutral corner where he hops up on the second rope, slapping his forearm a few times, watching as he waits for Hammonds to stir...]

JD: Hammonds rolls to all fours, trying to push up off the mat but he doesn't know that Lenny Strong is waiting for him...

[As Hammonds rises, Strong leaps off, smashing his forearm into the jaw of Hammonds, sending him falling back down to the mat as Strong makes another pin attempt.]

JD: One... two... but that's all! Hammonds is too strong to be put down this early in the match if you ask me.

BW: Not if the LOE keeps this up. They're battering the big man all over the ring, Dane.

JD: They certainly are.

[Hammonds again rolls to all fours, trying to crawl across the ring to where his partner is waiting with his arm outstretched. Strong climbs to his feet, assessing the situation...

...and then barrels across, leaping up to crack Skywalker Jones with a forearm, knocking him off the apron!]

JD: OHH! COME ON!

[The referee shouts at Strong as he turns around, grinning as Hammonds pushes up to all fours...

...and then FLATTENS him with a low dropkick to the mush!]

JD: Lenny Strong takes him down again...

[Strong stands over Hammonds, stomping him a few times before grabbing a foot, dragging him towards the corner where he tags his partner again.]

JD: Anderson is off the exchange...

[Each grabs an arm, flinging Hammonds back into the corner again. They ignore the referee's protests, repeating the doubleteam... and again... and again... and again...

...when Skywalker Jones comes rushing into the ring, throwing haymakers at both men!]

JD: JONES IS IN!! JONES IS IN!!

[But Jones quickly fades under a barrage of forearms and elbows from the challengers who turn him around...]

JD: Are you kidding me?!

[...and whiplash throw him back into his own partner!]

JD: Come on!



[The LOE throw Jones back into Hammonds a second time... and a third time drops Hammonds in the corner before Strong hurls Jones through the ropes to the floor.]

JD: The challengers are having their way with Jones and Hammonds right now...

[Strong steps out of the ring as Anderson pulls Hammonds off the mat, pasting him with a pair of European uppercuts that knocks him back towards the ropes.]

JD: Irish whip... ducks the clothesline!

[Hammonds hits the far ropes, building up steam...

...and FLATTENS a surprised Aaron Anderson with a leaping double axehandle blow across the chest!]

JD: OHHH!

[Hammonds hits the mat, instantly pushing to all fours, attempting to crawl across the ring where his partner is trying to regain his spot on the apron.]

JD: Hammonds with the big hammer blow to save himself but now he needs Skywalker Jones to get up there on the apron so that he can save him!

BW: Jones is still down on the floor though!

JD: He is... but he's got a little bit of time to get there before Hammonds gets there. Hercules Hammonds is crawling towards the corner which is vacant at the moment...

[The Tupelo Tower draws close to the corner when Aaron Anderson struggles to his feet, cutting off the tag with a stomp to the back of the head. A second one follows.]

JD: Anderson cuts off the tag! The first graduate of the Combat Corner was projected to be a major star in this sport but that level of success has eluded him so far in his career. Could tonight be the night?

[Anderson stomps Hammonds a few more times before he spins around, pushing up to the second rope in the champions' own corner.]

JD: Anderson on the middle rope... taking aim at Hercules Hammonds...

[And completely failing to notice Skywalker Jones as he pulls himself up on the apron, stepping up to the middle rope, and flinging himself into an enzuigiri on Anderson!]

"WHAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAACK!"

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

[Anderson staggers, falling forward as Hammonds pushes up off the mat...

...and PIVOTS into a powerslam!]

JD: POWERSLAM!! POWERSLAM!!

[Hammonds pushes up, falling back to tag the waiting Skywalker Jones!]

JD: JONES MAKES THE TAG!!

[Skywalker Jones wastes no time, scaling the turnbuckles immediately upon seeing Anderson laid out near the corner. Jones reaches the top rope in a flash, straightening up...]

"IN YOUR FACE DISGRACE!"

[...and hurls himself from the top rope, flipping forward dangerously fast!]

JD: 450 FROM THE TOP!!

[Jones hits hard, instantly reaching back to hook the legs of Aaron Anderson.]

JD: ONE!! TWO!!! THR-

[At the very last second, Aaron Anderson manages to kick out, breaking the pin!]

JD: How in the...?! The 450 splash is one of the signature moves of Skywalker Jones! We've seen him use that to finish off many an opponent over the years but he couldn't put away Aaron Anderson with it!

BW: He took a chance there and it paid off, Dane. Jones went to finish off Anderson based off the position in the ring. He didn't get the three count but Aaron Anderson is in a bad way right now.

JD: A look of disbelief on the face of Skywalker Jones as he argues with the official... giving Aaron Anderson a chance to roll out to the floor, clutching his ribs in pain. Miss Sandra Hayes breaks the land speed record getting over there to check on her man as Jones reads Johnny Jagger the riot act.

BW: It looked like a good count to me, Dane.

JD: Me too. Jones is just fired up... perhaps shocked that he didn't get the three count right there.

[Jones turns away from the official, shaking his head as he turns back to his opponent who is out on the floor. The high flyer steps out to the apron, backing down the length of it to give himself room to move...]

JD: What in the world is Jones going for now?

BW: I'm not sure but he can't pin the guy on the floor, Dane.

JD: No, but he doesn't have to pin him to beat him. A countout in a match like this is just as good for the champions. They'd still advance to the Finals of the tournament and still retain their titles. Of course, if the LOE won by countout or disqualification, they'd move on to the Finals but they would NOT win the titles!

[Jones leans against the ringpost for a moment...

...and then comes dashing down the length of the apron, throwing himself off. He flips backwards as he sails forward...]

JD: SHOOTING STA-OHHHHHHH!

[The crowd gasps as Anderson explodes off the ringside mats to catch the plummeting Jones with a European uppercut up under the chin!]

JD: GOOD GOD ALMIGHTY!!

BW: That might be it! That might do it right there! Get him back in the ring, Double A!

[A dazed Anderson falls back to the floor, clutching his ribs as Miss Hayes echoes Bucky's cries. The former Combat Corner student slides on his rear towards the apron, stretching an arm up to grab the ropes with a wince on his face.]

JD: Those ribs got hurt pretty badly by that 450 splash, I think, Bucky. Aaron Anderson is having a real hard time moving around out there on the floor. He's not able to take advantage of the major offensive strike he got in on Skywalker Jones.

BW: If the LOE ends up losing this match, Dane, look back to this moment. This was the moment where things could've gone much, much different for them. They are literally three seconds away from being the World Tag Team Champions right now and can't get it done because of those ribs!

[Anderson cries out in pain as he hauls himself to his feet, hearing the referee's double count hit six. A call in Japanese goes out over the PA system.]

JD: Fifteen minutes gone by in the forty-five minute time limit as the referee counts seven. We're very close to a double countout here.

BW: What the heck happens if that happens?!

JD: Jones and Hammonds would retain the titles but BOTH teams would be eliminated from the tournament. Suddenly, Violence Unlimited versus Air Strike would be the Finals of the tournament.

BW: How bizarre would that be? I don't know if I've ever seen that before.

JD: The count is up to eight as Anderson rolls back in! He's putting the win before the titles.

BW: He knew he didn't have enough time to get both himself and Jones back in and-

JD: The count is at nine! Jones is on his knees... on his-

[Jones suddenly surges up, throwing himself under the ropes and just BARELY beating the ten count to cheers from the fans.]

JD: Wow! How close was that?! We almost had a countout to end the match right there.

[Anderson staggers across the ring, tagging his partner.]

JD: Strong in off the tag...

[Strong pulls Jones off the mat, pasting him with a pair of forearms as Anderson grabs the arm.]

JD: Double whip sends Jones across...

[A double back elbow takes the high flyer off his feet in a big fashion, dropping him down on the mat in the middle of the ring.]

JD: Nice doubleteam...

BW: They're not done yet!

[Strong and Anderson each reach down, grabbing a leg and pulling back to roll Jones up to his feet. They swing around, hooking Jones around the neck as they swing their legs back in a double STO...

...and DRIVE the back of his head into the canvas!]

JD: OHHH! WHAT A DOUBLETEAM!!

[Anderson rolls out as Strong makes a cover.]

JD: ONE!! TWO!!

[Jones lifts a shoulder off the mat, breaking the pin attempt. Strong instantly is up to stomp Jones' lifting shoulder into the canvas. He leans down, pulling Jones up by the mini-afro. He blasts him with a pair of forearms, staggering him as he sprints to the ropes, bouncing off...]

JD: ROLLING ELB- MISSED!

[Jones sets his feet after rising up from his duckdown...

...and backflips, catching a stunned Strong on the top of the skull with a kick!]

JD: PELE KICK! THE PELE KICK CONNECTS!!

[Strong crumples to the mat as Jones pushes up, looking towards the corner where a recovering Hercules Hammonds slaps his hand on the turnbuckle, looking for a tag.]

JD: Hammonds is ready for the tag.

BW: Is he?! He took a lot of punishment in there and I think he's only offering to come back in because Jones got wiped out by the LOE after getting the tag! How long has he been out of the ring? Three minutes?

JD: Something like that, yes. You might be right but Hammonds certainly LOOKS ready, Bucky, as he stands there with his hand stretched out. He's ready for the tag.

BW: Jones shouldn't do it... but he may not have a choice.

[Jones gets REAL close to the corner when Strong makes a lunging attack, smashing a forearm into the back of the head. He shakes his head at Hammonds who takes a swing at him that misses. Strong smirks as he drags Jones back across the ring to the middle.]

JD: Back to the center of the ring, cutting off the tag...

[Strong stomps the back of the head a few times before flashing a double middle finger at Hercules Hammonds who comes tearing into the ring...

...but gets cut off by the referee who forces the big man back as Aaron Anderson slides back in, moving for the illegal doubleteam.]

JD: The LOE are both in!

[Strong and Anderson whip Jones across the ring, waiting for him to rebound back where they launch him skyward...

...and he comes back down with a split-legged dropkick that sends them both falling back into the ropes!]

JD: OHH! BEAUTIFUL COUNTER BY JONES!!

[The high flyer pops back up, throwing a glance towards his partner who is arguing with the official. He shakes him off, rushing towards the ropes and connecting with a double clothesline that takes both members of the LOE over the top rope and out onto the elevated rampway!]

JD: HE TAKES THE CHALLENGERS OUT OF THE RING!!

[Jones doesn't hesitate, hitting the ropes by the ramp, racing across to hit the far side. He's almost literally a speeding bullet as he approaches the ropes again, leaping to the top...]

JD: SOMERSAULT DIIIIIIIIIIIV-

[But the crowd collectively gasps as the rising Lights Out Express manages to CATCH the flying Skywalker Jones!]

JD: WHAT THE-?! WHAT THE-?!

[Each holding an arm and a leg, Strong and Anderson LAUNCH Jones skywards, bailing out as he SLAMS backfirst down on the ramp!]

JD: OHHHHHHHHHHHHH!

[Anderson gives a shout as Strong pulls Jones off the mat, throwing him over the ropes into the ring. He grabs the top rope, catapulting over to crash down with a somersault senton!]

JD: ONE!! TWO!! THRE-

[A DIVING save from Hercules Hammonds breaks up the pin attempt!]

JD: OH MY! HAMMONDS SAVES THE TITLES!!! HAMMONDS SAVES THE TITLES!!

[Strong loses it in the ring, slamming his fists into the mat, throwing a tantrum as the referee escorts Hammonds back out to the apron. The Knockout Kid climbs to his feet, shouting at Hammonds who bellows back at him. Strong backpedals to the corner, dragging Jones by the hair with him.]

JD: The tag is made...

[Anderson steps in, quickly hooking Jones in a side waistlock.]

JD: Belly to back...

[But Jones flips out, landing on his feet behind Anderson...

...but Strong is right there waiting, hooking him again and DUMPING him on the back of his head with a back suplex!]

JD: Jones hits HARD again! Strong is out... Anderson with a cover!

[The referee dives to the mat.]

JD: ONE!! TWO!! THRE-

[And again, Hercules Hammonds is in to break up the pin!]

JD: Hammonds breaks it up again!

[An irate Anderson rises to his feet, complaining to the official who moves across the ring, shouting at the second generation star who shouts back at him. The first graduate of the Combat Corner reaches down, hauling Jones off the mat...

...and hooks him in the Cobra Clutch!]

JD: Oh, come on!

BW: Final Combat!

[Anderson lifts Jones off the mat, violently throwing him down in a Cobra Clutch slam!]

JD: Aaron Anderson sending a message to the Combat Corner and everyone who has ever walked through its' doors right there!

[But Anderson doesn't cover this time, glaring across the ring at Hercules Hammonds who was already about to step into the ring. He shouts at the official who steps in, forcing Hammonds back to the apron...

...and then steps up, grabbing Jones by the legs.]

JD: Uh oh!

[The crowd begins to buzz in anticipation.]

JD: He's calling for the Giant Swing!

[But as Anderson leans forward to get a better grip, Jones reaches up, plucking him into a small package!]

JD: ONE!! TWO!! TH-

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

JD: He almost got him! Skywalker Jones almost pulled off the win right there!

[Jones rolls over, scrambling to crawl towards his corner. Aaron Anderson is quickly back up though, burying a knee down between the shoulderblades. He grabs a handful of afro, tugging back in a makeshift camel clutch as the referee protests.]

JD: Anderson drags him back off the mat... ohh! European uppercut! What a shot!

[Pulling Jones to the center of the ring, Anderson throws his arms apart in a "it's over!" gesture. He whips him in, ducking down for a backdrop...]

JD: Backdrop... Jones pulls up!

[Jones ducks down, hooking one arm over the back of Anderson's neck, ducking his head up under the Shane Gang member's armpit, reaching down to grab the leg with the other arm. He swings to his left, using his right arm to sweep out the leg...

...and DRIVES Anderson down on the back of his head and neck!]

JD: RAZZLE DAZZLE! JONES WITH THE BIG COUNTER!!

[The crowd roars for the big counter as Jones flattens out on his belly, stretching an arm towards the corner where Hammonds is smashing his powerful arms into the top rope repeatedly, shouting for his partner to make the tag.]

JD: Anderson is down! This is Jones' chance! This is his opportunity to make that tag and get his partner a chance to turn this thing around!

[Jones is dragging himself on his belly, using his arms to pull himself towards the corner where Hammonds has his arm stretched out as far as it will go...]

JD: Hammonds wants the tag! He needs the tag! But more importantly, his partner needs the tag! Skywalker Jones has taken a tremendous amount of punishment and he needs out of that ring if the champions are going to have a chance to retain!

[Jones inches closer... and closer...]

JD: Anderson's still down! He hasn't moved from the Razzle Dazzle yet...

[Jones pushes up to his knees, in a daze but still moving as he looks up through glassy eyes at Hercules Hammonds who reaches out insistently...

...when suddenly, Miss Sandra Hayes is up on the apron, branding iron in hand!]

JD: GET HER DOWN FROM THERE!

[The referee wheels around, shouting at Hayes to get off the apron...

...and misses the tag being made!]

JD: THE TAG IS MADE! IN COMES HAMMONDS!!!

[Hammonds comes in fast, throwing himself into a big boot as Anderson rises off the mat, connecting in the chest of the former Combat Cornder student and sends him rolling across the ring!]

JD: DOWN GOES ANDERSON!

[Strong slips in, charging hard...



...and gets hoisted up, twisted and flipped all around in an out-of-control tilt-a-whirl slam!]

JD: Strong goes down as well!

[Anderson rolls out to the floor, dropping down as Miss Hayes angrily gestures with her branding iron at Hercules Hammonds who had just pulled Strong into a front facelock...

...and the referee obliges, stepping in and ordering Hammonds out of the ring!]

JD: What the heck?! What is Johnny Jagger doing?!

BW: The right thing! He didn't see the tag!

[A furious Hammonds is protesting angrily as the referee forces him back.]

JD: Wait a second! Strong's not the legal man either! Did the referee miss that?! Johnny, he's NOT the legal man!

[A puzzled Johnny Jagger turns back as Hammonds steps out to the apron in a huff, watching cluelessly as Lenny Strong pulls Jones off the mat and a grinning Sandra Hayes drops back to the floor.]

JD: Lenny Strong did NOT make a tag, fans, but the official somehow didn't notice that he's in there.

BW: Well, at least he got Hammonds out. We KNOW that wasn't a legal tag!

JD: It... what?!

BW: If the referee didn't see it, he can't call it!

JD: He didn't see Strong make a tag either!

BW: Well, that's just semantics.

JD: It's... WHAT?! I tell you, I've got a whole new respect for Gordon Myers after sitting out here with you tonight. You're out of your damn mind, Bucky Wilde.

BW: Watch your tongue with me, boy. I'll make sure you never see a camera lens again.

JD: Like you have that kind of power.

BW: Ask Fred Hoyle if I've got that kind of power, kid.

[Strong pulls a dazed Jones off the mat, whipping him hard into the challengers' corner. With a shout, he races across, leaping into the air to smash his forearm into the jaw!]

JD: Big forearm in the corner!

[Strong reaches up, bumping Jones up into a seated position on the top rope. He tees off, landing a trio of hard forearms to the jaw that have Jones wobbly. Strong turns his back, reaching back to grab Jones under the armpits...

...and HURLS him over his head, throwing him down in a hard slam!]

JD: Goodness! That might be it!

[Strong climbs to his feet, throwing his arms apart in the "it's over!" gesture that his partner used earlier...

...but then steps back, slapping his elbowpad!]

JD: He's looking for the elbow - that rolling elbow that has knocked out so many opponents!

[Strong backs into the corner, slapping his elbowpad repeatedly, getting ready to deliver the elbowstrike. He jerks the pad off, throwing it furiously down to the mat as he shouts for Jones to get up.]

JD: He's ready! He's waiting!

[Jones pushes up to a knee, shaking his head back and forth as Strong waits for him...]

JD: Jones has no idea he's there! He may be an elbowstrike away from being a former World Tag Team Champion!

[The Human Highlight Reel shoves himself up to his feet, staggering as he tries to stay standing. With a shout, Strong goes into a spin out of the corner, cocking the elbow back...]

"WHAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAACK!"

JD: SUPERKICK! SUPERKICK! THE CALISTO KILLER CONNECTS!!

[The thrust kick connected SOLIDLY under the chin of the incoming Strong, wiping him out as Jones collapses back towards the middle of the ring, again belly crawling his way across the ring towards his waiting partner.]

JD: We're over twenty minutes into this grueling war and once again, Skywalker Jones is looking for the tag! Once again, Skywalker Jones is looking to make the tag!

[The crowd is behind Jones as Hammonds batters the top turnbuckle with an open hand, shouting encouragement to his partner as Buford P. Higgins does the same thing from the floor.]

JD: He's almost there! Jones is getting close and-

[Again, Miss Sandra Hayes leaps up on the apron, screaming and shouting at the referee who whirls around to confront her..]

...but he's not the only one!]

JD: BUFORD! BUFORD!

[Higgins scrambles around the ring, racing towards the interfering Hayes. He reaches up, grabs her by the skirt...

...and YANKS!]

JD: OH MY GOD!! HE RIPPED HER SKIRT OFF! HE RIPPED HER SKIRT OFF!

[An embarrassed Sandra Hayes falls off the apron, desperately trying to cover herself...

...and makes a dash for it up the side of the entryway!]

JD: SANDRA HAYES JUST GOT TAKEN OUT OF THE EQUATION!!

[With Hayes out of the picture, Jones lunges...]

JD: TAG!!

[The crowd ERUPTS as Hercules Hammonds steps into the ring, coming in quick as an also tagged Aaron Anderson comes charging in...

...and gets lifted right up on the shoulders in a fireman's carry!]

JD: Herc's got him up!

BW: Get him, Lenny!

[Still in the ring, Lenny Strong stumbles to his feet, staggering towards Hammonds to aid his partner...

...and gets LIFTED RIGHT UP AS WELL!]

JD: OH MY GOD!! OH MY GOD!!

[Hammonds DROPS back, smashing both men under him in a double Samoan Drop to a huge reaction!]

JD: HAMMONDS SQUASHES 'EM BOTH!!

[The Tupelo Tower flips over, applying a double cover.]

JD: ONE!! TWO!!

[Anderson lifts the shoulder off the mat, breaking the pin up. Hammonds nods, climbing up and pulling Strong off the mat. He quickly launches him over the ropes and down to the barely-padded concrete floor!]

JD: Hammonds clears out Strong... and turns his attention back to Aaron Anderson!

[Anderson gets pulled up off the mat where he promptly throws a knife edge chop across the chest. A second one follows... and a third...

...and very slowly, Aaron Anderson realizes his blows are having no effect at all. The Combat Corner graduate raises his hands, slowly backing away as Hammonds' stare burns a hole right through him!]

JD: Anderson's running out of room!

[Feeling the corner at his back, Anderson rushes forward, throwing a forearm that Hammonds sidesteps, hooking a half nelson...

...and hurls him skyward, dropping him across a bent knee!]

JD: BACKBREAKER... RIGHT OUT OF THE HALF NELSON!!

[Anderson hits the mat, attempting to crawl away from Hammonds who is having none of it, pulling him up by the back of the trunks...

...and yanks him into a cobra clutch!]

JD: He's got him hooked!

[Hammonds muscles him up, dropping him down across a bent knee again!]

JD: Cobra clutch backbreaker!

[He straightens back up...

...and FLINGS Anderson aside like he's a frisbee, tossing him several feet away as the crowd roars at the shows of strength.]

JD: Hammonds is back on his feet... looking down at Anderson...

[The crowd buzzes as Hammonds yanks Anderson up, tugging him into a gutwrench...]

JD: HE'S GOING FOR THE HAMMER!!

[But Lenny Strong slides back in, coming out of nowhere to land a leaping forearm smash to the back of the head. A second one connects... and a third...]

JD: Look at Strong!

[Strong pushes Hammonds back against the ropes, teeing off with forearm after forearm to the jaw. The former indy superstar opens fire, battering Hammonds down to a knee, still throwing blows...

...and he finally backs off, spinning around and giving a tremendous roar to the crowd who echoes it in respect for his fighting spirit!]

JD: Strong's hammered him down to the mat and-

[He turns around as Hammonds rises to his feet, hooking him around the head and neck...]

JD: What's he-?!

[...and HURLS Strong over the top rope, throwing him down on the elevated ramp with a released head and arm suplex!]

JD: OH MY GOD!!!

[With Strong down on the ramp, Hammonds turns back towards the downed Anderson...

...and completely fails to spot his tag team partner stepping into the ring, leaning against the ropes for a moment, drawing the attention (and support) of the fans.]

JD: JONES IS IN!!

[The Human Highlight Reel goes racing across the ring, charging towards the ropes...

...and leaps to the top rope, springing off...]

JD: ZERO G!!

[He flips backwards while soaring through the air, CRASHING down on Lenny Strong on the ramp with the Shooting Star Press! The crowd ROARS in response as Jones rolls off, clutching his ribs. The referee steps out on the ramp, moving to check on both men as a stunned Hercules Hammonds shakes his head in disbelief at his daredevil partner...

...and then turns back to the downed Aaron Anderson who is on all fours, cradling his arms against his chest.]

JD: Hammonds hooks him again! He's going for the Hammonds Hammer!

[He yanks Anderson off the mat, whipping him up for the sitout faceslam...

...but Anderson slips out on the way over, dropping down to a knee behind Hammonds.]

JD: Anderson gets free!

[Hammonds spins around to confront Anderson...

...when Anderson comes up quickly, holding the branding iron with two hands and JAMMING the middle of it into the throat of Hercules Hammonds, sending him staggering back where he falls down to a knee!]

JD: OHH! HE HIT HIM IN THE THROAT WITH THE BRANDING IRON!!

BE: Yeah, but the referee is out there checking on Strong and Jones! He didn't see it!

[Anderson throws a glance at the official to make sure he's still occupied, raising the branding iron over his head for the killshot...]

JD: No, no, NO! SOMEBODY STOP HIM!

[He swings it down like an axe, aiming for the skull of the Tupelo Tower who rises up...

...and blocks it!]

JD: HAMMONDS BLOCKS THE SECOND SHOT!

[The powerhouse holds his arms at full extension, blocking the swing of the metal bar. He's fighting over the weapon with Anderson...

...when the referee wheels around, stepping into the ring, waving his hands back and forth.]

JD: The referee saw it! He saw the branding iron in the ring and he saw these two fighting over it!

[Hercules Hammonds swings his knee up into the midsection of Aaron Anderson, causing the Axeman to lose his grip on the weapon. Hammonds snatches it away, raising it back over his head as the referee screams a final protest...

...and SLAMS it down across the shoulderblades of Anderson, dropping him to the canvas! An irate Hammonds throws the weapon aside...]

JD: He got him! He hit him! He-

"DING! DING! DING!"

BW: And that's the price he pays for it!

[Hammonds glares at the official who moves across the ring, kneeling down to talk to the timekeeper and ring announcer. He mimics swinging the branding iron, gesturing back at Hammonds and Anderson who is now down on the mat, wincing in pain.]

JD: We're trying to eavesdrop in here... trying to hear what the decision is...

[Megumi Sato nods, raising the mic to speak in Japanese.]

JD: He's disqualifying the champions! Johnny Jagger saw Hammonds use the branding iron - completely missing Aaron Anderson do the same thing - and he's disqualifying Jones and Hammonds!

BW: Which means that the Lights Out Express win!

JD: It certainly does. It means that the Lights Out Express is heading to the Finals of this tournament however they do NOT win the titles because of the disqualification. Jones and Hammonds retain the titles but they're not moving on in the tournament. What a bad break for the World Tag Team Champions!

BW: The Year Of The Shane Gang lives on in Tokyo!

JD: Hercules Hammonds arguing the call with the referee, he's obviously upset about the result of this one. You can't blame him for that. Anderson brought the weapon into the ring... he used it first... but it's Hammonds who gets caught doing it and that's the reason for the decision. That's the- hold on, fans... we're being told that AWA President Karl O'Connor is standing by with Mark Stegglet for an emergency announcement... Mark?

[An abrupt cut as Hammonds and the referee continue to angrily state their cases finds an equally-angry Karl O'Connor standing beside Mark Stegglet. The AWA President is dressed up for the occasion, wearing a black suit with white dress shirt and red tie. His cheeks are flushed, his brow is sweaty, and he looks like he's seen better days.]

MS: Thanks, Jason. Karl O'Connor was scheduled to address the situation with Brian James apparently becoming part of Air Strike for this night after the match concluded so he was right here with me when the referee disqualified the World Tag Team Champions. Mr. O'Connor, you demanded we cut back here to you right now... what's going on?

[O'Connor produces a handkerchief to wipe his brow as he adjusts his glasses.]

KOC: This night has had some controversial decisions to say the least. I'm not happy about a few things I've seen tonight but in tough times, tough decisions have to be made. This is one of those tough decisions.

The Stampede Cup is supposed to be about crowning the best tag team in the world, right?

[Stegglet nods.]

KOC: Well, in my view, the Lights Out Express have schemed and connived to work their way through this tournament and I'm sick of it. They got a lucky break in the last round when the referee disqualified the War Pigs and I'm not about to see lightning strike twice.

[O'Connor again wipes his brow, coughing a few times before continuing.]

KOC: The referee, Johnny Jagger, is the finest in the land but he simply made a bad call right there. Aaron Anderson, as we all saw, used the branding iron first!

[Stegglet nods again.]

KOC: Therefore, I am officially OVERRULING the referee.

[Stegglet's jaw drops.]

MS: Are you... wait, what are you saying?

[O'Connor again wipes his brow.]

KOC: I'm saying that I can't stand by and watch the Lights Out Express be rewarded for their actions here tonight. I can't take the chance that they'll be crowned the winners of this tournament and the best tag team in the wrestling world by flukes, mistakes, and poor judgment.

Now, this not be a WISE decision...

[The AWA President pauses, giving Stegglet a chance to jump in.]

MS: Are you implying that the Lights Out Express have benefited from Wise Men interference here tonight? That the Wise Men are somehow responsible for what we've seen to get them to the Finals.

[O'Connor shrugs.]

KOC: I simply don't believe that the Wise Men would stand by and watch an event as important as the Stampede Cup go by without having a vested interest in who wins it. Now they could be supporting Air Strike or Violence Unlimited for all I know but I smell a rat right now and I'm about to step on it.

Here it is, Mark... I am changing the result of that Semifinal match to a DOUBLE disqualification!

[Stegglet again drops his jaw.]

MS: Wait a second! That means that the other Semifinal...



KOC: ...is now the Finals. Absolutely right. The winner between Violence Unlimited and Air Strike is the 2014 Stampede Cup winner!

MS: But why not just reverse the decision? Why not send the champions on to the Finals?

[O'Connor shakes his head, coughing again.]

KOC: Hercules Hammonds DID use the branding iron. It was in retaliation but he still used it. A double disqualification is the fairest decision in my eyes.

MS: There's going to be a lot of angry people over your decision to change the result of the match. Over the years, many bad decisions by officials have gone by uncorrected because the stance of wrestling executives has always been that the referee's decision is final.

KOC: Agreed.

MS: What do you say to those who you know will criticize your decision here?

KOC: I say that being responsible for the day-to-day operations of a professional wrestling company as big and as successful as the American Wrestling Alliance is a strenuous, stressful, and life-shortening endeavor, Mark.

[O'Connor grins a pained smile.]

KOC: Anyone who thinks they can do better can file their resumes with ownership and be ready to step up to the plate when I retire.

[Stegglet chuckles at the response.]

MS: Alright, fair enough. One more question... you allowed Brian James to replace an injured Cody Mertz in the Quarterfinals of this tournament. Will James be allowed to compete in what is now the Finals as well?

[O'Connor nods.]

KOC: Cody Mertz has NOT been cleared to compete tonight. My understanding of past Stampede Cups says that if a competitor is injured and is unable to be cleared to compete by AWA medical staff, the option is given to the team affected - forfeit, go it alone, or find a new partner. Because of the time constraints, Mr. Aarons felt had no choice but to compete in the match by himself. Mr. James, however, came to me shortly after to try and convince me that he should be allowed to compete as his partner. I was hesitant to agree at first but Mr. James made a strong argument and ultimately, I decided that it was unfair for Mr. Aarons to be in - essentially - a handicap match against the former World Tag Team Champions when he had a partner ready and willing to compete.

Mr. James was in that match... and yes, Brian James WILL be allowed to compete in the Finals of this tournament and I wish he and Mr. Aarons the best of luck in there against one of the most dangerous teams in the world today.

[Stegglet nods.]

MS: Mr. O'Connor, I thank you for your time... and I suggest you find an umbrella to help deflect some of the criticisms coming your way.

[O'Connor grins, coughing again as he walks out of view.]

MS: The AWA President with a pair of controversial decisions here tonight at the Rising Sun Showdown resulting in a Final we never saw coming - the world-renowned team of Jackson Haynes and Danny Morton, Violence Unlimited taking on Michael Aarons and Brian James... sort of known as Air Strike on this night. That's the Finals! We're being told that it's been bumped to the night's Main Event instead of going on in just a short while so coming up next... it's Death Match time here in Japan! Let's hear from the two combatants who are about to go to war!

[We open up to a shot backstage, where we see Juan Vasquez, seated in front of a locker. Juan is shirtless, busy taping his fists, looking dressed for a street fight, wearing a pair of jeans and combat boots. On his face, he still bears the scar of Dave Cooper's assault, with a black leather eyepatch covering his left eye.]

JV: Before I dreamed of world titles and the hall of fame...

[He tears off a strip of tape with his teeth and spits it out.]

JV: ...I dreamed of being the King of the Death Match.

[He rises to his feet.]

JV: Because that was the era of hardcore. That was the era of extreme. That was a world where terrible men did terrible things to each other, all for the love of violence for the sake of violence. But that's all it ever was for me...

...a dream.

[He smiles to himself.]

JV: It was a world that I could never be a part of. The realm of men like Simon Ezra, Bram Black, Caleb Temple, Bobby Taylor...

[Juan's voice becomes just a bit colder.]

JV: Demon Boy Ishrinku.

[He looks away from the camera, nodding to himself.]

JV: When I was still just a dumb kid trying to make it in this sport, you were already a legend.

Bloodthirsty. Deranged. Psychotic.

Violent beyond reason.

[Juan turns his head back towards the camera.]

JV: But still a legend.

[A slight chuckle.]

JV: And it took me eighteen years to do it, but here \*I\* am, finally ready to enter your world. No longer a dumb kid, but a man worthy to be sacrificed to the Shinigami. A man who's fighting spirit is prized enough by you to be fed to at the altar of your Death God.

[Juan seems almost proud of that fact.]

JV: But you're wrong, Ishrinku. I'm not here to be a sacrifice. I'm not here to give up my soul to the Shinigami.

[A smirk.]

JV: Because honestly, Juan Vasquez's soul is a hell lot more than your Death God can handle.

[His expression quickly becomes more serious.]

JV: You were right about one thing though, Ishrinku. I WILL fight. I WILL struggle. I WILL bleed, tear, bite, scratch, claw...

[His voice grows with increasing intensity as he continues on.]

JV: ...MAIM, CRIPPLE, DESTROY!...

...I'll do ALL those things.

[Juan leans in close, speaking in a hushed tone, almost whispering.]

JV: But I will NEVER die.

[A small grin.]

JV: That's something you can relate to, can't you?

All your old rivals, all your legendary enemies...they didn't last. They didn't survive your era.

But YOU did.

[He points towards the camera...and then to himself.]

JV: And in the eighteen years since I've entered this sport, so many men have tried to end me, oh lord...

[Juan runs his hand along his eyepatch.]

JV: ...have they tried...but I survived. And here we are...two men. Nah, I'm allowed to stroke my ego a bit here...

...two LEGENDS...

Too proud to quit. Too stubborn to die. Ready to step into a ring, into a match, where we won't have any choice BUT to do both.

[The look on Juan's face expressionless. Unreadable. Almost like a man resigned to his fate.]

JV: So the Shinigami can keep on smiling. Tonight, the Death God won't go away disappointed. After all...

[He looks up...and grins.]

JV: ...today is a good day to die.

[Fade out...

...and fade up to a new piece of footage fades up with the label "EARLIER TODAY." The shot is a little bit shaky but we can hear the familiar voice of Mark Stegglet.]

MS: We rolling? I think he's down here.

[The camera moves up to properly frame Stegglet as he opens the door leading down into a stairwell of the Tokyo Dome. The camera moves to the side of Stegglet to show Demon Boy Ishrinku standing down the stairs on a lower level pacing back and forth. Ishrinku is wearing black bdu pants, black boots, a black loose fitting sleeveless t-shirt with a demon mask design on front in red and black tape on his hands and forearms. His bald head is covered in black facepaint with his trademark demon mask paint in red.

Next to him is a man dressed nearly identical except with a red t-shirt with black design. He has dyed blood red hair that is spiked up. This man is familiar to Japanese hardcore wrestling fans as going by the ring name, Demon Boy Jr.]

MS: Mr. Dem- uhhh... Mr. Ishrinku...

[Demon Boy Jr. spins his head around and lunges forward, almost crawling up the stairs towards Stegglet and his camera. The sudden movement

causes him to retreat slightly. The elder Ishrinku just keeps pacing, going from one wall to another as if he hadn't even noticed Stegglet's presence.]

MS: Mr. Ishrinku, later this evening you face Juan Vasquez in a-

[He is cut off by the shrieking scream of Ishrinku]

DBI: AIEEEEEEEEEEE!!!!!! VASQUEZ!!!!

[Demon Boy Jr. echoes the scream and then reels back around, reaching out to his mentor only to be harshly kicked away. Ishrinku begins to hit the walls with open hands as he paces back and forth]

\*SMACK\*

DBI: Vasquez....you say you volunteered. That you chose to be...

\*SMACK\*

DBI: ...in this match tonight. Yes?

\*SMACK\*

DBI: NOOOOO! Your fate is in Shingami's hands. My God.

\*SMACK\*

DBI: The God of Death.

\*SMACK\*

[Ishrinku stops pacing, turning to face one of the stairwell walls, his hands balling into fists as he presses them into the wall.]

DBI: You do not choose to be here. Destiny and the will of Shingami have put you here.

[Ishrinku begins to punch the wall. Lightly, just quick short jabs. Right, left, right, left. Demon Boy Jr. mimics this and begins pounding the floor in time with his mentor while uttering a disturbing low laugh]

DBI: Shingami has chosen you. A man who has served him so well. Walked in the path of violence and destruction. You have done good works in his name even if you don't know it.

[Ishrinku begins pounding the wall harder. Uncomfortably so. The smack of flesh and bone against brick echoing through the stairwell]

DBI: Is the Demon envious? No....YES!!!!



Kawasaki Stadium. So many incredible death matches have taken place in that place over the years, the grass watered with the life's blood of so many legendary warriors. And like the video said, tonight... it lives again! Tonight, Demon Boy Ishrinku and Juan Vasquez walk into that ring standing in the middle of that mass of humanity and they will attempt to END one another.

[The shot cuts to a panning shot at ringside of the raucous crowd.]

JD: The legendary Demon Boy Ishrinku, unseen by American wrestling fans for many a year, but one of the most famed hardcore wrestlers in Japan and beyond, will climb back inside the ring to do battle. Juan Vasquez, revered for his talent inside the ring and his popularity outside the ring, would not be denied the chance to compete on this global stage... on this historic night for not only the AWA but for all of professional wrestling... demanded the opportunity to go out of his element for this Death Match.

BW: That's right, Dane. Vasquez likes to talk a good game. He'll tell you that because of matches like WarGames... like the Outlaw Rules match with Ebola Zaire... that he's an old hat at something like this. He's not, I promise you that. Look at that ring! Look at the setup!

JD: This is a Exploding Ring Double Hell Death Match... and for our AWA fans who are not familiar with how a Death Match like this works, let's run down the rules. We've got two sides of the ring with the ropes taken down and replaced with strands of barbed wire stretched across. The other two sides have no ropes at all, leading to a sheer drop right out onto the floor where beds of exploding barbed wire have been set up.

BW: Plus, who knows what kind of goodies are under the ring? Ladders? Tables? Thumbtacks? Who knows?!

JD: And of course, this match is on a timer. These two men have twenty minutes to beat one another into defeat because if they don't...

BW: BOOM!

JD: Exactly. The ring will explode and lay waste to both of these legendary competitors. This is a rarity for AWA fans to see... a controversial match that put us on internet Pay Per View here tonight instead of being on WKIK... so soak it all in, fans... it may be a long, long time before you see another Death Match like this on AWA television. It's showtime out in Kawasaki Stadium so let's sit back and watch the entrances of these two warriors set to do battle!

[The house lights dim to be replaced by red strobing lights at the entrance way. Dry ice fog begins to slowly pour out from the opening, filling the air with a creepy feeling as a cover of "Sympathy For The Devil" by Neon Bushido starts up over the PA. There's a bit of delay as the crowd starts to buzz in anticipation of what they're about to see. Slowly, a chant of respect starts to build.]

"ISH-RIN-KU!"  
"ISH-RIN-KU!"  
"ISH-RIN-KU!"

JD: The fans here in Japan are overjoyed at the idea of seeing one of their most legendary competitors in action. Demon Boy Ishrinku was a major star here in Japan in the late 90s and beyond, serving as one of the centerpiece attractions for the historic G-PRO promotion - long held as one of the greatest Japanese wrestling companies. He later would move on to the United States to compete in the also-historic EMWC - famed for their brand of hardcore wrestling.

[As the chant continues, figures slowly emerge from the fog. Eight in total. They slowly march down in lock step towards the ring. They each carry in front of them a weapon. A barbed wire baseball bat, a red steel chair, a black bag, a kendo stick, light tubes painted red...etc.]

JD: You've gotta be kidding me.

BW: Ishrinku's not going to hope that the powers that be have loaded up the ringside area with his favorite toys. He's busted open the toy chest and he's bringing his own to the party!

JD: I see chairs... lights tubes... barbed wire baseball bats... good grief. This is like a bad dream.

BW: Or a nightmare if you're Juan Vasquez.

[The eight figures stop at ringside - the site of the intimidating Double Hell Exploding Ring - weapons extended out before them.

The camera pulls back to the entrance as a blood curdling scream cuts into the song and across the arena. Demon Boy Ishrinku and his protege Demon Boy Jr. emerge to a tremendous reaction from the crowd.]

JD: Here he comes, fans! The stuff of pure terror in the hearts of the children of the 90s. I was just a kid when this man was ruling the wrestling world and I can assure you that he gave me plenty of nightmares with that demon mask... the screaming... and of course, the carnage he left in his wake.

[Ishrinku stands at the top of the aisle, clad in black pants, black boots, a black t-shirt with a red demon mask design on the front, and black tape on his hands and forearms. His bald head is painted black with his trademark demon mask in red.

Demon Boy Jr. is identically dressed except wearing a red t-shirt with black design. His hair is dyed blood red and spiked up. Demon Boy Jr. also sports a collar around his throat, attached to a chain which is pulled taut by Ishrinku as his protege attempts to bound down the aisle to ringside.]



SUBTITLES: "It is now time for the EXPLODING RING DOUBLE HELL DEATH MATCH!"

[Huge reaction from the crowd!]

SUBTITLES: "Introducing first... from Osaka, Japan... weighing in at 111 kilos..."

[The subtitles end as the sound of Megumi Sato's voice echoes out over the Tokyo Dome AND Kawasaki Stadium sound systems.]

"DEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEMON BOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOY ISHRINNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNKUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUU!"

[Ishrinku strides down the aisle, allowing his protege to bound ahead of him. As the hardcore legend climbs the wooden ringsteps, he steps onto the exposed side of the ring, moving into the middle and raising his arm as a burst of red and black streamers sail from the crowd, some landing in the ring, some getting snagged in the barbed wire. He turns back towards the empty side of the ring, looking out as the figures in red and black raise their weapons towards the sky. Ishrinku raises his hands, letting out his trademark scream as they - one by one - lay the weapons down at his feet as if in tribute. Demon Boy Jr. supplicates himself at Ishrinku's feet, reaching out to stroke and paw lovingly at the instruments of carnage and destruction.]

JD: Ishrinku and his...cult of the Death God...I guess, and as if this match isn't dangerous enough he brings all those weapons with him.

BW: You think Vasquez is having second thoughts yet?

JD: Knowing Juan Vasquez, he's never backed down from a fight before and I expect he won't be backing down from one right about now.

[The lights drop down again as the sounds of "Wild Thing" by The Runaways begins to play as fountains of sparks burst forth from the entrance way.

When the sparks stop flying, we see a figure standing in the smokey haze. He's wearing a black t-shirt with the sleeves cutoff that bears the words "BLOOD ANGEL", a pair of jeans, and black combat boots.

It is Juan Vasquez, but not a Vasquez that we've seen before. He wears a muzzle-mask and a dead-white hair topknot wig, which along with the eyepatch covering his left eye, makes for a horrific image. However, it is Demon Boy Ishrinku, who's reaction in the ring is surprising, as gets a wide-eyed, rage-filled look on his face.]

BW: What the heck is he wearing?

JD: Oh boy. Only the most hardcore of wrestling fans might know this, but Juan Vasquez is trying to get into Ishrinku's head by copying the appearance of his old nemesis, "The Blood Angel" Simon Ezra!

BW: Ishrinku ain't playing with a full deck to begin with! And then you want to make him ANGRY? Vasquez's got a death wish, daddy!

[Reaching ringside, Vasquez whips off the wig and removes the muzzle mask, letting loose a primal, feral scream that draws a huge roar from the Japanese crowd! Vasquez slowly walks up the ringsteps, looking in at Demon Boy Ishrinku who is standing, facing him, with a twisted grin on his face.]

JD: Juan Vasquez has fought many monsters in his career but as he stands there staring into the eyes of the Screamin' Demon, you have to wonder if he's faced a monster quite like this.

[Ishrinku slowly raises his right arm, pointing at the motionless Vasquez...

...and lets loose his shrill, ear-splitting scream that many in the crowd echo. Vasquez turns, looking at the crowd...]

JD: Look out!

[Ishrinku surges forward to strike, smashing a fist into the ear and sending Vasquez tumbling off the steps and down to the floor, narrowly missing one of the beds of exploding barbed wire on the floor. Demon Boy Jr. cackles, dancing around the downed Vasquez as Ishrinku slowly approaches the open side of the ring, standing over the beds of barbed wire with his arms raised...]

JD: Look at the wild-eyed Ishrinku, shouting to the fans here in Kawasaki Stadium as Juan Vasquez is sprawled out on the floor.

BW: You can't think this is how Vasquez wanted to start this off, Dane.

JD: Absolutely not as he tries to get back to his feet, glaring at Demon Boy Jr. who is out there, getting under his skin.

[Vasquez pushes to his feet, turning back towards the ring where Ishrinku is descending the ringsteps, clutching a steel chair in his hands...]

JD: Ishrinku's got a chair already... there's the bell! Put twenty minutes on the clock for this time bomb ticking underneath the ring. Remember, if this match hits the twenty minute mark, that bomb WILL go off, this ring WILL explode, and who knows what happens to these men at that point.

[The Screamin' Demon raises the red and black spraypainted steel chair over his head, winding up...]

JD: HE SWINGS!

[But Vasquez vacates the premises, causing Ishrinku to slam the chair down into the grass field. Ishrinku wheels to the side, raising the chair again...

...and Vasquez buries a boot into the midsection, cutting off the assault. A second kick follows, causing Ishrinku to drop the chair aside.]

JD: Vasquez snatches up the chair...

[And takes a swing of his own...]

"WHAAAAAAAAAAAAAACK!"

JD: STEEL CHAIR ACROSS THE BACK!

[The blow knocks Ishrinku down to all fours, wincing in pain as the former AWA National Champion stands over him, looking down at the stunned Screamin' Demon. Vasquez raises the chair a second time...]

"WHAAAAAAAAAAAAAACK!"

JD: OHHH! WHAT A SHOT!!

[Ishrinku collapses chestfirst on the floor, reaching an arm around to grab at his back as Vasquez stands over him, pointing a warning finger at a nearby Demon Boy Jr. who is lurking a little too close for Vasquez' liking.]

JD: Vasquez shoos Demon Boy Jr. away as he puts the chair down on the ground, pulling Ishrinku off the grass by the arm...

[Vasquez twists around, aiming Ishrinku towards the exploding barbed wire boards. He grips the arm with both hands, readying an Irish whip...

...but Ishrinku pulls up short of the barbed wire, flailing his arms out and trying to steady himself before toppling into it!]

JD: Whoa my! He almost fell into the wire and-

[Ishrinku spins around as Vasquez moves in, throwing a big right hand. A second one lands as well, staggering Ishrinku.]

JD: Vasquez is trying to knock him back, hammering away with the right hands...

[The Screamin' Demon continues to wobble backwards, arms pinwheeling around to try and stay on his feet...

...when he suddenly lashes out with a kick to the midsection of his own, doubling up Vasquez!]

JD: Ishrinku fires back!

[He swings Vasquez towards the barbed wire, throwing a right hand of his own... and another... and another. Vasquez throws his arms out, struggling to keep his balance as Demon Boy Jr. cackles gleefully nearby.]

JD: Vasquez is trying to keep his feet! He knows what happens if he doesn't!

[Vasquez suddenly slumps forward, landing on his right knee as Ishrinku stands over him, grabbing the steel chair off the ground. He lifts it overhead again, giving a scream to the crowd...]

JD: LOOK OUT!

[But Vasquez climbs to his feet, raising his hands to block the steel chair aimed at his skull. The two men struggle over the chair, each trying to outmuscle the other and take control of the weapon.]

BW: These two are close to the same size. Vasquez has a few inches of height on him but weight-wise, they're almost identical so no one is gonna overpower the oth-

[Vasquez grits his teeth, trying to rip the chair away from Ishrinku who pulls his head back...

...and SPEWS red mist right into the good eye of Vasquez, splattering his eyepatch as well!]

JD: BLOOD MIST! THE BLOOD MIST OF ISHRINKU CONNECTS!

[Vasquez crumples back, rubbing at his eye as he turns away from the chair-wielding Ishrinku who winds up...]

"WHAAAAAAAAAAAAAACK!"

[...and drills Vasquez across the back with the steel chair, sending him pitching forward, landing facefirst...

Right on the exploding barbed wire board.]

"BOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOM!"

[Vasquez rolls to this back, ripping the now-scorched t-shirt covering his chest as he rolls right into more barbed wire on his back, ripping and tearing both the cloth and the flesh underneath.]

JD: JUAN VASQUEZ HITS THE EXPLODING BARBED WIRE!

BW: And it did EXACTLY what was advertised, Dane! It blew up Vasquez' face and then ripped his shirt to shreds!

[Ishrinku stands over the downed Vasquez, a manic look on his face as he lets loose another blood-chilling scream. Throwing the now-dented chair aside, Ishrinku steps carelessly into the now-scorched barbed wire board, tangling his own pant legs in the barbed wire. He jerks his leg clear, ripping the fabric as he pulls Vasquez up, shoving him back into the ring.]

JD: Ishrinku puts Vasquez back in. You can see the t-shirt of Juan Vasquez, ripped and torn.

BW: And you have to imagine that Ishrinku loves seeing the image of one of his greatest rivals, Simon Ezra, ripped apart even if it's only on a t-shirt.

JD: The Screamin' Demon climbs back up into the ring, stalking Vasquez who is crawling away, trying to get to the opposite side of the ring to safety.

[Ishrinku grabs the fleeing Vasquez by the boot, dragging him back to the middle of the ring where he drops an elbow down into the chest. He gets back up, snatching up a painted black kendo stick.]

JD: Ishrinku grabs another one of the "toys" that his followers brought out here for him to use... and use it he will!

"CRAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAACK!"

JD: KENDO STICK ACROSS THE BACK!!

[Vasquez arches his back, rolling to his side as Ishrinku winds up a second time...]

"CRAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAACK!"

JD: DOWN ACROSS THE RIBS!

[The wild-eyed Ishrinku drops to his knees, pressing the length of the wooden stick down across the throat!]

JD: He's choking him! Ishrinku's ripping the air right out of Vasquez' lungs with that chokehold!

[A desperate Vasquez swings a foot up, catching Ishrinku between the shoulderblades and sending him falling forward. Coughing and gasping for air, Vasquez climbs to his feet. He grabs the rising Ishrinku from behind, slamming his skull into the base of Ishy's neck!]

JD: Headbutt from behind!

[He reaches out, hooking a rear waistlock...]

JD: Vasquez looking for the German but Ishy blocks it!

[Vasquez struggles, trying to get him off the mat but the veteran Ishrinku has it blocked well, wrapping his leg around Vasquez'. The Los Angeles native breaks out of the waistlock, slamming a forearm to the back of the head and neck... and again... and again... and again...]

JD: Vasquez clubbing away at the back of the head!

[He breaks off the attack, hooking the rear waistlock again...

...and HOISTS him into the air, dumping him down on the back of the head and neck with a German suplex!]

JD: OHHH! NO BRIDGE, ALL IMPACT!

[Vasquez pops up to his feet, giving a shout to the crowd, many of which echo the shout. He turns back towards the downed Ishrinku...

...and grabs him by the legs, dragging him towards the middle of the ring.]

JD: What's Vasquez looking for here? Perhaps a Boston Crab or a Solar Flare type hold...

BW: I don't think so, Dane.

[Vasquez keeps on pulling, getting closer to the barbed wire ropes. The crowd begins to buzz as Vasquez looks out at them, nodding his head as they grow louder...

...and then falls back, sending Ishrinku flying into the air...]

JD: OHHHHHH!

[...and FACEFIRST into the strands of barbed wire, ripping the shirt of Ishrinku as he slams into it!]

JD: A catapult into the barbed wire by Vasquez... oh no!

[He climbs to his feet, grabbing Ishrinku by the back of the head...

...and PRESSES his forehead into the barbed wire, causing Ishrinku to cry out in pain as Vasquez drags the flesh down the "rope."]

JD: HE'S RIPPING AND TEARING ISHRINKU APART!

[The camera cut switches to show Ishrinku on his knees, blood now streaming from his forehead, right down into his open mouth as Vasquez continues to dig the barbs into the fleshy scar tissue covered forehead of the hardcore legend!]

JD: For our fans watching at home, if you have young children viewing, this may be the time to send them out to play for a while because this match just took on a whole new level of intensity and violence here in Kawasaki Stadium!

[Vasquez steps back, flinging a now-bleeding Ishrinku down to the canvas.]

JD: Juan Vasquez is showing all the doubters that YES, he can compete in a match like this!

BW: I'm not sure anyone ever doubted that he CAN... the question was if he should! He's got a serious eye injury. He's got a hotly-anticipated date with Dave Cooper at some point on the horizon. And you'd have to imagine that at some point, he'll want to make a run at the AWA World Heavyweight Title! If he's permanently injured in a match like this, all of those things become a serious problem.

[Pulling Ishrinku off the mat, Vasquez lifts him up, slamming him down in the middle of the ring.]

JD: Big body slam by Vasquez... elbow... elbow... they just keep on comin'!

[A half dozen quick elbowdrops stun Ishrinku, leaving him laid out on the canvas as Vasquez climbs back to his feet, raising his right hand high into the air.]

JD: Uh oh! Is Vasquez calling for the Right Cross?!

BW: He's not wasting any time. He doesn't want to be anywhere near that ring when that time bomb goes off!

JD: We're almost six minutes into this. A long ways before that ring would explode but you're right, Bucky. In a match like this, you know that exploding ring is in the backs of both of their minds. They both know that threat is looming and would prefer to not be anywhere near it when it happens.

[Vasquez moves around, positioning himself behind the rising Ishrinku who seems to have no idea where his opponent is. He slowly turns as Vasquez cocks his right arm back...

...and gives Ishrinku JUST enough time to drive his taped-up thumb right into the exposed eye!]

JD: OHH! EYEGOUGE BY ISHRINKU!

BW: Vasquez' good eye got hit! The other one is protected by that eyepatch but Ishrinku got the good one!

[Vasquez wobbles away, rubbing at his eye again as Ishrinku snatches up another weapon...]

JD: Oh my god!

[...and SMASHES a red-painted florescent light tube across the back of Vasquez, shattering the glass as Vasquez falls forward, draping himself over the barbed wire ropes!]

JD: THE GLASS SHATTERS!

[Vasquez slumps down to his knees as Ishrinku approaches, gripping about half of a broken light tube in his right hand. He flips it over, turning it into a makeshift dagger...]

JD: No, no, no! Don't do this!

[Ishrinku yanks Vasquez' head back by the hair, pushing the broken glass down into the forehead of his opponent!]

JD: AHH! He's carving him up with the broken glass!

[With Ishrinku's blood pouring down his own face, he soon turns Vasquez into a ghoulish mirror image with life's sweet crimson gushing from the longtime fan favorite's forehead.]

JD: Ishrinku's turning Vasquez into a bloody mess as well!

BW: Vasquez has always liked wearing masks in the ring. The Ribera Kid, the West Memphis Assassin... let's see how he likes a crimson mask, daddy!

[Ishrinku eventually throws the bloody glass aside, allowing Vasquez to slump down to the canvas as Demon Boy Jr. scoops up the broken glass light tube on the floor, cradling it lovingly to his chest as Ishrinku puts the boots to the downed Vasquez.]

JD: Both men are bleeding profusely now, their faces soaked as they continue to do battle in this historic Death Match.

[The Screamin' Demon throws his head back, giving an ear-splitting cry as he leans down, dragging Vasquez off the mat by the arm. He turns Vasquez around...

...and WHIPS him into the strands of barbed wire!]

JD: OHHH! INTO THE BARBED WIRE GOES VASQUEZ!!

[The former AWA National Champion staggers off the barbed wire, leaving the remains of his t-shirt behind...

...and Ishrinku rushes forward, throwing a big kick to the chest that sends Vasquez right back into the barbed wire, the barbs now digging into his bare flesh!]

JD: AGAIN!

[The camera cuts to show Vasquez' back pressed into the barbed wire, revealing thin red cuts across the back as Ishrinku stands before him, staring through blood-stung eyes.]

JD: Vasquez' bare back is being ripped apart by the barbed wire.



[Ishrinku slowly raises his right arm, giving another howl as he tears across the ring, extending the arm...]

JD: CLOTHESLI- OHHH!

[...but Vasquez drops down at the last moment, sending Ishrinku tumbling over the ropes where he manages to get his head and neck caught between the two top strands of barbed wire!]

BW: OH! HE'S CAUGHT IN THE BARBED WIRE!!

JD: Get him out of there, referee! This is horrific to witness! This is terrible!

[Vasquez pushes right in, pounding the cut forehead with right hands as Ishrinku struggles against the barbed wire digging in to both sides of his neck!]

JD: Vasquez won't let the referee help him! Juan Vasquez is trying to end this match right here and now as we approach the ten minute mark of this matchup!

[The referee finally steps in, literally shoving Vasquez away. A furious Vasquez peels off...

...and then kneels down, digging into his boot.]

JD: What in the world is... oh my god.

[The crowd erupts as Vasquez lifts his hand high in the air, now clenched around a fork.]

JD: He's got a fork! He's reliving that war with Ebola Zaire right here in Tokyo!

[The Los Angeles native walks towards the trapped Ishrinku, still wielding the fork...

...and physically shoves the official aside as he raises the fork, and STABS it down into the forehead!]

JD: AHHH!

BW: This is the same Vasquez we saw back in those dark months after WrestleRock when he was seeking vengeance for what the Wise Men did to him that night.

JD: He's got the fork, digging it into the flesh of Ishrinku!

[Blood continues to pour down the face of Ishrinku as he writhes back and forth, digging the barbed wire into his neck as well.]

JD: This looks like a damn horror movie!

BW: Jesus. Maybe WKIK was right about this one, Dane.

JD: The referee steps in, forcing Vasquez to back off again...

[This time, Demon Boy Jr. is up on the apron in a flash, trying to pull the strands of barbed wire apart to free his mentor.]

JD: Demon Boy Jr. is trying to get him free! He's pulling, the referee is pulling! Ishrinku is stuck pretty good in there and-

[Finally, Ishrinku is freed, slumping down to the grass with blood dripping down the sides of his neck. Demon Boy Jr. gives a scream of his own to the crowd...

...and then REALLY starts screaming when Vasquez yanks him by the hair into the ring, shoving him to his knees, and BURIES the prongs of the fork into HIS forehead!]

JD: AHH! AHH! VASQUEZ WITH THE FORK ON JUNIOR!

[The protege of the hardcore legend screams and shouts as the blood starts to pour from his forehead as well. Vasquez pulls the fork away, tucking it inside the pocket of his jeans as he drags the young competitor back to his feet...]

JD: Juan pulls him off the mat and...

[Dragging a bloodied Demon Boy Jr. across the ring, Juan flings him recklessly into the junction of the barbed wire ropes and the empty side of the ring, slamming into the ringpost.]

JD: Into the corner goes Junior... big knife edge chop... and another!

[He backs off, measures the man...

...and then barrels in, leaping into the air to drive his knees into the chest!]

JD: DOUBLE KNEE IN THE CORNER!!

[Juan backs off, watching as Demon Boy Jr. slumps down to a seated position in the corner. Vasquez looks around the ring quickly, picking up a pair of light tubes that have been taped together.]

JD: Oh my god. What in the world is Juan Vasquez doing?!

[He leans the lights up against the face of Junior as he backs off to the opposite corner, giving a shout of his own as he tears across the ring...

...and SLAMS his knees into the light tubes, causing them to shatter up against the face of the young protege!]

JD: OHHHHHH!

[Demon Boy Jr. falls to the mat, clutching his face as he cries out in pain. Vasquez backs off, watching as the youngster screams.]

JD: Vasquez has savaged Demon Boy Jr., this young protege of the hardcore legend who is now laid out on the mat, blood pouring down his face just like his mentor!

[A small clock appears in the corner of the screen, revealing a hair over ten minutes remaining on the timer. Vasquez turns to the crowd, giving a roar that many echo before he turns his focus back to Demon Boy Ishrinku who is crawling back up on the apron, a steel chair gripped in his hands...

...and rushes forward, throwing himself into a spear tackle!]

JD: NO!

[The tackle ties up both men, sending them sailing off the apron...

...and DOWN onto the exploding beds of barbed wire!]

"BOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOM!"

JD: GOOD GOD!! GOOD GOD ALMIGHTY!!

[The camera quickly cuts to show both men laid out on the beds of barbed wire. The boards are scorched from the explosion as the two motionless warriors soak up the appreciative cheers from the Kawasaki Stadium crowd.]

JD: Wow! What a war we're witnessing between two of the greatest of all time!

[Slowly, dueling chants start to build throughout the mass of fans who have come to watch one solitary match.]

"ISH-RIN-KU!"

"JUAN VAS-QUEZ!"

"ISH-RIN-KU!"

"JUAN VAS-QUEZ!"

"ISH-RIN-KU!"

"JUAN VAS-QUEZ!"

"ISH-RIN-KU!"

"JUAN VAS-QUEZ!"

"ISH-RIN-KU!"

"JUAN VAS-QUEZ!"

[The two combatants are laid out on the barbed wire, the steel cutting into their backs as the fans continue to roar their tribute to both men. The referee stands over the duo, not even bothering with a double count as he waits to see who rises to continue the fight.]

JD: Both men are laid out from that spear into the barbed wire.

BW: What in the world was Vasquez thinking with that spear? He had to know he was going into the barbed wire as well, didn't he?

JD: I don't know. It looked like he was hoping the tackle would just knock Ishrinku off the apron but Ishy hung on and dragged Vasquez down to hell with him! We've seen two of those boards explode now - big explosions - but nothing like we'll see if that ring explodes in... just over nine minutes time.

BW: And if you're Vasquez and Ishrinku, you need to be conscious of the time. You need to realize that you've got about nine minutes left to find a way to defeat your opponent and avoid that explosion.

JD: That's true but so far, neither of these men have even attempted a cover! They've been content to just punish one another for the entertainment of these great fans in Japan but no one has tried to win... not yet.

[Demon Boy Jr. comes hobbling into view again, blood streaming down his face as he pulls his mentor out of the barbed wire board, leaving what's left of his t-shirt behind as well as he shoves him back up on the apron. He climbs up there after him, helping his mentor to his feet...

...and gets dropped with a right hand to the throat for his efforts!]

JD: It's just not Demon Boy Jr.'s night, fans. He got dropped with a right hand by his own mentor... jeez, he's not done with him yet either!

[Ishrinku grabs Demon Boy Jr. off the mat by the arm...

...and WHIPS him into the barbed wire strands, sending a howl of pain up into the air!]

JD: I don't get this at all.

BW: Are you actually trying to analyze the actions of a nutcase like Ishrinku? Just be happy he doesn't get on a train, come down to the Tokyo Dome, and bring you some of this next.

JD: Well, I'm extremely happy about that.

[Ishrinku, burnt and bloodied, turns back towards the side of the ring where he spies Juan Vasquez dragging himself back to his feet. The Screamin' Demon grabs the bloodied Vasquez by the hair, pulling him up into the ring.]

JD: Both men back in the ring now...

[He scoops Vasquez up off the mat, slamming him down to the canvas. He grabs a black steel chair off the mat, throwing it down over Vasquez' face.]

JD: Ahh!

[Ishrinku backs off, measuring the downed Vasquez...

...and throws himself into one heck of a sloppy senton, smashing the chair down into Vasquez' face!]

JD: OHHH!

BW: Was that Shades of Tommy Stephens?!

JD: Not exactly, no.

[The Screamin' Demon throws the chair aside, rolling into a pin attempt.]

JD: ONE!! TWO!!

[But a weary Vasquez lifts the shoulder, breaking the pin.]

JD: Two count only for Ishrinku who does NOT look pleased about that... oh, come on!

[Ishrinku grabs the referee by the collar, shouting at him as he backs him towards the barbed wire strands...

...and then swings him around, pushing HIS face into the barbed wire!]

JD: WHAT IN THE HELL?!

[Ishrinku drags the referee's face back and forth across the barbed wire, ripping his forehead open...

...and then hurls him down to the mat recklessly, giving a scream to the crowd!]

JD: Demon Boy Ishrinku has bloodied Juan Vasquez... he's attacked his own protege... and now he's assaulted the referee as well!

BW: There's no disqualifications in this one, Dane. He's can bloody up the front row if he wants to!

JD: There would be major repercussions if that happened, Bucky.

BW: You think HE cares?!

[The camera zooms on a gleeful Ishrinku, smiling a bloody smile before spitting a spray of crimson on the camera lens.]

JD: Uck. Absolutely disgusting!

[Ishrinku turns away from the camera, moving back to the corner of the ring...

...and slowly raises a barbed wire wrapped baseball bat!]

JD: Oh god. Can somebody stop this thing?! We've seen enough!

BW: Hey, you people wanted a Death Match! That's exactly what you're seeing right now! You're seeing the Screamin' Demon, the hardcore legend, the God of jisatsu, competing in his element... a sick, twisted, demented hell that guys like him thrive in but the rest of us look down on with disgust and pity! This is why this style of wrestling isn't seen every week! This is why it's not on worldwide television! This is why the relics from that age - men like Temple, Ezra, and The Gremlin - are nothing but shells of themselves or washed out could've-beens on the streets doing God knows what to pay for that night's Big Mac dinner!

[Ishrinku walks towards the downed Vasquez, raising the bat over his head. He steps over him, one leg on either side of the former National Champion as he prepares to strike...

...and SLAMS it down into the sternum!]

JD: OHHH!

[The wild-eyed Demon drops to his knees, reaching down...

...and RIPPING OFF the eyepatch!]

JD: Oh no! Ishrinku just exposed the injured eye! He exposed the eye and-AHHHHH!

[The crowd ROARS as Ishrinku digs the barbed wire bat into the injured eye of Juan Vasquez!]

JD: HE'S TRYING TO PUT OUT THE EYE WITH THE BARBED WIRE!!

[Vasquez howls in pain, swinging his arms up to try and force the bat away as Ishrinku leans down with all his weight, trying to force the barbed wire into the eye!]

JD: STOP HIM! STOOOOOP HIM!

[A screaming Ishrinku, inflamed by his bloodlust, is trying to permanently injure Vasquez who is desperately searching for a way to escape the clutches of the hardcore legend...

...and somehow brings up his foot, using it to shove Ishrinku away.]

JD: Vasquez escapes!

BW: For now.

JD: You can say that again as he attempts to crawl away from Ishrinku who is right back up and-

[Ishrinku SLAMS the barbed wire bat down across the shoulderblades, digging deeper into the bloody flesh of the Latino superstar. He cackles as he throws the bat aside, watching as his bloodied protege retrieves it, rolling out to the floor...]

...and then Ishrinku turns his attention to a black velvet bag that rests on the canvas.]

JD: Oh no.

BW: What in the world do you think is in there, Dane?

JD: I don't think I want to know.

[But Demon Boy Ishrinku wants the WHOLE world to know as he picks up the bag, unties the string holding it shut...]

...and then upends it, pouring thumbtacks all over the canvas.]

JD: Oh my god... oh my god...

BW: Those are thumbtacks, Dane!

JD: I can see that, Bucky.

BW: And to think that your sister and brother-in-law used to commentate on crap like this every week! What in the hell was wrong with them?!

JD: For that matter, the ownership of this whole company used to be involved with this kind of thing every week! Jon Stegglet, Bobby Taylor... Bobby Taylor's been in plenty of matches JUST LIKE THIS himself!

BW: This is why, Dane. This is why these matches just don't happen anymore! It's things just like this. Ishrinku's about to turn Juan Vasquez into a human pin cushion and that just ain't right no matter how you feel about Vasquez!

[Ishrinku slowly drags the bloodied Vasquez off the canvas, tugging him up to his feet. He moves around, positioning his opponent for maximum impact as he secures a side waistlock...]

JD: No, no... don't do it! Fight out of this, Juan!

[And as a clock comes up showing "5:02" in blood red font, Ishrinku tries to hoist Vasquez off the mat...]

...but a desperate Vasquez rains a series of right hands to the head, blocking the lift!]

JD: Vasquez is fighting back! He's trying to avoid the suplex!

[Ishrinku bails out, hammering Vasquez down to his knees with a series of forearms to the back of the head...

...and then pulls him right back into suplex position.]

JD: He hooks him again! HE LIFTS!

[But the agile Vasquez flips over the top, landing on his feet behind a surprised Ishrinku who wheels around...

...and gets CRACKED with a headbutt between the eyes!]

JD: OHH! HEADBUTT!

[A second headbutt sends Ishrinku falling back a couple of steps...

...but he comes barreling in towards Vasquez who pivots, slipping his arm up under Ishrinku's...]

JD: HIPTOSS!

"BOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOM!"

JD: HIPTOSS TO THE FINAL EXPLODING BOARD!! GOOD GRIEF!!

[Ishrinku rolls around in pain on the barbed wire, ripping and shredding his back into pieces as Vasquez leans over, hands on his knees as he looks down on his injured opponent.]

JD: One of the most elementary moves in all of professional wrestling but in the right circumstances, it's an absolute killer! Demon Boy Ishrinku just slammed down on the final exploding barbed wire board and he's feeling the effects of it right now!

BW: We're just over four minutes left in this, Dane!

JD: The pressure is on... and right now, Juan Vasquez doesn't even have an opponent inside the ring to pin!

[Vasquez seems to realize that as he crawls down off the apron, gingerly stepping through the barbed wire to retrieve his singed and sore opponent, rolling him back into the ring.]

JD: Vasquez puts him back in...

[The former National Champion climbs back up on the apron...

...when suddenly, Demon Boy Jr. comes sprinting into view again, hooking Vasquez around the ankle and preventing him from pursuing his mentor. A frustrated Vasquez wheels around, viciously stomping Junior repeatedly!]



JD: He's stomping him into the grass!

[Vasquez pulls Demon Boy Jr. off the grass and up onto the empty ring apron where he promptly slings him over his shoulder, reaching back with his right hand to tuck the head and neck up while holding the legs with his left arm...

...and DROPS Demon Boy Jr. on the ring apron with a City Of Angels!]

JD: OHHHHHHH!

BW: That's it! Junior's done, daddy!

[An angry-looking Vasquez climbs to his feet, toekicking Demon Boy Jr. off the apron to the floor below...

...and then turns back to Ishrinku who greets him with a stiff headbutt between the eyes!]

JD: Headbutt by Ishrinku!

[Vasquez staggers under the blow from the Screamin' Demon before retaliating with one of his own!]

JD: Juan Vasquez has one of the hardest heads in all of wrestling. We've seen him trade headbutts with guys you wouldn't dream of doing that with - men like Raphael Rhodes, like MAMMOTH Mizusawa...

[Ishrinku wobbles, his arms pinwheeling around as he stands over the thousands of thumbtacks on the canvas...

...and then throws himself forward, ramming his head into the eyesocket!]

JD: Ishrinku returns fire!

BW: If those headbutts are rocking Ishrinku, he's comin' right back with some brutal ones of his own!

[Vasquez slams his skull into Ishrinku's again... and again... and again, leaving Ishrinku wobbling, barely able to stay on his feet as Vasquez sets for one again...

...and gets a stiff-fingered blow right into the formerly eyepatch-covered eye!]

JD: OHH! TO THE EYE!!

[Vasquez falls back, dropping to a knee as he grabs at his eye. Ishrinku smiles a bloody grin to the camera as he grabs at his throat.]

JD: He's going for the mist again! He's going for it again!

[Ishrinku slowly turns so that one and all can see the gesture that leads to the dreaded Blood Mist...]

JD: He turns back and-

[But just before he can spew the mist out, Ishrinku gets CRACKED in the jaw by a desperation blind Right Cross out of Vasquez that snaps the Screamin' Demon's head around, causing him to spew the mist harmlessly into the air...

...and then FALLS facefirst into the thumbtacks!]

JD: AHHH! AHHH!

BW: THREE MINUTES LEFT!

[And as the clock reads "3:00", a godawful ear-piercing siren begins to ring out over the PA system, cycling again and again to warn the two warring combatants of the danger that awaits them if they cannot finish the match in the next one hundred and eighty seconds.]

JD: Three minutes to go on the clock and Vasquez is... oh my god!

[Vasquez steps forward, reaching down to tie his leg up with Ishrinku's legs. He leans down, slapping the ribs of Ishrinku to bring his arms down so that he can grasp the wrists...]

JD: No, no! Juan, don't do it! Don't do this, Juan!

[The hero of the people pulls Ishrinku's torso back, revealing the pincushion that is his upper body after going facefirst into the thumbtacks.]

JD: He pulls him up and-

[Vasquez slips his foot in behind the head of Ishrinku, pauses...

...and then DRIVES him facefirst into the thumbtacks a second time with a face-piercing curbstomp!]

JD: GAAAAAAAH!

[Ishrinku rolls to his back immediately, kicking and flailing about in the pile of thumbtacks as we now see thumbtacks piercing his flesh all over his face.]

JD: Good god almighty, this is barbaric!

BW: There was a reason you always worked for companies that didn't put stuff like this one the air, wasn't there, Dane? Just couldn't handle it.

JD: You try having a big brother who put HIMSELF through stuff like this and see how you handle it, Wilde.

[Vasquez drops to his knees, applying a cover as the bloodied referee crawls back into the frame.]

BW: Even these Japanese REFEREES have fighting spirt, Dane. Look at this guy all busted up and making a count!

JD: ONE!! TWO!! THR-

[Ishrinku's shoulder just barely flies up off the canvas to break the pin, causing a ripple of nervous excitement to flow throughout the Kawasaki Stadium crowd as the siren continues to blare and the clock continues to tick lower and lower.]

JD: Two minutes to go! Only two minutes left for one of these men to put the other one away! We've seen barbed wire... we've seen explosions... we've seen chairs, kendo sticks, and thumbtacks!

BW: Plus a fork!

JD: And a bunch of other things I never thought I'd call as an AWA announcer but still these two men continue to fight and as that siren continues to blare, we are under two minutes away from this ring exploding unless one of these two men can do something... ANYTHING... to prevent that from happening!

[Vasquez takes a deep breath, climbing back to his feet as he looks down at the bloodied Ishrinku. He lifts his hands, wriggling his fingers for a moment as he stretches down to grab the hands of his opponent...]

JD: He's hooking him in the double knucklelock! We've seen this before!

BW: Yeah, but we ain't seen it for a while!

[With the hands trapped, Vasquez lifts his foot, repeatedly stomping Ishrinku's face while preventing his ability to defend himself. The end result is Vasquez' boot smashing over and over into the face as Ishrinku takes an insane amount of punishment before one final big stomp smashes the back of Ishrinku's head into the mat!]

JD: He covers again! ONE!! TWO!! THRE-

[Again, the shoulder flies up!]

JD: My god, Ishrinku refuses to stay down! Demon Boy Ishrinku, the hardcore legend and Japanese superstar, is refusing to stay down at the hands of the hero of the people, Juan Vasquez!

[Vasquez stares down in disbelief at the dazed Ishrinku who just kinda lies in a heap on the canvas, waiting for his attacker to strike again. The Los Angeles native climbs to his feet, looking down with his hands on his hips.]

JD: Vasquez looks shocked... stunned perhaps at his inability to put Ishrinku away. But the Demon Boy continues to fight as Vasquez leans down, dragging him off the mat...

[A DEAFENING SIREN turns on as the clock switches to show under one minute of time remaining.]

JD: ONE MINUTE LEFT!

[Vasquez looks around in a panic, moving quickly to pull the Demon Boy off the canvas. Ishrinku is practically limp in Vasquez' hands as the former National Champion drags him off the mat...

...and then suddenly swats Vasquez' hands away, spewing the Blood Mist into his eyes for a second time to a HUGE reaction from the crowd!]

JD: BLOOD MIST! BLOOD MIST!

[Vasquez staggers back, taking blinded swings at Ishrinku who grins as he approaches, scooping Vasquez off the mat...]

JD: He's got him up!

[He holds Vasquez up for a slam, turning a full circle before suddenly pitching to the side, driving the head and neck of Vasquez into the canvas!]

JD: NORRRRRTHERN LIIIIIIGHTS BOMMMMMMMB!

[Ishrinku rolls over, throwing an arm across the chest of Vasquez.]

JD: ONE!! TWO!! THRE-

[And this time, it's Juan Vasquez who stuns the crowd by shooting a shoulder off the mat!]

JD: NO! NO! VASQUEZ KICKS OUT!!

BW: We've got less than thirty seconds! I'm out of here, Dane!

JD: You're not even in the building! We're an hour away!

[Ishrinku looks up, staring up into the heavens.]

JD: What the hell is Ishrinku doing?!

BW: He's looking for a sign! Looking for support from his death god!

JD: A final prayer to Shingami, the Death God! Perhaps praying for.. for...

BW: Survival?!

JD: We're down to mere seconds now!

[illegible]

[Smoke and fire burst from all sides of the ring, some even pouring out from underneath the ring. Soon, a gigantic black cloud has enveloped the entire ring, making whoever or whatever is inside it completely invisible. The announcers sit silent, letting the roar of the crowd and the echo of the explosion tell the entire story.

After several moments, the cloud starts to climb in the night's sky, revealing a motionless Demon Boy Ishrinku...

...with an equally-motionless Juan Vasquez draped over him. The referee comes sprinting back down the aisle, diving into the ring.

He slaps the mat once.

Twice.

And finally, a third time before calling for the bell.]

"DING! DING! DING!"

[The crowd ROARS in reaction to the pinfall, a slightly more subdued reaction than you might expect but many seem to be still stunned by the massive explosion.]

JD: Juan Vasquez, walking through fire and destruction, has done it! Juan Vasquez has defeated the hardcore legend in his own fight... on his own battlefield. These two men went to war for twenty minutes but in the end, it's Juan Vasquez who comes out on top.

BW: But at what cost, Dane?

JD: What do you mean?

BW: He won the match but look at the amount of punishment he took. The barbed wire, the explosions, the thumbtacks, everything! The toll the physical abuse may take on his body considering he's gotta get up to wrestle tomorrow. Ishrinku could put himself through the wringer knowing he's going back to the retirement home. But Vasquez? Vasquez' days inside the ring are not over... not yet at least.

JD: You've got a great point there, Bucky. Who knows what the final tally will be in this war?

BW: I'll give you one more, Dane. We once saw Juan Vasquez venture into a dark, dark place... a place that the fans despised to see him in and at the end of the day, a place that Vasquez himself was ashamed to have gone to.

JD: And?

BW: He did some stuff in this match... bad stuff, dark stuff... stuff that will never be shown again on AWA television. But the fans here in Tokyo... and more importantly, the fans back at home... they saw. They all saw. How

can they look him in the eye when he gets back to the States and think he's not the same man who turned his back on them?

JD: An... interesting question and one that I'm not sure I have the answer to. We've got medical staff inside the ring at Kawasaki Stadium now, trying to revive these two warriors. The fans are on their feet. What a moment for Juan Vasquez! What a moment for Demon Boy Ishrinku! Fans, we're going to say goodbye to Kawasaki Stadium right now. But before we come back to the Tokyo Dome, we're going to the United States and to our own Gordon Myers who has a very special announcement!

[The screen switches to a view from a very different area. The walls are lined with built-in mahogany bookshelves, and what little wall we can see that isn't done in that reddish-brown wood has navy blue wallpaper. There are several display stands showing various oddities from all over the world, and a large desk featuring a computer monitor and several papers.

Behind this desk sits the "Collector Of Oddities", Percy Childes. We have seen this place before; it is the study of his home. The bald-headed goateed manager is wearing a white dress shirt with a blue-and-brown diamond pattern to match his environs, and a cream-colored tie. Seated next to the desk, to the left, is AWA broadcaster Gordon Myers. Gordon is, as always, wearing his plain salt and pepper sportscoat, black slacks, and white dress shirt. His tie is a simple black.]

GM: Well, fans, it seems I didn't completely get the night off, even all the way across the globe. I am Gordon Myers, and with me is the "Collector Of Oddities" Percy Childes.

PC: Don't forget what you promised our friend, Mr. Wilde.

GM: Yes, well... this is a special edition of the Call Of The Wilde performed by me on behalf of Bucky Wilde. As his... understudy.

PC: Gordon lost a bet.

GM: I am not here to talk about that bet. I am here to talk to you, Percy Childes. I understand you have an announcement about the next Saturday Night Wrestling.

PC: That I do, Mr. Myers. You recall the tournament that the AWA held in the leadup to SuperClash, I'm sure. It was a tournament to crown a Number One Contender for the World Championship.

GM: Yes, of course. Dave Bryant won the tournament, and went on to win the championship from Calisto Dufresne at SuperClash... only to fall to Supreme Wright moments afterward.

PC: We had, in that span, four people with guaranteed title shots they had won in matches. Bryant, Wright, Skywalker Jones who used his for a tag title shot, and Terry Shane III who has not yet used his. So many guaranteed title shots that two of them actually clashed in one night,

causing the mess that cost Mr. Bryant his championship reign. Do you know why that is?

GM: Matches with high stakes are very compelling. That is, of course, why the AWA and its sponsors pony a cool one million dollars every year for the Stampede Cup.

PC: This is true. But as the Cup shows, you don't need championship matches as currency to create a compelling event. No, Gordon, the AWA has used the 'guaranteed title match' or the 'make a match' provisions quite often for the simple reason that they're trying to take the power out of the hands of the Championship Committee.

GM: That makes no sense, Percy Childes. You're saying that the AWA... meaning the Championship Committee because they're the ones who make these matches... are trying to take the power from themselves? Why would the Championship Committee neuter itself?

PC: The answer is simple. The Wise Men try to keep championship matches spread out among all deserving competitors. We make sure that the Championship Committee can't revert to the days when just a few men got all the opportunities. Only the marketable ones, rather than the competitors who deserve opportunity based on the ability to win matches.

GM: In other words, the wrestlers who have signed on with the Wise Men, either managerially or as a co-conspirator!

PC: Not true. If we monopolized opportunity that way, we'd have a revolt.

GM: I don't believe that for a moment.

PC: Believe what you will, but the Championship Committee keeps throwing their hands up and telling us "we have no control". "The wrestlers have their guaranteed shots"! But now, they have finally seen the error of their ways. That is what this interview is about. Supreme Wright has seen how weak and useless the Championship Committee has become, and he has instituted his open-door policy. He grants his own title shots to all comers.

GM: I can't imagine the Wise Men are happy about that.

PC: Are you kidding? This is thrilling! From day one, we have tried to return the power to the wrestlers who were long overlooked. And Mr. Wright was overlooked. Every opportunity he received, he received by winning one of the Committee's matches. The matches they held because they didn't want the responsibility of choosing a number one contender. The responsibility of doing their job.

GM: Percy Childes, these claims of yours are contrary to what has actually happened these past few years. You and your co-conspirators have indeed tried to break the AWA's power, but only to take it for yourselves.



PC: Well, then it looks like the Championship Committee has a problem, yes? They've watered themselves down TOO much, and now our World Champion is sticking the fatal dagger in. Mr. Myers, as you know, there are two major committees in the AWA. But not all of the fans do, so please spell it out.

GM: Yes. The Championship Committee who determines the contendership for the championships and who sponsors those titles... along with other in-ring responsibilities. And the Board Of Directors which is the business aspect who book arenas and handle financial and broadcasting affairs. Plus, you have the AWA President's office who oversees the Committee and acts as an intermediary between the two groups.

PC: Quite simply, Gordon Myers, the Championship Committee has lost its authority. That is why I am prepared to go to the Board Of Directors, and move for the immediate dissolution of the Championship Committee!

[There's a moment of silence, as this statement stuns Gordon Myers.]

GM: ...what?

PC: We don't need them! Supreme Wright has proven that a Championship Committee is extraneous. His title reign is a success. And it all happened with no input from the Championship Committee.

GM: We've never not had a Championship Committee. You're proposing that the wrestlers determine who the contenders are themselves? What you're proposing is anarchy!

PC: But hasn't Mr. Wright shown us that anarchy works?

GM: Supreme Wright, at least, takes on all comers.

PC: Does he? Hm, I could have sworn that he has refused at least one challenge. In any case, when confronted with this uncomfortable truth, the Championship Committee has finally been persuaded to act. And act wisely, I might add.

GM: Let me guess. You've used the situation around the World Title to bully the Championship Committee with the possibility of losing their jobs.

PC: No! No, of course not. We have just set an ultimatum that the Championship Committee needs to get its act together and take control of their championships. The titles that they allegedly sponsor. Because if they're not willing to do that, they are not needed. And in fact, they have acted. On the very next episode of Saturday Night Wrestling, the World Championship - no matter the result in Tokyo - will be defended.

GM: Against whom?

PC: A man who made a very strong statement in the tournament I mentioned at the start of this interview.

GM: You must be referring to the man who won that tournament, and whom Supreme Wright has been ducking... Dave Bryant.

PC: Of course not. I'm referring to the man who left that tournament because it was simply absurd that he should even HAVE to wrestle a tournament or spotlight match or any such thing to get a title match, with his AWA track record. I refer to none other than "Showtime" Rick Marley!

[Another pause, and Gordon shakes his head.]

GM: Rick Marley. Whom you manage.

PC: Of course. I only manage the best, Mr. Myers. You can't possibly be surprised that such a top contender is in my camp. Everyone I manage is a top contender.

GM: All I am drawing from this, Percy Childes, is that the Wise Men are now overtly holding the Championship Committee hostage.

RM: And what I'm getting from THAT, Myers, is that you'd still like to see me back in my 'place'.

[Myers is startled, and turns to see Rick Marley entering the room. With his dark hair tied back in a ponytail, Marley wears a thick black dress shirt, matching slacks, and a blue tie. His eyes are covered by designer shades, but his facial expression is defiant.]

GM: I thought we were alone!

PC: This is my home, Gordon. It is natural for the people I manage to come visit me for strategy meetings.

RM: And to correct blatant lies. That too...you see, Hannibal Carver's been nagging at me for weeks now. Nonstop.

And it was working... he had me completely distracted. I feel for it hook, line and sinker... but then I started to ask myself "Why?". WHY has Carver been so dialed in on me? What does he actually have to gain out of the situation?

And then it came to me: The Title.

That's right... The title. Anyone worth anything has one thing on their mind: Winning the World Title here in AWA. There's no secret that it's MY goal... but I can't concentrate on it with that Beantown moron breathing down my neck and forcing me to look over my shoulder... it keeps the title away from me... away from us...

Now, why would that matter to Carver?

[It's clear it's a rhetorical question since Marley doesn't allow anyone time to respond before continuing.]

RM: It wouldn't... that's WAY above his pay grade... so who? Who would benefit from this situation, Gordon? Whose fingerprints are all over this little game?

[Marley advances as he speaks, and now he's looming over poor Gordon, who is very nervous.]

GM: It wasn't me, I can tell you that much!

RM: Clearly. Whoever hatched this plan had backbone.

You? You like making little side comments at the announcer's table... small things to try to keep me down.

Subtle... insidious...

But that's not really important anymore.

The Championship Committee has FINALLY gotten its wake up call and after all of this time here in AWA, they've finally listened.

I'm getting a shot at the title.

MY title.

It's not on a pay per view or supercard... but that doesn't matter.

They cracked the door for me... now I'll kick it down and take what's mine.

GM: How magnanimous.

RM: Well, I'm sure that the cash that we just shelled out to pimp a title match against some nobody from Japan is gonna be a hell of an investment.

With guys in the back that have busted their tails for years waiting in line for a shot, what happens? Some flavor of the week shows up... some guy that came in and defeated Maximus once... ONCE... and THIS is supposed to turn heads?

Please.

[Gordon tries to interrupt but is shouted down again.]

RM: You've got the last three champions of the ONLY other major wrestling organization that was able to compete with AWA head to head... considered by a lot of experts to be the best in the world... you've got 'em on the roster, and what do you do with 'em?

Not a damned thing.

I'll grant you that one of 'em is an ass who gets by on a wish and a prayer but he's got a resume and deserves... no DEMANDS attention.

[Marley sneers at Myers.]

RM: I know you don't like when anyone mentions it, but that place had a World Title back when AWA was barely a national touring company... they sold out arenas when AWA was having trouble filling bingo halls.

And then here comes Joe Nobody... oh, sorry, Kent-oe Kitnobodykawamurasama-chan. And the AWA ignores the entire damned talent pool to give this guy a chance to take its own World Title away from us.

Was this your brainstorm? It's the all time idiotic move in the history of idiotic moves! You go on and on about Tiger Paw Pro, how great it is, how the competition deserves AWA championship matches just by being great, and literally EVERYONE ELSE in the entire WORLD had to start over when we came here!

GM: Look, I understand that you're upset...

RM: Upset?! I passed upset a freakin' year ago, you self-important jackass. I'm saying what every single member of the AWA roster would say if they had the guts. All except Hannibal Carver, because nobody can decipher the gibberish that he drools out. The AWA didn't want me, Detson, or Lake going to Japan because if we went, Kitnobodykawamurasama-chan wouldn't have made it to the ring. It's a slap in the face of every AWA wrestler. A slap I intend to return on the next Saturday Night Wrestling.

Yeah, it's a shame that I'll be slapping around Supreme Wright. He's a casualty in all of this. A victim. He's probably as mad or more mad than I am. But I'd take out my own father for a World Title if I had to do it. I'd hit the Limelight on my wife if it meant bringing fairness to professional wrestling. And to do both at once?

I'll do anything. And everything. No matter what it is... or to who.

GM: Fairness? How would you winning the World Championship bring fairness? With all due respect, Mr. Marley, you have wrestled a part-time schedule, even on live arena events, for six months. I understand that nagging injuries are a cause of that, but...

RM: I noticed a long time ago that whenever anyone starts off with "with all due respect", it means the exact opposite. Always. Like just now. But I'll still answer your question, even though you just did what you always do and used your snide little sneaky comments to cut people down that you don't approve of.

I'm going to bring fairness back to the AWA by bringing the World Title to the Wise Men.

[Percy can be seen smiling at this statement as Myers looks horrified at the thought.]

RM: We would never allow the AWA to schedule a farce like this. An exhibition against Kent-oe Kitnobodykawamurasama-chan? Sure! On a TV show? Sure! On one of the biggest shows of the year, taking one of the big paydays out of the hands of an AWA performer? No. Never. NEVER. It would have been different if the AWA always acknowledged the careers of its performers. But that only happens if your past is convenient for the Board Of Directors, like for Kent-oe Kitnobodykawamurasama-chan.

All I have to say is this: if Kent-oe Kitnobodykawamurasama-chan wins, he needs to drop the title in the ring as soon as they hand it to him and run. Because if he flies to Dallas, he won't be flying home.

GM: Good grief. I came here to interview Childes, and this was an ambush.

RM: If you think this was the sort of ambush that I set up, you REALLY haven't paid attention to my career, little man.

PC: That is enough of that. Aggression against Gordon Myers is misplaced. Perhaps not unwarranted... but misplaced. Soon enough, we will bring the World Title to a place where it can be used to rebuild this company into a better place. Until then, well, enjoy the show.

GM: Rick Marley has apparently been granted an AWA World Title Match on the next edition of Saturday Night Wrestling. But who will he be facing? Will it be tonight's challenger, Kenta Kitukawa? Or will it be the current World Champion, Supreme Wright? We're just moments away from finding out! That's all from here Stateside. Jason, Bucky, back to you.

[We fade away from a determined Rick Marley...

...and fade back up to a burst of static. The static clears into the image of a dark back alley. A fire burns in a steel trash drum, sending up clouds of greasy black smoke. In the background, figures hunch over the fire, rubbing themselves for warmth. A figure in a bulky dirty and torn coat and a ratty wool tam shambles into the firelight. Her face is ghastly, livid brown skin and mottled scars splitting her mouth into a horrific Chelsea grin. Dead black eyes stare lifelessly through the screen.]

W: Yuh run away to a fah off land. Yuh tink yuh safe? Yuh tink di bright lights of di land of de rising sun will protect yuh from destiny?

[She shakes lousy lank knotted hair.]

W: Yu nah free. Yuh will not be free of destiny. Yuh lef us fi dead. But yuh can't kill what won't die. This cold cruel winter is ovah and we still here. Yoh treat us like pariah but we still here. Yuh 'ave yuh fancy tournament and give de winnin' team a million dollars. Yuh will not escape yuh destiny. Yuh will not escape di dead. Yuh cannot 'ide. We comin' fi yuh. We comin' 'ome. We comin' 'ome!

[Fade out on her dead black eyes...

...and back up to Mark Stegglet.]

MS: Fans, we are now just moments away from the first half of our Double Main Event, the World Title showdown between Kenta Kitukawa and Supreme Wright. We're going to be hearing from both of these men in a few seconds but before we do, I want to bring in a man who will be in a big match of his own on the next Saturday Night Wrestling - joining us live via satellite. Tony Sunn, welcome to Rising Sun Showdown!

[The screen splits to show Mark Stegglet on one side and Tony Sunn on the other, standing in front of a black wall with a simple AWA banner on it. The powerhouse wrestler is wearing a dark grey suit jacket, white oxford shirt and blue jeans. His dirty blonde hair is pulled back into a neat ponytail and he has a solemn expression on his face. He lets out a faint sigh, then...]

TS: Thanks, Mark. First off, I'd like to express my thanks to both the AWA and Tiger Paw Pro for allowing me this time to talk. While I wish I could have been in Japan myself competing in the Rising Sun Showdown, I understand I'm the "new guy" and gotta work my way up to these big events.

But something happened last time out that I couldn't stay silent on...

[Tony's face hardens into a deep grimace.]

TS: ...Ricky Lane, Willoughby Tremblay, I saw what you put Denny Watters through. What was supposed to be a hard fought match was turned into a SICK JOKE! What, you lost to me so you had to throw a temper tantrum and take it out on that poor guy?! Bullying, plain and simple -- and I won't stand for that...

[He slowly shakes his head, eyes narrowing in disgust.]

TS: You wanted to send a message to me, Tremblay?! You say you and your guy are now on a "Crusade" and I'm gonna be the first to fall?

Message received. Now, here's one from ME: I beat Ricky Lane once and I'll beat him again. You think it was a fluke?! Any night, I can prove you wrong AGAIN and AGAIN! I'm not running. I'm not hiding. You want a "Crusade"? Then be prepared to suffer the fate of all warmongers when they bite off more than they can chew!

When the AWA comes back to Texas, any night, Lane...any NIGHT!

[Sunn storms out of the picture, leaving Mark Stegglet behind.]

MS: An intense Tony Sunn who appears to be very, very ready for the challenge of Ricky Lane and Willoughby Tremblay on the next Saturday Night Wrestling!

[We fade away from Mark Stegglet...

...and up to a shot of Kenta Kitzukawa who has a sheen of sweat already covering his entire upper body. He stands bare-chested in a pair of green and white trunks, looking into the camera. Subtitles, of course, are present as he speaks.]

SUBTITLES: The time has finally arrived, Supreme Wright. After many months of you disgracing yourself... and more importantly, my teacher... the time for you to pay for your dishonor has arrived.

I will not lie to you, Supreme Wright. I have often dreamed of this night. But in those dreams, this was not the match it has become.

This match is personal. This match is a chance for me to respect the teachings of my mentor, Todd Michaelson, and to show you why you should have done the same instead of taking the cowardly, lowly road that you chose.

But in those dreams I've had for many years, it was not personal.

Not exactly.

[Kenta gets the slightest of smiles.]

SUBTITLES: When I first went to America to train with Todd Michaelson, I was a stranger to your country. I was afraid to leave the apartment that Tiger Paw had rented for me. I was fearful to go into the local drug store or grocery store.

But I had dreams. Big dreams.

I could see it in my mind's eye, Wright. I could see stepping into the ring for the mightiest promotion in the land to battle for their World Title... for the right to be recognized as the best wrestler in the world.

I worked hard in the M-DOJO... for that dream.

I came home, battling the best that Tiger Paw Pro had to offer... for that dream.

And every time my mentor would call with a potential opportunity in the States... the EMWC... PWR... the AWA... I would have the dreams all over again and I would battle even harder.

When I say the time has arrived, Wright... I don't just mean your time to pay retribution for the sins against our father.

The time has arrived for me to live my dream.

I have fought this match many times over the years in my nights. And every time, they all end the same way...

Kenta Kitukawa. New World Champion.

[Kitukawa nods confidently.]

SUBTITLES: The time has arrived... and your time as World Champion has ended.

[We fade away from Kenta Kitukawa...

The words, "RECORDED EARLIER TODAY" flash across the screen, as we see Mark Stegglet, standing in the backstage interview area with Supreme Wright. The World Champion is dressed in a three-piece, Angus olive checkered tweed suit, a striped pink dress shirt, and a tonal red checkered necktie. Cradled in his right arm, is the greatest prize in professional wrestling, the AWA World Heavyweight title.]

MS: Supreme Wright, tonight you defend the AWA World Heavyweight title against Kenta Kitukawa. Kitukawa has made it no secret that he's battling for more than just the title, as he holds you solely responsible for Todd Michaelson's resignation and departure from the AWA and the Combat Corner. Your thoughts going into tonight's big match-up?

SW: Kitukawa-san seems to be under the impression that the fact we both share the same teacher makes this match personal.

No.

The fact he's an opponent stepping into MY ring makes this personal.

[Supreme narrows his eyes at Stegglet.]

SW: But he wants to question my integrity? My love...my RESPECT for this sport...its history...and the legacy left behind by those that came before me?

[He shakes his head.]

SW: Then let us talk about legacy. Let us talk about tradition. Let us talk about respect.

[Supreme's eyes cast down for a split second, before he looks up with a cold, grim expression on his face.]

SW: Twenty-five years ago, Roosevelt Wright wrestled his retirement match inside the Tokyo Dome. It was here, that he held his grandson in his arms and told that crowd that some day, he would come back to this country he loves and when he did, his grandson would be the World's Champion.

[He laughs softly to himself.]



SW: My legacy was already decided for me a long time ago, Kitzukawa-san.  
And I RESPECTED that decision. I ACCEPTED that decision. I grabbed HOLD  
of my grandfather's dream and I made it MINE.

I grabbed hold of my destiny...

[He raises the World Title up towards the camera.]

SW: ...and I never let go.

[Wright's tone is belligerent...defiant.]

SW: I \_kept\_ my grandfather's promise.

[He stares hard into the camera, with an intense, focused glare.]

SW: Kitzukawa-san...your legacy, your very BEING is defined by the fact  
that you're Mr. Michaelson's student.

You wear it like a badge of honor. Grateful to forever live in Mr. Michaelson's  
shadow, as if you're afraid to step out from the darkness and be blinded by  
the sun.

Forever seeking his approval, forever singing his praises, and forever his  
STUDENT.

[A snort. A look of disbelief.]

SW: Not his friend.

Not his equal.

But his STUDENT.

[Supreme's eyes stay fixed on the camera and he slowly shakes his head  
with disapproval.]

SW: I respect Mr. Michaelson. I am GRATEFUL to Mr. Michaelson. I thank him  
for everything that he's done for me.

But I sure as hell am NOT living in that man's shadow any more.

[The tone of his voice grows angry, resentful.]

SW: And yet, you can't respect the fact that I've become more than just Mr.  
Michaelson's student. So you've become the man that wants to take away  
my hopes and dreams. The man that wants to tear down my legacy. The  
man...

...who wants MY World Title.

And that's just unacceptable.

[He just stares at the camera intensely for a few seconds, before continuing on.]

SW: You think I'm a coward and an opportunist. You think I'm a man that doesn't deserve to hold this title.

Then show me.

Show me just how much of a coward and opportunist I am.

Show me that I don't deserve to hold this title.

SHOW ME, Kitzukawa-san!

Show me what it truly means to be Todd Michaelson's student!

[Supreme leans in towards the camera. The expression on his face is fierce. His voice, filled with restrained rage spoken through gritted teeth.]

SW: And I promise you, I'll show you exactly what it means...

...to be the World Champion.

[Fade out from Wright...

...and fade back to a panning shot of the interior of the Tokyo Dome. The crowd is buzzing with anticipation for the World Title match that they're about to witness.]

JD: You can feel the electricity in the air, Bucky. These fans have been looking forward to this match since it was originally announced so many weeks ago. One of their own, Kenta Kitzukawa, is challenging for the World Heavyweight Championship against Supreme Wright. But it's more than that for these two men.

BW: It's a very personal situation. Todd Michaelson has been the Head Trainer in the Combat Corner since the day that the AWA is open. I've given him a lot of gruff over the years but the fact is, he's got a tremendous track record. When you look at the list of names that have come out of there - Supreme Wright, Eric Preston, Aaron Anderson, Air Strike, the list goes on and on - you have to be impressed. But when Wright turned his back on the fans back at SuperClash, Michaelson snapped. He couldn't take it anymore.

JD: He couldn't handle seeing his teachings twisted by the people who decided to take the low road... to take the easy way. Men like Anderson and Wright are on top of that list but there are others as well. So, Michaelson walked away from the Corner.

BW: He walked away from the AWA completely! The man co-owns this company and no one has seen or heard from him in months now, Dane.

JD: That's right. It's been a running theme here tonight from men like Air Strike and Kenta Kitzukawa... using this night to show Todd Michaelson that his years training were not in vain. That there are still men who believe in his teachings and will use the skills that he helped give them for the side of good. Kenta Kitzukawa walks in here tonight with a ton of pressure on his shoulders... the pride of his people, his home company here in Tiger Paw Pro, and the reputation of his teacher. He thinks that if he wins tonight, he might avenge Todd Michaelson for what Wright has done to him. He thinks that if he wins here tonight, Todd Michaelson might come back to the AWA.

BW: You know him better than most, Dane. He's your brother-in-law. Do you think that's true?

JD: I... I just don't know. The World Title, the biggest prize in the sport, on the line in this one. Let's go down to the ring for the introductions!

[Crossfade to the petite Megumi Sato who grips the mic with both hands.]

SUBTITLES: WORLD! TITLE! MATCH!

[BIG CHEER!]

SUBTITLES: The following match is set for one fall with a sixty minute time limit and is for the American Wrestling Alliance World Heavyweight Championship!

[More cheers! The lights die down in the building. Green and white lighting splash over the entryway, painting a path down the aisle.]

JD: Kenta Kitzukawa opting to use the color scheme of his mentor and teacher, Todd Michaelson, here tonight.

BW: Not just his mentor... not just his teacher... we actually heard Kitzukawa describe him as his father in that interview a few moments ago. A figurative father for Kitzukawa.

JD: Which sort of makes this a brother vs brother affair.

[The subtitles kick in again.]

SUBTITLES: From Osaka, Japan... weighing in at 119 kilos... being accompanied to the ring by Dave Bryant...

[Cue the screaming.]

"KENNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNTAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAA!  
KITZUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUKAAAAAAAAAAAAWAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAA!"

[The green and white lighting begins to strobe, turning into quite the dance party scene as the platform in the middle of the v-shaped gap slowly begins to rise, getting hit with several spotlights. The crowd begins to roar even

louder as the challenger comes into view, clad in a gorgeous green and white full length trenchcoat-style ring jacket that hangs down around his ankles.]

JD: Kenta Kitukawa is one of the favorite sons of the fans of Japan. He's been the Tiger Paw Pro Global Crown Champion before but tonight, he looks to take a major step up by becoming the World Heavyweight Champion for the very first time.

[As the rising platform locks in place, Kitukawa throws an arm into the air to a big cheer as he starts walking down the elevated platform. The left video screen lights up with "KEN!" and the right with "TA!", dancing back and forth in rhythm to start a massive "KEN-TA!" chant throughout the Tokyo Dome.]

JD: You talk about a home field advantage, Kenta Kitukawa has a big one here tonight. Some 40,000 plus fans in this building tonight and they're solidly behind the Japanese megastar as he attempts to wrest the World Heavyweight Title from around the waist of Supreme Wright here tonight.

[Dave Bryant emerges from a side entrance, joining Kitukawa on the platform with a brief handshake before the duo step into the ring together. Bryant holds up the challenger's hand, gesturing to him.]

JD: Dave Bryant is two months' away from receiving his World Title rematch. At Memorial Day Mayhem, he'll get a chance to become the first two-time AWA World Heavyweight Champion. But who will he be facing? Will it be his rival Supreme Wright? Will it be the man he will corner tonight, Kenta Kitukawa?

BW: Or maybe it'll be Ricky Marley who somehow, someway got himself a World Title match on the next Stateside edition of Saturday Night Wrestling!

[Kitukawa shrugs out of his jacket, standing in green and white trunks, kneepads, and boots. He tugs a similar colored pair of elbowpads in place as he stands in the corner, his black hair cut in what's close to a bowl cut. His body is smooth, very little muscle mass. Bryant slips from the ring, clapping for Kitukawa as he stands and waits for his opponent.]

SUBTITLES: And his opponent...

[The green and white lighting fade to normal lighting as the subtitles continue.]

SUBTITLES: He hails from Sherwood Forest, Baton Rouge, Louisiana... he weighs in at 102 kilos... he is the reigning and defending AWA World Heavyweight champion...

[See ya, subtitles.]

"SUPRRRRRRRRREEEEEEEEEEEEEEEMMMMMMMMMMMMMEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEE!"

"WRRRRRRRRRRRIIIIIIIIIIIIIIIIGGGGGGGGGGGHHHHHHHHHHHTTT!"

[The lights in the Tokyo Dome go completely dark, as the video wall begins to play old footage, apparently from a wrestling event that took place in this very same venue several years ago. There, we see an African-American male with greying hair and a beard in crimson wrestling trunks with three white stars on the front, standing inside a wrestling ring filled with flowers and well-wishers. It is Supreme Wright's grandfather...Roosevelt Wright.]

RW: "I may have just wrestled my last match, but I promise all of you that this won't be the last you'll ever see of me!"

[Roosevelt, who bears more than a striking resemblance to our current World Champion, holds up a young boy no more than two or three years old in his arms.]

RW: "This is my grandson, Supreme...and someday, I promise every last one of you that I'll come back with him to Japan. And when I do, he's going to be the champion of the world!"

[The video then fades to black, as the dome is engulfed in complete darkness, but Roosevelt's words are repeated over the PA system.]

"The champion of the world!"

"The champion of the world!"

"The champion of the world!"

[The voice becomes deep and distorted.]

"THE CHAMPION."

"OF."

"THE WORLD."

["Black Skinhead" by Kanye West then begins to play, as a spotlight shines down on the gap in the v-shaped entrance. Dry ice fog fills the entrance way, as a gigantic throne made in the likeness of Game of Thrones' "Iron Throne" rises from the abyss. Seated in the throne, is the AWA World Champion himself, Supreme Wright.

Wright is wearing a sleeveless, medieval-style gold robe over standard crimson wrestling trunks with three white stars on the front similar to the ones we just saw his grandfather wearing on the video wall footage, along with a crown of thrones atop his head. As he rises out of his seat, he holds out his arms and is bathed in blinding white light, as we see the entirety of Team Supreme, led by Cain Jackson, emerging from both walkways, forming a single-file line in middle of the aisle.

And coming out last, is a stern-looking elderly African-American male in a suit whose wrinkled features bear more than a striking resemblance to our World Champion. In fact, when his face is shown on the video wall,

the Japanese crowd immediately roars in recognition.]

JD: That's Roosevelt Wright! Supreme Wright's grandfather!

BW: We all saw Sudakov and Mahoney in that shoot fight earlier tonight, but this man was doing shoot fights and stretching people inside a ring before we even called that stuff Mixed Martial Arts! If there's anyone you wanna' point to for makin' the champion into the wrestler he is today, it's that man right there!

JD: Roosevelt Wright wrestled for four decades and a good number of those years were right here in Japan. The cheers you're hearing from the crowd right now are the sounds of respect being paid to a true pioneer and legend of the sport.

[The seventy-five year old patriarch of the Wright clan makes his way to the front of the line, standing in front of Cain Jackson. Each member of Team Supreme proceeds to place his hands on the shoulders of the man in front of him as the World Champion then steps down from his throne, placing his hands on the shoulders of the last man in the line. They then make their way down towards the ring, marching forward like a train.]

JD: It's a big fight atmosphere here in the Tokyo Dome, fans, and Supreme Wright and the entirety of Team Supreme form the train, escorting the World Champion down the aisle to the ring!

[Upon reaching the ring, Roosevelt Wright stays on the ramp, looking back as the Team Supreme members melt away to either side of the entrance ramp, walking down the steps to the floor, taking him what amounts to lumberjack positions around the ring, coming just short of a wary Dave Bryant. The path clears for Supreme Wright to walk up to his grandfather. Wright removes the World Title belt from around his waist, holding it up and handing it to his grandfather...

...who thrusts it into the air to a big reaction!]

JD: There it is. The biggest prize in our sport. The reason that men become professional wrestlers. Supreme Wright carries it, Kenta Kitukawa wants it. It's just that simple.

[The elder Wright hands the title back, embracing his grandson before taking a seat in the front row, escorted by two young ladies to his seat. Supreme Wright shrugs out of the robe, staring in at Kitukawa who has taken a spot in the center of the ring, staring out at Wright.]

JD: We've got a staredown already! These two are looking to take the fight to one another in a major way here tonight in Tokyo.

[Wright slips through the ropes, handing the title belt over to official Masa Fujiwara with a glare.]

JD: Masa Fujiwara is the man in the middle for this one. The AWA and Tiger Paw Pro had some serious negotiations about this one from what I understand. Ultimately, they decided to have two officials involved in this match. Masa Fujiwara, the head official for Tiger Paw will be in the ring and AWA Senior Official Johnny Jagger will be out on the floor, calling the action from out there.

BW: I don't know if I like Fujiwara being involved at all, Dane, but I guess having two refs is better than one crook.

JD: Are you calling Masa Fujiwara a crook?

BW: Hey, there's bigger paydays for everyone when the World Champion is involved with your shows. You think this guy's above a fast count to put a few extra yen in his pocket?

JD: Yes, yes I do.

BW: That's cute.

[Wright strides to the center of the ring, staring down his challenger as flashbulbs fire from all over the Tokyo Dome for the big moment.]

JD: It's been a long, long time since the World Heavyweight Title has been defended here in Japan and these fans are jammed into the Tokyo Dome to experience history in action.

[The referee steps up to both men, making sure they're aware of all the rules as the two men silently stare down one another. Wright is a few inches taller, looking slightly down at Kitukawa who is certainly heavier than the World Champion.]

JD: Look at this staredown. There's a lot of bad feelings there - mostly around the Todd Michaelson situation. Kitukawa, I've spoken to him. He directly blames Wright for Todd's disappearance and many in the Combat Corner would agree with him.

BW: Wright just did what anyone else would've done to become the World Champion, Dane.

JD: I completely disagree with that. He took advantage of an injured man in a situation he knew was not a fair fight. He ruined a magnificent moment for Dave Bryant and stabbed the fans in the heart at the same time.

BW: But he's the World Champion... and there's a whole lot of guys in the locker room who'd do the exact same thing when given the opportunity.

JD: Perhaps there is... but Kenta Kitukawa is not one of them.

[Having seen enough of the staredown, Masa Fujiwara steps in, forcing Kitukawa and Wright to backpedal to their respective corners, still staring across as the referee holds the World Heavyweight Title up, showing it to all

sides of the Tokyo Dome. The crowd noise gets louder again, buzzing in anticipation as Dave Bryant claps his hands at ringside, shouting, "LET'S DO THIS, KENTA!"]

JD: The time for talk is over... the time for action is...

"DING! DING! DING!"

JD: ...now!

[As the bell sounds, the two men come marching out of their corners, meeting in the middle of the ring again, going right back into the staredown. This time though, the staredown is short-lived as Wright throws a hard forearm to the jaw of Kitzukawa.]

JD: Oh, what a shot!

[Kitzukawa slowly turns, glaring at Wright again...

...and gets smashed with another forearm to the jaw!]

JD: A second forearm... but Kitzukawa is holding his ground!

BW: Hit him again!

[Wright obliges, grabbing the back of the head and slamming a European uppercut up under the chin!]

JD: Ohh!

[Kitzukawa turns back to Wright, giving a scream as he slaps himself across the face a few times...

...and lunges forward, throwing a series of forearms of his own, battering Wright back into the turnbuckles.]

JD: Kitzukawa is all over the World Champion!

[Grabbing an arm, he fires Wright from corner to corner, bouncing him off the turnbuckle...

...and LAUNCHES him skyward, sending him flipping over and crashing off the canvas!]

JD: HIGH BACKDROP BY THE CHALLENGER!

[Wright scrambles back up to his feet, getting caught with a blistering knife-edge chop across the chest!]

JD: Good grief! That'll leave a red welt for days, Bucky!



BW: We often talk about Supreme Wright being one of the hardest hitters in the entire AWA but Kenta Kitzukawa ain't takin' a backseat to anyone in that department. Michaelson taught him well!

[Another knife-edge chop has Wright falling back into the corner, his arms looped over the top rope to stay on his feet. The challenger approaches, ignoring the referee as he winds up again...]

"WHAAAAAAAAAAAAAP!"

JD: Big chop in the corner!

[Kitzukawa squares up, delivering another blow!]

JD: He's taking the hide off Supreme Wright with those knife edge chops! So powerful and so effective!

[Giving a shout, Kitzukawa launches into a series of quick, stinging chops to the chest that has Wright reeling.]

BW: Get him back, Fujiwara! You see, Dane... this guy is letting his boy break the rules already!

JD: That's not what I see at all.

[The Japanese challenger grabs Wright by the arm, flinging him across the ring again. He hits the buckles, bouncing back out towards Kitzukawa who comes barreling across the ring, leaving his feet with a one-legged dropkick, driving a foot into the chin of Wright and knocking him flat.]

JD: He takes Wright down with that kick and- cover!

[Kitzukawa dives into a cover, reaching back for a leg.]

JD: One- whoa! Wright's not hanging out for a two count. He's immediately out of there.

BW: A smart move. A lot of guys like to hang around for two, give themselves some time to recover... but if you do that, you could real easy find yourself pinned for three.

[As Wright scrambles up off the mat, Kitzukawa hooks a rear waistlock.]

JD: Waistlock!

[Wright feels the waistlock and immediately goes to escape, throwing a trio of back elbows to the cheek. He wheels around, throwing a very hard forearm shot to the cheekbone, knocking Kitzukawa down to a knee.]

JD: That one stunned the challenger!

[The champion grabs a handful of jet black hair, pasting Kitzukawa with a forearm uppercut.]

JD: Big European uppercut... and a second one!

[Dragging the challenger off the mat by the arm, Wright whips him to the corner, rushing in after him...

...and running headlong into a raised boot!]

JD: Ohh! Kenta caught him coming in!

[Wright staggers back, rubbing his jaw as Kenta steps out, burying a boot into the midsection.]

JD: Kenta goes downstairs and-

[The crowd ERUPTS as Kitzukawa hooks an arm, looking for a double underhook.]

JD: HE'S GOING FOR THE BILLION DOLLAR BOMB!

[But Wright spins out of it, avoiding the second arm behind hooked, throwing another forearm to the jaw!]

JD: Wright escapes and fires back!

[Grabbing the hair again, Wright lays in a series of short forearms to the jaw, battering Kenta back against the ropes. He pivots, throwing a knife edge chop of his own...

...but the challenger shakes his head, glaring at Wright.]

JD: Uh oh!

[Wright steps back, looking surprised as he throws a second chop.]

JD: Another chop!

BW: That's not workin', kid!

[The champion switches his stance, grabbing Kitzukawa by the hair again, throwing three short forearms to the temple followed by a huge European uppercut...

...but Kitzukawa gives a shout before throwing himself into a flurry of forearms, backing Wright across the ring.]

JD: Wright is stunned! Kitzukawa absorbed all those blows and just kept coming!

[Kitzukawa grabs the arm, whipping him across again...]

JD: The challenger shoots him across... big chop, ducked by the champion... off the far ropes...

[Wright runs headlong into Kituzkawa who hooks him around the torso, muscling him over in a released Northern Lights Suplex, hurling Wright halfway across the ring and bouncing him off the canvas!]

JD: Down goes Wright again...

[The World Champion quickly scrambles off the mat again, getting caught by the challenger who hooks a front facelock, looking for a big suplex...

...but Wright spins out, grabbing the wrist as he does it, yanking the arm under his armpit and DRIVES him down with an armbar takedown!]

JD: OHH!

BW: Beautiful counter by Wright! Supreme Wright just showed why he's considered, arguably, the greatest in-ring technician in the world right now. Kitzukawa was looking for a big suplex of some kind but Wright was ready for him, taking him down and punishing that arm!

JD: Into the Fujiwara!

[The crowd buzzes with concern as Wright grips the wrist, putting his weight on the upper arm to pin it down as he pulls up on the wrist!]

JD: The favorite hold of Hall of Famer, Jeff "Madfox" Matthews, has been applied by the World Heavyweight Champion on his challenger, Kenta Kitzukawa in the center of the ring here in the Tokyo Dome at Rising Sun Showdown!

[Kitzukawa grimaces as Wright plants his feet, leaning back to put pressure on the shoulder joint.]

BW: Jeff Matthews was a tremendous wrestler before he took on the Fujiwara as his signature hold. After he did, he became the wrestler who won World Championships and cemented his spot in the Hall of Fame, Dane. There's a reason this hold is as respected... as feared as it is.

JD: Wright's got it expertly applied - you would expect no less from a technician of his talents. Can the challenger find a way to escape this dangerous submission hold mere minutes into this matchup?

[Kitzukawa slips his feet underneath him, pushing up to extend his legs, and front rolls away from the pressure, flipping himself right out of the hold. Wright rolls with him, pinning the arm down to the mat as he slams his knee down into the bicep.]

JD: Wright's going after the arm!

BW: Kituzkawa's got a lot of stuff he's known for with that arm. The big lariat, all those elbows and forearms, all his big throws and slams - you can't do a lot of that with a bum arm.

[Wright drops a second knee on the arm, pinning it under his kneecap as he grinds the knee back and forth, punishing the limb underneath it. A quick cut to ringside shows a grinning Roosevelt Wright.]

JD: The grandfather of the World Champion looking on with a grin.

BW: This is the kind of thing he liked doing back in his day, Dane. Digging into that muscle, punishing it, torturing it. He was the epitome of what they'd call a "hooker" back in the old days, daddy.

[Climbing back to his feet, Wright keeps his grip on the wrist, dropping a leg across the bicep.]

JD: Wright stays on the arm, finding different way to weaken the limb just under five minutes into this World Title contest.

[He grabs the wrist, isolating it...

...and then uses his other hand to bend back the fingers of the challenger, causing him to cry out in pain! Kitukawa quickly struggles, wriggling around, and yanks his hand free as the referee warns Wright.]

JD: The referee wants to make sure Wright's not making an intentional attempt to seriously injure his opponent. Good call, Mr. Referee.

[Wright climbs to his feet, looking down at Kitukawa who cradles his hand against his chest as he rolls to his side, shielding the arm as well from the World Champion who looks for his next opening.]

JD: Ohh! Hard kick across the shoulderblades!

[The champion winds up, delivering a second soccer-style kick across the back, forcing the challenger to roll over onto his stomach. He grabs the wrist, extending the pain-filled arm...

...and KICKS the arm!]

JD: Oh, come on!

[Wright hangs on, delivering a second kick to the arm... and a third kick to the arm before Kitukawa again rips his arm out of Wright's grip, crawling towards the corner with the World Champion in pursuit.]

JD: The challenger is having his arm tormented by Supreme Wright!

[The Japanese challenger hooks an arm over the ropes, pulling himself to a knee in the corner. But Wright is right there waiting for him, hooking a handful of hair...]

JD: Short kick to the face!

[Wright delivers kick after kick, bouncing off the forehead and the bridge of the nose before shoving Kitzukawa back into the turnbuckles, glaring at him...

...and throws a big chop across the chest!]

JD: Another knife-edge strike in the corner! And a second blow connects as well!

[The sweat flies off the chest of Kitzukawa as Wright connects with a third blow...

...before Kitzukawa throws a forearm with his right arm, bouncing it off Wright's head and sending the World Champion falling back on his rear in the center of the ring. The challenger falls back into the ropes, grabbing his arm.]

JD: He instinctively threw that right forearm to the jaw even after the punishment it's taken at the hands of Supreme Wright so far in this Main Event World Title matchup!

[Kitzukawa leans against the ropes, clutching his right forearm as Wright pushes back up off the mat, moving in on Kitzukawa. He grabs a handful of hair, blasting him with a European uppercut that snaps the challenger's head back...

...but Kitzukawa throws a retaliation forearm, with his left arm this time, that spins Wright away from him!]

JD: Wright's stunned... Kenta hooks!

[The crowd buzzes as the waistlock is applied again but Wright reaches down, gripping the right wrist with both hands, twisting it around into a full armtwist, holding the wristlock to break the hold...

...and slams his elbow down on the bicep!]

JD: Another nice counter by the champion!

[Two more elbows find the mark before Wright hooks the arm under his armpit again, looking to secure the Fujiwara a second time...

...but a desperate Kenta Kitzukawa front rolls again, slipping his arm out of Wright's grip as he gets back to his feet, throwing his left forearm into the jaw!]

JD: Kenta counters right back!

[This time, Kenta is able to hook the rear waistlock, not hesitating as he muscles Wright up, throwing him down on the back of his head and neck with a released German.]

JD: GERRRRMAAAAAN SUUUUUUPLEX! All impact, no bridge as Wright gets driven down HARD on the back of his head and neck!

[Kitzukawa scrambles into a lateral press.]

JD: ONE!! TWO!!

[But up goes the shoulder, breaking the pin attempt.]

JD: Two count only for the challenger as he looks for a way to put down the World Champion for a three count in the center of the Tokyo Dome!

[Kitzukawa pushes up off the mat with his left arm, grabbing his right in pain as he gets to his feet.]

JD: I don't have any earthly idea how Kenta Kitzukawa managed to get Wright up and over in that German Suplex with a sore arm.

BW: It's what these Japanese people call fighting spirit, Dane. It helps them shut down the pain to pull off some incredible action.

JD: It certainly does as the challenger has the champion rocked after that suplex, right down on the back of the head.

[The challenger leans against the ropes again, clutching at his arm as he watches a dazed Supreme Wright struggle off the mat, climbing to his feet...

...and slowly turns right into a vicious chop across the chest!]

JD: Big chop by Kitzukawa!

[The left-handed blow sends Wright falling back into the ropes, clutching his chest as Kitzukawa approaches, delivering a second knife edge chop.]

JD: Man, you can hear that impact all over the building! As we close in on the ten minute mark of this sixty minute time limit, Kenta Kitzukawa is looking to land some high impact shots to buy himself some time to recover from the punishment that his arm has taken so far in this one.

[Kitzukawa turns, nodding to the fans before he steps back in, attempting a third left-handed chop...

...but Wright brings his own arms up, absorbing the chop on his forearms. The challenger falls back, wincing in pain as Wright pushes off the ropes, grabbing the injured right arm from behind...]

JD: He's looking for a chickenwing! He's going for the cross-faced chicken wing!

[With an arm looped around the injured right arm, Wright reaches over with his left arm...

...but Kitzukawa plants his feet, shoving backwards to smash Wright into the turnbuckles!]

JD: Ohh! Back in the corner!

[Kitzukawa wheels around, grabbing the top rope with his left arm, and throwing a roundhouse kick into the ribcage... and again... and again... and again as the referee protests the attack in the corner.]

JD: Big kicks to the body by the challenger!

[The challenger breaks off the attack, grabbing Wright by the arm...]

JD: Irish whi- reversed!

[Kitzukawa slams into the corner as Wright barrels in after him, running up the chest of the challenger, backflipping out to the center of the ring where the challenger staggers out...

...and gets CRACKED with a rising European uppercut under the chin!]

JD: OHHHH! WHAT A SHOT!!

[The Osaka native immediately falls back to the corner, arms draped over the top rope as Wright pursues.]

JD: Wright's moving in on the cornered challenger...

BW: He's going right back after that arm.

[Grabbing the right wrist, Wright wraps the arm tightly around the top rope, smashing an elbow down on the tricep. A second and third blow land before Wright steps out to the apron, grabbing the wrist again...]

JD: Supreme Wright steps out on the apron... what's he got in mind right here?

[Wright stretches out the arm...

...and DROPS off the apron, snapping the hurting limb down over the top rope. Kitzukawa cries out, staggering back out to the middle of the ring where he drops to his knees. AWA Senior Official Johnny Jagger, out on the floor, steps in to tell Wright to get back into the ring. A few Team Supreme members lean in to pat their mentor on the back before he moves under the ropes.]

JD: Remember, fans, two officials in this one to make sure everything goes smoothly.

BW: They may need more than that with Bryant and these Team Supreme guys barking at each other.

[We cut to show the Doctor of Love trading verbal barbs with a few nearby Team Supreme members.]

JD: Bryant trading words with Team Supreme. There's certainly some history there.

[Cut back into the ring where Wright is coming in behind the kneeling Kitzukawa. He moves slowly in front of the challenger, looking down at him...]

"WHAAAAAAAAAAAAAP!"

JD: Hard kick to the chest!

[Wright backs off, measuring Kitzukawa before stepping back in.]

"WHAAAAAAAAAAAAAP!"

[He measures him again, looking out at the crowd.]

"WHAAAAAAAAAAAAAP!"

"WHAAAAAAAAAAAAAP!"

"WHAAAAAAAAAAAAAP!"

"WHAAAAAAAAAAAAAP!"

"WHAAAAAAAAAAAAAP!"

[The challenger crumples to the canvas as Wright drops to his knees, flipping him over into a lateral press.]

JD: One!! Two!!

[Up comes the shoulder, breaking the pin just in time. Wright glares at the official for a split second before swinging a leg over Kitzukawa's torso, taking the mount.]

JD: Wright's on top of him!

[The World Champion opens fire, slamming his palm down into the cheekbone of Kitzukawa. The challenger raises his arms, trying to defend himself as Wright slams palm strike after palm strike down into the head of the Osaka native.]

JD: Kitzukawa's in trouble, trying to block the- CROSS ARMBREAKER!

[The crowd roars as Wright transitions from the mount into the cross armbreaker, trying to stretch out the arm and hook in the submission hold. Wisely, Kitzukawa locks his hands together, avoiding the hyper-extension of the elbow that would likely mean the end of his title challenge.]



JD: The armbar is close to being fully locked in!

BW: Supreme Wright's showing Callum Mahoney how you hook in an armbar, daddy!

JD: I don't think even Supreme Wright would want to tangle with the Armbar Assassin in a battle of armbars, Bucky.

[Kitzukawa, feeling a sense of desperation, rolls to his side, keeping his hands clasped together as he gets his feet underneath him, rolling Wright to his shoulders.]

JD: ONE! TWO! TH-

[Wright lifts a shoulder just barely off the mat, still in the same position as he tries to keep the armbar threat in place. Kitzukawa switches positions, muscling him back on his shoulders again.]

JD: ONE! TWO! No!

[The two men continue to hold the same position, Kitzukawa trying to push the World Champion onto his shoulders while Wright tries to keep the armbar attempt in play...

...when suddenly, Kitzukawa lets loose a big shout, muscling the smaller man up into the air...]

JD: HE'S GOT HIM UP! HE'S GOT HIM UP!

[...and DRIVES Wright down to the canvas with a released powerbomb!]

JD: POWERBOMB!! POWERBOMB!!

[Kitzukawa lunges into a cover, reaching back with his injured arm to hook a leg.]

JD: ONE!! TWO!!

[Again, the shoulder flies up off the mat, breaking the pin attempt!]

BW: Kitzukawa couldn't get as much lift up on that move as he would have liked. That minimized the impact he got on the powerbomb which is why Wright is out at two instead of being a lot closer to losing the World Title right there.

JD: Excellent analysis, Bucky. He did indeed get out at two thanks to the lower lift on the powerbomb. But Kitzukawa rolls to the corner, again hanging onto that arm... trying to protect it, revive it, something!

[With Wright down on the mat and struggling to get up, Kitzukawa marches back in, booting him in the gut.]

JD: He's going for the Billion Dollar Bomb again! He hooks one arm... he hooks- no!

[Wright again spins out, gripping the arm and swinging right around into a rear hammerlock that he holds for a split second before dropping down into a legsweep, causing the challenger to fall back onto his own arm!]

JD: OHH!

[With Kitzukawa's arm trapped under him, Wright leaps up, dropping both knees down into the torso and slamming the 262 pound Kitzukawa down onto his own arm!]

JD: Double kneedrop! Unique offense out of the World Champion!

[He slips quickly from the double kneedrop back into the mount, rearing back and slamming his open palm down into the injured shoulder.]

JD: Palm strike to the right shoulder... and another one!

[Wright climbs back to his feet, stomping the shoulder several times with dangerous precision. He leans down, pulling Kitzukawa up by the arm.]

JD: The challenger's back on his feet...

BW: But for how long? He slowly turns it over in an armtwist...

[Turning his back, he JERKS the arm down over his shoulder!]

JD: Ohh! Over-the-shoulder armbreaker by Wright!

BW: He is physically dissecting the right arm of Kenta Kitzukawa who came into this match with dreams of being the World Heavyweight Champion. Right about now, he should be dreaming about being able to lift a spoon for breakfast tomorrow.

[Kitzukawa falls chestfirst into the ropes, wiggling his fingers as he drapes his arms over the top. Wright slowly approaches from behind, burying his forearm into the kidneys, causing the challenger's back to arch back. A second forearm to the back allows Wright to pull Kitzukawa off the ropes by the back of the hair.]

JD: Wright turns him around... Irish whip...

[The World Champion sets for his own backdrop but Kitzukawa is ready, dropping to his knees and slamming a forearm down on the back of Wright!]

JD: Counter by the challenger!

[The Osaka native climbs back to his feet, stepping back and throwing a brutal roundhouse kick, catching Wright on the ear. Wright falls back towards the ropes...

...falling in between the top and middle ropes, using them to catapult himself back forwards...]

JD: WHAT A-

"WHAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAACK!"

JD: LARIAT! LARIAT! WRIGHT WITH THE REBOUND LARIAT!!

[He dives atop Kitzukawa, hooking a leg...]

JD: ONE!! TWO!!! THR-

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

JD: SHOULDER UP!! MY GOD, KITZUKAWA GOT THE SHOULDER UP!!

BW: That was REAL close, Dane. Supreme Wright was a split second away from walking out of Japan as the World Champion still... a champion with two title defenses already scheduled for him in the next two months. Ricky Marley is awaiting the winner of this one on the next Saturday Night Wrestling and then whoever wins that has the Doctor of Love, the Number One Contender, Dave Bryant facing them at Memorial Day Mayhem!

JD: Wright pushes up to his knees. He looks surprised, Bucky. I think he thought he had it won with that rebound lariat.

BW: It's a helluva move, Dane. He caught Kitzukawa by surprise and nearly turned out his lights with it.

JD: Dave Bryant, you could hear him, Bucky. Bryant was shouting at Kitzukawa what was coming and the language barrier may have been a problem there for the challenger.

BW: Bryant's seen that before. Heck, he's COUNTERED it before.

JD: It was a desperation, sheer instinct counter during the Chase For The Clash tournament last fall but it was a counter that directly led to Dave Bryant defeating Supreme Wright that night.

[Wright climbs to his feet, glaring at Bryant.]

JD: I think Wright heard Bryant trying to warn Kitzukawa and he may be taking some offense at that.

BW: As well he should!

JD: Why?! Dave Bryant put himself in the corner for two reasons - to help keep Team Supreme at bay and to help give advice to the challenger to see if he can beat Wright. He's doing exactly what he said he'd do!

[A shout in Japanese is heard over the PA system.]

JD: Fifteen minutes have expired in the sixty minute time limit for this one. Relatively speaking, it's still early but this has been one heck of a brutal contest in this World Title matchup!

[Wright, still looking at Bryant, hauls Kitzukawa up off the canvas, hooking in a cravate.]

JD: Wright hooks the cravate and... ohh! Big knee!

[Bryant shouts at Wright as the World Champion lays in kneestrike after kneestrike to the head of the trapped Kitzukawa, putting him down on his knees.]

JD: He's shouting at Bryant... telling him to watch... telling him what he's going to do to him at Memorial Day Mayhem. Personally, I think he's getting ahead of himself. This one is a long way from being over.

BW: Stop trying to pretend to be neutral, Dane. We all know you're rooting for Kitzukawa here tonight because of his close relationship to your family.

JD: I can't deny that but I'm going to be as impartial as an announcer should be - present company excluded.

[Wright looks down at the kneeling Kitzukawa...]

"SLAAAAAAAAAAAAAP!"

[An open-handed slap to the ear bounces off the skull of Kitzukawa who drops his head in response.]

JD: Wright slapped him in the ear! Trying to bust up that eardrum! This guy fooled us all into thinking he was a nice guy for a real long time but now we're seeing his true colors. The kind of guy who would grab an opponent's fingers and try to break them. The kind of guy who would slap an ear and try and break the eardrum. There's such a thing as a wrestler's code and this man knows nothing of it.

BW: Oh, he knows all about it... he just doesn't give a damn if you think what he does is appropriate or not.

[A second slap connects, bouncing Kitzukawa's head to the side. Wright turns back to Bryant, again pointing at the challenger.]

JD: Supreme Wright is losing his focus a little bit here. You have to wonder if Dave Bryant is getting under his skin a touch.

BW: The man is a fighting champion the likes of which this industry has never seen and you've got people saying he's DUCKING Dave Bryant! Of course the Number One Contender is under his skin!

[Wright turns back to Kitzukawa, winding up again...

...but Kitzukawa springs to his feet, leaping up, and CRACKING Wright in the temple with a one-legged kick!]

JD: KAMENGIRI! KAMENGIRI!

[Wright dead men sells, falling to his face where Kitzukawa flips him to his back.]

JD: ONE!! TWO!!!

[The shoulder of the World Champion springs up off the mat!]

JD: No, no, no! Two count only for the challenger as he gets back up, dragging him off the mat...

[He tugs him into a front facelock, lifting Wright off the mat...

...and HANGS him out to dry, landing gutfirst on the top rope!]

JD: OH MY! WHAT A MOVE BY KENTA!!

[The challenger dashes to the far ropes, rebounding back...

...and THROWS a big high kick to the side of the head, sending Wright sailing off the apron and CRASHING down on the barely-padded floor below!]

JD: OHHHHH!! THE RUNNING HIGH KICK CLEARS OUT WRIGHT!

[Kitzukawa collapses against the ropes, breathing heavily as he looks out on Wright who is sprawled out on the floor.]

JD: Kenta Kitzukawa strings together two high impact blows that completely turns this thing around. The Japanese challenger refused to go down without a fight and he puts the champion out on the floor.

[The members of Team Supreme quickly move to support Wright, forming a human wall between he and the ring where the challenger has straightened up, shouting in Japanese at the interlopers.]

JD: Kitzukawa's telling Team Supreme to move... ordering them to get out of his way...

[With a shake of his head, Kitzukawa breaks into a sprint, hitting the far ropes. He bounces back, barreling across the ring...

...and HURLS himself between the top and middle ropes, throwing an elbow as he does so, wiping out the line of defense!]

JD: AAAAAABUUUUUNAAAAAAAI! KITZUKAWA TAKES OUT A PART OF TEAM SUPREME!!

[Kitzukawa hits the floor as Bryant cheers him from several feet away. More Team Supreme members swoop in, clearing out their fallen comrades as Supreme Wright uses the railing to get to his feet, approaching the rising challenger, and blasting him with a forearm in the jaw!]

JD: Big forearm by Wright!

[He winds up, laying in a second one as the challenger takes a step back.]

JD: Another!

[Wright rears back a third time, ready to fire...]

JD: ELBOW!

[But Kitzukawa does not fall, glaring at Wright.]

JD: You've gotta be kidding me!

[Wright fires again, bouncing an elbow off the jaw of the challenger.]

JD: No effect!

[Kitzukawa absorbs a European uppercut before throwing a palm strike to the chest, sending Wright falling back into the railing. The AWA official, Johnny Jagger, moves in to shout out his count to both men as Kitzukawa approaches, grabbing the railing with his hands to steady himself as he throws kick after kick to the torso!]

JD: Roundhouse kick to the ribs... and again... and again...

BW: Those kicks are doing some damage, Dane. You can see some discoloration on the torso of the World Heavyweight Champion as Kitzukawa continues to lay in those lethal strikes.

JD: He switches his stance... big chop!

[He gives a shout as he uncorks a barrage of chops.]

"WHAAAAAAAAAAP!"

"WHAAAAAAAAAAP!"

"WHAAAAAAAAAAP!"

"WHAAAAAAAAAAP!"

"WHAAAAAAAAAAP!"

"WHAAAAAAAAAAP!"

"WHAAAAAAAAAAP!"

"WHAAAAAAAAAAP!"  
"WHAAAAAAAAAAP!"  
"WHAAAAAAAAAAP!"

[The challenger grabs a handful of hair, shoving Wright's face down as he swings up his leg into the forehead...]

JD: Shin kicks to the skull! Over and over by the challenger!

BW: Chops, kicks, forearms! This guy's all over the champion!

[With another howl, Kitukawa drags the dazed Wright off the railing, rocketing him under the ropes. He climbs up on the apron as a Team Supreme member lunges forward, grabbing him around the leg to prevent him from getting back into the ring...]

...and the Doctor of Love dispenses some nasty medicine with a right hand to the jaw that lays out the young man on the floor! Bryant shouts at him as he scampers away, allowing the challenger to get back inside the ring!]

JD: Dave Bryant paying dividends out on the floor for the challenger!

[The challenger pulls Wright off the canvas again, tugging him into a front facelock again. He lifts Wright up into the air, holding him high...]

...and then sits out, splitting his legs and dropping Wright facefirst to the canvas!]

JD: OHHH! What a move by the challenger, rolling Wright over!

[He leans forward, grabbing a leg for an awkward pinning combination.]

JD: ONE!! TWO!!

[But Wright kicks out, still having enough left in the tank to escape.]

JD: Two count only.

BW: What kind of a cover was that?! Michaelson teach him that garbage?!

JD: Kitukawa has been through a tremendous amount of punishment in this match. I think he was just trying to avoid using that bad arm to make the cover. Unfortunately for him, it didn't pan out.

BW: You just mean "unfortunately" in general, don't you?

JD: I already admitted that I'm rooting for the challenger in my heart of hearts. What more do you want me to say, Bucky?

[The Japanese challenger climbs back to his feet, pursuing a crawling Wright as the third generation competitor looks to regroup. But the challenger is having none of it, using a handful of tights to yank him up off the mat.]

JD: As we near the twenty minute mark of this matchup, Kitzukawa is looking to put the World Champion away.

[Kitzukawa leans in, hooking both of Wright's arms behind him in a double chickenwing...

...and then LAUNCHES him through the air, again dumping him on the back of his head and neck!]

JD: TIIIIIGEEEEERRRR SUUUUUPLEX!

[Kitzukawa rolls over, crawling across the ring, and lunges into a pin attempt.]

JD: ONE!! TWO!!! T-

[The crowd groans as Wright inches a shoulder off the mat. A fired-up Kitzukawa takes the mount, grabbing a handful of cornrows and opening fire.]

JD: Big right hands from the top! He's hammering away at the World Heavyweight Champion!

BW: Those are clenched fists! Get in there, referee!

[Referee Johnny Jagger shouts at Kitzukawa from outside the ring as Masa Fujiwara does the same inside the squared circle. The count starts up, allowing the challenger to land a few more shots before breaking at the count of four.]

JD: Kitzukawa hammers him down to the canvas... but that's not going to win the World Heavyweight Title for him, Bucky.

BW: It's not but I'm sure it makes him feel better. Maybe somewhere back in Los Angeles, Todd Michaelson is watching and it's making him feel better too.

JD: Perhaps you're right but I'm betting what would really make Todd feel better is to see Kenta Kitzukawa, his first student, wearing the AWA World Heavyweight Title around his waist!

[The Japanese challenger grabs the rising Wright, tugging him into a standing headscissors.]

JD: He hooks him!

BW: He's pinned Wright with the Billion Dollar Bomb before! That's why he keeps going back to it! He knows this move can win the World Heavyweight Title for him right here in his home country!

JD: He hooks one arm... Kenta hooks the other!



BW: That's the furthest he's gotten to hitting it so far tonight!

[The challenger hoists him up for a potential match-ending maneuver...

...but Wright over rotates, flipping over to secure a bodyscissors while hooking Kobashi's head in a guillotine choke!]

JD: CHOKE! WRIGHT HOOKS A CHOKE!!

BW: We've seen him use that counter to the BDB before! Apparently Kitzukawa hasn't done his homework as well as Supreme Wright has! But who would be surprised at that when your cornerman is Dave Bryant?!

[Bryant grabs the middle rope, shouting instructions to Kitzukawa who struggles under the sudden submission hold application.]

JD: Kitzukawa's trapped in the center of the ring! Wright's got that chokehold in deep!

BW: And how horrible would it be for Kitzukawa to get choked out in the middle of the Tokyo Dome in this match? For Supreme Wright to end this night standing over an unconscious Kitzukawa?

JD: The challenger is fighting it, flailing at the ribs and back of Wright, trying to batter his way free!

BW: He's going to need more than that! Wright's teeth are clenched and so are his arms! He's got this on TIGHT, Dane!

[A desperation Kitzukawa walks across the ring with Wright, heading towards the corner with him.]

JD: He's gonna try and ram Wright into the corner and- ohh! Into the buckles he puts the champion!

[But Wright hangs on, shaking his head as he keeps the hold applied!]

BW: He couldn't break it! The hold is locked in deep!

JD: The challenger is running out of time right here!

[Kitzukawa backs up, getting more momentum behind a second slam back into the corner...]

JD: Again he puts him into the turnbuckles!

BW: But again, Supreme Wright refuses to break that chokehold! He's going to chokeout the challenger in front of all of his home country fans! This is awesome!

JD: Kitzukawa backs off again... one more shot here...

[The challenger pauses, planting his feet...

...and then takes Wright up and over, putting him down with a Northern Lights Suplex!]

JD: COUNTER BY KITZUKAWA!

[But the crowd buzzes as Wright clings onto the hold, rolling through the suplex to retake his feet, still holding the choke...

...and SUPLEXES Kitzukawa down to the canvas with the chokehold!]

JD: OHHH! What a tremendous counter by the World Champion!

BW: A suplex JUST using the neck. Imagine the strain and pressure put on the neck with a move like that.

JD: Usually, Wright rolls through that move, keeping the chokehold applied from a mounted position but this time, he lets go. I think it took a lot of out of him getting the 262 pounder over in that suplex.

[Both men lie motionless on the canvas for a bit, breathing heavily as the referee starts a double count.]

JD: Both champion and challenger are down after that exchange. Both men hurt. Both men weary. Both men desperately searching for a way to keep the fight going and to walk out of the Tokyo Dome as the World Heavyweight Champion.

BW: And the longer this match goes, the bigger the smile is on the faces of Ricky Marley and Percy Childes.

JD: You're absolutely right about that. "Showtime" Rick Marley is lying in wait, looking to become the World Heavyweight Champion in just a matter of days at this point.

[The crowd is clapping for the two combatants, trying to inspire the grapplers to get back to their feet and continue the fight. As the referee's count reaches six, the World Champion is the first to stir, falling back into the ropes as he waves for the challenger to regain his feet.]

JD: Supreme Wright is experiencing the toughest fight of his championship reign to date in my opinion, Bucky.

BW: That's right. He's a stranger in a strange land and there's 40,000 screaming maniacs in this building who would love to see their hero keep the gold here in Japan.

[The challenger pushes up to a knee at the count of eight. Wright nudges himself off the ropes, wobbling forward. He hooks the arm, stretching it out in front of him...

...and DROPS the challenger with a single-arm DDT!]

JD: AHH!

BW: That's how you separate a shoulder in a hurry!

JD: He might've done exactly that as Kenta immediately rolls to his back, clutching his right shoulder as Wright... he's going for an armbar!

[Wright grabs the wrist, looping his legs around the arm and falling back into another cross armbreaker attempt.]

JD: He's going for the cross armbreaker! Kitzukawa powerbombed out of this earlier!

BW: Not this time! Wright's got him!

JD: Not yet he doesn't! The challenger still has his hands locked together! He's still managing to find a way to avoid this submission hold. Can he keep fighting it though? Can he-

[Wright takes one hand off of Kenta's wrist, slamming the heel of his hand into the bridge of the challenger's nose a few times.]

JD: Wright's trying to break off the defense!

[Suddenly, a hard yank breaks the grip, forcing Kitzukawa back into the cross armbreaker!]

BW: That's it! Ring the bell!

JD: He's got it locked in! He's got the arm stretched out, trying to hyper-extend the elbow!

[Kitzukawa cries out in pain at having his arm bent back, trying to find an escape as he stretches out for the ropes first with his free hand and then with his legs.]

JD: He's trying to get to the ropes but no dice!

[The challenger immediately slips his legs under him, pushing him off the mat to his feet. He leans down, clutching his other hand...]

BW: You've gotta be kidding me! AGAIN?!

JD: He's going for the powerbomb again! He's trying to power his way out of this punishing hold!

[With a mighty roar, Kitzukawa lifts the challenger up, higher than before, ready to drive him down and break the hold...]

...when in mid-lift, Wright switches the position of his legs, scissoring them around the head and neck of the challenger, figuring fouring them...]

BW: What the-?!

JD: TRIANGLE CHOKE!! TRIANGLE CHOKE!!

[The crowd ROARS at the swift switch of submission holds as Wright slams his elbow down into the skull, trying to force a submission out of the challenger who stumbles forward, lunging...

...and gets Wright over the ropes, harmlessly falling down onto the elevated platform as Kitzukawa collapses down to his knees!]

JD: He broke it! The challenger breaks the hold!

BW: Wright almost broke his arm! That was REAL close to being over, Dane.

JD: It certainly was but a desperation dive by the challenger keeps his title dreams alive... for now at least.

[Wright climbs up off the ramp, reaching over the ropes...]

JD: What in the world?

[The crowd buzzes as Wright secures a front facelock, slinging Kitzukawa's bad arm over his neck...]

JD: He's going for a suplex out on the ramp!

BW: Why? There's no need for that! Just grab the arm, bend it over something, and then finish this! This is an unnecessary risk!

JD: I'm not sure what Wright is hoping to accomplish here. Perhaps he's tired of having his submission holds countered and he wants to take all of the fight out of the challenger in one shot!

BW: I hate to admit it but that's a damn good point, Dane. Every time he sinks in an armbar, Kitzukawa is finding a way to counter it. Maybe Wright wants to make sure that the next time he hooks on a hold, it's over!

JD: He's setting up for this suplex on the ramp... can he get the man up?

[Gritting his teeth, Wright sets his feet, gives a shout of effort...]

"THUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUD!"

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

JD: SUPLEX! SUPLEX OVER THE TOP ON THE WOODEN RAMP!!

[Again, both men lie flat on their backs, this time out on the elevated platform. The chests of both champion and challenger are heaving, pulling

air into their bodies as they struggle to get enough strength left in their bodies to continue the fight.]

JD: Both men are down. That took a lot out of Supreme Wright but you can believe it took a lot more out of Kenta Kitukawa.

[A handful of Team Supreme members take up flanking positions on either side of the ramp, slapping their palms down against the wood in rhythm, trying to cheer their leader back to his feet. Cain Jackson is one of these men, his strikes a bit more impactful than those surrounding him.]

JD: Team Supreme is trying to rally the World Heavyweight Champion up to his feet... trying to inspire him to get up and continue the battle.

[Wright slowly regains his feet as referee Johnny Jagger steps up on the wooden steps leading up to the top of the ramp, shouting for the World Champion to get the action back inside the ring. The champion shakes his head, dragging the challenger up off the ramp.]

JD: The referee wants Wright to put him back in but Wright's having none of that, lifting the challenger up onto his shoulders...

BW: He's looking for Fat Tuesday out on the ramp! Fat Tuesday which has defeated countless opponents in the past-

JD: He slips out!

[The struggling challenger slips free, shoving Wright into the ropes from behind...

...and dropping him with a roundhouse kick to the side of the head on the rebound, dumping Wright back down to his knees on the ramp!]

JD: HIGH KICK BY THE CHALLENGER!

[Kitukawa looks down at Wright, throwing a back kick to the chin that puts Wright down on his back...

...and suddenly, the challenger turns his back on Wright, walking back up the lengthy entrance ramp.]

JD: What in the world? Where is he going?

BW: He's had enough! He's calling it a night!

JD: I highly doubt that, Bucky. The challenger though is walking down this long entrance ramp here in the Tokyo Dome, a walkway that dwarfs ours back in Dallas in the Crockett Coliseum with ease.

BW: Seriously, where is he going?

[A quick cut shows a puzzled Dave Bryant looking on, watching in disbelief as the challenger heads towards the exit of the building. He stops a few yards short of the v-shaped platform. He pauses, taking deep breaths as he throws his arms up into the air..

...and with a roar, he leans over to slam his hands down on the ramp!]

JD: What in the...?

[The challenger suddenly whips around and with a shout, he starts charging down the ramp towards the ring...]

JD: Oh my god! Oh my god!

[He sprints, his legs pumping rapidly as he runs the long distance that he just walked, his eyes locked on the rising Supreme Wright...]

JD: KITZUKAWA DOWN THE LENGTH OF THE RAMP...

[...and absolutely CREAMS Wright with a running clothesline as he reaches him, taking him over the ropes and back into the ring!]

JD: ...AND LAYS OUT THE WORLD CHAMPION WITH THE DAMNDEST CLOTHESLINE I'VE EVER SEEN!

[The crowd is ROARING for the showmanship as Kenta Kitukawa steps through the ropes into the ring. Dave Bryant is beaming at ringside, clapping for his newfound ally as the Japanese challenger pumps an arm to the ceiling, grasping at the air as he pumps the arm over and over and over, watching Supreme Wright as he struggles to get off the canvas.]

JD: He's waiting for him to get up! He's measuring his man!

[As Wright struggles to a knee, Kitukawa races to the far ropes, rebounding back at top speed...]

JD: LAAAAARIAAAAATOOOOOO!

[...but a desperate Wright comes up swinging, throwing a high kick that catches the arm flush, sending Kitukawa spinning away. He grabs at his arm, slowly turning back...]

JD: OHHHHHHH!

[...right into a Sudakov-like high kick to the head, dropping the challenger down to his knees!]

JD: What a roundhouse kick to the side of the head!

BW: We've seen the armbar from Mahoney and the high kick from Sudakov. You think Supreme Wright wasn't watching that Shoot Fight earlier tonight?

[With Kenta down on his knees, Wright turns...

...and points a finger straight at Dave Bryant who looks confused...]

JD: What's he-?

"WHAAAAAAAAAAAAACK!"

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

JD: SUPERKICK! SUPERKICK TO THE KNEELING KENTA!

BW: That's how Bryant beat him last year!

[Wright looks at Bryant again who is absolutely fuming as Wright drops to his knees, applying a lateral press.]

JD: ONE!! TWO!! TH-

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

JD: SHOULDER UP! KENTA KITZUKAWA GETS THE SHOULDER UP!!

[Wright looks more than a bit surprised as he pushes up off the mat, looking at Masa Fujiwara who holds up two fingers again. He turns to Johnny Jagger who is also holding up two fingers. A call goes out over the PA system.]

JD: Thirty minutes gone by! We've hit the halfway point in this tremendous battle between two of the very best in the entire wrestling world!

[Wright climbs to his feet, glaring down at Kitzukawa who is still down on the canvas. He leans down, pulling the challenger off the mat. He straightens him up, sizing him up...

...and BLASTS him in the jaw with an elbow strike, sending the challenger falling back into the turnbuckles.]

JD: What a shot!

[Seeing the blow fell Kitzukawa, Wright moves in for more.]

JD: Another elbow... and another!

[Switching his stance, he throws a series of skin-splitting chops instead.]

JD: Kitzukawa is being hammered in the corner by the champion.

BW: And he's feeling them now! Earlier tonight, he might've had the adrenaline to suck that down and not feel these blows but right now, he's reeling with every shot the World Champion hits him with.

[Grabbing the challenger by the back of the head, Wright tees off with a brutal series of a half dozen European uppercuts, leaving the challenger drained in the corner.]

JD: He's having his way with the challenger right now, firing him from corner to corner...

[Wright backs into the buckles, taking a few deep breaths before he tears across the ring, throwing a running European uppercut up under the chin, taking Kenta off his feet!]

JD: Good grief! What an uppercut by Wright!

[Pulling the challenger back up, Wright sends him across again, charging in after him...]

JD: Another big uppercut in the corner!

BW: Kitzukawa's out on his feet, Dane!

JD: It certainly looks that way. Is he going to do it again?!

[Wright lifts a finger to indicate "one more time" as he grabs his challenger by the arm, whipping him out...

...to full arm extension where he yanks him back into a bodylock, popping his hips and HURLING Kitzukawa into the turnbuckles with an overhead belly-to-belly!]

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

JD: HE THROWS HIM INTO THE CORNER!!

BW: That's gotta be it, Dane!

JD: We may be about to find out.

[Wright gives Kenta a slight tug, moving him from the corner as he makes a pin attempt.]

JD: ONE!! TWO!!! THR-

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

JD: MY GOD! HE KICKED OUT! HE KICKED OUT!

[Wright rolls to his rear end, staring with disbelief at the referee who holds up two fingers.]

JD: With less than a half count remaining, Kenta Kitzukawa called on some of that fighting spirit to lift a shoulder off the mat! Supreme Wright was as



close as you can get to retaining the title without actually getting that victory.

[The champion regains his feet, turning to pull Kitzukawa off the mat. He promptly grabs an arm...]

JD: He's going for the cobra clutch!

[The crowd gasps at the sight of the Cobra Clutch Crossface being applied but the challenger DRIVES backwards, smashing Wright back into the turnbuckles!]

JD: Kenta just saved himself!

BW: Not a soul has managed to escape the Cobra Clutch Crossface!

JD: That's right, Bucky. And if that hold is applied here in Tokyo, you can bet we're going to see Kenta Kitzukawa unconscious in the center of that ring!

BW: Unless...

JD: What?

BW: Well... if there's a counter for that hold, wouldn't you think that Michaelson's prize student might know it?

JD: I... wow. I have to say that never occurred to me, Bucky.

BW: I got one more for ya, Dane.

JD: What's that?

BW: Michaelson only teaches that hold to his most special students, right?

JD: Right.

BW: Ya never forget your first, Dane.

[Kitzukawa throws a trio of back elbows to the side of Wright's head, still trapping him against the turnbuckles. He turns slightly, throwing a left-handed chop that echoes throughout the Dome. The exertion of delivering the blow weakens the challenger who leans against Wright, keeping him in place before delivering a second.]

JD: Big chops in the corner by the challenger!

[The challenger switches his stance again, grabbing Wright by the arm.]

JD: Irish whi-

[But Wright pulls up, gripping the whipping arm in his hand...

...and VIOLENTLY twisting the arm, taking the challenger down hard with an armwringer!]

JD: OHH! The armwringer right back on the right arm and he takes him down to the mat with it!

[Wright straddles the back of Kitzukawa, pulling the arm back under his armpit and settling into a back-mounted straddle armbar.]

JD: He's going right back after the arm, the same limb he's tormented throughout this battle!

[Wright shouts "ASK HIM!" at the official who kneels down, checking to see if the challenger wants to submit.]

JD: Kitzukawa is shaking his head no... refusing to give up on his dream of becoming the World Heavyweight Champion and avenging his teacher!

[Wright yanks the arm hard, causing Kitzukawa to grimace, grabbing at his shoulder with the free hand as he kneels on the canvas. The World Champion looks out on the crowd, sweat pouring down his upper body as he tries to force a submission out of the Japanese people's favorite son.]

JD: Wright again asking the official to check for a submission... but no, the challenger continues to hang on.

BW: His arm is probably being held together with Play-Doh and Rubber Cement right now, Dane.

JD: An odd combination but the point is valid. Kenta Kitzukawa again screams a refusal to give it up...

[Wright pulls out of the hold, planting his knee against the shoulder joint, and then riding the arm down, DRIVING it into the canvas!]

JD: Good grief! Another punishing attack on the arm!

[He climbs to his feet, watching as Kitzukawa again pulls the arm under him, trying to shield it from further attacks. Wright walks around the weary challenger, wiping his own brow with the back of his arm as he ponders his next assault.]

JD: No wasted movement here. Wright will not strike until he knows exactly what's coming next.

BW: And likely what's coming after that... and after that... and after-

JD: We get the point.

BW: Hey, don't get testy with me just 'cause your boy is losing.

JD: Kenta Kitzukawa is NO ONE'S "boy." He is a man, a professional wrestler, a champion, and a warrior. And on this night, he'd love to add the words "World Heavyweight Champion" to that list. But can he do it? Can he find a way to overcome the assault on his arm that he's taken here tonight? Can he find a way to put Supreme Wright's shoulders down for a three count?

[Wright leans down, hauling Kitzukawa off the canvas by the back of the green and white trunks. Again, he slips his arm through, looking to secure the Cobra Clutch. Dave Bryant starts shouting "NOW! NOW!" at the challenger, surprising Wright who pauses...

...and gets whipped up and over by the arm!]

JD: OH MY STARS!

BW: Just like Bryant did to Wright last year!

[Wright scrambles up, full of piss and vinegar, embarrassed by getting caught with the same counter a second time...]

JD: LAAAAAARIAAAAAATOooooooooo!

[The HUUUUUGE lariat connects, flipping Wright to the side. Kitzukawa drops to the mat, howling in pain as he grabs at the right arm he just used to deliver the blow. Bryant can be heard SCREAMING at his charge.]

JD: Bryant's shouting for him to cover Wright... to pin the World Champion!

BW: He can't do it! He instinctively used the right arm to deliver that high impact lariat and he hurt himself too badly to make the cover. Bryant's screams are useless right now, Dane!

JD: You may be right. Both men are down. Kitzukawa is grabbing that arm, in horrific pain with every movement he makes. After thirty-five plus minutes of having his arm twisted, bent, slammed, and assaulted in every which way, Kenta Kitzukawa can NOT take advantage of the lariat right there!

[Kitzukawa sits up on the mat, wincing in pain as he scoots to the ropes, using his left arm to drag himself off the mat. He leans against the ropes, looking down at Wright who has rolled over to his stomach, trying to push up off the mat.]

JD: Wright's still down... and look at Kenta!

[The crowd cheers as Kenta slaps himself across the face with his left hand.]

JD: He's trying to fire himself up!

[A second slap lands, leaving a red welt behind as Kitzukawa's entire body begins to shake with intensity.]

JD: Kitzukawa is trying to find the strength for one more run... one more surge... one more effort to put the World Heavyweight Title around his waist and do his mentor... his teacher... his father proud here tonight in the Tokyo Dome!

[One final slap, this one delivered with the pain-wrecked right arm, causes Kitzukawa's eyes to go wide. He marches across the ring, yanking Wright up off the mat, tugging him into the standing headscissors again...]

JD: He hooks one arm!

[Big cheer!]

JD: He hooks the other arm!

[Bigger cheer!]

JD: HE LIF-

[But Wright is able to jerk both arms out of the grip, grabbing the legs of the challenger, yanking them out, and flipping over into a double leg cradle!]

JD: CRADLE! CRADLE! ONE!! TWO!! THRE-

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

JD: BY GOD, HE WAS A HALF A COUNT AWAY FROM VICTORY BUT KITZUKAWA REFUSES TO LOSE! ABSOLUTELY REFUSES TO LOSE!

BW: That's the same counter Stevie Scott used against him in the World Title Tournament. He knows how effective it can be and he saved it for the perfect time to almost seal this match!

JD: He came so close... so very close... but it wasn't enough!

[Both men try to beat the other up, scrambling to get off the mat...

...but it's Wright who is the first one there, connecting with a pair of forearm uppercuts!]

JD: Wright goes right back with those European uppercuts, rocking the challenger...

[...who fires back with a forearm shot to the jaw!]

JD: Oh! Kenta returns fire!

BW: How the heck is even standing?!

JD: I just don't know!

[Wright throws an elbow to the jaw...

...and Kenta hits one of his own!]

JD: They're trading shots in the center of the ring... ohh! Big elbow by Wright...

[The blow spins Kenta around, allowing him to land a spinning back chop to the side of Wright's neck!]

JD: OHH!

[Kenta advances, grabbing a handful of hair...]

JD: FOREARM! ANOTHER! A THIRD!

[Wright slaps the hand away, grabbing a cravate.]

JD: KNEE! ANOTHER! A THIRD!

BW: This is nuts!

[The crowd rises to their collective feet, cheering on the exchange as the two men continue to trade blows - forearm for forearm, elbow for elbow, chop for chop, kneestrike for kneestrike.]

JD: Wright hooks him... ohh! Headbutt!

[Kenta staggers back, then throws himself forward into a Mongolian chop, hitting the sides of Wright's neck! Wright spins around, burying a rolling sole butt into the midsection...]

"SLAAAAAAAAAAAAAP!"

JD: A slap across the ear again!

[Wright stands over Kenta who staggers back. He grabs at the side of his head as the World Champion approaches...]

"SLAAAAAAAAAAAAAP!"

JD: OHH! KENTA FIRES BACK!

[This time, it's Wright who staggers back, grabbing at his ear.]

JD: They continue to stand and fight! These fans in the Tokyo Dome are going nuts!

[Wright moves back in, cracking him with an elbow on the jaw. Kitzukawa throws an elbow in response.]

JD: Elbow for elbow... one after another...

[The two men stand in the center of the ring, teeing off with elbow after elbow after elbow.]

Soon, it becomes a blur of motion as they're throwing hard, impactful blows at a ridiculous pace!]

JD: IT'S DEAFENING HERE IN TOKYO!!

[Kenta lands a shot... big cheer.]

JD: Kenta connects again!

[Wright lands a shot... big cheer.]

JD: Wright fires back!

[With the crowd roaring, Kenta echoes their roar, throwing a lightning quick one-two-three-four combo of elbow strikes to the side of the head, staggering the World Champion...

...and spinning to throw a thrust kick into the sternum, knocking Wright back into the ropes where he ducks between the top and middle rope.]

JD: REBOUND LAAAAAAAAARIAAAAAA-

[But Kitukawa ducks the blow that might finish the match, cocking back his left arm...]

JD: LAAAAAARIAAAAAAAAAAATOOOOOOOOO!

[The left-handed lariat was delivered with so much impact, Wright did a full flip in the air before crashing down to the mat. Kitukawa pushes back up, throwing his arms apart in a "IT'S OVER!" gesture as he yanks Wright up, tugging him into a standing headscissors.]

JD: He's going for it again! Can he finally land the move he's fought all match for?!

BW: Counter it! Get out!

JD: He hooks one arm...

[Big cheer!]

JD: He hooks the other!

[Kitukawa gives a deafening shout as he muscles Wright up into the air, flips him over, and sits out in a spine-shaking Tiger Driver.]

JD: BILLION! DOLLAR! BOMB!!

[Holding the legs, Kitzukawa fights to keep the pin on as the referee dives to the mat.]

JD: ONE!! TWO!!! THREEEEEEEEEEE-

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

JD: OH MY GOD! OH MY GOD! WRIGHT KICKED OUT! WRIGHT KICKED OUT!

[Kitzukawa collapses to his side, his arms covering up his face in frustration as he falls back to the mat.]

JD: The challenger thought he had him! I thought he had him! The WORLD thought he had him but Supreme Wright refuses to lose! Supreme Wright refuses to stay down for a three count!

BW: How in the world did the kid do it, Dane? These two have been tearing each other apart for nearly forty minutes and somehow, somehow they keep fighting.

JD: It's the World Heavyweight Title! It'll drive your body beyond the limits you thought you had. For Kenta Kitzukawa, he has fought his entire career for this moment... for this opportunity... and if he loses tonight, you have to wonder if he'll ever get another chance at it.

BW: Supreme Wright thought he should've been the FIRST AWA World Champion and there were a whole lot of people who agreed with him. You want to talk about someone who knows about how hard you have to scratch, claw, and fight to become the World Champion and about a man who is willing to do ANYTHING to stay that way, you're looking at him!

[A dazed Kitzukawa climbs to his feet, looking at the official in disbelief as he drags Wright off the canvas, turning him away from him.]

JD: He's got the World Champion up, turning him the other way. What is he...?

[The crowd ROARS!]

JD: COBRA CLUTCH!

BW: Oh my god!

JD: He's got it hooked! Could he be going for the Crossface?! Did Todd Michaelson teach him the most dangerous hold in all of professional wrestling?! Could he-

[Wright suddenly grabs the injured wrist with both hands, yanking hard as he swings out of the hold...

...and RIPS Kitzukawa into a brutal European uppercut!]

JD: OHHHH! WHAT A SHOT!

BW: But the challenger's still standing!

[Kitzukawa stumbles and staggers but stays on his feet, shaking his head as Wright backs off, goes into a spin...

...and lets loose a hellacious yell as he absolutely OBLITERATES a stunned Kitzukawa with a discus European uppercut!]

JD: OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!

BW: That's it, Dane! He's out!

JD: We've thought that many, many times before! Can the challenger rise up and continue the fight one... more... time?!

[An overzealous Combat Corner member leaps up on the apron to celebrate the blow...

...but gets YANKED down by Dave Bryant who shoves the kid away and...]

"WHAAAAAAAAAACK!"

JD: CALL ME IN THE MORNING OUT ON THE FLOOR!!

[Bryant turns to celebrate his big move...

...and nearly gets cut IN HALF by a monstrous spear tackle from Cain Jackson!]

JD: OHHH! JACKSON TAKES OUT BRYANT!!

[A staggered Supreme Wright pushes up off the mat, in a daze as he looks out to ringside...

...and locks eyes with his grandfather, the legendary Roosevelt Wright.]

JD: What's he-?!

[Wright quickly leans down, grabbing his opponent's arm. He slips Kitzukawa's right wrist under his left armpit, sitting down across the shoulderblades, and uses his left hand to grab the tricep of the challenger, pulling back. The crowd instantly ROARS in recognition.]

JD: That's his grandfather's legacy! The patented submission hold of Roosevelt Wright!

[A quick cut to the aforementioned grandfather shows him on his feet, looking on with great anticipation to see if his grandson can force the submission.]



JD: The fans are on their feet! Long-time Japanese wrestling fans have seen this hold finish off countless matches here in Japan! Are they about to see another one end the same way? The arm is trapped, the limb is in excruciating pain!

BW: Kitukawa's trying to hang on! He's trying to find a way to survive. His arm may be seriously injured already so he may not be willing to give up his chance at the World Title easily!

JD: Wright is cranking back, looking for the submission...

[Not getting one right away, Wright climbs to his feet, lacing his feet over Kenta Kitukawa's...

...and falls back, arching the challenger into a bow-and-arrow version of his grandfather's patented submission!]

JD: AHHHHH!

[The Japanese challenger hangs on, fighting. He grits his teeth, shaking his head back and forth insistently at the referee...

...and then finally slaps his hand on the mat three times.]

"DING! DING! DING!"

JD: He gave up! Kitukawa had no choice but to give up to that devastating submission hold!

[We cut outside the ring where Dave Bryant was being held up by two Team Supreme members, each holding an arm. A third was holding his hair, forcing him to watch Kitukawa's submission.]

JD: And of course, those jackals in Team Supreme were there to make sure that Dave Bryant didn't miss a moment of it. Supreme Wright has retained the World Championship in the middle of the Tokyo Dome in perhaps the greatest match I've ever had the pleasure of calling, Bucky.

BW: It was one heckuva match... one heckuva fight... and in the end, one heckuva win for the World Champion. Who can deny that Supreme Wright is the best professional wrestler in the world today after that victory, Dane? Who?

JD: It won't be me, that's for sure. He is holding the AWA World Heavyweight Title and in my eyes, that makes you the best. But if you had any question going into this match if Wright was better than the best that Japan has to offer, that question has been answered and answered convincingly.

BW: Ricky Marley. Dave Bryant. Both of 'em gotta be wondering right now if they can find a way to beat Supreme Wright and become the World

Heavyweight Champion. They've both got their shots comin' up... but do they have enough to beat the champ? I just don't know, Dane.

JD: Dave Bryant has done it before. He's beaten Supreme Wright before.

BW: Yeah, but that wasn't a Supreme Wright with a World Title to defend. It's a whole different beast now.

JD: But what about Rick Marley? Or more importantly, what about the Wise Men? What role will the Wise Men play in that match between Marley and Wright on the next Saturday Night Wrestling? Will they be able to resist having the World Title under their control? And if they can't resist, is there ANYONE who can stand up to them?

[The camera cuts to ringside where a clapping Roosevelt Wright is approached by his grandson who pulls his elder into an embrace.]

JD: The World Champion has done it. He's remained the champion here in hostile territory - something many thought he just wouldn't be able to do.

[A cut to the canvas shows Dave Bryant kneeling next to Kenta Kitazawa who is sitting up against the ropes, cradling his right arm against his chest.]

JD: It was a tremendous effort... an unbelievable effort by the challenger who walked into the Tokyo Dome with championship dreams here tonight but came up just a little bit short, Bucky.

BW: He's got nothing to be ashamed of... except for giving up!

JD: Who could blame him for giving up? That arm was on the verge of breaking if it hadn't already. There was a risk of serious, permanent injury and... well, he did what had to be done. I don't blame him and I'm sure none of these fans do either.

[Wright climbs the steps up on the ramp, joined by Cain Jackson and other Team Supreme members as he stares back with cold, dead eyes into the ring at Dave Bryant who has risen to his feet to glare at the World Champion. Wright slowly raises the title belt into the air.]

JD: As of right now, that's your Memorial Day Mayhem Main Event, fans. But will Rick Marley be able to upset that apple cart? We will find out in the very near future. A tremendous battle but we're not done yet. Tonight, we've seen many surprising moments, and one of the most shocking moments was the AWA debut of Brian James. No one was expecting the son of the legendary Casey James to make an appearance tonight. And no one at all could have predicted that the makeshift team of Michael Aarons and Brian James would go on to defeat the Blonde Bombers. But that's just what happened. And now, this new team finds themselves in the Finals of the Stampede Cup. A team no one even heard of before tonight could win it all!

BW: You wanna know what I think? I think there's no justice to be found in Japan! We should have seen the epic confrontation between Blonde Bombers

and Violence Unlimited! We should have seen one of those two teams take on the Lights Out Express in the finals of the greatest tournament of all! Instead we have to... ugh, see these two dumb kids come out. The only good thing about that is knowing that Morton and Haynes are going give them the beating of a lifetime and become the first team to ever win the Stampede Cup twice!

JD: There are plenty of people who feel the same way, Bucky, but be that as it may, Colt Patterson is backstage with these two young competitors. Colt, take it away!

[Cut to backstage, where Colt Patterson stands, microphone in hand. On his right hand side is Michael Aarons, worn out, hair drenched in sweat and wet down wearing a fresh Combat Corner tee shirt and his same wrestling attire from earlier. Brian James, however, is not on the left. Instead, the young, lanky James is pacing back and forth, letting out periodic howls of energetic delight.]

CP: Dane, I consider it a personal insult that the powers that be saddled me with these two instead of a pair of real men like VU. But I'm a professional and I'll do my job. Michael Aarons, how is your regular partner doing?

MA: Well Colt, Strictly Business managed to make a bad situation even worse and they're going to get theirs but Cody's being checked out again to make sure his ribs aren't cracked. He isn't cleared to wrestle even though he's tried several times to convince the docs otherwise.

CP: Now, if I could just get a word with your partner. Brian...

[It takes Brian a moment to stop pacing back and forth. Lots of energy in this kid. Finally, Brian turns and moves right up next to Patterson. Maybe a bit too much in his personal space.]

BJ: First off, Mr. Patterson, you're a real legend, and I would be honored if you'd shake my hand.

[Ever eager, Brian thrusts his hand out. Patterson isn't quite sure what to make of the amped up Brian, but tentatively holds his hand out, only to find it pumped up and down vigorously.]

BJ: Thank you so much! And now, first, let me just say...

YEEEEEEEEEEEEAAAAAAHHHHHHH!!!

[That word comes out as another howl from Brian, and ends with a giant, goofy grin.]

BJ: It feels soooo good to be here tonight! And to be standing right next to my good friend, Michael Aarons. Michael and I? We knew each other really

well in the Combat Corner. Michael was a bit ahead of me, but he always watched out for me. It feels so good to be here to help him out tonight.

I don't like what happened to Cody. It makes me sick to my stomach. And you better believe that I'm going to be watching eagerly when Michael and Cody take out those two no good, dirty...

[Brian's face contorts angrily.]

BJ: ...Jerks!

[The way he says that, you'd think he said something a lot worse.]

BJ: In Strictly Business. But until then, Michael, thank you so, so very much for letting me watch your back tonight. But Strictly Business is for another day. Strictly Business, you two jerks, you already got beaten by Cody and Michael once. And when Cody is all healed up? Its going to happen a second time. And a third time. Heck, I wouldn't be surprised if they beat you ten times in one night!

I'm here because one of my Combat Corner brothers should be here, and because my other Combat Corner brother needed me. And whatever happens, I'll be there for you, always, Michael.

MA: Hey Bri, don't thank me man. Its because of you I even have a back left to watch. I honestly didn't know what I was going to do going in against the former Champions of the world. But if a man's got to go down, he's gonna go down fighting. And Bri here, he's a man who knows that, but it was what Todd Michaelson taught us. Its what my partner in crime Cods believes in. And I wasn't going to let either of them down.

[Patterson turns back to Brian James.]

CP: What are you even DOING here in Japan? I'm told you weren't scheduled to debut for a few more weeks still.

BJ: Well, it's a funny story. See, I was invited here to Japan by one of the men who helped train me in the Combat Corner. I'm talking about the man who just took the World Champion to the limit, Kenta Kitazawa. Kitazawa-san asked me if I would be his sparring partner in his pre-match warm up. And of course I agreed. And that's all I would have done, if it weren't for Strictly Business. But like I already said, I wasn't going to let those sore losers get away with taking away something my friends have earned.

[Patterson nods.]

CP: You two got incredibly lucky in knocking off the World Tag Team Champions when Kenny Stanton broke his arm. But in just a few minutes, you're going to face the near unstoppable duo of Violence Unlimited. And if I'm being honest with you two, what chance do you think you actually have against them? You two have to be feeling like the lambs led to the

slaughter. You may think this is the opportunity of a lifetime but you're facing nearly impossible odds!

MA: Lambs?

[Aarons turns towards James.]

MA: Hey Bri, are we lambs?

[Brian James shakes his head as he continues to pace.]

MA: I didn't think so. You see lambs are these cute little, defenseless creatures, Colt. And I mean... yes, I'm cute and everything; but Bri and I, we intend to fight. Unstoppable? Legends? Awesome force? Snazzy dressers? Large vocabularies? All may be true. Just don't be naming them the winner to a fight they haven't won yet!

BJ: Can I just add something?

I know what everyone is thinking. How are two young kids, who've never teamed up before, going to defeat a decorated, legendary tag team? How do two non-partners take on a duo who've had years worth of experience teaming together? What does some thrown together team do against multi time champions who've held belts all over the world? You want to know what I say to that?

I say we already did it once tonight!

Whatever you can say about Violence Unlimited, you can say about the Blonde Bombers! Heck, the last time they were in Japan, the Bombers beat VU! Yeah, its true, VU is a legendary tag team! They got the size, the experience, they have everything. But what I got, and what Michael's got?

Its heart, and you can't measure that.

And the bond that VU has? All those years of working together? All that being able to read each other's mind stuff? You want to talk about a bond? You try coming to the Combat Corner with nothing but the clothes in your gym bag. You try spending all day on a sweaty mat in a hot gym, pushing yourself to the limit, with nothing but other guys who are just as hungry and just as sore as you, and you see what kind of bond forms. We're both of us Combat Corner kids, and just because you never saw them on television or in an arena, don't think that doesn't mean we didn't go through wars together.

No one saw us coming, and now, everyone can see us do it! And that's just what's going to happen, isn't it? You see this?

[Brian thrusts his arm out.]

BJ: Look at my arm, Mr. Patterson! Do you see that?

[The camera zooms in on Brian's arm. Goosebumps cover it.]

BJ: We are one win away! One. Win. Away. Michael and I? We could win the Stampede Cup! And if we do. If we scale that mountain. If we win that Cup?

Cody, brother, this one is for you!

Now, Michael, you ready to do this?

[Brian looks over at Aarons, the lanky young man starting to bounce up and down when he isn't moving back and forth, building up energy.]

MA: Ready. Willing. And able. We're going to do this for Cody. We're going to do this for Todd. But we're going to do this for ourselves as well. It may not be what anyone was expecting but its what's here and now!

And if the Bombers can beat Violence Unlimited in Japan, then the two of us, the two who beat the Bombers have just as much shot as anyone! We may not be Air Strike but we've got Air (points at himself) and we've got Strike (points at James).

We got the high fly...

We got the Muay Thai...

We got the death defy...

We go the never-say-die...

We got two people who don't know the word quit and all that other stuff just don't mean...

[Aarons pauses and smirks at his new partner.]

MA: ...a thing.

[With that, Aarons holds out his fist for a fist bump exchange with James. Overeager, James slams his fist into Aarons and runs off towards the entrance leaving Aarons shaking his hand as he follows him out.]

CP: It may not be Air Strike but up next against Violence Unlimited it will certainly be a fight! Let's go hear from the team looking to become the very first two-time Stampede Cup winners!

[Cut to the backstage area, where we see Violence Unlimited. Jackson Haynes is dressed in his tri-cornered beat-up looking cowboy hat and red Confederate flag-style wrestling tights. Beside him is his tag team partner, Danny Morton, in his standard red wrestling trunks, standing still for once. Haynes removes his hat, placing it over his heart, with a somber look on his weathered face.]

JH: Three years ago, I made the mistake of showin' a man compassion inside a wrasslin' ring.

[His grip on his hat tightens considerably, crushing it.]

JH: And that one moment of compassion was repaid with a lifetime of regret! I gave James Lynch the courtesy of being stared right in the eyes before I would put his bloodied carcass out of its misery and it cost us the Stampede Cup! And there ain't a single day that goes by ever since, that I don't wish I could redeem myself.

[He throw his hat down.]

JH: There ain't a single day that goes by, that I don't wish I could forgive myself!

[He stomps on his hat.]

JH: And there ain't a single day that goes by, that I don't wish, I could just get ONE more chance to fix the greatest mistake I've ever made!

[Morton spins Haynes around and grabs him by the shoulders, shaking him.]

DM: But here it is, Jack! HERE IT IS! The moment you've waited for, so long!

REDEMPTION! ATONEMENT!

VALIDATION!

[Suddenly, Morton lets go of Haynes and sighs, turning away and shaking his head.]

DM: But they say that Aarons and James have the makings of a Cinderella story, Jack! The team that ISN'T a team have a chance to become the greatest in the world! Maybe, just MAYBE, they can overcome the odds and actually WIN the Stampede Cup! Can you believe it?

JH: Yer sayin' this is a Cinderella story, Danny?

[Haynes shakes his head emphatically.]

JH: As soon as that bell rings, you might as well believe that their clock's stuck midnight! 'Cause as much as I can respect Michael Aarons carryin' on without his real partner, as much as I can respect a rookie like Brian James havin' the stones to jump into the ring against the very best the world has to offer, this AIN'T a fight that these rookies are gonna' be able to handle!

DM: We don't know, Jack! We know about Aarons! We knew about Mertz! But we don't know anything about Brian James!

JH: It could be CASEY James in that ring, and it wouldn't matter! They don't understand the nature of the beast! We don't quit! We don't stop! We keep on hittin'! We keep on fightin'! We keep on comin'!

[Haynes turns his attention to the camera.]

JH: We ain't a couple of Larry Doyle's bleach blonde bimbos! We ain't a couple of retirement home rejects whose best days happened when Michael Aarons was learnin' to walk and still messin' his pants! We're not like anything they've ever faced! What we are, are the two toughest, roughest tail-whuppin', butt-kickin', jaw-jackin' bastards in all of professional wrasslin'!

[Morton throws a few air punches, getting gradually more and more fired up with each swing.]

DM: You're right, Jack! You're absolutely right!

JH: No more regrets. No more heartache. No apologies.

[Haynes runs his hands through his hair, getting a wild-eyed look on his face.]

JH: When we leave that ring tonight, there ain't gonna' be any questions! There ain't gonna' be any doubt! Tonight, we're not coming to that ring to show anyone compassion! Tonight, we're not coming to that ring to show anyone mercy! Tonight...

[Haynes moves towards the camera, so close that the only thing we're left looking at are his big, crazed eyes.]

JH: ...WE'RE COMING TO THAT RING TO WIN THE STAMPEDE CUP!!!

[Fade out to a nice panning shot of the Tokyo Dome crowd, buzzing with anticipation for the match they've waited all night for. We crossfade down to Megumi Sato for the introductions.]

SUBTITLES: It is now time for the STAMPEDE CUP FINALS!

[HUUUUUUGE CHEER!]

SUBTITLES: One fall, sixty minutes. Coming to the ring first...

[Suddenly, the entire arena blackens, the lights all going out. A hushed silence fills the Tokyo Dome, as "Guren no Yumiya" by Linked Horizon blasts suddenly over the loudspeakers. The audience, recognizing the theme song of the Attack on Titan anime, reacts with loud cheers to the familiar song.]

SUBTITLES: At a weight of 211 kilos...

"!BRIIIIIIIIIIIIAAAAAAAAAAAAAANNNNNNNNNNN  
JAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAMMMEEEEEESSSSSS!"



[The blackness in the arena suddenly goes red, and the camera focuses on the top of the entrance ramp. There, we see the tall, lanky Brian James, a black silhouette amidst the red light, going through an intricate kata, kicking, and punching and leaping to the delight of the crowd.]

"!AAAAAANNNNNNNNNNNDDDDDDDD!"

[His kata completed, Brian sprints down to the midpoint of the entrance ramp, and points to the top. Suddenly, there's a dazzling display of exploding pyro. Red, purple, blue, green and various other colors explode, blinding the audience.]

"!MIIIIIIIIIIIIIIIIIIIIICCCCCCHAAAAAAEEEEEEELLLLLLLL  
AAAAAAARRRROOOOOOOOOOOOOOONNNNNNNNNSSSSSS!"

[There's a single loud explosion, and then, thrown into the air by a hidden mechanism, Michael Aarons leaps high into the air, landing on his feet to the delight of the crowd. As he rushes to meet Brian James, the lighting in the arena begins to strobe and flash, in a dizzying, seizure inducing array of lights. The two young wrestlers race down the rest of the way, their movements highlighted and stylized by the strobing lights. The result is vertigo inducing, but continues to draw loud cheers from the fans. Finally, with both men in the middle of the ring, the lighting returns to normal. James and Aarons exchange a double high five and turn towards the entranceway, awaiting the arrival of their opponents.]

SUBTITLES: And their opponents...

They are the 2010 winners of the Stampede Cup! Tonight, they weigh in at a combined weight of 270 kilos...

[Cue the name screaming.]

"THE HAMMER! JACKSON HAAAAAAAAAAAYYYYYYYYNNNNNEEEEESSSSS!!!!"  
"DANNY MORTOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOONNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNN!!!!"

"VIOLEEEEEENNNNNNNNNNNCCCCCEEEE  
UNLIMMMIIIIITTTTTTEEEEDDDD!!!!"

[The sounds of Motley Crue's "Shout At The Devil" suddenly fills the air. The Japanese crowd, familiar with this entrance, sing along to the opening lyrics.]

"SHOUT!"

"SHOUT!"

"SHOUT!"

"SHOUT AT THE DEVIL!"

[The arena lights cut to black as the Japanese crowd then ROARS as huge columns of fire spout forth from the top of the rampway like the flames of hell!]

\*WOOOOOOOOOSSSSHHHHH!!!\*

"AHHHHHHHHHH!!!!"

[When the flames disappear, the crowd roars once more at the sight of Danny Morton and Jackson Haynes, standing at opposite sides of the v-shaped rampway, illuminated by spotlights, both wearing frightening Japanese Daikijin (great devil god) Noh masks. Beneath the masks, Morton is dressed in his traditional red wrestling trunks and white boots. Meanwhile, Haynes is in Confederate flag-style wrestling trunks and wearing his familiar tri-corner cowboy hat. In his right hand, he carries his infamous bull rope.

The house lights return as they remove their masks and make their way down to the ring. Morton makes an immediate beeline for the ring, rubbing his hands in anticipation, while Haynes takes a more scenic route, actually CLIMBING over the guardrail and recklessly swinging his bull rope around, sending the fans scattering out of his way as he kicks chairs over and chases after fans.]

JD: Look out down there! Jackson Haynes is one of the most equally feared and adored grapplers to compete in all of Japan and he's showing us exactly why that is the case night now, fans.

[Security finally convinces Haynes to stop harassing the fans, as he makes one final swing of his bull rope towards them, scattering them once again, before finally climbing back over the guardrail and making his way towards ringside, visibly agitated.]

JD: These two teams could not be more different tonight. Brian James and Michael Aarons, barely constituting a tag team at all as they compete in their second professional match as partners. They rely on a quicker style. A hit and run offense. Stunning their opponents to set up for bigger moves. Violence Unlimited are long-time partners... the kind of tag team that stays together an entire career. They bring the pain... the intensity... the brutality in every move they deliver.

[The two teams have a final strategy session, staring across the ring at one another as AWA Senior Official Johnny Jagger stands in the middle of the ring, having discussions with both teams to ensure that they're ready to compete.]

JD: So much on the line here, fans. One million dollars. The Stampede Cup itself. The right to call yourselves the greatest tag team in the world. When we sat back at the start of the night and looked at the list of teams entered into the tournament, we never envisioned this would be the Final. We never expected this... and to be honest, we never expected to see a bye that essentially turned one of our Semifinals into the Finals!

BW: This has been, without a shadow of a doubt, perhaps the strangest Stampede Cup tournament. Injuries. Substitute partners. Controversial disqualifications. Controversial decisions by executives that overruled referees. Byes. And now, we have a tournament final featuring a team that has only wrestled once so far in Violence Unlimited - although they defeated a Japanese superteam in Taguchi and Fujimoto to get here - taking on a team who didn't even compete in a full match yet. This is strange... and we'd be doing the fans a disservice not to point that out, Dane.

JD: When you've got a tournament like this, you often claim that anything can happen. Tonight, I think we're proving that. But the question remains - will Violence Unlimited become the first ever two-time Stampede Cup champions or will the team I suppose we're calling Air + Strike shock the world to win it all?

[As the two teams finish their discussions, Jackson Haynes steps out of the ring while Michael Arons does the same on the other side of the ring.]

JD: It's going to be Michael Arons starting things off with Danny Morton, the American Murder Machine.

[The Senior Official steps in the middle, checks with both teams, and signals for the bell!]

"DING! DING! DING"

JD: The Finals of the Stampede Cup are underway!

[An overzealous Brian James tears across the ring towards Danny Morton, quickly throwing a series of short forearms to the side of the head. A surprised Morton reaches out, piefacing James back. The youngster rolls through it, getting right back to his feet...

...and charging right back in, leaping up to barrel him back into the corner where he starts throwing forearms again!]

JD: Brian James is taking the fight to Danny Morton!

BW: But he's in the wrong part of town, Dane.

[Jackson Haynes reaches out, taking a big swing at Brian James who ducks out of the way, showing off his speed edge over the veterans. James surges back in, throwing a big knee into the ribcage of Morton. He throws a back elbow on the chin of Haynes, knocking him off the apron to the floor.]

JD: James clears out Haynes too!

BW: The kid's got a lot of fire in him, Dane.

[James pulls Morton into a Muay Thai clinch, using it to drag Morton out to the center of the ring where smashes a knee up into the head... and a second... and a third. The martial arts training of Brian James is quickly on

display as he alternates knees, working over the American Murder Machine who struggles to escape but James using the clinch to throw Morton down to the mat near the corner of Air + Strike.]

JD: Morton's down in the corner... ohh! Leaping thrust kick into the chest sends him back into the buckles.

[Grabbing an arm, James twists it around in an armwringer before slapping the hand of Michael Aarons.]

JD: The tag is made... Aarons climbs the ropes...

[And leaps off, crashing down with a big forearm across the stretched out arm.]

JD: Nice basic doubleteam out of Air + Strike. There's a lot of speculation about these two being outgunned simply because we haven't seen them team together until tonight. But the fact of the matter is, these kids trained together in the Combat Corner. They're good friends and there's a real good chance they've teamed together in the Corner on many occasions. Don't count them out as being too inexperienced to knock off Violence Unlimited.

BW: Seriously? Look, I've had my problems with Haynes and Morton in the past too but they're former AWA National Tag Team Champions, former multiple time Tiger Paw Pro Global Crown Tag Team Champions, former Stampede Cup winners in 2010. They made the Cup Finals again in 2011. That means in the past four Stampede Cups, Haynes and Morton have made the Finals three out of four times.

[Aarons grabs Morton's powerful arm, twisting it around into a wristlock...

...and gets cracked in the mush with a forearm by Morton!]

JD: Morton caught him with that big forearm shot... whips him across...

[The Oklahoma powerhouse winds up his right hand...

...but comes up empty as Aarons drops into a baseball slide, sliding between the legs of Danny Morton. He pops up behind him, throwing a big dropkick that sends Morton tumbling through the ropes, crashing down to the floor outside the ring.]

JD: Michael Aarons with a dropkick to the back, sending Morton out to the floor!

BW: He had to attack the man from behind, Dane!

JD: He didn't HAVE to... he chose to right there.

[Aarons pumps a fist, jogging in place as he watches Morton start to stir off the mat. He races alongside the ropes towards the corner, leaping up to the middle rope...

...and blindly springing back, throwing himself at a surprised Danny Morton in a crossbody over the ropes to the floor, wiping out the tag team superstar!]

JD: AARONS TAKES DOWN MORTON!!

[Aarons takes the mount on the floor, hammering away at the barrel-chested powerhouse for a few moments before dragging him up by the arm, shoving Morton under the ropes and back inside the ring. Aarons pulls himself up on the apron, grabbing the top rope with both hands...]

JD: Over the top...

[He catapults over the ropes, dropping a big leg across the chest!]

JD: Legdrop connects... and a quick cover!

[The count hits two before Morton powers out, hurling Aarons off of him, through the ropes and out to the floor.]

JD: Wow! Danny Morton is one of the strongest men in the entire wrestling world and it just seems like he manages to prove that again every time he laces the boots to compete.

[With Aarons down out on the floor, Morton climbs to his feet, looking towards his corner where Jackson Haynes is waiting for a tag...]

...and then turns back to find Aarons who comes sailing off the top rope, catching Morton with a high cross body off the top!]

JD: ONE!! TWO!!

[Morton again kicks out hard, breaking out of the pin attempt.]

JD: Michael Aarons is using his speed, his quickness, his aerial ability to throw off the power game of Danny Morton. Morton wants to assert himself physically against the smaller opponents but so far, they're not allowing that to happen.

[Aarons again twists the arm, walking back to the corner where he slaps his partner's hand. Brian James is quickly in, throwing an uppercut-style shot at the trapped arm before securing it under his armpit.]

JD: James hooks an armbar on Danny Morton, trying to disable that powerful limb and-

[Morton winds up, throwing a haymaker to the jaw that breaks the hold in an instant. A second one sends James falling back into the neutral corner. Morton pursues, ignoring his partner's cries for a tag.]

JD: Jackson Haynes wants a tag but I think Danny Morton is a little embarrassed and wants to punish these two a bit.

[Morton shoves James back as he attempts to leave the corner, winding up to crack him across the chest with a knife edge chop...

...and then throws a big right hand to the jaw!]

JD: Big chop... big right hand... big chop... over and over again!

[The chop/punch barrage has James reeling under the impact, nearly knocked down to a knee by the Oklahoma native. Morton backs off for a moment, running in place as he sticks out his tongue at the dazed Brian James...

...who suddenly steps out, grabbing Morton by the hair, and swinging him back into the buckles!]

JD: What the...?!

[James squares up, throwing a series of snapping jabs to the chin of Morton before a hooking right hand stuns him. The son of the Blackheart crouches down, throwing lightning quick rights and lefts to the midsection of Danny Morton...

...and wraps up the combo with a brutal elbow uppercut that snaps Morton's head back, causing him to slump down to a seated position in the neutral corner!]

JD: What a series of punches out of Brian James! We know that Brian James spent some time training under the tutelage of his father's best friend, Tiger Claw, and it's certainly showing here tonight in Tokyo!

BW: That was something straight out of the Tiger Claw playbook, Dane.

JD: It sure was.

[James grabs Morton by the arm, dragging him off the mat, reaching out to slap Michael Aarons' hand.]

JD: The tag is made and in comes Aarons again...

[Each man grabs an arm on Morton, whipping him across the ring in tandem.]

JD: Double whip shoots Morton in...

[The duo drops Morton with a double back elbow up under the chin, racing to opposite ropes...]

JD: This is one of Air Strike's signature doubleteams!

[Aarons takes flight, crashing across the chest of Morton with a senton backsplash as James leaps up, dropping a heavy knee down into the sternum!]

JD: Ohh! They put their own spin on that trademark doubleteam as James exits, leaving Michael Aarons in there... and so far, this so-called makeshift duo is looking VERY good against one of the greatest teams in the entire sport.

[Aarons pulls Morton off the mat by the arm, reaching out for another tag to his partner.]

JD: Look at these quick tags, managing to keep Danny Morton both off-balance and in their part of the ring as they shoot him across again... and drop the powerhouse with a double clothesline!

BW: Jackson Haynes is pacing back and forth over there in VU's corner. He can't believe what he's seeing right here, Dane, and quite frankly, neither can I.

JD: Aarons and James did NOT come to this match with the intention of rolling over and dying for the heavily favored Violence Unlimited. They came to fight! And they came to win!

[James watches as Michael Aarons bails out of the ring, leaving him to pull Morton off the mat, throwing a spinning back elbow to the cheekbone, sending Morton falling back into the ropes where James makes another tag.]

JD: The tag is made again! This is wild! Air + Strike is dazzling us all here tonight in Tokyo and Violence Unlimited is not an exception to that.

BW: They might have been taking them too lightly, Dane.

JD: That's a possibility as they fire him across again and...

[The duo ducks their heads, launching Morton up and over, bouncing him off the canvas with a double backdrop!]

JD: Another double team by Air + Strike! Can you believe what we're seeing here, Bucky?

BW: Absolutely not... and look at the grin on Michael Aarons' face. Keep smiling, dummy. Sooner or later, you're going to make a mistake and VU is gonna make you pay for it.

[Aarons pulls Morton off the mat, lighting him up with a pair of knife edge chops, sending Morton back into the turnbuckles.]

JD: Big whip coming up, no! Morton reverses!

[Aarons bounces off the far ropes, leaping up and leaving his feet for a flying forearm...

...where Morton snatches him out of the sky, lifting him straight up into a military press!]

JD: Oh my! He's got him all the way up...

[Morton pushes him skyward, catching him over the shoulder on the way down, and DRIVES him into the canvas with a powerslam!]

JD: OHHH!

[Morton climbs back to his feet, spitting on Aarons' prone form as he slaps the hand of his own partner.]

JD: Violence Unlimited with their first tag of the match and this can't be good news for Michael Aarons as each man grabs an arm, shooting him across...

[Each man drops into a three-point stance, exploding forward and wiping out a much-smaller Aarons with a double shoulderblock!]

JD: Ohhhh... king-sized shoulder tackles by Violence Unlimited!

[Aarons sailed through the air off the tackle, crashing down in a heap on the canvas as the wild-eyed Jackson Haynes shouts something in the direction of Brian James.]

JD: Haynes with some trash talk towards the rookie. The 310 pounder out of Moscow, Tennessee has been wrestling since he was fifteen years old. He's had impressive stints not only here in Japan and back in the AWA but he was also a featured star in Blackjack Lynch's PCW several years back.

BW: He was a monster there, Dane. Remember the Lynches and VU tangling it up a few years ago? There was a whole lot of history there between Haynes and Old Man Lynch that was driving every bit of that.

[Haynes drags Aarons off the mat, smashing his elbow overhead and down across the forehead of Michael Aarons. A second one sends the Carson City youngster sprawling across the canvas as Haynes dashes to the ropes, rebounding off...

...and leaping into the air, dropping a heavy leg across the chest of Aarons!]

JD: Running legdrop by the Hammer... a cover!

[Haynes scores a two count before Aarons slips out from under him.]

JD: Michael Aarons and Brian James have a lot of heart in there but it's going to take every bit of it and then some in order to pull off an upset of this magnitude, fans.



[Haynes climbs back to his feet, launching into a vicious series of stomps on Aarons, driving him over near the ropes. He reaches down, snagging two hands full of hair and pulling the good-looking young man off the mat.]

JD: Hanes is pulling him up... big slam, facefirst to the neutral corner!

[Aarons stumbles away, trying to escape from Haynes, looking towards his corner where Brian James stands with his hand outstretched...

...but Haynes slips in front of him, cutting off his tag attempt by securing a front facelock...]

JD: Haynes blocks his path, holding him... oh! Hard knee to the face!

[Brian James slaps the top turnbuckle, shouting encouragement to his partner as Haynes slams knee after knee home into the face and upper chest of Aarons before slinging him aside, throwing him so that he's draped over the middle rope.]

JD: Aarons is outgunned in there against a man the size of Jackson Haynes, I think. I know there are a lot of hopeful Air Strike fans out there rooting for Michael Aarons and Brian James to pull off the upset but I just don't know if that's happening here tonight.

[Haynes breaks into a charge, hitting the ropes and rebounding back where he leaps up, dropping into a sitdown splash on the upper back of Michael Aarons, snapping his throat down on the middle rope before Aarons falls back inside the ring, clutching his windpipe.]

JD: Jackson Haynes... tag!

BW: I wouldn't think Morton would be recovered enough to come back in there but he's coming in and he looks hot under the collar, Dane.

JD: He certainly does. I wouldn't want to be in Michael Aarons' shoes right about now.

[The Hammer whips Aarons across into the neutral corner before charging from corner to corner, throwing up his leg and driving his big boot up under the chin!]

JD: Running boot in the buckles... here comes Morton!

[The Oklahoma powerhouse rampages in, landing a massive clothesline in the corner, causing Aarons' feet to lift up off the mat before he slumps back down into a seated position in the corner...

...but Morton shakes his head, muscling him back up to his feet, wrapping his massive arms around Aarons' 225 pound frame.]

JD: Morton backs him out... and LAUNCHES him halfway across the ring with a king-sized belly to belly throw! Good grief!

[Morton slowly gets up off the mat, looking out at the crowd who respond with a mix of cheers and boos.]

JD: Many expected that Violence Unlimited would be one of the most popular teams in the building tonight considering the name they've made for themselves here in Japan but Aarons and James gained a lot of fans for the way they knocked off the Blonde Bombers here earlier tonight.

[The American Murder Machine climbs to his feet, slowly approaching the downed Aarons who is trying to get to his feet...

...and throws a right hand downstairs on Morton!]

JD: Aarons is fighting back! A second right hand to the gut!

[Aarons climbs up to his feet, tucking his head under Morton's chin and dropping down to his knees!]

JD: OHH! JAWBREAKER OUT OF MICHAEL AARONS!!

[Still on his knees as Morton staggers away, clutching at his chin, Aarons takes aim on the corner where Brian James is dying for a tag, hopping up and down, pacing back and forth with great enthusiasm.]

JD: Aarons has a clear path to the corner! He needs to take advantage of this counter he put on Danny Morton who is wobbling towards his own corner...

[Morton slaps the hand of Jackson Haynes, bringing him back in. Haynes marches in, hooking to the back of the trunks to pull Aarons back a few feet before he could reach the corner. James slaps the top turnbuckle in frustration as Haynes muscles Aarons up, dropping him on the back of his head with a back suplex!]

JD: Haynes takes him down again with that suplex!

[Haynes flips over, applying a cover.]

JD: Haynes gets one! He gets two! But that's all!

BW: Michael Aarons is a tough kid, I'll give him that. And if he was out here with his usual partner, with Cody Mertz, I might give 'im a snowball's chance in Hell of knocking off Violence Unlimited. But with a new partner - a rookie at that - there's no chance at all, Dane. It's just a matter of time.

[The Tennessee native drags a dazed Aarons up by the arm, flinging him into the ropes...

...where he lifts him up, pausing and HURLS him down to the canvas in a standing spinebuster that bounces Aarons' head off the mat!]

JD: OHHH! That might be it!

[Haynes drops into another cover, his arms at full extension as he leans into it.]

JD: ONE!! TWO!! But again, Aarons slips out!

BW: He should have hooked the leg there. He can't get overly confident. He still needs to fight like he's in the fight of his life and take advantage of every opportunity that comes his way.

[James turns towards the crowd, attempting to rally them into a "MI-CHAE!" chant that doesn't gain much traction in the usually stoic Japanese wrestling fans.]

JD: Brian James is trying to get some support behind Michael Aarons but it doesn't seem to be working... not one bit... as Haynes pulls Aarons off the mat again, tugging him into a standing headscissors...

BW: He's going for the powerbomb!

JD: If Haynes hits the powerbomb, it might be game over for Michael Aarons! We've passed the ten minute mark in this sixty minute time limit but it's hard to envision getting anywhere near that with the punishment that Michael Aarons has taken already in this one.

[Haynes pulls him out to the middle before hoisting him up, flinging him up to maximum height...

...where Aarons flips out, landing on his feet in front of the Hammer. He ducks under, lifting him up, and dropping him in an inverted atomic drop!]

JD: Aarons with the timely counter... hits the ropes...

[And leaves his feet, cracking Haynes between the eyes with a flying forearm that drops the 310 pounder!]

JD: He puts him down! Michael Aarons lays down the hammer ON The Hammer!

BW: Oh, that's hysterical, Dane.

JD: I thought you might like it. These fans certainly liked that desperation move out of Michael Aarons as he, once again, turns his focus towards the corner where Brian James is waiting!

[Aarons pushes up to all fours, looking across the ring where Brian James is stomping his foot, slapping the top turnbuckle, screaming, shouting, and hollering for his partner to make the tag!]

JD: Brian James is fired up! He wants that tag so he can get in there and rally his team!

[The Air Strike member pushes up to his feet, looking across at his partner who is shouting at him to get to the corner...

...which makes him completely unaware when Danny Morton steps in and lowers the boom with a big forearm smash to the back of the head, knocking him down as the referee forces Morton out of the ring.]

JD: Oh, come on!

BW: Morton and Haynes haven't become one of the most famed and successful tag teams in the entire wrestling world for nothing, Dane. Danny Morton saw an opening there to regain the advantage for he and his partner and he took it!

[With the referee shouting at Morton, Jackson Haynes pulls Michael Aarons off the mat, pasting him with a right hand between the eyes. A second one connects as well, sending Aarons falling back into the ropes. Haynes moves in after him...]

JD: Aarons fires back!

[...and gets caught with a boot to the gut by a staggered Aarons!]

JD: Aarons trying to rally from behind and get to the corner to make the tag to Brian James who is about ready to explode over there if he doesn't get the tag soon.

[Aarons lands a second kick to the gut before snapping one off to the mush, straightening Haynes up and sending him stumbling back. The Carson City native quickly turns towards the corner, staggering across...

...and gets DRILLED with a running clothesline by Haynes, taking him over the ropes and out onto the floor!]

JD: OH MY!! Jackson Haynes let loose a tremendous running clothesline that puts Michael Aarons out there on the floor.

BW: That ain't where you want to be with the Hammer, Dane.

JD: It certainly isn't as Haynes drops to his back, rolling under the ropes to the floor.

[Haynes promptly pulls a stunned Aarons up by the arm, turning slightly...]

"CLAAAAAAAAAAAAANG!"

JD: He FIRES Aarons into the steel railing out here at ringside!

BW: Haynes is known all over the world for being one of the craziest, nuttiest brawlers in the biz, Dane. He'll stand on the floor and throw you

into anything he can find... and he's just as likely to hit you with a steel chair as he is to hit you with a right hand.

JD: There's a Texas Death Match between Haynes and Ebola Zaire back in PCW that they STILL talk about throughout the great state of Texas! One of the wildest brawls on record.

[Haynes approaches Aarons who has his arms draped over the steel to stay on his feet, winding up with a big right hand. A second one follows, knocking him down to a knee where Haynes jerks him right back up.]

JD: Haynes grabs the arm again... look out!

[The Hammer attempts another Irish whip, sending Aarons quickly towards the barricade...

...but Aarons leaps over it, landing on the other side where a few fans stop his momentum.]

JD: Aarons escapes!

[A furious Haynes comes lumbering down the length of the ring, seeking to exact more punishment on Aarons...

...who leaps up on the railing, springing off and nailing Haynes with a dropkick to the mush!]

JD: Wow! What a counter out of Michael Aarons! This kid is making a tremendous showing for himself here tonight in Tokyo as he tries to win this match... for his friend and partner, Cody Mertz... for his teacher, Todd Michaelson... and for every Air Strike fan all over the globe!

[Aarons pulls back to his feet, stumbling into the apron where he tugs himself back into the ring, pushing up to his knees where once again, an enthusiastic Brian James is waiting for the tag, clapping his hands together in rhythm.]

JD: Michael Aarons is back in the ring, again looking towards his corner and again looking to make the tag! We're over fifteen minutes into this Final match in the 2014 Stampede Cup tournament! One million dollars on the line. The Cup itself on the line!

[Aarons pushes up to his feet, stumbling as he does so, looking across at Brian James who is waiting for him...]

JD: Once again, Michael Aarons has a clear path to his partner. Jackson Haynes is trying to get back to his feet on the floor but Aarons is all alone inside that ring as he tries to get to Brian James.

[Aarons steps closer, wobbling with each step...

...when Danny Morton suddenly breaks into the ring, rushing in behind Aarons and clubbing him with a double axehandle to the back of the head, knocking the fan favorite down to the canvas. The referee steps in, shouting at Morton...

...when Brian James comes tearing across the ring, leaping up to land a big forearm smash on a stunned Morton to a big reaction from the crowd. James stays on his feet, throwing a barrage of speedy punches to the ribs and chest as the official turns his attention to getting James back across the ring and out to the apron!]

JD: This one is getting dangerously close to being completely out of control, Bucky.

BW: Johnny Jagger's doing his best but there are some very volatile elements inside that ring right now.

JD: Speaking of volatile elements, Jackson Haynes rolls back under the ropes into the ring.

[The Hammer pulls Aarons off the mat, shoving him back as he walks to the corner and tags in Danny Morton.]

JD: The tag is made again for the veteran team of Violence Unlimited.

[Haynes lifts Aarons up, dropping him down across the knee in a pendulum backbreaker, holding him there as Morton hops up to the middle rope, stands tall...

...and DROPS an elbow down on a helpless Aarons!]

JD: OHH! He almost decapitated him right there! Haynes exits as Morton goes for the cover! ONE!! TWO!! T-

[Aarons slips a shoulder out from under the Oklahoma powerhouse, breaking the pin as Morton glares at the official. The big man slowly gets back to his feet, staring across at Brian James who is still pacing back and forth, working himself into a frenzy.]

JD: Oh, that wasn't necessary. A rude gesture from Morton towards Brian James.

BW: It wasn't like that at all. He just heard that James was an avid bird watcher, Dane.

JD: I'm sure.

[Morton pulls Aarons off the mat, turning to face Brian James. He scoops him up, holding him across his barrel chest...

...and DROPS down across the knee in a backbreaker!]

JD: Ohh! Backbreaker!

[But Morton lifts him right back up, holding his limp form like a small child before doing it again!]

JD: A second backbreaker! Look at the power of Danny Morton! One of the strongest men I've ever seen compete inside a wrestling ring and a- ohh! A devastating third backbreaker!

[Morton gets back up, still holding Aarons and still staring right at Brian James who is shouting at his partner to make something happen...

...right before Morton falls forward, crushing Michael Aarons under his 285 pound frame in a front powerslam!]

JD: POWERSLAM!!

BW: That might do it, Dane!

JD: It certainly might. Morton hooks a leg - ONE!! TWO!! TH-

[Brian James slips through the ropes, stomping the back of Morton's head to break the pin. Morton throws his head back, looking to beat down James who is being forced out by the official.]

JD: A near fall there for the former AWA National Tag Team Champions and 2010 Stampede Cup Champions but the rookie gets in and breaks it up before Danny Morton can finish off Aarons.

[Morton gets up, dragging Aarons across the ring, and flinging him bodily back into the Violence Unlimited corner where he slaps Jackson Haynes' hand.]

JD: Here comes the Hammer!

BW: And somewhere in the locker room, Cody Mertz is screaming at a monitor, "PLEASE HAMMER! DON'T HURT 'IM!"

JD: Look at this!

[The massive forms of Violence Unlimited break into a series of clubbing forearms on a stunned Aarons, battering him down to the mat and keeping him there.]

JD: Nothing fancy about that at all. Just a complete beatdown in the corner as Morton steps back out, leaving his partner to deal with Michael Aarons who is in serious trouble right about now and-

[Suddenly, the crowd begins to cheer.]

JD: Wait a second!

BW: It's Mertz!

[The cheers grow louder as Cody Mertz comes hobbling out onto the raised entrance platform. He's still in his ring gear with a red and black Combat Corner t-shirt but is moving very slowly as a backstage official is helping him down the aisle.]

JD: Cody Mertz is heading down the aisle, presumably to give his friends a little bit of moral support!

[Jackson Haynes spots Mertz coming, turning to point at him. He grabs at his ribs, mocking the Air Strike member before turning back towards the rising Michael Aarons, lashing out with a kick to the midsection.]

JD: Cody Mertz is heading down the ringsteps, planting himself in the corner of James and Aarons.

[Brian James hops down, giving Mertz a quick pat on the back before slamming his arms repeatedly on the apron with a, "COME ON, MICHAEL!"]

JD: There's a whole lot of support in the corner for Air Strike... or Air + Strike. Call it what you will but Michael Aarons needs to make a move and he needs to do it soon, fans.

[Haynes straightens his fingers, jabbing them into the throat of Aarons and sending a gasping Michael Aarons falling into the neutral corner. The Hammer pursues, grabbing an arm...]

JD: Big whip coming up...

[The Irish whip sends Aarons crashing into the turnbuckles where Haynes gives a big whoop before coming after him...]

...and CONNECTING with a big running clothesline in the corner!]

JD: OHHH! Big clothesline connects!

BW: He's gonna do it again, Dane!

JD: He certainly is... big whip across- AARONS!

[The athletic Michael Aarons tries to save himself by leaping up to the midbuckle, blindly leaping off, twisting himself around...]

...and catching Haynes across the chest with a cross body, knocking him off his feet as Aarons hooks a leg!]

JD: ONE!! TWO!!

[Haynes powers out to the disappointment of many in the crowd and the obvious disappointment of Cody Mertz who winces in pain after slapping the ropes in frustration.]



JD: Haynes is down! This is Michael Aarons' chance! He's already halfway across the ring and the six foot six Brian James has his arm outstretched, looking for a tag...

[James is back on the apron, slapping the turnbuckle with one hand to cheer on his partner while his other is reaching out as far as he physically can.]

JD: James wants the tag! Aarons needs to make it!

[But as Aarons crawls towards his corner, Jackson Haynes rushes across, drilling Brian James with a right hand, knocking him down off the apron to the protests of Senior Official Johnny Jagger. But Haynes pays him no mind as he grabs Aarons, scooping him up over his shoulder...

...where Aarons slips out, tying up Haynes, and snapping him back in a Russian legsweep!]

JD: What a counter! A beautiful counter by Michael Aarons and there may be no better time for Michael Aarons to make the tag than right now! The fans are behind him! Cody Mertz is behind him!

[Aarons rolls to his knees, looking up as a pissed-off Brian James takes his spot back on the apron, reaching in...]

JD: He's right there, fans! He's-

[Aarons makes a lunge, diving towards the outstretched hand of his partner.]

JD: THE TAG IS MADE!!

[A big cheer goes up as Brian James slingshots himself over the top rope, racing across the ring to throw a high kick at an incoming Danny Morton, sending Morton spilling through the ropes and back out to the floor. James wheels around, waving an arm at a rising Jackson Haynes.]

JD: Haynes is back up... here comes James!

[James rushes in, leaping up to deliver a forearm shot that sends Haynes falling back into the Air + Strike corner where the rookie quickly secures a Muay Thai clinch, hammering knees up into the skull of the Moscow, Tennessee native!]

JD: KNEES TO THE HEAD! OVER AND OVER BY BRIAN JAMES!!

[After landing a dozen knees, James grabs an arm, firing Haynes into the far corner where he hits the buckles hard, rebounding back towards a waiting Brian James who lifts him by the upper thighs, pivoting...

...and DRIVES him down in a spinebuster!]

JD: SPINEBUSTER!! He got all of that!

[James dives atop Haynes, reaching back to hook a leg.]

JD: ONE!! TWO!! T-

[The Hammer powers out at two, breaking the pin. But James isn't done as he gives a shout, sweeping a leg up over the torso of Jackson Haynes. He raises a right hand to the ceiling before driving it down into the face of a stunned Haynes, then a left... then back to the right.]

JD: He's hammering Jackson Haynes into the canvas - no pun intended!

[With Haynes at his mercy, James' back is exposed to Danny Morton who slides into the ring, approaching quickly...

...but James sees him coming, wheeling to deliver a right hook to the midsection, doubling up Morton. James climbs to his feet, grabbing Morton by the hair...]

JD: Short kicks to the skull! He's rocking the American Murder Machine!

[After connecting with a half dozen head kicks, James peels off, grabbing Morton by the arm, whipping him into the ropes...]

JD: SHIN KICK!

[The most dangerous strike of his teacher connects on the chest of the rebounding Morton, dropping him down to the mat where he again rolls out to the floor as James turns his focus back towards a rising Jackson Haynes, pushing him back against the ropes where he ducks down, throwing rights and lefts to the ribcage...]

JD: Brian James is using those dangerous hands of his up against the ropes... Irish whi- reversed!

[Haynes sends James bouncing off the ropes where he ducks under a clothesline from the big man...

...and drops into a baseball slide, nailing Danny Morton in the face and sending him sprawling back into the ringside railing!]

JD: OHHH! James caught Morton before he could get back in!

[The rookie pops back up on the apron as Haynes approaches, sidestepping and throwing a kick between the ropes to catch Haynes in the midsection...]

JD: James goes downstairs as we pass the twenty minute mark in this, the Finals of the 2014 Stampede Cup tournament!

[James grabs the top rope, skying his way over the top in a sunset flip attempt...]

JD: He's going for the sunset flip! Trying to take the big man down...

[But Haynes grabs the top rope himself, blocking the move...

...until Michael Aarons comes tearing down the apron, using the ropes to leap up and drive a foot between the eyes of Haynes, allowing James to pull him down!]

JD: ONE!! TWO!!! THRE-

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

JD: HE ALMOST GOT HIM!

BW: Wow! What an upset that would've been!

JD: Brian James was a half count away from pinning Jackson Haynes and winning the Stampede Cup for the most unlikely duo we could imagine winning this thing tonight!

[A frustrated James claps his hands together as he gets back up, grabbing the rising Haynes in a side waistlock, lifting him skyward and dumping him down in a back suplex...

...at which point, he gestures to the top rope.]

JD: You've gotta be kidding me!

BW: Where the heck is he going?!

JD: All six foot six and 240 pounds of Brian James is stepping out to the apron. He's climbing to the top!

BW: This is a mistake, Dane.

JD: You very well could be right, Bucky. Brian James is on the second rope... now stepping up top...

[But Jackson Haynes isn't as hurt as James thought he was, climbing to his feet, moving in quick...

...and slamming his arm into the side of James' knee, sweeping out the legs and causing James to land crotchfirst up top!]

JD: OHHHHH! A rookie mistake made by Brian James and now he finds himself in a bad, bad way as... tag!

[A pissed-off Danny Morton rushes in to aid his partner. They each reach up, grabbing the smaller man...

...and HURLS him off the top rope, sending him crashing down hard to the canvas!]

JD: OH! They throw the man off the top rope and that completely has turned things around in this one for Violence Unlimited! Brian James is laid out on the canvas - much to the chagrin of Michael Aarons and Cody Mertz!

[Morton, ever the powerhouse who likes to show that off, pulls a dazed James off the mat...

...and easily muscles him up over his head in a military press!]

JD: Oh my! Look at the power of Danny Morton!

[Morton walks out to the middle of the ring, holding the rookie high over his head...

...and lowers him down so that James' stomach hits the top of Morton's head before pressing him right... back... up!]

JD: He's pressing him... over and over... sheer strength and power the likes of which you wouldn't believe. When people say that Danny Morton is one of the strongest men in this business, this is exactly what they're talking about, Bucky.

BW: Now, he's just showing off... a half dozen reps of pressing this kid into the air and-

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

JD: HE THREW HIM OVER THE TOP TO THE FLOOR!! GOOD GRIEF!!

[James SLAMS down onto the barely-padded floor, crashing down in a heap as Michael Aarons drops off the apron, moving to check on his partner as the injured Cody Mertz does the same.]

JD: Danny Morton just threw him to the floor for no reason at all! That was just Professor Pain being nasty, Bucky!

BW: You can say that all you want but Brian James, this punk kid, has really got a lot of people steamed tonight. He stole a spot on one of the biggest shows of all time... stole a spot in the MAIN EVENT of one of the biggest shows of all time and he's going to need to pay a little hard dues for that one.

[Morton smirks at the crowd's reaction before he hits the ropes, rebounding across...

...and HURLS himself through the ropes, crashing into Michael Aarons and Cody Mertz!]

JD: OH, COME ON!!

[Morton climbs to his feet, glaring down at the two members of Air Strike that he just laid out. There are some definite boos coming from the crowd as he looks out, gesturing for more of a reaction. The resulting noise is very split for the long-time Japanese king gaijin tag team as Morton leans down, pulling James off the ringside mats...

...and SLAMMING his face into the ring apron!]

JD: Morton slams him hard into the apron, turning him around now.

[He wraps his arms around James' torso, stepping back a few paces...

...and then rushes forward, driving James' back into the edge of the ring apron!]

JD: Backfirst into the hardest part of the ring... and again!

[Morton lands one more charge into the apron before shoving him back under the ropes into the ring. He turns around to menace Cody Mertz who is still down on the floor, clutching his ribs, and then moves back up on the apron...

...where a fiery Brian James throws a right hand through the ropes, catching him in the gut coming in!]

JD: What's he...?!

[A desperate James hooks a front facelock on Morton, dragging him through the ropes so that his feet are draped over the middle rope...]

JD: You've gotta be kidding me!

[...and drops down, DRIVING Morton's skull into the canvas!]

JD: MODIFIED DDT! SHADES OF TEX VIOLENCE!!

[James flips Morton over, diving across his heaving chest.]

JD: ONE!! TWO!! THR-

[Morton powers out, lifting a shoulder off the canvas as James falls back, slapping the hand of a shouting Michael Aarons.]

JD: Tag! Aarons wanted the tag and he got one!

BW: That hardly seems like the best idea either, Dane. Aarons took a tremendous beating in there and he hasn't been out of the ring nearly as long as he'd need to to recover from it.

[Aarons quickly scales the turnbuckles, looking down at a stunned Danny Morton...

...and leaps into the air, skying high, and DROPS down with a splash across the chest of Morton!]

JD: BIG SPLASH OFF THE TOP!! HOOKS THE LEG!!

[The referee dives down to the mat!]

JD: ONE!! TWO!! THRE-

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

JD: A DIVING SAVE BY JACKSON HAYNES!!

[Haynes yanks Aarons off the mat, chucking him across the ring. He winds up with his big left hand, ready to drill Aarons between the eyes on the rebound...

...but Aarons ducks down, baseball sliding through the legs, popping back to his feet...]

JD: Dropkick!

[Aarons gets back up, throwing a second one.]

JD: Another dropkick!

[Haynes staggers back to the corner as Brian James gives a shout, tearing across the ring as fast as he can, stepping up to the middle rope...]

"WHAAAAAAAAAAAAAACK!"

JD: ENZUIGIIIIIRIIIIII!

[With Haynes staggered, James ducks down, hoisting the big man up into the air and setting him down on the top turnbuckle.]

JD: What the heck is Brian James doing?!

BW: Here's a better question - neither of those guys are the legal men! What the heck is Johnny Jagger doing?!

[Jagger seems to be losing control as Aarons pulls Morton off the mat, lighting him up with knife edge chops in the neutral corner. He switches to right hands, stepping up to the middle rope to rain down fire on the skull of the American Murder Machine!]

JD: Big right hands from the ropes, hammering away on Danny Morton.

[While that's going on, Brian James has stepped up onto the middle rope, reaching up to secure a front facelock.]

JD: He's setting for a superplex!

BW: Get him out of there, Jagger!

[But before James can get him up, Aarons whips Morton across blindly, sending Morton crashing into the corner...

...a move that sends James sailing over the ropes, crashing down to the floor below!]

JD: OHHHHHHHHHHH!

BW: There it is, Dane! There it is!

JD: There WHAT is?!

BW: The mistake that a tag team who has never worked together would make! James and Aarons seemed like they were a natural team until that moment right there! You would NEVER see Morton and Haynes make a mistake like that!

[Aarons looks shocked, stunned at what he just accidentally did. He tries to keep his focus, throwing a series of right hands to the skull of Morton before whipping him across again...]

JD: He shoots Morton back across the ring.

[Michael Aarons turns back to check on his partner...

...when Jackson Haynes leaps off the second rope, lashing out with a big boot to the jaw to a HUGE reaction!]

JD: OHH! BIG BOOT \_OFF\_ THE MIDDLE ROPE!!

[Haynes hits the mat hard, quickly rolling to the floor as Danny Morton drops into a three point stance, watching and waiting for Aarons to rise.]

JD: Michael Aarons got CREAMED with that big boot to the mush! Morton's gonna finish him though! Morton's down in that three point stance, his legs shaking with intensity as he looks to finish off his opponent here in the Stampede Cup Finals!

BW: Look! Look at this, Dane!

[The crowd begins to roar in surprise as Cody Mertz pulls himself up on the apron, shouting into the ring at a downed Michael Aarons, trying to warn him of what's coming...]

JD: Mertz is on the apron! Cody Mertz is on the apron, shouting to warn his partner of- OH NO!

[The crowd reacts as Morton breaks out of the three point stance, grabbing Mertz by the hair and YANKS him over the ropes into the ring.]

JD: MORTON'S GOT MERTZ! MORTON'S GOT MERTZ!

[A jeering crowd and a protesting Johnny Jagger are all over Professor Pain as he pulls Mertz to his feet, lifting him up over his shoulders in a fireman's carry...

...and then hoists him up and over, dropping him ribsfirst across a bent knee!]

JD: OHHHHHHHHHHH! THAT SON OF A-

BW: Easy, Dane! He'll come get you next!

[Mertz rolls around in pain on the mat, eventually rolling out of the ring and falling out to the floor as a grinning Danny Morton shouts something along the lines of "STAY THE [BLEEP] OUT OF MY RING!"]

JD: Fans, we apologize for the language of Danny Mort- AARONS!

[The crowd cheers as Aarons throws himself at Morton's back, hammering away with right hands!]

JD: Aarons saw what Morton did to his partner and he's all over him!

[Aarons batters Morton back into the ropes, grabbing an arm.]

JD: Irish whi- reversed!

[Aarons hits the ropes, rebounding off at a lighting speed as Morton rears back a right hand...

...but Aarons leaves his feet, connecting with a leaping leg lariat that stuns the big man long enough for Aarons to boot him in the gut, grabbing him by the hair, and SLAM his face into the canvas!]

JD: He puts Morton down with that faceslam... and traditionally, that's the setup for High In The Sky, the top rope elbow that Aarons does so well!

[Aarons turns towards the corner, ready to scale the turnbuckles...

...but the cries of pain from his partner turn his attention back towards the floor. Aarons slowly makes his way over to the ropes, leaning over them to look down on a hurting Cody Mertz.]

BW: Another rookie mistake, Dane! Aarons should go for the kill here. Instead, he's too worried about his knucklehead partner who shouldn't have even come out here to begin with!



JD: Cody Mertz is down and hurt. Brian James is down and hurt. Michael Aarons is the only member of Air Strike still standing and right now, he's too concerned about the welfare of his partner to finish this match off...

[Which allows waaaay too much time for Danny Morton to get to his feet, slipping in behind Aarons to hook a waistlock, jerking him clear of the ropes...

...and HURLING him down on the back of his head and neck with a German suplex!]

JD: OHHHHHHHH!

BW: That's it, Dane!

JD: You might be right, Bucky!

[But Jackson Haynes is back on the apron, shouting to his partner who marches across, making the tag.]

JD: Jackson Haynes wanted back in and apparently The Hammer is looking to finish Michael Aarons off himself!

[Haynes grabs Aarons by the hair, yanking him into a standing headscissors in the center of the ring. He looks out at the crowd, decidedly split on their feelings towards Tiger Paw Pro's final representatives in the tournament. He gives a big nod as he reaches down, wrapping his arms around the torso of Aarons. The crowd is buzzing in anticipation, knowing very well what comes next for both Haynes and Aarons.]

JD: HE LIFTS HIM UP!!

[The near three hundred pound big man from Moscow, Tennessee hoists Aarons up into the air, pausing at the top of the lift...

...at which point, a desperate Michael Aarons hooks his legs around Haynes' head, dragging him down to the canvas, reaching back to tightly hook both legs!]

JD: THIS IS HOW THEY LOST TO THE LYNCHES IN 2011!

[The referee dives to the canvas.]

JD: ONE!! TWO!!! THRE-

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

[Haynes immediately gets back up after kicking out, shaking his head at the still-buzzing crowd as he yanks Aarons back into the headscissors, lifting him sky high, pausing once more...

...and DRIVES him down into the canvas!]

JD: POWERBOMB!! POWERBOMB BY HAYNES!!

[Haynes stacks up Aarons in a jackknife pin, leaning in for extra leverage as the referee dives down again.]

JD: ONE!! TWO!! THREEEEEEEEEEEE!!!

"DING! DING! DING!"

[The crowd roars in reaction, some cheers and some boos, for Violence Unlimited as Haynes drops down to his knees, breathing heavily as Danny Morton comes in to pull him back to his feet. The two powerhouses fall into a quick embrace as they celebrate their victory and Megumi Sato makes it official.]

"STAAAAAAMPEEEEEEDE CUUUUUP CHAMPIONNNNNNS!"

[She gestures to the celebrating duo.]

"VIIIIIIIIIIIIIIIIIIIIIIOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOLENNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNCE  
UNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNLIMITEDDDDDDDDDDDDDDDDDDDDDDDDDDD!"

[Morton and Haynes are standing in the middle of the ring, their arms raised in triumph as AWA and Tiger Paw Pro officials come walking down the aisle, carrying the gold and silver Stampede Cup trophy.]

JD: For the third time in four years, Violence Unlimited made the Finals of the Stampede Cup tournament and for the first time ever, we have a two-time winner of this prestigious event!

BW: Who's gonna tell Morton and Haynes that they ain't the best in the world now, daddy?!

JD: Danny Morton and Jackson Haynes are one of the most dominant tag teams this sport has ever seen - whether it's in the United States or in Japan - and tonight, they've proved it once again. They are the Stampede Cup winners. They ARE the best tag team in the world today. Brian James and Michael Aarons gave it one hell of an effort here tonight in the Tokyo Dome despite all the odds but they just couldn't overcome the brutality of one of the greatest all-time tag teams in our sport... and love them or hate them, you've gotta give them that respect now. They have cemented themselves here tonight as one of the best tag teams in the history of this industry, Bucky.

BW: Without a doubt. We ran down the resume for them earlier but let's do it again - former AWA National Tag Team Champions, former Tiger Paw Global Crown Tag Team Champions, three-time Finalists in the Stampede Cup tournament, and now the first ever two-time WINNER of the Stampede Cup tournament. They are the best tag team walking the face of God's green Earth and I don't give a damn if you're Jones and Hammonds, the

Lights Out Express, the War Pigs, or any of these other teams, until you've beaten Violence Unlimited, you ain't got a right to that distinction.

JD: The only thing missing from that resume is the AWA World Tag Team Titles and traditionally, the Cup winner has been named the top contender so you would have to imagine that Morton and Haynes will get their chance to add that line to their resume in the near future.

[The camera cuts to the floor where Brian James is tending to Cody Mertz and Michael Aarons alongside AWA medical personnel.]

JD: Again, a heck of an effort out of Aarons and James here tonight... and Aarons and Mertz before that. You have to wonder if things would've gone differently in this Finals if it was Aarons and Mertz but we'll never get the answer to that question.

BW: No time for what ifs and what could have beens, Dane. We've got the 2014 Stampede Cup champions standing in the ring, holding the Cup high over their heads. For the second time, they're pocketing a million bucks with this win. Wow. This team is the real deal.

JD: Fans, it's been a long and exciting night of action here in Tokyo. A historic night. A controversial night. Say what you will about it but it has been the honor of my life to be here at ringside to call this action... even if I had to do it with Bucky.

BW: Hey!

JD: For Bucky Wilde, Mark Stegglet, and Colt Patterson, I'm Jason Dane. We're coming home everyone! Good night!

[The camera holds on Violence Unlimited celebrating their win, the trophy held high overhead as pyro bursts in the Tokyo Dome...

...and we fade to black.]