

Saturday Night Wrestling

March 15, 2014
Crockett Coliseum
Dallas, Texas

[We fade up from black on the sounds of Bachman Turner Overdrive's "You Ain't Seen Nothin' Yet" as we get shots from past AWA action:

Juan Vasquez smashing the Right Cross across the jaw of MAMMOTH Mizusawa.

Calisto Dufresne throwing a fireball in the face of City Jack. The Dragon revealing himself as William Craven.

The Bishop Boys landing Doc Allen's Miracle Headache Elixir on a helpless foe.

Grant Stone and Bobby Taylor trading haymakers from their war in the early days of the AWA.

Marcus Broussard hitting belly-to-belly suplexes on a range of opponents over and over again.

Stevie Scott smashing the metal briefcase over the skull of Kolya Sudakov.

Alex Martinez dropping a bloodied William Craven in a Firebomb chokeslam.

Ryan Martinez and Gunnar Gaines using the Splashbuster to great effectiveness at the Stampede Cup

Dave Cooper gets a montage of spinebusters executed to perfection over the years.

Nenshou spews mist into the eyes of Jason Dane.

And more footage flashes by - Violence Unlimited, the Lynches, Kevin Slater, Raphael Rhodes, Eric Preston, The Shane Gang, Ron Houston, Tumaffi, and more... and more... and more...

Until finally, the footage is all a blur of motion, shots flying by so fast, it's almost impossible to pick out who is who - Buddy Lambert, Ricky Royal, the Rockstar Express, Gary Bright, Glenn Hudson, Alphonse Green, The Rave, The Hive...

The footage freezes on a clip of Alphonse Green plucking Ryan Martinez into an inside cradle to win the World Television Title before cutting to Skywalker Jones and Hercules Hammonds winning the World Tag Team Titles at SuperClash V as Jones leaps off the top rope, driving a double stomp down into the face of Kenny Stanton just before Hammonds throws Stanton down with the Hammonds Hammer.

And then finally to Supreme Wright lifting a torture racked Dave Bryant up and over his head, driving him down onto two raised knees, capturing the World Heavyweight Title in shocking fashion after cashing in the Steal The Spotlight contract at SuperClash V...

...and EXPLODES into the panning live shot of the exterior of the Crockett Coliseum, a converted warehouse on the outskirts of Dallas, Texas. Big steel letters with the name of the building stand tall over the entrance - a giant gleaming marquee that reads "AWA SATURDAY NIGHT WRESTLING" in large black print. There are still lines of fans streaming into the building as the voice of Gordon Myers is heard over the footage.]

GM: Ladies and gentlemen... WE! ARE! LIVE! from the Crockett Coliseum in Dallas, Texas, for yet another edition of AWA Saturday Night Wrestling. And we are just two weeks away from a historic moment - the very first trip outside of the United States for the American Wrestling Alliance as the AWA heads to the Tokyo Dome in Japan for a very special joint show with our friends at Tiger Paw Pro - a night we're calling Rising Sun Showdown!

[As Gordon speaks, we crossfade into the building where first, we get a shot of the Wall Of Fame, the lengthy wall that the AWA uses to pay tribute to stars of professional wrestling past. We see the Hall of Fame plaques for men like John Wesley Hardin, Caleb Temple, and "Crimson" Joe Reed along with tons of old wrestling photographs, posters, and even a handful of memorabilia like the trunks Tommy Fierro was wearing when he beat Hamilton Graham for the World Heavyweight Title and what appears to be a piece of the iconic Bulldog Brown table.]

BW: The two biggest promotions in the world getting together for one gigantic night of action... and you're gonna miss it!

GM: I'm not the world's biggest fan of air travel, Bucky, you know that... and I'm sure Jason Dane will do an excellent job calling all the action in the Land of the Rising Sun right by your side.

BW: Better be careful, Gordo. Ever heard the story of Wally Pipp? He sat out a game with a headache, Lou Gehrig replaced him and then basically never let him play again!

GM: I don't think that's exactly what happened but I will be right here waiting for you when you come back to paraphrase my good friend, Richard Marx.

BW: Your... huh?!

GM: Never mind.

[A second fade gets us into the arena bowl where five thousand fans have jammed into the Hot Tin Box to get a glimpse of the best pro wrestling action on the planet. Steel chairs are set up all over the ringside area, surrounding the red, white, and blue roped ring that has black mats laid out at ringside and a steel barricade to keep the masses at bay. Towards the back of the sections of chairs are wooden bleachers that seat the majority of the crowd.]

GM: With just two weeks away until Rising Sun Showdown, the action here in Dallas, Texas is at a fever pitch. One spot remains in the Super Bowl of Tag Team Wrestling known as the Stampede Cup and tonight, in the Main Event, we will fill that spot in the second ever Tag Team Gauntlet match! Some of the best teams in wrestling will step into that ring tonight in hopes of being in the Tokyo Dome in two weeks' time to prove that they are THE best.

BW: One last shot... one more chance... one final opportunity to break into the Field of 12 and fight for a million dollars, daddy!

GM: In addition to that, the winners of the 2010 Stampede Cup and the #3 seed in this year's tournament, Violence Unlimited, will be in action as well.

[One side of the building houses a small entrance stage with a long elevated wooden platform that leads the distance to the ring. We can also spot an elevated interview platform off to the side of the stage.]

A cut down to ringside shows the timekeeper's table before the cameraman rounds the corner to find Gordon Myers and Bucky Wilde standing in front of the announce table. Myers, the Dean of professional wrestling announcing, is standing in a plain salt and pepper sportscoat, black slacks, white dress shirt, and a stars and strips flag tie. Wilde, a former multiple time Southern Manager of the Year, is in a bright sunburst yellow sportscoat that he's got pulled tight and buttoned up so that no one can see what's underneath. Gordon looks a bit curious at Bucky as he speaks.]

GM: It's a tag team extravaganza here tonight, fans, plus Dave Bryant will be in the building with what he says is a very special challenge for the World Heavyweight Champion, Supreme Wright! We'll have all of that plus much, much more so let's go up to Phil Watson for our opening matchup!

[Crossfade. Ring announcer Phil Watson is standing in the ring. Also in the ring is a black-haired, lean man with a slight acne problem and large nose. He wears white gi pants and a green cloth belt. He goes barefoot, with athletic tape around his feet.]

PW: The following contest is scheduled for one fall, with a five minute time limit. In the ring, hailing from Colorado Springs, Colorado and weighing in at 233 pounds, he is... ALBERT SHOWENS!!!

[Showens holds his right fist in the air, to a smattering of cheers from the crowd...]

PW: And his opponent...

[...which really gets going when 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. Like his opponent, he is also barefoot, with athletic tape around his feet.]

'T WAS 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!

PW: Hailing from County Cork, Ireland and weighing in at 240 pounds, he is...

CALLUM MAAAHONEEEY!!!

[Reaching the ring, Mahoney steps through the ropes. As the music fades, he paces the ring, awaiting the start of the match. The fans begin to chant "MAKE HIM TAP!" and, of course, "FIGHT! FIGHT! FIGHT!"]

BW: Mahoney, rocking some new gear, Gordo. Guess he is taking this shoot fight at Rising Sun Showdown extremely seriously.

GM: And why wouldn't he? He's going into something that is not quite up his alley. On the contrary, this so-called shoot fight is Sudakov's speciality, being a former MMA star. Maybe the different gear is one way for Mahoney to get a feel of what the experience could be like.

"DING! DING!"

[Mahoney and Showens circle each other. They move in and go into a collar-and-elbow tie up, which Showens quickly drops, going instead to grab Mahoney by the waist. He places his left leg on the outside of Mahoney's right leg and tries to leverage the Irishman over, but Mahoney quickly shifts his right leg to the outside, hooking Showens' left leg with it and sweeping it out from under Showens, while pushing him backwards onto his back.]

GM: Nice display of grappling from the two from the outset. Mahoney takes advantage, moving into the mount position...

[Mahoney drops down into the aforementioned mount, letting loose with a barrage of short punches that catches Showens by surprise. He lifts his arms, looking to defend himself...

...which is exactly what Mahoney wanted as he shifts his body so that he is lying across Showens' chest, pulling his legs under him to scissor the left arm.]

GM: Wait a second!

[The Irishman quickly leans back, hyperextending the elbow.]

BW: Whoa! Whoa! Whoa!

[The referee leaps to his feet, waving frantically for the bell.]

"DING! DING! DING!"

GM: What just happened?!

PW: [Uncertainly.] Ladies and gentlemen... Your winner... By way of submission...

CALLUM MAAAHONEEEY!!!

[The Pogues' "The Rocky Road to Dublin" starts to play, as Mahoney releases the hold and gets to his feet. Referee Ricky Longfellow tries to raise his hand, but Mahoney very quickly pulls it away.]

BW: Armbar out of nowhere! Showens had no choice but to submit!

[Mahoney holds both his arms up, to cheers from the crowd. He looks directly into the camera and we hear him say, "Tick-tock, tick-tock! Sixty seconds, Pro Wrestler Hunter Killer, sixty seconds is all you get!" before stepping through the ropes and exiting the ring.]

GM: That... I don't think we even hit the minute mark! Mahoney just showed how quickly he could lock the armbar in and make his opponent tap out! But will he be able to do the same to the Russian War Machine, Kolya Sudakov, a former Mixed Martial Arts star and a former AWA National Champion as well, at the Tokyo Dome two weeks from tonight?!

BW: That's gonna be a heck of a fight. I think Mahoney might be ready for him, Gordo.

GM: It certainly appears that way if that match we just saw was any indication. We're going to be hearing from Kolya Sudakov in some fashion later tonight as well. You have to wonder if he's re-thinking this idea right about now.

BW: Sudakov tapped out at SuperClash. He tapped out to that armbar once already and if the Armbar Assassin hooks it on in Tokyo, I'm betting that Sudakov will be tapping out again, daddy.

GM: You could very well be right, Bucky. But right now, let's go up to the interview platform where Jason Dane is standing by! Jason?

[The screams. They're deafening. High-pierced. Eardrum shattering. Never ending. As it moves towards the interview stage and Jason Dane, the camera pans across the crowd, focusing on the young girls in the front rows, jumping up and down, shrieking, hands clenched, some of them with their eyes shut, some with eyes that stream with tears. But no matter what else they're doing, they're screaming. And why?]

JD: Fans, right now, I'm joined by the one and only Travis Lynch.

[That's why.]

JD: And his brother, Jack Lynch.

[The screams aren't for big brother Jack. But there's an equally loud roar. Deeper voices, with bass in them, cheer for the eldest of the Lynch brothers. As always, the tall, lanky cowboy is dressed all in black, only the white buttons on his long sleeved, button down shirt offering a glimpse of color. Jack wears his black cowboy hat slung forward, casting a shadow that obscures his eyes. Next to him, Travis is dressed much more ostentatiously, wearing his trademark super smedium AWA Travis Lynch t-shirt as well as black chaps, with silver studding forming the belt and along the edging. Jason Dane has one hand up to his ear, covering it. Why? Because of the screams.]

JD: I know you two have some things you want to get off your chest, as both of you are embroiled in controversy of late. Jack, let's begin with you. I understand you have a message for the Black Tiger himself, one Demetrius Lake.

JL: ...

[But the moment Jack opens his mouth, a chorus of high-pitched "WE LOVE YOU TRAVIS" screams interrupts him. Jack shakes his head and exhales slowly, offering a slight smirk.]

JL: ...and he loves you too ladies.

Now, before I address Demetrius, there's somethin' I want to remind everyone of. See, of late, I've been seen more in the company of my friends than I have of my brother. Most of you have seen me hangin' out with Hannibal Carver, Bobby O'Connor, and William Craven...

[Jack gives a slight shrug of his shoulders, as if to say "yeah, that last one surprises me too."]

JL: And if you come around after the show, you've seen us all havin' a good time at the Rusty Spur. And Hannibal, Bobby and William are my friends. I got their back, and they got mine. And friends are great. But this guy right here?

[Jack removes his hat, and inclines his head towards Travis. Cue the screams.]

JL: He's my family. And family comes first.

Some people wanna say that I'm too focused on my family. They wonder why I don't strike out on my own. Why don't I make a run at the big gold? Well, its real simple. A man who stands alone, a man who forgets his roots... that's a man like Supreme Wright. And we've seen, week after week, that he's becoming less of a man and more of a snake.

I stand with my friends, and I stand for my family. My name is Jack Lynch, and its the "Lynch" that's the most important. This ain't weakness. Strength is in my blood. My strength _is_ my blood.

So Trav, I wanna take this opportunity to remind you, and all the people listenin', that your big brother is right here, ready to help ya out whenever ya need it. I'm watchin' what happens with ya, and I always got your back.

I saw what that...

[Jack pauses, searching for the right, TV-friendly adjective]

JL: What'd ya call her? Jezebel? Yeah. I saw what she did, slappin' ya across the face.

[You thought the girls couldn't get louder? Now their screams of ecstatic joy have become howls of anger and outrage, as they are traumatized by reliving the memory of Sunshine slapping their idol in his handsome face. And those boos and howls are enough to make the Crockett Coliseum tremble.]

JL: But I know that you got that all taken care of. Don't ya?

[As the heartthrob of the Lynches begins to speak, the screams are once again deafening. All Travis can do is smile and shake his head as he waits for them to die down.]

TL: Come on Jack, you know this isn't the first time a girl has gone a bit crazy around me.

[Travis chuckles.]

JD: Certainly, this situation with Sunshine has been... controversial to say the least. You've made your feelings on her well known Travis, but do you have any more to say.

TL: Honestly, Jason, I do have something I want to say to Sunshine. On the last Saturday Night Wrestling, I never meant for her to fall to the mat. I just couldn't stand havin' that jezebel touching me and well, I pulled my arm away just a bit too hard. So while I want nothin' to do with her...

[Travis runs his hands through his blonde locks.]

TL: I was raised a gentleman, so Sunshine... I'm sorry.

JD: Well, hopefully that will put an end to all the accusations that have been thrown about in your direction.

TL: For my mom's sake, I can only hope so.

JD: And the other subject that the Lynch family finds itself embroiled in is the "Ban the Claw" movement, begun by the aforementioned Demetrius Lake. I understand that Mr. Lake is even sponsoring "Ban the Iron Claw" dinners, held at Cowboy Bob's All You Can Eat Ribs.

[Boos at the mention of Cowboy Bob's.]

JD: Of course, Lynch supporters can show their support by coming to one of the many "The Claw is the Law" events at the Rusty Spur.

[Cheers as Jason plugs the Spur. Though one might wonder how many of Travis' fans can get into a bar.]

JD: But Travis, I'd like to ask you what you think of this drive to ban the Iron Claw. We've heard Jack's thoughts, of course, but this is about your heritage as well.

TL: Of course it is, Jason. But let's start with a fact about Demetrius himself. He claims the hold is dangerous, rambles on about the injuries it has caused... but he fails to mention one important fact. Demetrius Lake fears the CLAW!

[The crowd cheers in agreement.]

TL: Demetrius Lake is called the Black Tiger but if you look closely, y'all see the black tiger has a yellow belly! While he brags about running Jack out of Missouri, he fails to mention how on more than one occasion he was he was begging for Jack to release the Claw.

It's not about the dangers of the Claw or Lake's fake concern for another's health... it's all about one man's fear! Lake knows when the Claw is applied this time around, it's the end of his career!

[You guessed it, cheers erupt from the crowd.]

TL: As you said, Jason, there's no doubt the Claw is rooted in my heritage and deep in the history of the PCW. Look over the PCW history, and you'll see the titles the Claw has won for James, Jack, myself and of course Blackjack... well, Bucky over there, he can't count that high. But honestly it's more than the titles, it's more than the greats who've been locked in the Claw...

[Travis pauses.]

TL: The Claw is honestly about family. Cause we didn't learn it from someone in a school... we didn't learned it from the tales of a legend who used it once. No, we learned it from the master, Blackjack Lynch! Each one of us has been taught this hold since the day we could walk. And before that the day, the tales we heard, the legends that were spun in front of the fire about Claw... it's almost like the Claw is a glue for the Lynches.

Hell, what Demetrius fails to realize, is the Claw is the Lynches.

[His brother finished, the camera cuts back to Jack.]

JL: See, this circles me right back to the original point. Bannin' the Claw ain't just about one man's cowardly attempt to avoid gettin' his skull crushed. It's about tryin' to cut the heart out of the Lynch family. And that's somethin' I don't take lightly.

Now everyone knows that Demetrius Lake is a big talker. He's got more oration skills than this humble old cowboy will ever possess. But my dad used to say that there's two types of people in this world - there's talkers, and there's doers. And only the latter ever gets things done. We all know Demetrius Lake is a talker.

But lemme ask ya, what kinda man do you think I am?

[Jack settles his hat back on his head and gives a slight nod.]

JL: I know you're in the buildin' tonight, Demetrius. And I'm gonna do somethin'... I'm gonna keep the promise I made to ya awhile back.

So keep talkin'. It'll be a good warm up for the screamin' you'll be doin' once I get the Claw on you. Because I'm done talkin'. And there's only one thing left to do.

[Jack turns towards his brother.]

JL: Trav? Tell the ladies goodbye.

TL: Goodbye ladies. I'll see y'all a little later on tonight.

[Travis winks at the camera and the screams once again fill the Crockett Coliseum. Jack can only shake his head as we crossfade back to Gordon and Bucky at ringside.]

GM: Ban The Claw versus The Claw Is The Law! It's all the rage here in the AWA as Demetrius Lake and Percy Childes try to get that petition signed and get the AWA to consider banning the Iron Claw once and for all.

BW: It SHOULD be banned! It's a dangerous weapon and it's not fit for a wrestling ring!

GM: The clawhold has been a part of wrestling for decades, Bucky!

BW: That don't make it right! Slavery was around a long time too and everyone seems pretty happy that it's gone!

GM: BUCKY! You are NOT comparing the disgusting practice of slavery to a wrestling hold!

BW: All I'm sayin' is that everyone knows these Lynches are no good. From Blackjack Lynch, that ol' miserable miser squeezin' a penny so hard that Honest Abe tapped out... to that goldbrickin' James Lynch trying to soak up some Obamacare money... to Travis Lynch... good ol' heartthrob Travis who showed the world two weeks ago just what a scumbag he is...

GM: Scumbag? Oh no... you didn't.

[And on cue, a grinning Bucky opens up his sportscoat to reveal a black t-shirt with the phrase "#ScumbagTravis" written across the chest.]

BW: Of course I did! The hashtag trending worldwide for the past two weeks!

GM: It is not! I can't believe you bought one of those shirts out in the parking lot tonight! I was disgusted when I saw those street vendors selling them!

BW: The AWA could learn a lesson from these kids out there. This one would sell like hotcakes!

GM: It would not! If you look throughout this building tonight, I bet yours is the only one of those shirts here!

BW: Only 'cause of all these henpicked cowboys who're afraid their wives and girlfriends will close up shop - if you get my drift - for insulting their precious Travis Stench!

GM: I've had enough of this. You're ridiculous, Bucky. Let's go backstage to Mark Stegglet!

[We fade back to Mark Stegglet standing alongside the big chunk of athlete known as Willie Hammer. Willie's wearing a pair of silver trunks with black lightning bolts down the side and the words "HAMMER TIME" across the rump. Hammer is wearing a camo "COMBAT CORNER" tanktop as well, using his hands to shape his hair as Stegglet speaks.]

MS: Thanks, Gordon. Joining me right now is one of the hottest rookies in the entire AWA, Willie Hammer! Willie, you've been on a big roll in the local arena events as of late and are starting to really make a name for yourself in the locker room.

[Hammer nods.]

WH: Ain't no thing, Mark. Willie Hammer was born to do this! From the day I peeked my head out of mama's unspeakable place, I was ready for a fight. I grew up on the streets of Los Angeles, ready for a fight. And when Sweet Daddy Williams, my friend and mentor, found me in some broken down dirty gym in South Los Angeles, throwing these ol' soupbones...

[Hammer holds up his fists.]

WH: ...at a heavy bag and shakin' what my mama gave me...

[He jerks a thumb at his rear end.]

WH: He knew... they knew... everyone knew that right here on Saturday Night Wrestling is where Willie Hammer was meant to be. Now, all the fans and all the guys in the locker room are learning that too!

[Stegglet nods.]

MS: We learned earlier tonight of the final roster of talent heading over to Japan for Rising Sun Showdown and the rest of our tour there... and unfortunately, you're not on that list. How disappointed are you?

[The young rookie grimaces.]

WH: Ain't gonna tell you I wouldn't love to be on that jet with you guys, Mark. But I've got dues to pay and business to take care of right here at home. You know what I'm gonna do until y'all come back?

[Stegglet shakes his head.]

WH: I'm gonna park this big ol' butt right down in the Combat Corner. I'm gonna pull together what's left of those loyal to the cause in that gym and I'm gonna show 'em why Willie Hammer is makin' the natives shake and the rafters quake everywhere we go these days!

But that's not it, Mark. That's just part of it.

[Stegglet waits.]

MS: What's the-

[Hammer excitedly interrupts.]

WH: I'm gonna be workin' out myself! I'm gonna be hittin' the weights... hittin' the heavy bag... workin' that speedbag like it's nobody's business... I'm even gonna get my big butt on that treadmill and do some cardio, Markus... and you know why?

[Stegglet shakes his head.]

WH: Because yours truly was down at the Championship Committee offices this morning to make it official. When the AWA comes back to the land of Stars And Stripes, I want to challenge Supreme Wright for the World Heavyweight Title!

[Big cheer from inside the building!]

MS: It sounds like they approve. But you're not even a Top 10 Contender! Do you really think you deserve a title shot?

[Hammer shrugs.]

WH: Supreme Wright said he wants to defend against anyone and everyone, right? Well, I think I fit in BOTH of those categories, brother. But if for some reason I don't... well, this young pup is just as happy gettin' Mr. Wright inside this ring without the title on the line. The bottom line, baby, is that he needs a butt kickin'... Combat Corner style... and Willie Hammer is ready to give it to him.

[Stegglet smiles.]

MS: One more question for you, Willie... you said you want a shot at Supreme Wright and the World Title when we come back to the States. Does that mean you believe Wright will successfully retain his title against Kenta Kituzkawa at the Rising Sun Showdown?

[Hammer strokes his chin.]

WH: Me and Kenta go back a ways, Mark. When my teacher, Todd Michaelson, was still running the Corner, he brought Kenta in a few times to run us through the paces. They were close... tight. And him being here meant the world to all us kids trying to make it.

Plus, we've shared more than a few brews down at the Spur, ya dig?

[Stegglet chuckles, nodding.]

WH: But to answer the question, Mark, I gotta ask you one right back. You saw what Supreme Wright did to win the title at SuperClash. You've seen what he's done since, gettin' Cain on his side, robbin' the Corner blind when he saw the chance, kickin' us all when we were down.

My question for you...

[Hammer gets a slight grin.]

WH: Do you really think there's anything he WON'T do to keep that title?

[Stegglet pauses, thinking... and then slowly shakes his head.]

WH: Me neither. Sign the contract, Wright. Sign it now. Sign it tonight! Let's do this, brother! Let's do it!

[With Hammer still shouting variations of that, Stegglet retakes the mic.]

MS: Willie Hammer's looking for his shot at the World Heavyweight Champion whether the title's on the line or not! He'll be in action later tonight, fans, but right now, it's time for our first commercial break of the night! Don't go away because when we come back, it'll be time for tag team action!

[Fade to black.]

Cut to a very long shot of the exterior of a pretty dingy looking building.]

"Have you ever dreamed of fame?"

[Cut a little closer.]

"Of glory?"

[A little closer.]

"Of your friends and family seeing you on television?"

[And just a little closer, revealing a red, white, and blue sign that reads "AWA Combat Corner."]

"Well, now you can make all your dreams come true by signing up today at the AWA Combat Corner - the official training school for the American Wrestling Alliance!"

[We cut to the interior of the building where we can see lots of standard gym equipment surrounding a very basic wrestling ring. There are people lifting weights, running on treadmills, and of course, working out in the ring.]

"With the very best trainers in the business, the AWA Combat Corner is the most-equipped training facility to get you in shape and get you in the ring in the shortest amount of time!"

[Cut into the ring where an unseen instructor is barking out instructions to two young students who are grappling on the canvas.]

"So, stop by the Combat Corner today... call our offices... visit our website... and let them know that you want to be the next AWA Superstar! You want to be the future of the business! You want to wrestle!"

[Fade to a graphic that has all the info on the AWA Combat Corner before we fade back to black...]

Fade up backstage where Jason Dane is surrounded by three members of the Shane Gang. Lenny Strong and Aaron Anderson stand to the interviewers' right in their matching green and white track jackets and ring trunks. Strong's brown hair is just long enough again to tuck behind his ears while Anderson's is buzzed tight enough to make it hard to distinguish his actual hair color. Standing in front of them is the ever delightful and always pleasant Miss Sandra Hayes.

The Siren, doing her part to match her duo, is fitted in an effortlessly sexy green jumpsuit which naturally has an alluring and bejeweled scoop neckline -- which otherwise would be bland and as memorable as former colleague Harry Hyatt's AWA career. Hayes' black hair is braided tight and hangs over her right shoulder while her trademark florescent pink branding iron rests over her left.]

JD: Welcome back, fans. Right now I'm standing here with a group who is all too familiar with running the gauntlet. Last year they rose to the occasion and outlasted a dozen teams to lock up a spot in the Stampede Cup. While they won the night, they went on and lost --

MSH: Hold it right there, sugar.

[Lenny places his hand on the Siren's shoulder and she turns towards him.]

LS: Hang on, we got this.

[The Siren nods and holds her hand out in a "the floor is yours" fashion.]

LS: You think we don't remember what happened last year, jack? You think Aaron and I somehow forgot about RyGunn bouncin' us from the Cup? Didja think that Sandra sprinkled us with memory loss dust and all of a sudden the idea that RyGunn stole our moment and went on to get shot after shot at the World Tag Team titles completely escapes our brain? 'Cause we remember it REAL well.

We remember showin' up to the Crock and layin' a beatin' on anyone that stood in our way. Whether it was Sweet Daddy and the Big Soup, the Mastah and Mr. Mensa, or even former tag champ Tin Can Rust and whatever hack he dug up, it didn't matter. It was our night for the taking and quite frankly we stole the show...we stole the moment...and like you said yourself, we stole the night. Now before you get all getty and tell these people about what happened from that point on let me tell YOU the cold hard truth.

[Lenny inches in real close to Dane who tries his best to lean away.]

LS: RyGunn? Gone. Bishops? Gone. Aces? Gone. Sharif and 'Nova, Samoan Hit Squad, Prehistoric Powers, Bullies, Justin Bieber's career, Breaking Bad,...Gone. Gone. Gone. THEY ARE ALL GONE! But ya know who is still here, Jason? Ya know what team has surpassed them all?

JD: Skywalker Jones and Herc --

LS: US! The Ring Workers, Warriors, Lights Out Express, call us whatever the hell ya want, jack. Lenny Strong and Aaron Anderson have survived each and every single on one of them. 'Cause that's what this team is all about. We're survivors. We're destined to prevail where others were doomed to fail. So if you're wonderin' if we can run the table for a second time we are gonna lay it out for even a guy like you to understand...

AA [low, stern]: Bring. IT. On.

LS: That's right. For the past three hundred and sixty five days we haven't asked for title shots...we haven't demanded main event moments... we haven't cried fair or foul because we have had one thing and one thing only on our minds.

The Cup.

The single...solitary symbol...of what defines that greatest tag team in the World. The titles, they'll come and go just like the teams I spoke of earlier. But winnin' the Cup is some'em that is everlastin'. Look at Violence Unlimited. Look at the Lynches. Look at Freeman and Dufresne. All relevant for one simple reason.

They brought home the biggest prize on the biggest stage.

JD: Well, technically Calisto Dufresne --

AA: Save it, Dane. Strong and I could care less about him. This is about us. This is about the road we are about to pave through the AWA tag team division. For once we don't have to worry about some moronic team like the Rave or Gunnar and his punk son getting in our way. We don't even have to worry about Steve Spector sticking his nose in our business because tonight he is banned and buried to God knows where. Tonight our eyes are fixated on repeating history and running the gauntlet one team at a time.

It doesn't matter if we step foot in that ring first, last, or somewhere in-between because at the end of the night only one team is going to be left standing and sealing their place into the 2014 Stampede Cup and for everyone else...

[Strong cocks back his right arm...]

LS: It's going to be LIGHTS...

[...and 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.

[Anderson and Strong storm off camera with Miss Sandra Hayes throwing her hands up and over their shoulders as the camera pans back to Jason Dane standing by himself.]

JD: The Lights Out Express are determined to repeat history right here tonight, fans. But there's a laundry list of teams waiting to cash in their own ticket to make the Stampede Cup's elusive Field of 12! Gordon, Bucky, back to you.

[Crossfade back down to the ring.]

GM: The Lights Out Express are only one of the teams in that big tag team gauntlet match later tonight. Yes, they won it last year but repeating that feat will be a very difficult task in tonight's Main Event.

BW: Aaron Anderson and Lenny Strong are, in my opinion, one of the most underrated teams in the entire AWA, Gordo. They got stuck for a solid year tussling with those freaks from the future and getting bogged down in Terry Shane's battles... tonight could be their moment to shine! Last year's Gauntlet match got them in the picture... this year's might make them superstars!

GM: That remains to be seen. Fans, let's go up to the ring for tag team action!

[Crossfade to the ring where Phil Watson is standing.]

PW: The following is a tag team match scheduled for one fall with a fifteen minute time limit! Introducing first, on my right...they weigh in at a combined weight of 452 pounds, here are Ian Eagle and Jay Hawke...

THE BIRDS OF THE PREEEEEEEEEEEEEEEY!!!

[The camera cuts to show two unimpressive-looking men in American flag-style tights. They raise their arms into the air to the indifference of the crowd.]

PW: And their opponents...

[The sounds of Motley Crue's "Shout At The Devil" kicks in to a HUGE POP from the crowd! Soon, the crowd is singing along...]

"SHOUT!"

"SHOUT!"

"SHOUT!"

"SHOUT!"

[As the lyric "SHOUT AT THE DEVIL!" hits, the curtain tears apart to reveal a fired-up Jackson Haynes and Danny Morton to a MASSIVE ROAR from the crowd!]

PW: They are former AWA National Tag Team champions and winners of the 2010 Stampede Cup! Tonight, they come in at a combined weight of 595 pounds... "THE HAMMER" JACKSON HAYNES... DANNY MORTON...

VIIIIIIIOOOOLENNNNNNNCE UNNNNLIMMMMMITED!!

[Morton jogs down the aisle, dressed in his usual red boxer's robe. He is followed close behind by the cowboy hat-wearing Jackson Haynes, who points at Eagle and Hawke inside the ring, before slowly moving his thumb across his throat and lumbering down the aisle behind Morton.]

GM: The AWA may be going to Japan for The Stampede Cup, but this next team shocked us all, when they flew in FROM Japan along with The War Pigs to confront the AWA World Tag Team champions! Virtually no one expected to see Violence Unlimited back in the states!

BW: They've been gone from the AWA ever since Jones and Hammonds beat'em by the slimmest of margins at Homecoming last year, but ya' gotta' believe they're hot under the collar 'cause they didn't get that number one seed, Gordo.

GM: Danny Morton and Jackson Haynes are former AWA National Tag Team champions, former Stampede Cup champions, and for well over a decade, have been considered one of the most dominant tag teams not only in Japan, but the world. You just know that they would love to win the Cup one more time and cement their place as the very best.

[There's a huge roar from the crowd, as Haynes and Morton climbs up opposite corners and raises his fists into the air.]

GM: The Birds of Prey are a veteran team, probably best known for their stints along the northeast coast territories back in the late 90s, but they've got a long night ahead of them if they hope to beat Violence Unlimited.

BW: HA! I got a feeling it ain't gonna' be a long night, Gordo. A PAINFUL one...but not a long one.

[The bell sounds, as Jay Hawke and Danny Morton lock up. Hawke struggles hard, but is unable to move Morton, who straightens up and then shoves Hawke down hard into the canvas!]

GM: Danny Morton showing off some of that legendary power, easily overpowering Jay Hawke.

BW: A small guy like Hawke has no business trying to match power with Morton. Hell, Hercules Hammonds or Brad Jacobs barely got any business trying to match power with Morton!

[Hawke gets back to his feet quickly grabbing Danny Morton into a side headlock. However, he doesn't have the hold cinched in for long, before Morton powers him into the air and TOSSES him off him!]

GM: OH! Up goes Jay Hawke!

[Hawke comes up holding the small of his back and right into Morton's clutches. The Oklahoma native lifts Hawke up into a military press and slams him down to the canvas, right in front of his tag team partner!]

GM: And down he goes! And here comes Ian Eagle!

[Seeing his tag team partner in trouble, Ian Eagle tags himself in. He steps through the ropes and charges at Morton...]

"SMAAACK!"

GM: OH MY!!! WHAT A LARIAT BY DANNY MORTON!!!

[From the other side of the ring, Jackson Haynes sticks his arm out, yelling at Morton to tag him in. Morton walks over and slaps Haynes' hand to a big cheer from the crowd!]

GM: And in comes the Madman from Moscow, Tennessee, Jackson Haynes!

[Haynes grabs Eagle and whips him into the far corner, crushing him with a clotheline. He grabs Eagle and whips him hard into the opposite corner, before charging in and nailing Ian Eagle with a big boot!]

"OHHHH!!!"

GM: OH MY STARS! I've seen that big boot in the corner by Jackson Haynes hundreds of times and it's always brutal to watch.

BW: Between that lariat from Morton and that boot from Haynes, I ain't sure Eagle's got any teeth left, Gordo!

[Eagle falls face-first into the canvas, as Haynes shouts, "IT'S ALL OVER!!!" to the cheers of the crowd! However, as he begins to pull Eagle up into a standing headscissors, Hawke comes charging in...]

GM: OHHHH!!!

[...and is struck down by the Whiskey Lullaby!]

GM: THE WHISKEY LULLABY! Jay Hawke took that vicious thumb strike from Haynes right in the throat!

[Staring down momentarily at Hawke's prone form, Hayne turns his attention back to Eagle and pulls him up into a standing headscissors, yelling, "NOW IT'S OVER!" before lifting Eagle up into the air. At the height of his lift, Haynes holds Eagle there for a moment, before turning...]

"OHHHHHHHHHHH!!!"

[...and POWERBOMBING Eagle onto his own tag team partner!]

GM: OH MY STARS AND GARTERS!

BW: He tried to powerbomb Eagle THROUGH his own tag team partner!

GM: That has to be it! This match is over!

BW: It ain't over yet, Gordo!

[Haynes gets to his feet and turns to the corner, pointing towards Danny Morton, as the crowd roars their approval! The Tennessee native tags in Morton, yelling, "GET THAT SUM'BITCH UP!"

[Big pop!]

GM: HERE COMES THE STAMPEDE!

[Hyped up and ready to go, Morton slaps himself repeatedly, before YANKING Ian Eagle to his feet and scooping him up into his arms. With a bellow, Morton charges across the ring and smashes Ian Eagle back-first into the corner...]

GM: Morton slams Eagle into the corner!

[...and spins around, charging across the ring and smashing Eagle into the corner once more!]

GM: And into the other corner!

BW: Here it comes!

[And spinning around one more time, Morton takes two steps forward and LEAPS into the air, DRIVING Eagle into the canvas with a running powerslam!]

GM: THE OKLAHOMA STAMPEDE!

[Morton plants two hands on Eagle's chest and sticks out his tongue as Ricky Longfellow counts...]

GM: ONE! TWO!! THREE!!! HE GOT HIM!

[BIG POP!]

PW: Your winners...

VIIIIIIIOOOOOLENNNNNNNCE UNNNNLIMMMMMITED!!

[Morton and Haynes high-five each other as the crowd continues to cheer wildly.]

GM: That was complete and utter domination from bell-to-bell by Violence Unlimited.

BW: Morton and Haynes wanna' be the first two-time winners of the Cup and based on what I saw tonight, that ain't just a dream. They got a huge chance of winning the dang Cup again!

GM: Indeed. We'll try to get a word with Violence Unlimited after these important commercial messages!

[Fade to black.]

Cut to a very long shot of the exterior of a pretty dingy looking building.]

"Have you ever dreamed of fame?"

[Cut a little closer.]

"Of glory?"

[A little closer.]

"Of your friends and family seeing you on television?"

[And just a little closer, revealing a red, white, and blue sign that reads "AWA Combat Corner."]

"Well, now you can make all your dreams come true by signing up today at the AWA Combat Corner - the official training school for the American Wrestling Alliance!"

[We cut to the interior of the building where we can see lots of standard gym equipment surrounding a very basic wrestling ring. There are people lifting weights, running on treadmills, and of course, working out in the ring.]

"With the very best trainers in the business, the AWA Combat Corner is the most-equipped training facility to get you in shape and get you in the ring in the shortest amount of time!"

[Cut into the ring where an unseen instructor is barking out instructions to two young students who are grappling on the canvas.]

"So, stop by the Combat Corner today... call our offices... visit our website... and let them know that you want to be the next AWA Superstar! You want to be the future of the business! You want to wrestle!"

[Fade to a graphic that has all the info on the AWA Combat Corner before we fade back to black...]

As we come back from commercials, we see Jason Dane, standing by with Violence Unlimited. The two have hardly broken a sweat following their victory over The Birds of Prey, looking quite proud of themselves.]

JD: Gentlemen, the Stampede Cup is just around the corner! But the question is, why did you come over from Japan? Why did you step foot back into the AWA?

JH: Why?

[Haynes gives Dane the stink eye.]

JH: You're askin' us WHY???

[His eyes bug out.]

JH: 'Cause ya' forgot!

Ya' forgot who's the most dominant team in AWA history!

Ya' forgot who's the most dominant team in Stampede Cup history!

Ya' forgot, so we HAD to come back!

[He leans in close to the camera as his voice goes soft.]

JH: We HAD to come back, to remind you all. To jar those memories loose and make you realize the cold, harsh reality of it all! The number one team in the world AIN'T Hercules Hammonds or Skywalker Jones! It AIN'T those stinkin' Blonde Bombers! It's the same damn team it's always been and always will be, boy!

Violence Unlimited!

[Danny Morton pats Haynes on the shoulder, laughing.]

DM: Now me and Jack, we respect these teams, don't get us wrong, but it's obvious that someone in the AWA doesn't respect...us.

Number three.

[Morton shakes his head.]

DM: Number THREE.

[His voice begins to grow louder and more intense.]

DM: NUMBER THREE???

[Morton slaps himself hard in the face.]

DM: DO WE LOOK LIKE THE _THIRD_ BEST TAG TEAM IN THE WORLD!?!?!]

[Getting worked up, Morton runs his hands through his hair and repeatedly slaps himself in the face, before screaming out in pent-up rage.]

DM: Does anyone in their right mind THINK that there's two teams in the world that stand above us!? Does anyone think there's even one!?!]

[And with that, Morton turns to Haynes and shoves him hard in the chest.]

DM: IT'S A JOKE, JACK! IT'S GOTTA' BE A JOKE!!!

JH: I know, Danny! It's sick! It's disgustin'! It's the most perverse, twisted thing I've ever seen in all my years of wrasslin'!

But they'll remember.

They'll ALL remember.

We'll MAKE them remember.

[Haynes chuckles and turns to Dane.]

JH: Ya' know, Dane...for months, all we've heard is that The Stampede Cup was comin' to Japan. That the AWA was finally goin' international! That the Stampede Cup would finally be a global tournament to show who really is the best tag team in the world!

[Haynes shakes his head slowly.]

JH: Well, that ain't exactly right. Yeah, the Stampede Cup is comin' to Japan...but thing is, it ain't LEAVING Japan.

As far as me and Danny are concerned, the Cup is coming to STAY. As far as me and Danny are concerned...

[They point at themselves as Morton leans in with a sick grin on his mug.]

DM: ...The Stampede Cup is coming HOME.

[The two make disturbing faces at the camera, softly laughing to themselves, but suddenly becoming very quiet, their happy expressions replaced by dead serious looks.]

JH: We'll see ya' in Tokyo, boys.

[The two then stare down at Jason Dane, before turning and walking away. Fade.]

GM: An impressive victory by the former National Tag Team Champions and Stampede Cup winners who will be looking to become the first ever two-time Stampede Cup winners in two weeks' time in the Tokyo Dome.

BW: Morton and Haynes are two of the biggest, toughest, strongest guys you'll ever find in a wrestling locker room, Gordo. They've dominated Japan for years and we've only gotten a taste of their dominance in their time in the AWA. But a win in the Cup would put them right in line to challenge Jones and Hammonds for the World Tag Team Titles, Gordo.

GM: It certainly would. And speaking of teams who are hoping to get a shot at those titles, you've gotta be talking about Air Strike. It's been well-established by now that Michael Aarons and Cody Mertz were childhood fans of Andrew Tucker and Mike Sebastian - collectively known as Strictly Business. We learned two weeks ago that Air Strike and Strictly Business would be meeting in the first round of the tournament in what has to be a dream match for Air Strike you would imagine. But I'm not sure anyone really understood how big of fans these two youngsters were in their early days... until earlier this week when Michael Aarons' mother sent us a video that she had from Michael's youth. Let's take a look at that video now...

[We crossfade to old, shaky, poorly-shot home video footage. It appears to be a video camera set up on a tripod as we see a young man who is unmistakably Michael Aarons as a child walking away from it. A good listener would hear the voice of Jon Stegglet in the background, calling a match from an EMWC event. Young Michael Aarons settles in in front of the TV, lying on his stomach on the floor with his chin on his hands. A female voice, presumably the mother, calls out from off-camera.]

M: Mikey! Don't sit so close to the TV!

[Young Michael Aarons doesn't respond, engrossed in the action on the screen in front of him.]

M: Mikey, are you listening to me?!

["Mikey" turns towards the voice.]

YMA: Mom! It's Strictly Business!

M: Are you watching that wrestling stuff again? That stuff will rot your brain!

[Young Michael Aarons rolls his eyes as we catch a glimpse of Mike Sebastian making a tag, rushing in to dish out haymakers on his opponents as Aarons gets up, grabbing a nearby pillow to deliver the same right hand.]

YMA: Oh yeah! Take that Hardin!

[He picks up another pillow, throwing a haymaker.]

YMA: And you too Dan Oliver! Jivvy ain't nothing compared to the Cerebral Assassin!

[A third pillow gets picked up as Aarons throws something resembling a dropkick, landing hard on the carpet.]

M: MIKEY! STOP THAT! You're gonna hurt yourself!

YMA: No way, Mom! "Money Driven" can do it and I bet I can too!

M: Don't you know this stuff is fa-

YMA: MOM! Look at this!

[Aarons bodyslams the pillow, leaping up to drop an elbow on it. He grunts as he hits the floor, moving a little slower this time as he climbs to his feet. He says something completely unintelligible.]

M: What are you saying? Did you hurt yourself? Do you have a concussion?!

YMA: No, Mom! That's my Andrew Tucker accent!

M: Oh, okay. Is he Russian?

[Michael Aarons looks puzzled at his mother before a big crowd shout turns his focus back to the TV. He points, shouting.]

YMA: Here it comes, Mom! The frog splash! The Stock Market Crash!

[Aarons leaps up on the couch, stupidly stepping up on the armrest and nearly falling off before steadying himself.]

M: MICHAEL AARONS, GET DOWN FROM THERE!

[Aarons lifts his arms high, nearly touching the low ceiling before flinging himself into the air, trying to tuck his arms and legs before crashing awkwardly down onto the pillow. He groans in pain as his mom dashes in from off-camera.]

M: WHAT DID I TELL YOU ABOUT WATCHING THIS STUFF?! YOU'RE GONNA HURT YOURSELF! IF I HAVE TO TAKE YOU TO THE HOSPITAL AGAIN, I'M-

[A partially delirious Michael Aarons rolls to his back, absentmindedly starting to sing.]

YMA: Call me Big Daddy when you back that ass up.

M: WHAT?! WHAT ARE YOU-?!

YMA: Hoe, who is you playin' wit? Back that ass up.

M: MICHAEL AARONS! YOU DO _NOT_ SAY THINGS LIKE THAT TO YOUR MOTHER!

[She yanks him off the floor, slinging him over his shoulder as she turns off the TV, leaving a silent room behind.]

YMA: Ma... do we have any watermelon?

[And we fade away from the home movie back to a chuckling Gordon Myers.]

GM: Kids, don't try that at home but as you could see there, Michael Aarons and Cody Mertz grew up wanting to be Strictly Business and in two weeks' time, they're going to get their chance to step into the ring with their idols! I can't wait for that. Later tonight, we'll hear from Air Strike as they look forward to that big showdown in Japan but right now, let's go back to Phil Watson for more action!

[Crossfade to the ring where Phil Watson is standing.]

PW: The following contest is scheduled for one fall with a fifteen minute time limit. Introducing first... from Hollywood, California... weighing in at 205 pounds... Denny Watters!

[The slender bleached blonde rookie flips his hair, pulling a pair of heart-shaped sunglasses off to the cheers of the crowd.]

PW: And his opponent...

["Grinnin' In Your Face" by Son House starts up to big boos from the capacity crowd.]

PW: From Baton Rouge, Louisiana... weighing in at 475 pounds... being accompanied to the ring by Willoughby Tremblay...

"THE BIG UNEASY"...

RIIIIIICKYYYYY LAAAAAAAAAAAAANE!

[The curtain parts for the tall, thin (borderline gangly) manager known throughout the South as "Slick Willy." He looks as though he shops at a 70s thrift store with his retro suit. His raggedy brown hair is fastened up into a ponytail as he looks down his glasses at the jeering crowd.]

GM: Look at that piece of work.

BW: Not a fan of Willoughby Tremblay?

GM: There's a reason he's known as Slick Willy, Bucky. I wouldn't trust that guy as far as I can throw him and I shouldn't be throwing anything with my bad back.

[Tremblay turns, applauding cheerily as the quarter ton behemoth, Ricky Lane, strides into view. He has cropped black hair, shaven short on the sides except for a few small designs shaved to the scalp. His dark skin reveals a faded Lion tattoo that is barely visible on his left bicep which is exposed by his red double strapped singlet, black elbow pads, and black boots.]

BW: Six foot six, 475 pounds... this guy's a monster!

GM: He was a monster two weeks ago when Tony Sunn made short work out of him too, Bucky.

BW: That was a fluke. No way that happens again.

GM: If it does, Ricky Lane's days in the AWA may be running short. He may find himself back on the independent circuit... or perhaps back in Japan where he spent some time after exiting the sumo scene.

BW: Is that a threat?

GM: I'm just a lowly announcer like you, Bucky. I can't make threats.

[Lane walks down the elevated platform, reaching the ring. He grabs the top rope with both hands, looking angrily out the booing crowd before stepping through the ropes into the ring.]

BW: Denny Watters is looking pretty intimidated right now.

GM: He knew what he was getting into.

BW: Did he? A lot of times when a guy signs a contract, he's not really thinking about what's going to be waiting for him when it's time to fulfill that contract. This match may have sounded a whole lot better when he agreed to it.

[Referee Marty Meekly steps in the middle, extending his arms to keep any pre-match attacks to a minimum. He pauses to have a few words with both wrestlers before waving for the bell.]

GM: And here we go!

[Watters comes in fast, slamming a forearm into the chest of Ricky Lane. A second one clunks off the chest as Lane simply stands and stares at the much smaller man...

...before reaching up, piefacing Watters down to the canvas!]

GM: Ohh! He throws him down!

BW: Watters gave him two big ol' forearms which felt like a mosquito landing on Ricky Lane's chest, Gordo.

GM: I'm not sure trying to slug your way to success is the best strategy against Ricky Lane.

[As Watters rolls back to his feet, he charges in again, running headlong right into a cross-armed thrust to the throat!]

GM: Oh!

[Watters goes staggering backwards, coughing violently as Lane pursues, burying a knee into the midsection.]

GM: Big knee right into the breadbasket...

[Grabbing Watters by the back of the head, Lane SMASHES his skull into the top turnbuckle, turning his back into the corner. Lane nods at the jeering crowd, grabbing the top rope and turning his back to face Watters' chest...

...and SLAMS his rear end into the midsection of Watters!]

GM: Ohh! That's a whole lot of baggage to crash into someone!

[Holding the top rope, Lane pulls himself out of the corner a bit...

...and LUNGES back into the corner, smashing Watters in the corner a second time! The referee steps in, warning Lane as he delivers the smash a third time before walking arrogantly out of the corner, allowing Watters to slump down to a seated position against the turnbuckles.]

GM: Lane leaves him down on the mat and... LOOK OUT!

[The crowd groans as Lane charges back in, slamming his hindquarters into Watters' face!]

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

GM: Ricky Lane may have knocked him out cold right there!

BW: He calls that the Southern Wrecking Ball, daddy, and it sure wrecked this punk kid from Hollywood!

[The big man leans over, grabbing Watters by the ankle and dragging him out of the corner. He stands over him, barking insults at the still-jeering crowd...

...and DROPS a near five hundred pound elbow down into the chest of his prone opponent!]

GM: OHHH! WHAT AN ELBOWDROP!

[Lane rolls into a lateral press, barking at the official to "COUNT!" Meekly drops down to the mat, slapping it twice before Lane pulls Watters off the mat by the hair.]

GM: Oh, come on! There's no call for this, Bucky! This kid's had enough and Ricky Lane is trying to send him to the hospital.

BW: It wouldn't be the first time. Ricky Lane's sent more guys to the hospital in his brief time in the AWA than a lot of guys who've been here for years. And this is a ticked off Ricky Lane... one who hopes that Tony Sunn is watching right now.

[With the crowd whipped into a frenzy, Lane stands over the downed Watters...

...and steps up on his chest, putting all his weight on the much-smaller man before stepping off.]

GM: So simple but so effective. Denny Watters is in a whole lot of trouble right about now, Bucky.

BW: That might be the biggest understatement of the night.

[Lane pulls Watters off the mat by the arm, giving a shout as he whips him into the corner.]

GM: Oh no.

[Lane backs off, pounding a fist into his massive chest...

...and gives another shout as he barrels across the ring, throwing his near five hundred pound frame into a full body avalanche, shaking the entire ring!]

GM: OHHHH!

BW: HE MOVED THE WHOLE RING!

[Lane backs off, glaring at Watters who falls forward into Lane's waiting arms, scooping him up and holding him horizontally across his wide chest...]

GM: Lane's got him up! He's not done with-

"OHOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOO!"

[The crowd reacts to Lane flopping forward, DRIVING Watters to the mat with a front powerslam!]

GM: Good grief!

BW: We're gonna need a spatula to get this kid off the mat... or maybe a hose!

[The referee drops down to count but Lane climbs back to his feet, wagging a massive finger at the official...

...and then jumps into the air, landing on the mat. He does it a few times around the head of the downed Watters before charging into the ropes, bouncing back to hit the far ropes where he rebounds a second time...]

BW: LOOK OUT BELOW!

[...and leaves his feet, dropping his near quarter ton frame down on the chest of Watters with a seated senton!]

GM: BLACK CRUSH! That'll do it!

[Still sitting on the chest, Lane crosses his arms as the referee drops to the mat, quickly slapping the canvas three times.]

"DING! DING! DING!"

GM: Ricky Lane picks up a win in dominating fashion and perhaps gets back on track after the loss to Tony Sunn two weeks ago.

BW: Look at this, Gordo!

GM: Get off the man!

[The referee protests as Lane refuses to stand up, sitting on the chest with all his weight.]

GM: Enough is enough! Come on, referee!

[Meekly shouts at Lane... then at Tremblay.]

GM: Ring the bell again! Disqualify this man!

[Lane finally... and slowly... climbs to his feet, looking down disdainfully at the motionless Watters.]

GM: Finally, Ricky Lane gets off the man.

BW: Don't look now, Gordo... but I think Ricky Lane has sent someone else to the hospital!

GM: I think you're right. And I think he enjoys it! Slick Willy there seems pretty pleased with what he just saw as well. Earlier this week, our own Jason Dane sat down with Willoughby Tremblay to get his thoughts on the future of Ricky Lane here in the AWA. Let's take a look...

[Crossfade to footage marked "EARLIER THIS WEEK." There is a small room with two comfortable chairs. Seated in one of them is Jason Dane, a man who is the greatest interviewer who ever lived...according to our source,

Jason Dane. The other is occupied by a tall, slender man in a charcoal suit, white shirt, yellow and red bowtie, and a dark gray top hat. He looks like a car salesman complete with a condescending wry smile. But unlike most salesmen, he whole-heartedly believes in his product.

That product being the near quarter ton monstrous man standing behind his chair, "Big" Ricky Lane. His massive forearms are folded across his chest, his black flat top is sculpted high and tight around his ears, and the big grin is gone and replaced with a cold, hard stare.]

JD: I'm Jason Dane and joining me at this time to do a sit down interview is the well traveled self-proclaimed wrestling visionary-

[The last remark doesn't seem to sit well with Lane who turns towards Jason Dane. The pale and thin fingers of Willoughby Tremblay extend in front of his client.]

WT: Tsk, tsk, Mr. Dane. You don't want to upset my client now, do you?

[Dane lets that thought linger for a moment.]

WT: Mr. Ricky Lane takes it very personally when you insult my livelihood whether it be with force or tasteless words, Mr. Dane.

JD [passive]: Noted. Ever since you took this man...

WT: Now, now, Mr. Ricky Lane is no ordinary man. It should do you great justice to refer to him as "Big" Ricky Lane.

JD: Fine, "Big" Ricky Lane. It seems a bit obnoxious but so does the fact that simply renaming your client has wrongfully given you both some sort of entitlement in the AWA. Warnings, signals, you're about three words and a voice recorder away from blackmail. Do you really think people are buying this act, Mr. Tremblay?

[Willoughby Tremblay purses his narrow lips as his fingertips dance together.]

WT: That was HIS idea, not mine. However, it has proven to be less of a detriment than expected.

JD: Really?

WT: Yes. You see, there is no place in modern society for trust. People have become highly cynical, especially of anyone claiming to possess enlightenment. But that is what Mr. Ricky Lane experienced. He had a, dare I say, coming to Tremblay moment.

JD: Did you just-

WT: If a man comes to me, claiming to be honest and truthful, they will say he is a liar. Yet if a man states outright that he is a liar, what will people say?

[Dane, sorta lost, shrugs.]

WT: "Well, at least he's honest." That, my friend, is how it began. Mr. Ricky Lane came to me a lost soul and with my help he has cleansed himself of his own identity and for the past few months he has helped those in need of a cleansing be relieved of their pains and suffering.

JD: By outlandish attacks? By hospitalizing them? He nearly crippled a man a month ago in Dallas, Texas!

WT: He released them, Mr. Dane. All of them. You may take my words at face value as I understand you question my reputation and travels but I have not lied to you or any of the AWA fans a single solitary time. From the first day Mr. Lane became one of my followers I promised you that he would wreak havoc, I promised you that bodies would crumble, and I promised you that he would unleash a path of destruction unlike the AWA has ever seen. We have delivered.

But sadly, there are still those who do not heed the call. The poor wretches will be cast aside just as they were at SuperClash. Just as they were in the Battle Royal over a month ago. And oh, how I pity those unfortunate souls. Those blind, foolish pigs, who spend so much time chasing inordinate items that they do not concern themselves with the alarming force that is about to take over them.

Soon enough, the world will discover our Crusade, Mr. Dane.

JD: Your... Crusade?

WT: Yes. It was a short time ago that even I found myself at the absolute nadir of my life. I was trapped in a bad situation, and it was my own actions that had led me there. But then, just as Mr. Lane found me, I too found my own light. That light showed me what I needed to do to extricate myself from that particular trap. It helped me up, and gave me strength. It also gave me direction and led me to Mr. Lane. Together, we have found purpose in one another.

JD: And what is that purpose?

WT: To go where we are needed, much like others in their ministries and good work. Much like my brethren who preach on the streets of Mardi Gras, I have come to a place with a very high concentration of lies, deceit, and sin -- a modern day Gomorrah to the Sodom that you know as the AWA. It just so happens that my calling was here and that I found a man who could deliver my message.

Ricky Lane will go forth to show the world our way and deliver to them our call.

And when the AWA returns to America, we shall deliver that message to Tony Sunn.

[Dane looks surprised.]

JD: Tony Sunn? Your man lost to Tony Sunn two weeks ago in-

[Lane growls in Dane's direction, silencing him.]

WT: Careful, Mr. Dane. Yes, Tony Sunn. Yes, the man who defeated my man two weeks ago. He is most definitely not the first and he will not be the last as there are many men among us who could use a little help in their journey.

JD: Such as?

WT: Oh, Mr. Dane. I could fill your ears with names but that's all they would be. We do not play favorites, there will be a time and a place for all of them. But first, Mr. Sunn must be forgiven and relieved of his tempestuous lifestyle.

He must experience our Crusade first hand, for thine is the Way of Willoughby Tremblay...

...and Mr. Ricky Lane is the power, and the glory, for ever and ever.

[Cut.]

GM: Disturbing.

BW: Compelling.

GW: What has gotten into Tremblay?

BW: I got a better question. What does Tremblay know that the rest of us doesn't know considering he just challenged Tony Sunn to a rematch when the AWA comes back to the United States in about a month?

GM: It's a good question. Sunn defeated Lane in a shockingly short amount of time two weeks ago but perhaps Tremblay thinks... well, I don't think I want to begin to speculate on what Slick Willy thinks. Fans, we're going to take a quick break and when we come back, "The Professional" Dave Cooper will be in action but before we do, let's go backstage to Mark Stegglet and see if we can find out just who will be Eric Preston's partner in tonight's Main Event!

[Cut to the backstage area, where Mark Stegglet stands with Eric Preston.]

MS: Thanks Gordon. I'm here with Eric Preston who as of yet hasn't told the world who his partner will be in tonight's tag team gauntlet. Eric, who will you be teaming up with to try to qualify for the Stampede Cup?

EP: The truth is that I left that slot open. I don't have a partner, as of right now. Time is ticking away, I know, but I gotta tell ya that I'm not really sure I want to know what the answer is gonna be. I'm not really sure if I wanna hear people say thanks but no thanks when I ask them to team up with me.

When you've got guilt hanging over your head, when you're trying to make up for a dirty past... moments like these aren't easy.

[Suddenly, an unexpected but familiar voice is heard.]

DB: Yeah, tell me about it.

[Preston turns his head around and looks at Dave Bryant, who holds his hands up.]

DB: Don't worry, I didn't show up here to bore you with some lecture or anything like that. I just wanted to tell you that I know exactly where you're coming from. Guilt hanging over your head? If I could've come to my senses just thirty seconds faster, Glenn Hudson would still be working today and not using a cane to get around. A dirty past?

[Bryant chuckles wryly.]

DB: I know all about that. I know you've done things you aren't proud of, things you spent all the time in the world justifying to yourself while you were doing them, after you did them. It takes a hell of a lot of guts to finally look yourself in the mirror, admit you don't like what you see, what you've become, but as much as it takes to just admit that, it takes a hell of a lot more to do anything about it...

[Bryant trails off, then points at Preston.]

DB: But you didn't let that stop you. You didn't let it keep you from trying to change what people see you as, you didn't cower away from the herculean effort of becoming a better person. You knew people wouldn't trust you, Eric, at least not right away, but you still put your neck out, and what you did two weeks ago should've gone a long way to convincing people that your intentions are honest.

[Preston shrugs with the slightest of smiles.]

EP: I appreciate that, man, you've got no idea. I gotta admit that watching you turn it around was a big part of me thinking that I could do the same. And not just the success in the ring, winning the World Title and all that. Everybody envies that, clearly.

But the fact that you seem to have found peace of mind, the respect you have from everyone in the locker room, it's something... it's what we all aspire to.

[Preston extends his hand.]

EP: I'm just following your lead, dude.

[Bryant looks at Preston's hand, chuckling and shaking his head for a moment before shaking it.]

DB: That's probably about the damndest thing I've ever heard.

[Bryant grins.]

DB: Just keep doing what you're doing, and eventually, people will come around. The ones who don't, well...just know that sometimes the ones who don't believe your words can still be convinced by your actions.

[With that, Bryant exits the area as Preston furrows his brow and nods in agreement.]

MS: Eric? Your partner?

[Preston pats Stegklet on the shoulder and begins to leave.]

EP: I'll tell you out there.

[Fade to black.]

Cut to a head and torso shot of a sharply dressed Stevie Scott, who stands alone in the ring in an empty WKIK studio, looking directly at YOU, the home viewer!]

HSS: Hey, you there!

[He taps the air, and inexplicably, a "plink plink" sound is heard, as if he is tapping the inside of your TV set...and your TV set were still one of those old-fashioned models from the 80's.]

HSS: This is the Hotshot talking to ya! Did you miss out on the Heat Wave tour, or do you just want to experience all the HOT action one more time? Well, you're in luck...

[From out of camera sight, Stevie Scott picks his arm up and reveals a DVD, with many small pictures of action surrounding one large picture of AWA World Champion Calisto Dufresne in a pose.]

HSS: ...because the new 2013 Heat Wave tour DVD is now available on AWAShop.com! Whoo, check it out!

[Stevie flicks the DVD towards the camera...which, through the wonders of post-production, starts spinning rapidly at the screen for a second, until it morphs into a shot of Miss Sandra Hayes leading her charge to the ring.]

HSS: Nine matches, over three hours of action from all over the southern states that was just too HOT for television!

[Cut to a shot of BC Da Mastah MC trying a diving splash into the corner...and MISSING, as Yuma Weaver gets out of the way, and comes back with a THUNDEROUS chop.]

HSS: You'll see BC Da Mastah MC and Yuma Weaver in a hellacious Indian Strap Match!

[Manny Imbragno has Dave Bryant up in his patented extended Airplane Spin.]

HSS: The World Television title is up for grabs as Dave Bryant defends against the enigmatic Manny Imbrogno!

[In what looks to be shallow center field of a minor league baseball stadium, Juan Vasquez is slugging it out with...something slimy.]

HSS: The best of two eras collide, as Juan Vasquez engages in a no-holds barred brawl with The Mud Monster!

[Kenny Stanton and Brad Jacobs slump in opposite corners, as The Rave hits a running double dropkick on Stanton...then kip up and do the same to Jacobs, as Larry Doyle pounds the mat in frustration.]

HSS: The Rave try to fulfill their destiny twenty years early, as they take on The Blonde Bombers for the World Tag Team Championships!

[Cut to a shot of Calisto Dufresne and Supernova eyeing each other in the ring...followed a shot of Dufresne getting press-slammed off the top rope...followed by a bloody Dufresne trapped in Supernova's Solar Flare leglock.]

HSS: And that's right, it was a SuperClash III rematch as Supernova got his shot at Calisto Dufresne for the big one, the twenty pounds of gold, the World Heavyweight Championship! All this action, plus much, much more!

[Cut to a shot of a screen featuring a DVD player, a screen on the right showing other wrestling action, and a screen on the left back to showing a well-dressed Stevie in the ring, talking directly to the home viewer.]

HSS: Who won? Who lost? My lips are sealed! The only way to find out is to order the DVD from AWAShop.com, right now!

[The URL appears on the bottom of the screen for a second, before fading out...

We open back up backstage where standing in front of a royal blue AWA banner is Jason Dane. To his is "Bunkhouse" Bobby O'Connor. Bobby is wearing a black Kansas City Royals baseball hat with a blue brim, a blue and black flannel shirt with the sleeves rolled up and unbuttoned to reveal his trademark Blue Oyster Cult t-shirt, and his usual wrestling trunks and boots. Behind them, pacing back and forth like a caged animal, is Hannibal Carver

who is adorned in his wrestling gear as well as his usual black zip-up hooded sweatshirt, the hood obscuring much of his face.]

JD: Bobby, last time we all saw as you were blindsided by both Johnny Detson and Rick Marley. First things first... how are you feeling and will that attack have an impact on your performance here tonight?

BOC: Mister Dane, I'd be lying if I stood here and said I was right as rain. Those two are no common thugs coming in off the streets, they're experienced in the mat wars but even more so... experienced in underhanded tactics. They know how to attack from behind in a blink of an eye... and how to do the maximum damage possible. So no, I am not at one hundred percent. But there's something I AM one hundred percent about.

[Bobby nods.]

BOC: There is no way I will ever let those two cowards keep me from what is a chance of a lifetime here tonight. I have been through too much already here in the AWA to let this stop me now. Too many false starts and too many attempts by others to make me turn tail and run. Maybe these scare tactics work on some...

[Bobby hooks a thumb back towards Carver.]

BOC: ...but some people don't have the guidance of a veteran like Mister Carver. More importantly, some people haven't lived their entire lives listening to the wisdom of my grandfather, my hero. I am not going to let my grandfather's position in this company give me any shortcuts or preferential treatment, but at the same time you'll have to put me six feet underground before you EVER get me to give up and let down that man after all the faith he's had in me.

JD: There's also the matter of the challenge Detson issued to you personally. Do you have an answer for him?

BOC: I didn't think there was even a need to answer, because my answer is clear as day. After all the dirty tricks they've pulled. After all the accusations of me being on the receiving end of favoritism. After trying to take me out of this sport and onto the injured list on more than one occasion. My answer is YES. I owe it to the fans who they constantly try to cheat out of a good night's entertainment with all of their cheap tactics. I owe it to everyone who wasn't as lucky as me and now IS on the injured list, maybe permanently. But most of all, I owe it to my family name and ME. He has everything over on me, I've got to admit it. He has the experience. He has the mat technicality. He has the knowledge of where and when to cheat to win. But I have one thing that he has absolutely none of.

[Bobby claps his hand to his chest.]

BOC: HEART. Mister Detson is sadly lacking in that area. And I will fight, no matter how high the odds are stacked against me, with every square inch of the fire that burns in my heart. I may not win... but he will know he was in

a fight, and he will regret the day he decided to try and make an example out of an O'Connor.

[Jason nods, and then looks back to the pacing Hannibal Carver.]

JD: Hannibal, Johnny Detson also had some less than flattering words about you. Your thoughts?

[Carver halts, clenching his fists at his sides. He breathes heavily through his nostrils, seeming more like a raging bull than a human being, before finally speaking.]

HC: My thoughts?

[Carver pulls the hood off his head, turning to glare directly at Jason Dane.]

HC: I think I had the pleasure and honor of returning to the country that gave me my first real shot in this sport. Sent there by the company that let me rise from the ashes in my home country. As I was spreading the good word of a once in a lifetime event, I have to hear the news. That a pair of cowardly jackals used my absence to attack my good friend here from behind. They didn't have the stones to put him out of commission when I ran in to put a stop to it, and news flash...

[Carver scowls.]

HC: ... THEY STILL DON'T. Even with no one there to come to Bobby's aid, yeh two scrubs STILL couldn't get the job done. Marley, yeh want to cry and moan that yeh were never given a real shot in this this company? Held back from the main event? Yeh can use all the buzz words yeh want, but I have two that actually fit yer situation.

Choke artist. Pathetic loser.

[Dane blinks, clearly taken aback by Carver's words.]

HC: Did yeh ever consider it? Did yeh ever think the reason why yeh don't have ten pounds of gold strapped to yer waist is a lot simpler than all the conspiracy theories in the world? Yeh just aren't very good at what yeh do. Yer the type that needs the sleazy manager making the deals. Yeh could never do it with the sweat off yer back, with the power of yer own skill. Because the amount yeh have, clearly couldn't fill a thimble.

[Carver fumes, taking a long breath before continuing.]

HC: Then there's Detson. Yeh talk about hearing my name for years. How if the name Carver was bought up, it was gonna be trouble. Well, congratulations, genius.

[Carver applauds sarcastically.]

HC: Yeh finally got something right. Finally more than two synapses in that barren wilderness in yer skull got fired up enough to have a thought. I am mad, bad and dangerous to know. But fortunately for yeh, I've made a promise. A promise to let this man...

[Carver slaps his hand on Bobby's shoulder.]

HC: ...fight his own battles. So while that's fortunate... I also have to let yeh know that it's UN-fortunate that yer gonna get dropped right on the top of yer head after Bobby here bashes yer face into all kinds of new and exciting shapes with his mitts.

Which brings us to tonight, which brings us to the gauntlet. And to all the men bringing their best tonight, I've got only one thing to say to yeh.

[Carver shakes his head.]

HC: Sorry.

JD: Sorry?

[Carver nods.]

HC: That's right. Sorry. Sorry for what yeh signed up for. Sorry for the agony that awaits yeh. I can't elbow Detson's head into an early nursing home stay, so it goes to each and every last one of yeh. Every bit of pent up frustration I have since having to watch the footage of this man... this man who has quickly become the younger brother I never had, get beaten down by a couple cowards. Each one of yeh will now know MY pain, and it'll be like nothing yeh've ever had to live before in yer lives.

JD: Does that go double for you, Bobby?

BOC: I hate to say it, but even with the pain I'm dealing with I've been looking forward to kick some tail tonight after what's been done. Don't get me wrong, I have all the respect in the world for every man in that ring... but the time has come for me to prove I belong here. Even Strictly Business, bonafide legends that I couldn't be more proud to be in the same right with... I will not stop before they can't take anymore and our hands are raised.

HC: Sad for yeh boys, but reality for me and Bobby. Neither of us have either of our names on the dotted line for a match in Japan... but tonight is how and when we're getting it. And if I have to stomp the hell out of every single team that laces up their boots here in the AWA, you better believe I'll do it and love every second. Many teams I've wanted to hook it up with for some time, and I wish it could be on better terms... but life is pain, gentlemen. I've fought side by side with MAMMOTH Maximus before, but I've got no problem bashing that mastodon in the head until he's a big slab of brontosaurus steaks fit for Fred and Wilma.

BOC: Even with his mystery partner, you won't be taking us by surprise. We are taking everything we have in mind for the Unholy Alliance, everything we have in mind for the Wise Men... and are putting it on the shelf until this job is done. And there's no better prize I can think of, than at the end of this side road we raise the Cup up to the heavens.

HC: I've also heard the talk. The talk of Eric Preston continuing to try and prove he's changed his ways. Trying to prove he's worth the faith Michaelson had in him way back when. No doubt looking to wipe away the dastardly garbage he pulled on one James Monosso. Well Eric, I fought Monosso. It was one helluva fight, and in the end he pulled out the stops to put me down for a count of three. But he did so much more than that. He turned this company in my eyes from a single payday to a new lease on life. Because any company that fosters a warrior with the fire inside like Monosso was well worth my time. So please, come on down tonight. Bring whoever yeh want to help hold up the ropes. I'm in a mean mood, and I ain't exactly buying your bill of sale. Yeh might have changed yer tune or so yeh say... but let's see how yeh deal with the tune I'm playing tonight.

BOC: We have to run the gauntlet tonight, and I couldn't be more delighted. We have revenge on our minds, Mister Dane... and tonight is just a teaser for what the Unholy Alliance have waiting for them.

[Carver and Bobby high five, walking off.]

JD: An impromptu team to be sure, but they seem determined to prove themselves here tonight. Let's go down to the ring to Phil Watson!

[Crossfade to the ring where Phil Watson is standing.]

PW: Wrestling fans, the following contest is set for one fall with a ten minute time limit. Introducing first, hailing from Catania, Sicily, Italy, and weighing 250 pounds, this is THE SICILIAN STUD!

[Polite applause for the Italian wrestler with the stocky build, who wears a green singlet with the Italian flag on the front.

And that polite applause turns to boos as "The Professional" by Leon kicks in over the PA.]

PW: And his opponent, he hails from Albuquerque, New Mexico, and weighs 260 pounds, this is "THE PROFESSIONAL" DAVE COOPER!

[Cooper comes down the rampway, dressed in his black wrestling trunks, black kneepads, white wrestling boots, and a brown vest with the words "The Professional" on the back in white lettering. He's also wearing dark glasses and moving his hand about, as if he can't find his way to the ring.]

GM: Dave Cooper's actions in recent weeks have just disgusted me. He's been taunting Juan Vasquez for what happened to Luke Kinsey last summer, and two weeks ago, he caused serious injury to Vasquez's eye.

BW: Ease up there, Gordo. Cooper's future is just so bright, he's gotta wear shades.

GM: And I suppose he studied nuclear science as well.

BW: Why, Gordo, I never knew that!

GM: I was being sarcastic, Bucky.

[Cooper stops his act once he reaches the ring. He laughs slightly as he ducks between the ropes, where he removes the glasses and vest as the bell rings.]

GM: Cooper getting right in the face of the Sicilian Stud... the Stud not backing down a bit, though.

[Cooper talks trash as Stud just stares back... then Cooper hauls off with a slap.]

GM: An insulting slap across the face!

BW: And the Stud is too scared to do anything about it!

[Cooper turns away from the Stud, raising his arms, then covering his eyes, engaging in his "blind man" act again.

Only he doesn't notice the Stud moving into action, winding up... and cracking a turning Cooper across the jaw!]

GM: Big right hand by the Sicilian Stud!

BW: How dare you attack a man when he isn't looking?!

GM: Cooper dropped his guard and the Italian is taking the fight to him... right hand after right hand...

[Grabbing the Professional by the arm, the Stud shoots him into the ropes. Cooper rebounds back...

...and gets launched sky-high into the air, flipping him over and down to the canvas!]

GM: BIIIIIG BACK BODYDROP BY THE SICILIAN STUD!

[The crowd is cheering, rallying behind the feisty Italian as he waits for Cooper to rise...

...and then drops him with a leaping dropkick!]

GM: The Stud throws a dropkick and down goes Cooper!

BW: It'll take more than that though. Cooper's right back up and-

[A second dropkick connects on the chin, knocking Cooper down again!]

GM: Another dropkick puts him down a second time!

[This time, Cooper opts to bail out, rolling swiftly under the ropes to the floor. He angrily slaps the apron in frustration as the Stud pumps his fists, earning cheers from the crowd as the Italian brawler plays up to them.]

GM: Cooper takes a powder - he's got no desire to be in there when the Stud's on a roll like that. I'm pretty sure Dave Cooper had no idea he was about to get rattled like that.

BW: And that's why it's a good move to bail out of there, Gordo. He's the Professional. He's a ring strategist, a tactician - he knew he had to find a way to break the momentum and found it.

GM: The Stud wants to go after Cooper... the referee not letting him.

[Stud argues with the referee, as Cooper suddenly strikes, grabbing Stud by the leg and yanking him off his feet!]

GM: Cooper caught him and-

[Holding the leg, Cooper lifts it high and SLAMS the back of the knee down into the ring apron!]

GM: OHHH! Cooper goes after the leg!

BW: Now THAT'S how you break momentum, Gordo!

[Cooper raises the leg a second time, slamming the back of the knee down into the edge of the apron again.]

BW: And maybe a limb on top of it! Dave Cooper has been a contender for every title in the AWA since he started here, Gordo. He's a former National Tag Team Champion but he's got his eyes set on singles gold in 2014. The World Television Title. The World Championship. Dave Cooper wants gold this year, Gordo.

GM: He may have no chance at that at all after Juan Vasquez gets his hands on him.

BW: Juan Vasquez may not have hands left after Demon Boy Ishrinku's done with him in that Death Match.

GM: We're hoping to hear from Juan Vasquez at some point tonight to find out exactly why he took on that dangerous showdown with one of the most bloodthirsty wrestlers in the history of our sport, the Screamin' Demon himself, Demon Boy Ishrinku.

BW: I think he might be hoping for an injury so he doesn't have to face the Professional in one-on-one action.

[Cooper slowly climbs the ringsteps, smirking at the camera as he ducks through the ropes to re-enter the ring where the Sicilian Stud is rolling around on the canvas in pain. The Professional measures his opponent for a few moments before viciously stomping him to even more jeers from the crowd.]

BW: I love watching Dave Cooper inside that ring, Gordo. No wasting movement, always knowing his next three moves. He is the epitome of a ring tactician.

GM: This isn't being a tactician, this isn't being a ring general... this is Dave Cooper being his vicious, violent self as he stomps the heck out of his opponent.

[Hauling the Stud off the canvas, Cooper grabs the bum leg, folding it up as he lifts him into the air...

...and drops him down across a bent knee with a shinbreaker!]

GM: OHH!

BW: You can criticize Cooper's tactics all you want, Gordo, but you can't criticize his talents. He's going after that leg with a mean streak.

GM: Cooper hangs onto the leg and... look at that!

[Cooper steps over the leg, kneeling down as he pushes the leg over his own bent knee.]

BW: The stepover toehold! How often do you see that anymore, Gordo? Dave Cooper is old school and he's got a mastery of some of the holds you just don't see anymore.

GM: Cooper working that submission hold on the Stud... just wrenching away at that knee.

[Cooper momentarily stops working the hold to raise a sharp boot right across the knee of the Stud.]

GM: Look at that vicious assault!

BW: He just taking him apart, Gordo.

GM: I'm sure Juan Vasquez is watching closely right about now, folks.

BW: The only way he can watch closely is to get right up by the TV with a magnifying glass!

GM: Bucky, enough!

[The Professional hauls him to his feet again, holding the leg under him armpit...

...and snaps to the side, using a dragon screw legwhip to take him off his feet!]

GM: Good grief! The referee needs to take a look at stopping this thing if you ask me, Bucky.

BW: The Sicilian Stud has been tortured, tormented, and absolutely dominated by Dave Cooper here tonight... and now he goes right back to that stepover toehold!

GM: He's looking for a submission here and you've gotta give the Sicilian Stud credit for hanging in there.

BW: I'm not sure if Cooper wants the submission or not. Right now, I think he might be satisfied with snapping that leg in half. This is Dave Cooper sending Juan Vasquez a lesson. Stay home, stay away... call it a career... 'cause if you come back, this is what's waiting for ya!

GM: Cooper rises back to his feet... figure four!

[But the crowd erupts in cheers as the Stud plants his free foot on the butt of Cooper, shoving him off facefirst into the turnbuckles!]

GM: He counters! A tremendous counter by the Sicilian Stud who creates a window of opportunity to get himself back into this match.

[The Stud drags himself towards the ropes, barely able to put any pressure on the leg that has been tormented by Dave Cooper in this match as he uses the ropes to pull himself off the mat.]

GM: The Stud makes it to his feet and-

[And Dave Cooper runs down the length of the ropes, dropping the Stud with a tremendous running clothesline!]

GM: Ohh! And just like that, Dave Cooper gets right back in control!

[An angry Professional grabs the Stud by the ankle, hauling him out to the center of the ring where he flips his opponent to his stomach, tying up the leg in a different version of the stepover toehold, dropping down to add in a crossface!]

GM: Cooper locks in another submission!

BW: The STF is applied! Dave Cooper tells me that this is one of his favorite submission holds and it is expertly applied in the center of the ring right now. The Sicilian Stud has nowhere to run... he has nowhere to hide... and...

[The Sicilian Stud valiantly tries to hang on, attempting to fight off the pain but after a few moments, it's clearly too much for him as he cries out his submission.]

"DING! DING! DING!"

GM: That's it!

[The crowd jeers at the sound of the bell... and then gets louder as they watch Cooper refuses to break the hold.]

GM: Oh, come on, referee! The man is had enough! The match is over! There's no reason for this!

BW: Sure there is, Gordo... make sure if Juan didn't get the message last time, that he gets it this time!

GM: He's got the message! We've all got the damn message! But I tell you that Dave Cooper is a fool if he believes he's going to intimidate Juan Vasquez!

[Cooper releases the hold, climbing to his feet and raising his hands up. The referee barks in Cooper's directions as he nods...

...and then ducks down, pulling the Sicilian Stud off the mat by the arm.]

GM: Wait a second!

[The Professional fires him in, bouncing him off the ropes towards him where he lifts him by the upper thighs, pivots, and DRIVES the Stud spinefirst into the canvas!]

BW: SPINEBUSTER! No one does that quite like Dave Cooper, daddy!

GM: You've gotta be kidding me! When does the referee reverse this decision?! He'd be completely entitled to do it if you ask me, Bucky.

BW: You're right, Gordo, but I'm not sure that Dave Cooper cares right now.

[Cooper smirks, dropping down to his back and rolling under the ropes to the floor.]

GM: Finally, Cooper's getting out of there... finally giving the Sicilian Stud the respect to let him heal up in peace and-

BW: You were saying?

[The jeers pick up again as Cooper reaches under the ring ropes, dragging the Stud to the apron by the ankle...

...and then SLAMS the point of his elbow down into the eye of the Stud!]

GM: Ohh! Right in the eye!

BW: Hey, I heard Stud needed some LASIK surgery, so Cooper's just helping him out!

GM: That's not funny, Bucky! Dave Cooper trying to seriously injure the Stud! There's no reason for this!

[Cooper repeatedly slams the point of his elbow down into the eye as the referee rolls out of the ring, physically grabbing Cooper's arm and pulling hard. The Professional wheels around, raising a threatening hand at the official who quickly backpedals, ordering Cooper to leave as a few more officials rush into view, putting themselves between Cooper and the Sicilian Stud.]

GM: Finally! Finally we get some help out here to break this up!

[An agitated Cooper glares at the official before climbing the wooden steps up onto the elevated platform.]

GM: Thank goodness for the referees stopping that assault before any more damage was done.

BW: Hey, Cooper is just keeping his eye on the prize. Too bad the Stud can't do that any longer and neither can Juan Vasquez.

GM: You're a real piece of work, Bucky. I see Jason Dane is standing by.

[Indeed, Jason Dane is up at the interview platform, where Dave Cooper walks toward, a smirk on his face.]

JD: Dave Cooper, I cannot believe what you just attempted to do to the Sicilian Stud, much like I cannot believe what you did to Juan Vasquez two weeks ago. What on earth would possess you to cause serious injury to one of the all-time greats in this business?

DC: Jason, I figured I'd do people a favor by taking out the man responsible for what went down at SuperClash. We all know Juan Vasquez enabled Supreme Wright to get his shot at the World Title, so I made it a point to punish him for his crimes. That, and the fact he stuck his nose in something that wasn't his business to begin with, when I was about to settle things with Dave Bryant. But, as they always say, an eye for an eye.

JD: You have got to be kidding me. You are one sick man, Dave Cooper.

DC: Save it, Jason... you know the truth as well as anyone else in the AWA. You saw how it all went down at SuperClash and you know that if Juan had never offered that Steal the Spotlight entry to Supreme Wright in the first place, then none of what went down at the end of the show would have happened. Now, men like Dave Bryant might want to live in a world of denial and decide to go after somebody like Wright, but I knew it was better to go

after the man who enabled everything in the first place... the very same man who is responsible for Luke Kinsey being blind as a bat and men like Supernova and Stevie Scott getting their heads sent through a windshield.

JD: It amazes me to hear you claim that Juan Vasquez brought everything upon himself... really, you sound too much like Percy Childes. I believe there is more to what's going on than you are letting on, Dave Cooper.

DC: You can tell everyone I'm playing a game of blind man's bluff, so to speak, but the fact is I'm just doing what I feel is necessary to be done. Only problem is, I didn't get the job done to my satisfaction. So you better believe the next time I see Juan Vasquez, I'll be getting the job done... that is, if Demon Boy Ishrinku doesn't finish it first.

JD: And what are you implying, Dave Cooper? Did you make some sort of deal with Demon Boy to soften him up for that Death Match at Rising Sun Showdown?

DC: You seem to have a knack for coming up with visions of what I'm up to, Jason, but all I'm gonna say is that Juan Vasquez is in no shape to be wrestling any type of Death Match, especially against somebody as tough as the Demon Boy. But if Juan somehow survives that match, he certainly won't survive against me, because I'll ensure the job gets finished to my satisfaction... after all, I have one more eye to go. And Jason Dane, that is the END of the discussion!

[Cooper walks off as we cut back to Gordon and Bucky at ringside.]

GM: Some vile words being spoken there by Dave Cooper who has some strong accusations towards Juan Vasquez.

BW: Ain't nothing the rest of us haven't thought, Gordo. Dave Cooper's just the one with the guts to say it. Juan Vasquez IS the reason that Supreme Wright won Steal The Spotlight at SuperClash. He wouldn't have been in the match if Vasquez hadn't put him in it. So, that means that Juan Vasquez is the reason that Supreme Wright stabbed Dave Bryant and the fans in the heart at SuperClash to win the World Title. Vasquez is to blame and everyone's letting him get away with it... everyone except Dave Cooper!

GM: Give me a break. What a wild conspiracy theory you and Dave Cooper have worked up. In the meantime, we've got officials out here and medical personnel working on the Sicilian Stud. Cooper was out of control out here... much like we've seen Shadoe Rage in recent weeks. That situation came to a head two weeks ago when Rage defeated Colonel P.W. de Klerk but attempted to put him on the shelf after the match. Marissa Monet managed to defuse that situation but... well, it wasn't enough for AWA officials who asked to meet with Shadoe Rage earlier this week. Our cameras were there to get his comments immediately after that meeting. Let's take a look...

[We fade away from Gordon and Bucky to a shot of a hallway of the building that houses the AWA offices on the outskirts of Dallas, Texas. Shadoe Rage,

accompanied as always by the impressive, Angela Davis-afro'ed Marissa Monet, emerges from behind a door marked VP -- Talent Relations. Rage is dressed in what passes for corporate attire for him. His locks are wrapped into a bun behind his head. He wears pink tortoise shell glasses and a hot pink double-breasted corduroy blazer over an open collared ivory shirt, black and pinked checkered pants and knee high black boots. His belt is a black cord and a pink and black bandana flourishes from his breast pocket.

Marissa is wearing a knee length navy skirt, matching turtleneck and knee high caramel colored boots. Rage mutters to himself, his fists clenching and unclenching in time with his jaw as he marches deliberately away from the office. Marissa has a hand on his shoulder until she shuts the door, looking towards the camera.]

SR: (in a strangled voice) Unbelievable, Marissa Monet. They want to say that they're concerned about my mental state? They're worried that I'm a danger to the talent?

[Rage starts to lunge at the office door, a movement that startles Monet who gestures at the camera. Rage spins towards it, glaring.]

SR: I'm not out of my mind! Tell them, Marissa, I'm not crazy! I'm just frustrated. I'm just real real frustrated right now. And they want to keep me off the show this week because they wanted to monitor my behavior. Marissa Monet, do you think they're really concerned about my mental state right now?

MM:

[Before she answers, Rage cuts her off.]

SR: Said I was too rough on P.W. de Klerk? Said they wanted me to ramp down the intensity? Marissa Monet, have you ever known me to be less than one thousand percent intensity?

MM:

SR: Of course you haven't!

[Rage seems to drift back towards the Talent Relations door, ready to kick it in.]

SR: Because it's never going to happen! And the suits in talent relations know that full well. But I've got to thank you for your negotiating tactics in there. And people get on me for letting you speak for me sometimes. And people want me to be too macho to ever let a woman take the lead sometimes. Without you, they probably would have suspended me.

[Marissa smiles at him, again throwing a sideways glance at the camera, perhaps wondering if her man is being too honest considering the camera crew's presence.]

SR: They wanna say you saved me when you stopped me from jumping off the top rope again on de Klerk.

MM:

SR: You knew I wouldn't jump when you made the decision to protect de Klerk and challenge me. Absolute total faith right there (snaps fingers) that my rage hadn't completely taken over.

[The expression on Marissa's face belies that faith wasn't as total as all that.]

SR: And your explanation in there was brilliant, explaining to the suits that the real issue was Donnie White and not me. I don't need no stinking medication, I don't need no stinking Employee Assistance Program, I don't need any outreach. All I need is one match. One match to resolve everything. One match to settle the score with Donnie White and bring this all to an end.

[Rage grips Marissa's face between his two hands. She flinches involuntarily as the goggle-eyed mad man kisses her proudly on the forehead.]

SR: One match of my choosing. One more time between me and Donnie White, winner take all. One match to settle all of our issues and get back on track to winning the World Television Championship and then going on to win the World Heavyweight title.

[He turns towards the camera suddenly, as if just now noticing it.]

SR: AWA, don't you worry about me. I will not let the opportunity slip through my fingers.

[He grabs Monet in another hard embrace and kisses her roughly, jarring Marissa.]

SR: Let's think about this. What's the best way to bring Donnie White low? We haven't had to dream up a match since we were in Portland, eh, Marissa.

MM:

SR: Good thing our imagination is still fertile. Donnie White's destiny is finally in my hands. And I'm going to squeeze real hard.

[Marissa pats him on the shoulder, trying to guide him towards the exit.]

SR: (caught up in his own world) Donnie White, brother, I'm gonna getcha!

[Seeing whatever work she did behind the scenes unraveling, Marissa urges Shadoc away from Talent Relations.]

SR: (gleefully) Donnie White, you're gonna die, brother! HEAR ME? YOU'RE GONNA DIE!

[Marissa, panicked by their proximity to the Vice President's office, nudges Shadoe out the door.]

SR: (off camera) I'm gonna get you, Donnie White. It's gonna feel so good!

[Fade to black.]

After a three second pause, cut to the living room of a house, where two kids are playing an Atari 2600. Some pathetic bleeps and bloops are coming from the screen, as they have in every media portrayal of video games ever. The kids are half-heartedly going through the motions. One of them seems to be having trouble staying awake.]

Kid #1: This is boring.

Kid #2: I wish we had toys that could _really_ fight.

[Suddenly, a body is flung through the large front window with a loud crash. A hard-rock background track plays as the body gets to his feet... wait, is that Rick Marley?]

Kids: *gasp*

[And... is that Stevie Scott running through the broken window to attack him again?!]

Kids: Stevie Scott!

[And... did Dave Cooper just kick down the front door to attack Alex Martinez from behind while he was grappling with Calisto Dufrense in the dining room for no apparent reason?! And is that Supernova leaping down the staircase at Nenshou? And why are the Blonde Bombers beating up the mailman? Oh, there's the Bishop Boys turning them around and brawling with them on the lawn!]

Kids: WOAH!

[Yes, these two kids are about to have a very badly-acted simultaneous cardiac arrest and orgasm. It happens. Especially when Skywalker Jones is jumping off your kitchen cabinet to hit Chris Staley with a flying clothesline, Juan Vasquez is hiptossing Johnny Detson across your family room, and the Lynches and the Beale Street Bullies are brawling across your driveway.

Percy Childes takes a dish from the china cabinet and breaks it across the back of Danny Morton as he had Stevie Childes in a headlock while Jackson Haynes is ramming Daniel Tyler's head into the sink in the background, Buford P Higgins and Miss Sandra Hayes are in a shouting match, Glenn Hudson tries to dropkick Dave Bryant, who ducks... poor Glenn hits the boys' father who was coming in to check out the noise. Then Alphonse Green wanders by and stomps the poor guy. Because he can.]

Kids: THIS IS AWESOME!

[And cue the sales pitch!]

Announcer: And now you can bring the awesome home with Series Two AWA action figures from Hasbro!

[We cut to the product line, where action figures of all of our favorite AWA characters stand in dramatic action figure poses~!]

Announcer: Relive the greatest matches!

[RyGunn does a double throw to send The Rave over the living room divider into the kitchen! Then we see the kids playing with the RyGunn and Rave action figures.]

Announcer: Create new dream matches never before seen!

[Luke Kinsey tries to smash Terry Shane the Third with a kitchen chair, but Shane pulls open the ironing board from the wall to block it! Then we see the kids playing with the Nenshou and Dufrense action figures.]

Announcer: Form brand new alliances and teams that you'd never see live!

[Brian Von Braun and Tully Brawn double-clothesline Vladimir Velikov in the kitchen... then both grab for the paper towels to wipe off their hands with disgusted 'yuck' expressions. Then we see the kids playing with these three action figures.]

Announcer: Perform the great signature moves of the AWA wrestlers, or invent totally new ones!

[The magic of blue-screen editing makes it look like William Craven is doing a double-backflip powerbomb to Alex Martinez. Well, his body is doing flips in the air as if someone were just spinning the footage around (because that's exactly what it is). Then we see the kids do the same 'move' with the action figures.]

Announcer: The base set comes with the Crockett Colosseum ring and four of the top stars in the AWA!

[Cut to a posed shot of Staley, Green, Marley, and BVB. See, you have to buy the ring, and you get some reasonably-popular-but-not-first-choice guys (GLASS CEILING~!) and then you HAVE to spend money to get the popular guys! Clever!]

Announcer: AWA Action Figures... get them today! Because it's the only way to get this close to the action... AND SURVIVE.

[With that, we cut to the post-fight devastation of the house... it looks like a tornado went through here. And exploded.]

Announcer: Ages 8 and up!

[Fade to black...

Fade up on an alley where we see piles of trashbags pushed against the dumpsters. Oddly, the camera hesitantly moves closer to the pile. Suddenly, a long, thin arm claws its way up through the refuse. The bags start to roll aside as the scar-faced homeless woman emerges through the bags, bundled in a dirty bubble goose winter coat and haggard shredded sweaters. Her skin is mottled and grey with cold and filth. She stares at the camera with crazed eyes, her ragged grey cap barely containing her dirty matted hair. She cackles at the camera with yellowed teeth.]

W: Dis long col' wintah continues witout end. And all yuh people in your warm 'ouses and yuh warm beds yuh never tink about us. No, yuh tink yuh safe. But for your comforts dere is a price to be paid. And yuh will soon start payin' dat price in spades. Yuh left us fuh dead. But de dead will not be fuhgotten. Yuh took everyting from us but we still 'ere. De dead will walk again and we comin' for our own. We comin' 'ome! We comin' 'ome!

[A slow fade out takes us back up to live action in the backstage area where Mark Stegglet is standing next to the young tag team Air Strike. Michael Aarons is all smiles in his pink Air Strike Fan Club tee shirt and is wearing long black tights with a green vertical stripe down each leg. Cody Mertz is without expression standing there stoic. He is wearing a heather gray Property of the Combat Corner tee shirt with a pair of long green tights with a double vertical black stripe down each leg.]

MS: I'm joined here by Air Strike the duo who last show found out they would be facing Strictly Business at the Stampede Cup now just a few short weeks away! Gentlemen, your thoughts?

MA: First round! Legendary tag team from yore Strictly Business against the high flying, death defying, Teenage Dream Team Air Strike!

[Aarons smiles at Stegglet and Mertz whose expression remains unchanged.]

MA: Man, what a day it's going to be when we get to step into the ring again a team that used to be at the very top of the mountain! A team I've idolized since I was eight or nine! Certainly my main man Cods over here would agree!

[Aarons smacks Mertz on the back almost a little too hard as if to try and wake him up.]

CM: It might be dark times or dark days in the AWA and I might not agree with Team Supreme and the decision they made because honestly Mark, they made the WRONG decision joining up with Supreme Wright... from Cain on down the line.

[Mertz looks down.]

CM: But that wrong decision they made was still theirs to make. And Air Strike has decisions to make of their own. We can side with the Combat Corner with Eric Preston and Ryan Martinez; we can fight for what we think is right and we can do our teacher, our mentor, and our friend Todd Michaelson proud knowing that the instruction that he gave is something he can be proud of.

[Mertz looks over at his partner.]

CM: Violence Unlimited, Blonde Bombers, Sky Herc, Strictly Business all great teams. Every one of the twelve in their own right deserve to be here. But Air Strike is on a mission...

[Aarons raises his fist and moves it towards Mertz.]

MA: Cuz we're the high flying...

[Mertz finally laughs as he raises his own fist.]

CM: Death defying...

[FIST BUMP~!]

MA: Teenage Dream Team of the future. And all other eleven teams better take notice because the Stampede Cup is where Air Strike arrives!

[With that Air Strike takes their leave. We hold on Mark Stegglet for a moment.]

MS: Air Strike is ready for action here tonight and they sound like they're ready to win the Stampede Cup in Tokyo - no matter who they may be facing in the tournament! Let's go down to the ring and see them in action!

[Crossfade to Phil Watson who is in the ring with a pair of competitors.]

PW: The following match is scheduled for one fall, currently in the ring, Angelo Cordero and the South Philly Phighter.

[Little reaction to the duo.]

PW: And their opponents...

["Can't Hold Us" by Macklemore and Ryan Lewis to a big cheer from the AWA crowd.]

PW: Weighing in at a total combined weight of 420 pounds... Michael Aarons and Cody Mertz...

AIIIIIIIIIR STRIIIIIIIIKE!

[Cody Mertz and Michael Aarons come racing out of the back to the cheers from the crowd. All smiles and sprinting down the aisle, Air Strike bend down to slap the hands of all the fans that stick their arms out. Aarons has a well-toned, tanned small size frame with shoulder length brown hair. He is wearing long black tights with a green vertical stripe down each leg. Mertz is a similar size if not a little smaller with short, messy dirty blonde hair. Mertz is wearing a pair of long green tights with a double vertical black stripe down each leg.]

GM: More strong words from Air Strike and you have to admit with each passing minute this young duo is gaining more and more confidence giving them a real shot at the Cup.

BW: I don't have to admit anything, Gordo. Violence Unlimited? SkyHerc? The War Pigs? The Blonde Bombers? These young twerps have no shot! Heck, to make it out of the gate, they've gotta beat the team they've admitted are their idols... that's a tough cross to bear, Gordo.

[The duo throw their shirts into the crowd to the delight of their growing female fan base as Aarons looks to start things off for Air Strike against the Phighter.]

GM: Aarons looking to start things off with the Phighter and the Phighter immediately calling for a test of strength.

BW: Wouldn't you against the spaghetti arms of these two high schoolers?

[Phighter holds his right hand up high, pointing to it and challenging Aarons. Hesitantly, Aarons obliges, locking his right and then left hand with the Phighter.]

GM: Here we go... and the Phighter looks like he's got a lead in the strength department over young Michael Aarons who struggles against this knucklelock!

[Aarons is fighting and fighting, hoping not to be pushed to his knees...

...and then drops to his back, pulling the Phighter into a monkey flip that sends the South Philly native bouncing off the canvas. Aarons releases, scampering to his feet as the Phighter does the same.]

GM: Both men back up after that toss by Aarons... clothesline!

[But the embarrassed Phighter's sloppy brawling style has him completely whiff the clothesline attempt, nearly falling over in the process as Aarons straightens backs up from his duck-down.]

GM: The Phighter wheels around... armdrag by Michael Aarons!

[The crowd cheers the deep armdrag out of the youngster.]

GM: Both men right back up... and right back down goes the Phighter from another armdrag! Those armdrags are lookin' good, Bucky - a benefit, no doubt, of Aarons' days in the Combat Corner.

BW: I wonder if you'll be saying that in the Gauntlet Match tonight when Aaron Anderson is dominating his way towards a second trip to the Cup.

[The South Philly Phighter gets taken down with a third armdrag, knocking the brawler completely off his game as Angelo Cordero ducks into the ring, charging in to aid his partner despite the referee's protests.]

GM: In comes Cordero and- hah!

[The crowd cheers as Aarons sidesteps, elevating Cordero up, over, and down onto his prone partner with a hiptoss!]

GM: Aarons saw him coming and made both his opponents pay the price right there. Moving to the corner and in comes Cody Mertz off the exchange.

[There's a nice squeal from the young ladies in the crowd as Merz steps in, rushing to one set of ropes as his partner hits the other.]

GM: Tandem offense by Air Strike on the way!

[Aarons skies high into the air, dropping backfirst onto both opponents with a senton.]

GM: Nice leaping backplash by Aarons... and Mertz drops the same backplash! Oh my, what a nice doubleteam out of Air Strike!

[Cordero rolls under the ropes to the floor as Aarons steps out, leaving the Phighter and Cody Mertz as the legal man. Mertz hauls the Phighter up to his feet, blasting with a stiff European uppercut!]

GM: Ohh! Nice shot there. Perhaps Cody Mertz is sending a little message to Aaron Anderson with that shot. We know how much the Combat Corner means to these two men - especially Cody Mertz - and Aaron Anderson was the first graduate of the Corner only to turn his back on Todd Michaelson's teachings to become a hired thug of Terry Shane III.

BW: The Shane Gang are partners, Gordo! They're an elite force of superstar grapplers and the future of this industry! They're not a leader and a pack of dogs.

GM: I dispute that and I think a lot of other people would as well, Bucky.

[Two more stiff uppercuts has the Phighter falling back into the neutral corner where Mertz pursues, landing a pair of big knees into the breadbasket before the referee tells him to back off. Mertz raises his hands, backing away with a nod as the referee tells the Phighter to get out of the corner.]

GM: The Phighter's trying to stumble out but Mertz is right back in, taking him down with a snapmare out of the corner...

[Mertz backs into the buckles, pausing a moment as the Phighter steadies himself in a seated position...

...and then rushes forward, grabbing the Phighter's head from behind as he flips into a somersault, and SNAPS the neck down, whiplashing it back!]

GM: Ohhh! Mertz with a whiplash type maneuver and this is as aggressive as I can recall seeing Cody Mertz, Bucky. Something got under his skin in a bad way.

BW: It could be the Cup but I think it's that encounter we saw two weeks ago when he bit off more than he can chew by approaching the World Champion.

GM: Huh? Supreme Wright approached him!

BW: That's not the way the champ tells it. Anyways, Mertz isn't man enough to try and bring this fight to the World Champion so he's taking it out on the South Philly Phighter here tonight in Dallas.

GM: Cody Mertz did nothing wrong to Supreme Wright. For the lack of a better term, all he did was respectfully disagree with the champion and his recent actions. Is that a crime?

BW: Depends on the country, Gordo. In the Nation Of Wright... it absolutely is.

[Grabbing the Phighter by the legs, Mertz slaps his partner's hand. Aarons climbs in, rushing to the ropes again as Mertz falls back, catapulting the Phighter up...

...and right into a flying forearm from Michael Aarons!]

GM: Another effective doubleteam by Air Strike who, with each move, are building more and more momentum for the Tokyo Dome, the Rising Sun Showdown, and the Stampede Cup tournament. These two are tag team specialists, Bucky, and they continue to show it every time out.

[Aarons attempts a cover but Cordero breaks it up at two...

...before getting wiped out by a running high cross body by Cody Mertz to a big cheer from the fans!]

GM: Mertz takes 'im down!

[Cordero again rolls out to the floor as Mertz glares down at him. Michael Aarons stays on track though, pulling the Phighter up into a front facelock. He looks out at the crowd, hesitating a moment...

...and then hooks the arm of the Phighter, taking him over with a snap suplex instead.]

GM: Textbook suplex by Arons!

[With Mertz back in the corner, Arons pulls the Phighter up, whipping him into the corner.]

GM: The Phighter slams hard right into the wrong part of town for him, the corner of Air Strike.

[Arons charges hard, slamming his shoulder into the midsection of the Phighter before slapping his partner's hand.]

GM: In comes Mertz... Arons drops down...

[Mertz rushes across, smashing a fist into the side of Cordero's head to a cheer, knocking him from the apron. He spins around, charging the distance of the ring from corner-to-corner, leaps off the back of his partner, and smashes into the corner with a back elbow under the chin!]

GM: OHHH!

BW: These kids are pulling out all the illegal moves to get by this week! Double team after double team! They're going to need more than that for the Cup, daddy!

GM: That remains to be seen as Mertz drags the Phighter out to the middle of the ring... what's he calling for here?

[Mertz shouts out "BILLION DOLLAR BOMB!" to a big cheer from the crowd!]

GM: He's calling for the Billion Dollar Bomb - the signature move of Todd Michaelson and the one move that it seems every one of his students learns from him!

BW: Yeah, and if that's not ego, I don't know what it is.

[But before Mertz can get the double underhook applied, the Phighter uses the last of his strength to stand up, backdropping Cody down to the mat before stumbling into his corner, collapsing forwards and slapping the hand of Angelo Cordero.]

GM: The tag is made to Cordero for the very first time!

[Cordero rushes in hard, raising his hands over his head for a double axehandle...

...and gets DROPPED facefirst to the canvas with a drop toehold!]

GM: Ohh! Mertz takes him down hard!

[A grinning Mertz gets back to his feet, leaping up to drop an elbow to the back of Cordero's head, smashing his face into the canvas.]

GM: Mertz pulls him off the mat, whips him in...

[Mertz rushes to the ropes behind him, springing back...

...and DRIVES a running knee into the midsection of Cordero, snapping him over hard and putting him down on the mat.]

GM: Cody Mertz is building momentum here as he pulls Cordero off the mat, winging him into the ropes again...

[Mertz takes flight, lashing out with two feet right under the chin of a stunned Cordero!]

GM: Standing dropkick and a beauty! You're not going to find too many dropkicks thrown better than that one, fans.

[Mertz gets up, celebrating the big dropkick with the cheering fans as the feisty South Philly Phighter stumbles back into the ring, barreling across at Mertz...

...who throws a second dropkick, catching the Phighter right on the chin which causes him to collapse to the mat and promptly roll out to the floor.]

GM: Michael Aarons is in!

BW: Illegally, I might add!

GM: So was the Phighter! The referee might be losing control of this one!

[Aarons signals to the outside, pointing at the Phighter. He runs off the ropes behind him, charging across...

...and LEAPS over the top rope, crashing down on a stunned Phighter out on the floor!]

GM: OH MY STARS! Michael Aarons just leapt over the top rope and crashed down on the Phighter, showing very little regard for the safety of either man!

BW: Impressive athleticism, but liable to get you killed, Gordo!

GM: Indeed, meanwhile in the ring, Cody is on the second turnbuckle waiting on Cordero.

[As Cordero rises, Mertz leaps up, snaring his head between the legs, and takes him down with a flying hurracanrana, snapping him down to the mat.]

GM: Ohh! Flying headscissors! And that might be all she wrote, fans!

[But before Mertz can attempt a pin, Aarons climbs back on the apron, slapping the top turnbuckle and shouting for the tag. Mertz exchanges a smile with his partner before tagging him in.]

GM: The tag is made and they're REALLY looking to finish Cordero off now.

BW: Take the pin when you get the chance. This is a mistake in my book and could easily cost these two dumb kids a victory if they pull garbage like that at the Cup.

GM: Michael Aarons is climbing to the top... but Mertz is still on the mat. This isn't the doubleteam we're used to seeing from them at the end of their matches. This is something else, fans.

[Mertz pulls Cordero to his feet, burying a knee into the midsection, doubling him over. The youngster looks up to his partner, making sure Aarons is in position before Mertz laces his leg over the back of Cordero's neck, holding the arm straight out before leaping into the air, and DRIVING Cordero facefirst into the mat with a leg-assisted bulldog!]

GM: OHHHHH!

[With Cordero down, Aarons skies into the air, pumping his arms and legs, and CRASHES down onto a prone Cordero!]

GM: Whoa! Frog splash by Michael Aarons!

BW: That's Flash And Cash, Gordo! That's Strictly Business' signature move! Can they do that?!

GM: They just did! It's a tribute to their childhood idols!

[As Bucky and Gordon argue, the official drops to the mat to count.]

BW: It's plagiarism! It's blatant theft! Grand theft even!

[The crowd counts along with the three count, cheering big at the sound of the bell.]

GM: Nice work by Air Strike as they continue to look forward to the Stampede Cup tournament at the Rising Sun Showdown!

BW: And showing up their idols - and first round opponents - in the process.

GM: Showing them up?! That's ridiculous, Bucky. They're fans! They're-

BW: Gordo, they just fought the same two opponents as Sebastian and Tucker did last time out and just did the very move that Strictly Business has trouble pulling off. They're saying they're better, younger, and faster, and can even do moves better than Strictly Business even though Strictly Business have done those moves for years.

GM: Air Strike has had nothing but positive things to say about Strictly Business since they found out they were in the Cup! They are simply paying tribute to a team they respect, to suggest otherwise is just wrong, Bucky!

[It looks like we'll find out exactly how Strictly Business interprets it, because "Can't Hold Us" cuts off and is replaced by Powerman 5000's "When Worlds Collide" as the pop from the Dallas faithful gets even louder with the imminent arrival of Andrew "Flash" Tucker and "Money Driven" Mike Sebastian.

Tucker is clad in a navy blue sweatshirt that reads "BILLIONAIRE BOYS CLUB" across the front with the sleeves pulled up to the forearm and a pair of indigo-colored jeans, his blond hair pulled back into a pony tail. Sebastian's ensemble consists of a pair of pressed khaki shorts and a forest green Polo with "Pebble Beach" sewn atop the left breast. A pair of Maui Jim shades conceal his baby blue peepers.

The duo climbs into the ring with Air Strike, who looks a bit incredulous. They request a microphone from Phil Watson, who obliges. Tucker and Sebastian stand opposite their young Stampede Cup opponents as Tucker begins.]

AT: Nice move there at the end, fellas. Wonder where ya' learned it.

[A smirk from the California-native.]

MS: "Now get your own car and we'll see how you do in a crowd."

[Sebastian unsubtly sneers at his own Days of Thunder reference.]

AT: Imitation bein' the sincerest form of flattery and all that. Not sure what you guys or the suits in the back had on your mind here this week; first schedulin' a match against the same two nobodies we faced two weeks ago and then usin' our calling card to finish the job. It's almost like you're sendin' a message to us ahead o' the Stampede Cup.

[Tucker's eyes narrow a bit as he focuses on Air Strike, trying to read the two youngsters.]

AT: You guys are either incredibly stupid or incredibly smart. Not quite sure which.

[The crowd murmurs a little bit as the two teams stare each other down from across the ring.]

MS: There's no question you two pups were looking to send a message tonight... it's just a matter of 'Drew and myself making heads or tails of exactly what that message was. And exactly how we want to respond to it. Do we give Air Strike the benefit of the doubt? Do we not? A decade ago they would have some hourly employee center-ring with a broom - Hell, a mop - picking up the highest flying plasma this sport has ever seen. But we're not there yet.

AT: Either way, in just a few weeks when we touch down in Japan, you boys are gonna find that this ain't the Combat Corner, an' Strictly Business sure as Hell ain't these two clowns.

[Tucker tosses a nod the direction of the recovering South Philly Phighter and Angelo Cordero.]

MS: We respect what you two bring to the table on a nightly basis. More than either of you probably even realize. The energy you pack, the way you guys leave it all out on the field, as they say. It's damn admirable. And we appreciate the fact you guys were such big fans of ours umpteenth years ago. Just goes to show what great taste y'all had.

[A smirk from Sebastian now.]

MS: But it's not like the four of us are belly-up to the bar together after the show with us picking up your Zima tab. The four of us are all after the same prize here. And we can good-game each other all the way over the Pacific, but once that bell rings, that's a wrap on play time. The Cup isn't a pleasure trip for us, boys. It's a business one.

AT: The real question though, Mikey, is what do we do about these two in the meantime?

MS: Well, there is a million dollars on the line. I certainly see an opportunity in front of us to tilt the odds in our favor a few weeks in advance...

[Air Strike immediately takes up a defensive posture and the fans begin to boo a little bit. The veterans step forth simultaneously, getting nose to nose with the youngsters, who don't back down in the least.]

GM: Bucky, we may see a preview of the Stampede Cup right now!

BW: Where are the Wise Men with a windshield when you need 'em?

[The tense moment continues for a few more seconds before Tucker glances at Sebastian, who nods slightly in return. Tucker suddenly breaks out in a grin and backs up, sticking a hand out for Cody Mertz to shake as Sebastian does the same to Aarons. Air Strike pauses a moment before shaking the outstretched hands of Strictly Business as the crowd pops in response. Tucker and Sebastian raise Air Strike's arms into the air as the crowd gets even louder at the rare show of sportsmanship.]

GM: Incredible show of sportsmanship there by Strictly Business and Air Strike, Bucky! These two teams are going to head to Japan ready to put on one heck of a show for the fans and do it with class!

BW: It doesn't matter which one of 'em wins, Gordo, they're both just headed for the same buzzsaw that is the Blonde Bombers in the next round!

GM: We shall see. Fans, let's go backstage to hear from MAMMOTH Maximus!

[We crossfade back to the locker room where MAMMOTH Maximus stands in front of a publicity poster for Rising Sun Showdown, dressed to compete in a black mask, a black singlet, with a silver M across the front, and black fingerless gloves.]

MM: One final shot at a spot on the main card of Rising Sun Showdown. One final shot for a spot in the Stampede Cup tournament. Having recently made a trip to Japan, I am HUNGRY for another chance to wrestle in front of thousands of Japanese fans in the Tokyo Dome!

Tonight, I head into the Tag Team Gauntlet alongside an old foe. On any other given night, my mystery partner and I would gladly try to tear each other's heads off!

Tonight, we try to tear the heads off all the other teams they try to throw at us in the gauntlet!

Tonight, we show the world that old foes can make great partners!

Tonight, we present to the world a team that BOTH Tiger Paw Pro and the American Wrestling Alliance can be proud of!

[Maximus slaps himself across the face with two hard shots.]

MM: IT'S OURS!

IT'S OURS!

THE CUP IS OURS!

[We fade away from the bestial Maximus and back out to the ring where Phil Watson is standing.]

PW: The following contest is scheduled for one fall with a ten minute time limit. Introducing first... from Bonesteel, South Dakota... weighing in at 280 pounds... MADHOUSE MCWESSON!

[McWesson, a bulky man with a tall black mohawk, jagged eyebrows, pale white skin, and a big beer belly gut, throws his arms up into the air with a shout to the jeers of the crowd.]

PW: And his opponent... from South Central Los Angeles... weighing in at 280 pounds...

WILLLLLLLIEEEEEEE HAAAAAAAAMMMMERRRRR!

[There are more cheers for the young man than two weeks ago as he throws his arms apart, bursting towards the ropes while shoving his chest forward.]

He steps up on the middle rope, gesturing for louder cheers as McWesson paces back and forth.]

GM: Willie Hammer had some strong words out here earlier tonight.

BW: Dumb words if you ask me. This kid really thinks he's going to get up in the face of the World Champion? He's so low on the totem pole, the cameras don't even televise his entrance! He doesn't even have entrance music, Gordo! How is this guy fit to be in the same locker room with Supreme Wright, let alone the same ring?!

[Hammer turns around just as McWesson comes barreling across the ring at him. The big brawler lands three big clubbing blows across the shoulders, shoving Hammer back against the ropes.]

GM: McWesson with the big whip...

[Hammer hits the far ropes, rebounding back...

...and ducks under a wildly swung clothesline attempt, racing to the far ropes where he springs off again...]

GM: OH MY!

[The young Combat Corner rookie leaves his feet, throwing a 280 pound spinning leg lariat that catches McWesson across the jaw, knocking him down to the canvas!]

GM: Wow! Did you see that, Bucky Wilde?!

BW: Of course I saw it, Gordo. I ain't Juan Vasquez, amigo.

[Down on the mat, the agile near-three hundred pounder kips up to his feet, earning a big cheer from the crowd.]

GM: Incredible agility from a man that size, Bucky.

BW: He's quick, he's agile, he might even have potential. But he's NOT on the same level as Supreme Wright... not at all.

GM: That remains to be seen. The challenge has been issued to the World Champion but will he accept it?

BW: Supreme Wright's got bigger issues on his plate than Willie Hammer. Kenta Kitzukawa in Japan. Dave Bryant when we get back to the States. Terry Shane III sitting back with a guaranteed World Title match in his back pocket.

[McWesson struggles to his feet, walking right into a pair of short forearms that backs him into the buckles. Hammer grabs an arm, whipping him across...

...and then comes barreling across the ring, leaving his feet to land a big leaping forearm smash on the jaw!]

GM: Ohh! What a shot that was!

[Hammer bounces back out of the corner, waving for McWesson to come towards him. The South Dakota native staggers out, getting hooking around the head and neck. The Californian powers him up, swings him around, and sits out in a uranage slam!]

GM: OHHHH!

[Still sitting out, Hammer grabs the legs as the referee drops down to count.]

GM: One! Two! Th-

[But McWesson lifts a shoulder, breaking the count. Hammer gets back to his feet, clapping his hands together a few times which starts the crowd off on a supportive rhythmic clap.]

GM: These Dallas fans are quickly finding their way onto the bandwagon of young Willie Hammer, cheering him on here tonight against the burly veteran from Bonesteel, South Dakota, Madhouse McWesson.

[Hammer climbs to his feet as McWesson does the same, greeting McWesson with a series of snapping right jabs to the jaw and a big uppercut on the chin that sends him falling back into the ropes.]

GM: Willie Hammer throwing those big soup bones just like his uncle, Soup Bone Samson, used to do in this very ring.

[Hammer grabs an arm, firing him across again with just a one-handed whip...

...and FLOORS the rebounding McWesson by leaping into the air, swinging his arm behind him, and SMASHING it across the collarbone of the big man!]

GM: McWesson gets dropped again... and look at Hammer!

[The crowd roars as Hammer steps to the middle of the ring, looking out at them with his eyes bulging. He starts jogging in place, puffing his cheeks in and out at a comical pace before breaking into a dash towards the ropes, rebounding back and high-stepping back out before leaping up, flipping over, and dropping a high leaping senton down across the chest!]

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

GM: Quite an impressive move out of a man that size! Willie Hammer might be gaining even more fans here in Dallas, Texas tonight!

BW: I talked to Hammer earlier tonight about that move. Remember, we discussed two weeks ago that he might've learned it from Juan Vasquez during Vasquez' time as a trainer at the Combat Corner and Hammer confirmed it. That senton is indeed shades of Juan Vasquez.

[Back on his feet, Hammer throws his arms apart, surging forward to another big cheer as he heads towards the ropes, quickly scaling them. He gives a shout of "HAMMER TIME!" as he reaches the top rope, his arms spread apart...

...and hurls himself into the air, pumping his arms and legs, and CRASHING down across the chest of McWesson!]

GM: FROG SPLASH OFF THE TOP!

[Hammer reaches back, hooking a leg as the referee drops down.]

GM: ONE!! TWO!! THREE!!

"DING! DING! DING!"

[The youthful rookie pops back to his feet, giving another big shout as he hammers his chest with a clenched fist.]

GM: Another impressive victory by Willie Hammer as he looks to build momentum - and support - towards an eventual showdown with the World Heavyweight Champion, Supreme Wright.

BW: I can't even believe YOU'RE supporting that idea. Look at the Top Ten contender list, Gordo. You've got contenders like Shane and Bryant who we mentioned earlier... but what about Johnny Detson? What about Demetrius Lake? Heck, what about guys like Hannibal Carver and even Juan Vasquez? Are we going to pass up all those guys to give a young punk like Willie Hammer a shot at the title?!

GM: That decision is not up to you... nor is up to me. That decision is up to AWA President Karl O'Connor and the AWA Championship Committee. However, speaking of Demetrius Lake, let's go up to the interview platform where the Black Tiger himself is standing... with his entourage.

[We go up to the interview position, which has several "BAN THE IRON CLAW" placards and posters hung around it. Standing here are Percy Childes, Radiant Raven, and Demetrius Lake. The fans are booing them loudly.

Childes, short and squat with a bald head and dark goatee, is wearing a royal blue sweater with a vertical English-style lion stitched on the right side of the chest. He also wears dark brown pants and leather shoes, and sports his crystal-tipped walking stick.

The six-foot-tall Raven is garbed in a white strapless dress which stays fairly tight to her legs, and is accented with pearl-textured lines. The dark-haired

pale beauty has pale blue blush and eyeliner, and long white lacy gloves that extend to her upper arms.

Demetrius towers over even her; at six-nine, he dominates the scene. He is wearing a yellow ring jacket, red wrestling trunks which sport his initials in yellow, red boots, yellow knee pads, and white tape around his wrists and left thumb. His black fedora is nestled atop his afro, and a sour look is on his face, capped by his conical beard.

Childes has the microphone and begins.]

PC: Two weeks ago, we warned you about the Iron Claw. It is an illegal, dangerous hold which needs to be explicitly banned due to AWA officials not recognizing it as the illegal hold that it is.

[BOOOO!]

RR: Poor judgement is a common trait these days, it seems.

PC: The AWA has agreed that if we can get ten thousand signatures on our petition at [www dot AWA dot com slash bantheironclaw](http://www.dota.com/bantheironclaw), they will recognize that the fans are in accord with us regarding this. I am shamed to say that, at present, we have exactly... one hundred and thirty six signatures.

[The crowd cheers this news of failure.]

DL: Percy Childes, that's because these hobo fans are used to seeing only lowdown bums use the Iron Claw, like the Lunch boys. Jack Lunch is living proof that evolution can go in reverse. He is a bum, and even he could only do any damage with the Iron Claw by using sharp metal objects in his finger tape. Ohhhh, the shame of it all. The shame that the king of wrestling would have to suffer a bum like that in my kingdom, in my ring, usin' metal blades to cut up people with his Iron Claw.

But he will be stopped. He MUST be stopped. I am the king, and a king has responsibilities. As the king of wrestling, it is my responsibility to get rid of the gutter trash that fouls up this sport.

RR: He wears designer labels he wears on a day to day basis. They all read "Hefty".

PC: I think the fans need an education, Demetrius. So we're going to bring out a victim of the Iron Claw. A young man who may have had not one, but three careers tragically cut short two weeks ago by Jack Lynch's brutal Claw. Come on out, Kenneth.

[The fans boo as preliminary wrestler Kenneth "Pin Up" Doll comes sulking out from the back. His face is wrapped in swaths of bandages. His blonde hair sticks out between wraps in back, revealing that whomever did this had no clue how to wrap someone's face. We can only see his eyes and mouth. He's also wearing a T-Shirt that has the "BAN THE IRON CLAW" logo on it, and blue slacks.]

DL: Mr. Preliminary Wrestler, tell all these dummies we got tonight what happened to you.

KD: It was terrible! It was horrible! It was a national tragedy! Forget all those ugly people in Ukrania, LOOK AT MY FACE! That monster cut my face up! I had to cancel modeling gigs in Taipei, Cancun, and the Banana Republic! I had to turn down the covers of GQ and Vogue for next month! MY CAAAAAALENDAR ohmygodthetorment WHAT WILL THE LADIES THINK?!

[He turns to sob inconsolably, burying his head in... uh, well, Raven. She clenches her fists as her impassive expression turns into rage, but Lake pulls Doll away before she can murder him on national television.]

DL: You see what a mess this man is! Stand here, Mr. Preliminary Wrestler. All these people need a good look.

KD: NO! I must hide my face!

RR: Hide it on me again and I'll pull the rest of it off.

KD: Er... SEE?! Normally, beautiful women throw themselves at my feet in total solicitude! But John Lynch...

PC: Jack Lynch.

KD: ...that guy's claw ruined my life! I'll actually need to pretend to care about this woman in order to get her to be with me!

[Raven reaches for his throat, but Percy steps in between because murder cases are hard to win when you have this many witnesses.]

DL: You all can see it. Real clear. This boy's face got messed up, and now he's retarded, too. We ain't got so many retards in the world that we need any more of them. Raven, get you a large blunt object and escort this young man to the first aid room.

KD: I don't need to go to...

DL: And speaking of retarded individuals that have no idea what's in store for them; Jack Lunch, you might need sharp metal to mess somebody up with the Iron Claw, but if a real wrestler, a true ath-e-lete started using it, the effects would be catastrophic. And that's why I am going to prove why I am the king.

As I said, the king of wrestling has a responsibility to the sport of wrestling. I must act for the good of all wrestling. And so, I will lower myself and degrade myself for the public good. I will use the Iron Claw myself, here today, on this hobo they got lined up for me to fight. It disgusts me all the way to my soul to have to use this move. No true wrestler would ever stoop

this low, but it has to be done. I am the king and I will do what needs to be done. This hobo I'm about to fight will just have to be sacrificed.

Now, I already checked and he don't got no family that cares about him, so you don't got to worry about that. He's just a Mexan. But just remember that Jack Lunch is responsible, and all you bums that didn't sign the petition are responsible. But you'll do it now that you've seen what it can do even when a limp-wristed turkey rancher from Mexas does it... and then what a real ath-e-lete would do with it. No doubt about it!

[Demetrius drops the mic, and he and Percy head to the ring. We see Raven escorting Kenneth to his doo... er, to the back. "Mack The Knife" by Louis Armstrong starts up as Lake heads down the aisle, pointing an accusatory finger at some fans that have a "BAN THE THUMB" sign.]

GM: That... that was terrible. Fans, we apologize for the words of Demetrius Lake. He, quite frankly, used language that should not come out of the mouth of an AWA employee. We apologize to the fans of the AWA and to all individuals who suffer the indignity of being called "retarded" by a soulless creature like Demetrius Lake. But nonetheless, we're about to see Demetrius Lake in action.

BW: And we might never see Kenneth Doll again.

GM: That's a possibility. Radiant Raven did not look too pleased to be his escort to the back. But the big news is that Demetrius Lake says he'll use the Iron Claw here tonight... and that, I simply must see.

BW: You're a bloodthirsty man, Gordo.

[We get a shot in the ring of a wrestler with a slightly flabby physique, black hair which is beginning to lighten at the ends, an 80's mustache, and a two-strap full length singlet which is black with white trim. He has white boots and is wearing a locket. Phil Watson enters the ring as Lake stands next to the ropes, still on the aisle, jawing at fans. Childes heads down the stairs from the elevated aisle to ringside as Watson makes the introductions.]

PW: The following contest is set for one fall with a fifteen minute time limit.

Introducing first, to my left... from San Saba, Texas... weighing two hundred seventy pounds... "FIGHTING" CARL SARIFINO!

[Sarifino bounces on his heels and raises his arms as Lake steps over the top rope into the ring.]

PW: His opponent, to my right... introducing first, the manager... "The Collector Of Oddities" Percy Childes!

[BOOOOOO!]

PW: Accompanied by Radiant Raven... from Kansas City, Missouri... weighing three hundred seventeen pounds... he claims to be the King Of Wrestling... "THE BLACK TIGER" DEMETRIUS LAKE!

[BOOOOOOOOOOOOO!]

GM: Well, despite the introduction, Radiant Raven isn't at ringside. So one less source of interference to worry about.

BW: Like Lake needs it?! He's the king, daddy! Sarifino's a lifelong journeyman. I don't think he's wrestled in the AWA before, but he has been in the Minnesota, Portland, and Chicago territories for years. And he's had a, uh, let's say a Hugh Jenner-like career.

[*DING*DING*DING*]

GM: There's the bell, and a collar-and-elbow tieup. Lake shoving Sarifino across the ring! Sarifino is a big man in his own right, at six-three and two seventy. But there's clearly no contest in physical strength here.

BW: Oh, yeah. Lake hits the gym while Carl hits his son's place.

GM: His son has a gym?

BW: Carl's Jr! He lifts the double with cheese to his chin and back... lots of reps!

GM: Will you stop?!

[As the announcers banter, Lake is loudly boasting about his strength to the fans, which gets them booing more. A second tieup yields the same results as the first. Demetrius holds up his index finger and says he'll give Carl one more chance. Carl walks towards him with arms out for the lockup, and leaves himself wide open for Lake to hit a double cross chop to the windpipe, causing his foe to crash flat to the mat!]

BW: No, but Sarifino will. In his tracks!

GM: Typical devious tactics by Lake. Lake in the kneeling position, and rams the knee to the chest. And again! And again! Demetrius Lake with four, now five kneedrops of a sort to the sternum.

BW: See how he doesn't jump with that? He just plants his hands on the mat and drives in the knee. There's no risk there. If the guy moves, Lake wouldn't hurt himself. That's the mark of a smart wrestler.

GM: I'd certainly say that Lake is crafty and clever, though he uses those attributes in disgusting ways. Lake pulling his man up, backs him in to the corner... and a huge biel throw sends Sarifino soaring across the ring!

BW: That's not exactly an aerodynamic man, either. Sheer power by the king, and he's letting this crowd know it.

[Boos rain down as Lake does a circle of the ring, running his mouth, before going back to Sarifino, kicking his head to put him on his back, and then stepping directly on his throat while pulling the ropes for extra power.]

GM: Oh, of course. Lake establishes enough dominance to show that he doesn't need to break rules, and now here comes the rulebreaking. This is the most infuriating thing about the man. He is utterly without shame.

BW: Why on Earth would he be ashamed? He's undefeated in one-on-one action, Gordo! The only loss he had was at the end of Steal The Spotlight, and that was a two-on-one where he beat one of the other two first, and the other one is the current World Champion!

GM: His tactics! Lake pulls up Sarifino, and rakes his eyes for no reason.

BW: Sure there was a reason: he wanted to. He raked his eyes because he wanted to.

GM: Sending Sarifino off the ropes, and there's the big boot! Right to the forehead! That usually knocks a man insensate enough for the Big Cat Pounce.

BW: But he ain't gonna use the Big Cat Pounce. He's gonna use the Iron Claw. A man like Lake would probably make Carl Sarifino's head pop like a soap bubble. It'll be like watchin' Scanners.

GM: Lake picking up Sarifino, and throws him out to the floor! He possibly could have gone for the win, so I do not know what he's doing with this.

BW: Again... whatever he wants. Normal guys like you aren't really used to the concept of being able to do anything you want, are you Gordo?

GM: I'm not used to the concept of wanting to rake someone's eyes or throw them into concrete. Those desires just seem evil to me.

[After a brief bout of mouthing off at the fans, Lake heads outside the ring. He takes his time stalking Sarifino, and Percy Childes decides to have a word with referee Ricky Longfellow about goodness-knows-what. At that time, Lake scoops up Sarifino, and smashes his head right into the ringpost to the loud protests of the crowd!]

GM: OH MY STARS! What is this all about?!

BW: And again! Wham! That sounded like a cantaloupe exploding!

GM: There's no need for this! What is he doing?!

BW: How many times do I have to answer the same question, Myers?! What! He! Wants!

[After ramming poor Carl's head into the ringpost twice, Lake rolls into the ring and starts yelling at the referee. That's when we see that Raven has made her way back to ringside... notably without her gloves. She walks over to Carl Sarafino, who is flat on his back and busted open, and steps directly on his forehead with the heel of her stiletto heels!]

GM: GOOD GRIEF! Raven's back, and she is using those heels on the man's open wound!

BW: No worries, Gordo, I think she's already got blood on them.

GM: She does, and that doesn't make it better!

BW: You have no sympathy for a woman's shoes, do you?

GM: Finally, Raven steps away from Sarifino. Referee Ricky Longfellow is questioning her... now she's distracting him! Lake outside, and he's moving the protective mats! WHY?!

BW: Stop. Stop askin' questions when you already know the answer. I don't like repeating myself. You, on the other hand, seem to love it.

[Lake pulls Sarifino to his knees. The Texas native is bleeding already, and it is about to get worse as Lake slaps on a half nelson, and hurls him face-down on the bare concrete with a SPLAT. The crowd is going crazy with outrage over this.]

GM: HE SLAMMED HIS HEAD INTO BARE CONCRETE! That has to be a suspension! It has to be!

BW: Look, this ain't Steve Spector beatin' up a hundred-twenty pound non-athlete. This is "Fighting" Carl Sarifino. "Fighting". The fact that he didn't do much fighting don't take away from the fact that's what he came here to do. You don't suspend a man for winnin'. If Sarifino don't want to get his wig split, all he has to do is stop Lake from doin' it. He's a pro wrestler and he knew the risks.

GM: No, Bucky, this is not part of the sport! The ringpost and concrete floor are not part of the legal wrestling surface. The referee and AWA President have it in their power to disqualify or punish someone who inflicts unnecessary and illegal harm to a helpless opponent. Lake rolling Sarifino in the ring, and Carl Sarifino is a bloody wreck!

BW: Okay, you want clean wrestling? There it is!

GM: What. What? WHAT?!

BW: Gordo. Don't you dare. Don't you dare blow up about this.

GM: HE PUT HIM IN A FRONT FACELOCK!

BW: That's a legal technical move. Don't cry about cheatin' and then cry about NOT cheatin'. That's called 'hypocrisy'. Or worse, 'politics'.

GM: The man is bleeding and semiconscious, in need of medical attention, could be pinned for the count of a hundred, and Lake puts him in a wear down hold?!

BW: You can't be too sure.

GM: Why is Longfellow not stopping the match!?

BW: Because he don't know how bad off Sarifino is, what with all the being distracted and Lake moving around so Longfellow can't check the guy. Terrible job by Longfellow, I agree with that. He keeps gettin' himself distracted.

GM: This crowd's about to riot and I'm about to lead it.

BW: Wow! Gordo, you been hittin' the caffiene a bit much?

[Finally, after using the front facelock to get the blood flow nice and large, Lake lets go... and holds up the Claw hand. The crowd is angry and are letting the world know.]

BW: Oh! Here it is! Now we'll see what the Iron Claw can do when a real man puts it on.

GM: This... this... he did all this to mock the Iron Claw?! He possibly ended a man's career, his livelihood, and his ability to enjoy his old age to mock the Iron Claw?!

BW: Hail to the king, baby!

[Lake slaps on the Iron Claw, and makes a bunch of comical 'exertion' sounds, growling and snorting, as he pretends to struggle to force Sarifino to his back. Blood is everywhere, and now that Longfellow sees Carl Sarifino's condition, he calls for the bell.]

[*DING*DING*DING*]

BW: Look at that, Gordo! Look at that! He's bleeding everywhere! The Iron Claw is way too dangerous!

[Lake lets go of the Claw immediately, and looks at his hand in mock horror. He holds it up to the crowd to show them the blood on his palm. They are not taking it well.]

BW: I think it is pretty clear lookin' at this that the clawhold has to be banned. Carl Sarifino's gonna be hospitalized because of that.

GM: I'm done. I'm done talking about it, and justifying this charade. It's one thing to go around and make insane claims to try and get under a

wrestler's skin, but when you're hurting innocent people in order to get under someone else's skin, you're a menace to society. Lake's far from the only one, but I've had it with this sort of thing.

PW: The referee has stopped the match, and awarded it to "THE BLACK TIGER" DEMETRIUS LAKE!

[Raven goes over and collects the microphone from Watson, holding it by the cord in disgust. She marches over to the broadcast table, gets some tissues from a tissue box that Gordon had on hand (just in case), and uses the tissues to hold the mic (because her gloves are gone). She then marches towards Lake and holds the microphone for him, so he doesn't have to get blood on it.]

DL: I told you. I told you about the Iron Claw. TAKE A GOOD LOOK!

[He holds up the Claw hand again.]

DL: This poor hobo is lucky they gave him medical care at the expense of hard workin' men like myself. They might put his skull back together, but probably not. He'll be a brain dead vegetable in any case. Really, they oughta put him in a dumpster and be done with it; we don't need a drain on our society like this. And if you don't sign to ban the Iron Claw, Jack Lunch will keep on usin' it, hurtin' lesser men real bad so they become useless drains like this one. And if a real wrestler sees him, and realizes that if even a bum like Jack Lunch, a no-good Mexan who couldn't squeeze toothpaste out of a tube, can use the Iron Claw to such an effect, then they could do real damage with it. And then we'll all have to pay for all the people that end up in the hospital, on life support because they had what passes for brains crushed.

The real tragedy, of course, is that some of those victims might not be Mexans.

[BOOOOOOOOOO! And then suddenly, cheers!]

GM: JACK LYNCH HAS HEARD ENOUGH!

BW: No! He's got his hand blades on!

[Like a bullet fired out of a gun, Lynch is sprinting at full speed down the entrance ramp. He's dressed in his street clothes - a black shirt and black jeans. He pauses only long enough to push down the top rope and climb over it. The moment Lake is in his sights, he rushes forward, tackling Lake down to the mat, and leaps atop with a furious rain of punches!]

GM: Jack Lynch said that every time he saw Lake, he would put him in the Claw! He's pounding away... the Black Tiger rolls him back over and now he's going to work with some punches!

BW: That'll show him! Lake's shown the world what happens when a real athlete uses the Claw! Maybe he'll put it on Stench! How great would that be, to see Stench laid out just like Sarifino is because of the Iron Claw!

[The big Missouri native picks up Lynch, kicks him, and Irish whips him off the ropes. A big clothesline attempt is ducked, and Jack Lynch barrels off the far ropes at a high rate of speed, jumping at Lake with a Thesz press... and with the Iron Claw! The crowd explodes!]

GM: CLAW! JACK LYNCH HAS THE CLAW ON LAKE AGAIN!

[Fortunately for Demetrius, the momentum of Lynch flying into him carries him back into the ropes. Lake spills out between the middle and bottom ropes, and his sheer weight and momentum manage to pull him loose from the Claw only a couple seconds after it was applied!]

BW: Look at that brilliant counter!

GM: That was sheer, unadulterated luck! Raven now stepping in between!

[The fans urge Jack Lynch on as he steps out onto the apron. He starts to dive to the floor atop Lake, but has to grab the top rope to stop himself when he sees Raven standing, quite unafraid, in the way.]

BW: We saw two weeks ago that a Stench will brutalize a woman! Careful, Raven, he might get that scumbag Travis out here!

GM: Will you stop?!

[One person who will not stop is Jack. He hops to the floor, grabs Raven by the upper arms, and physically moves her aside. He then moves in on Lake, but the delay was all that was needed. Security is on the scene.]

BW: Look! Jack Stench attacked a woman just like his brother! What did Blackjack teach these kids?!

GM: He did not, and Raven's hardly defenseless anyway! Look at Lake hiding behind the security!

[Indeed, Demetrius has pulled a security guard in place with one arm, and with his other arm is acting as if he wants to get at Jack Lynch but can't because the guard is holding him back. All of the other guards are required to actually hold Jack Lynch back.]

BW: That must be the best security guard ever, if he can keep Demetrius Lake back by himself. We should send HIM to the Combat Corner. Even Michaelson couldn't screw that up. Well... okay, actually, he could. Never mind.

GM: Fans, we have to go to commercial. We'll be back after we get this under control!

[Fade to black.]

Cut to a very long shot of the exterior of a pretty dingy looking building.]

"Have you ever dreamed of fame?"

[Cut a little closer.]

"Of glory?"

[A little closer.]

"Of your friends and family seeing you on television?"

[And just a little closer, revealing a red, white, and blue sign that reads "AWA Combat Corner."]

"Well, now you can make all your dreams come true by signing up today at the AWA Combat Corner - the official training school for the American Wrestling Alliance!"

[We cut to the interior of the building where we can see lots of standard gym equipment surrounding a very basic wrestling ring. There are people lifting weights, running on treadmills, and of course, working out in the ring.]

"With the very best trainers in the business, the AWA Combat Corner is the most-equipped training facility to get you in shape and get you in the ring in the shortest amount of time!"

[Cut into the ring where an unseen instructor is barking out instructions at two young students who are grappling on the canvas.]

"So, stop by the Combat Corner today... call our offices... visit our website... and let them know that you want to be the next AWA Superstar! You want to be the future of the business! You want to wrestle!"

[Fade to a graphic that has all the info on the AWA Combat Corner before we fade back to black...]

We slowly fade up on an iconic image to longtime wrestling fans - the skull facepaint that "Blackheart" Casey James would apply when it was time to go to the most personal of wars. Our camera shot bores into the eyes, showing rage... hatred... unadulterated wickedness. The voice of Todd Michaelson cuts through.]

"Looks just like he did the night he beat the hell out of his parents."

[The shot pans down, revealing the well-toned torso of the Blackheart, showcasing scars that were picked up in rings in Portland, in Los Angeles, and in South Laredo. The voice of Jon Stegglet is heard.]

"Temple's trying to rip the upper body of Casey James wide open!"

[Then Todd Michaelson's voice as we focus on a particularly nasty scar.]

"Temple wants to bleed Casey James dry here tonight in Texas."

[The shot dissolves to a pair of hands... noticeably missing one finger. Michaelson's voice is heard again.]

"The damn barbed wire ripped his finger off!

[We hear the haunting cackle from the Blackheart on that horrific night, ringing in the ears of every man, woman, and child viewing... just as it did on that evening. The laugh of a man who had put his body through hell against his greatest rival and come out the other side. The shot fades to black where a series of words appear.]

"KING OF THE DEATH MATCH."

"FORMER WORLD CHAMPION."

"HALL OF FAMER."

[The final graphic fades, leaving a black screen for a moment before we slowly fade back up to reveal a bright white screen with a still photo in the middle, showing a young man in a suit and tie, something resembling a high school graduation photo minus the cap and gown. Tall and handsome. His hair is long, dirty blond in shade. He's clean shaven. He has a big smile on his face, wide-eyed and innocent as he looks into the photographer's lens.]

"AND THIS MAN IS HIS SON."

[The graphic fades again, the shot zooming in on the smiling face.]

"Brian James.

Coming soon to the AWA."

[And one final fade to black.

Fade to the ring where Phil Watson is getting ready to introduce the next match.]

PW: This next contest is scheduled for one..

[Watson pauses, as the youngster known as Matt Rogers rolls into the ring. Rogers quickly pops to his feet, wagging his index finger in the air in Watson's direction. He points to the microphone, and Watson gives the mic to Rogers after briefly thinking about it. Rogers is a pale man with a slight build. He's dressed to compete, wearing a pair of black trunks, with a red circle-A anarchist symbol on each leg, black ankle supports, wrist, and finger tape.]

MR: Hold on just one second here, Mister Watson!

GM: Matt Rogers is not scheduled to compete here right now but he's come out and commandeered the microphone.

BW: From how Rogers is dressed, and from the look on his face, I'd say he's ready to compete, Gordo.

[Rogers looks out over the crowd, who pays the youngster little mind. Rogers rubs his goatee.]

MR: I was supposed to step in the ring with some so-called Hall of Famer, Steve Spector, this week, but the fool got himself suspended, huh? Yeah, we all saw his silly little meltdown two weeks ago, but I know the truth! He saw that he was supposed to take on me, Matt Rogers.. no relation to Adam, of course!

GM: Oh please.

[The fans boo the fact that Matt Rogers would even mention himself in the same sentence as Adam Rogers. Rogers smirks.]

MR: So yeah, Spector got so scared that he turned his fright on AWA officials, leaving me without an opponent here tonight. But ya know, I saw a certain someone backstage headin' on out of here like he thinks he himself has the night off or something.

Well, that man thought wrong. You see, by the rules of the Championship Committee, the AWA Television Champion needs to defend his title on every episode of Saturday Night Wrestling! No nights off for our little boy champion. I think I earned my shot at glory, so Alphonse Green.. get out here and defend your title!

GM: Rogers does raise a good point. With the focus being on the tag gauntlet tonight, the World Television Championship did fall by the wayside. Green is backstage here... and there he is!

[The crowd roars, and the camera pans over to the curtains, where the AWA Television Champion pokes his head out, curious at to what's going on. After a moment, the curtains part, and the champion steps out onto the aisleway, not dressed to wrestle. He's wearing a pair of green and white zebra pants, and a "Gang Green" T-Shirt. An AWA duffel bag is slung over his shoulder as he stares at the ring.]

BW: Gordo, are those... L.A. Gears?

GM: Indeed.

[Green raises his arm, telling Rogers to wait. Green drops the duffel bag to the ground, and unzips the bag. After a moment of rummaging through the bag, he pulls out the Television championship, and fastens it around his waist.]

BW: Well, if this is gonna be a title defense, he might as well look the part.

[Instead of heading for the ring, Green raises his arm, telling Rogers that he'll be right back.]

GM: Now what? Green's turned around and has disappeared behind the curtain.

[After about thirty seconds, Freddy Mercury's familiar voice blares through the building!]

Tonight... I'm gonna have myself a real good time..

I feel Alllllllll---iiiiii---iiiiii-vvvveee

And the world, turning inside out.... yeaahh.

I'm floating around... in ecstasy.. so don't. Stop. Me. Now.

Don't. Stop. Me..

GM: Of course.

BW: The champ needs his belt, and he needs his theme music too! Now he's ready to go!

[Green stops at the top of the aisle, and looks down at the watch he's wearing. Green shrugs, then walks with a purpose down to the ring, not stopping to acknowledge the crowd. Once he reaches ringside, he drops the duffel bag, and quickly removes the Television Championship. He quickly steps into the ring, and Rogers jumps on him to start the match!]

DING DING DING

GM: Rogers starting off this impromptu Television Title match with a fury!

[After a few stomps, Rogers pulls Green to his feet and whips him into the ropes.]

GM: Clothesline... ducked!

[Green bounds off the far ropes. Rogers turns around after that wild swing, and Green flies through the air, nailing him underneath the chin!]

GM: A beauty of a dropkick! Rogers to his feet, and quickly taken down with an armdrag! Rogers up.. and armdragged to the mat again!

[Rogers tries to roll to the outside, but Green is quick on the attack, grabbing Rogers to pull him back towards the center of the ring.]

BW: Rogers wanted his chance at glory, and there's no retreat at this point!

[Green pulls Rogers to his feet, and looks to take him over with a back suplex, but Rogers flips behind Green.]

GM: Nice agility from the youngster out of Oakland, California. Green turning around..

[Rogers jumps in the air, hoping to catch Green with a jumping spin kick, but Green rolls away just in the nick of time.]

BW: Rogers is rather handy with kicks himself, Gordo.. look out!

[Speaking of kicks, Green lunges forward, catching Rogers underneath the jaw with a Yakuza kick right as Rogers turns around. Rogers rolls over to the corner, checking his jaw, just as Green looks down at his watch. His eyes widen, and an audible shout of "MY FLIGHT!" is heard.]

GM: Green rushing over to Rogers, who is shaking the cobwebs after that kick.

[Not giving Rogers a chance to recover, he cinches Rogers, and scales the corner. He flips back, driving the back of Rogers head into the canvas!]

GM: HUNGER STRIKE! There's the cover, and Green gets the quick three count!

DING DING DING

PW: The winner of the match, and still AWA Television Champion..
ALPHONSE GREEN!

[The crowd roars, but Green swiftly rolls out of the ring, picking up his title belt and duffel bag. Jason Dane makes his way down to the ring.]

JD: Congratulations on another title defense, Alphonse..

AG: I'd love to stay and chat, but my flight to Japan takes off in three hours... so you can feel free to insert a TSA joke to save me some time, Dane. I've been lookin' forward to this flight for the last few weeks, daydreamin' of all the restaurants in Japan. Heck, I'm even daydreamin' of airline food, that's how amped up I am. Too bad I can't fly on th' Gang Green Flyin' Machine, 'cause I'd get there lickety-split!

[Dane raises his eyebrow.]

JD: I don't know how you would put yourself on the Gang Green Flying Machine..

[Green shakes his head.]

AG: Ya still don't quite get what I'm capable of. Heck, a whole entire country doesn't know what I'm capable of!t I'll be glad to show Japan what Gang Green is all about! I'm hopin' the Championship Committee can squeeze an AWA Television Title on Rising Sun Showdown, 'cause I think the whole world deserves to see Mecha Alphonse Green in the flesh!

[Green looks down at his watch.]

AG: ..two hours and fifty-five minutes. My cab's gotta be here by now! Now if you excuse me, it's time for Alphonse Green to ride.. to the airport!

[Green quickly rushes past Dane and disappears off camera, stage left. Dane looks over to the left, and turns his head back to the camera. Dane shrugs his shoulders as the camera fades back to the locker room area where...

Oh, ok, this guy is back. It's Gibson Hayes. His "best afro in the wrestling business today" afro looks quite snazzy and he's elected to forgo his jacket, wearing his white business shirt, dark navy blue suit pants, and red tie. He's alone backstage with the mic in hand because... no one really wants to stand there while he babbles.]

GH: So, I got to thinking - why is Gibson Hayes here, in the American Wrestling Alliance? Is it because you have something to prove? That the best in the business ply their trade here and that you want to be amongst them?

[Hayes raises his eyebrows.]

GH: No. I've already proven that I'm better than each and every one of the men on this roster with out ever having been in that ring, right there. That isn't me boasting, that's me telling you what fans across the world said. Who's the man who had his face and existence censored on AWA television because they wanted to deny his existence? Me.

I'd like to thank the cripple James Monosso for that, by the way - gave me a good chuckle. I kept a deathgrip on so many year end categories, helping a company that was run by idiots who believed, for a brief moment, that Brian Young, Rob Cole, or Rick Marley constituted someone you, the average cud chewing viewer wanted to see in the spotlight.

[A shoulder shrug.]

GH: No, I've parried, stymied, sabotaged, and flat out stole spotlight from this company, right here, time in and time out. I've done it because, whether or not you like to admit it, no matter what happens in that ring, I already have a pedigree beyond what Nenshou, Wright, Bryant, Craven, Green or any other of the men on the roster can bring down. Even Vasquez.

[We can hear boos from inside the Coliseum.]

GH: Hey, I never said that until now... you folks did. Back in 2011, and, if the company I had previously been employed by had managed some semblance of consistency, it may have been more. Heck, even in the glory year of 2012, the top two shows - Gibson Hayes leading the charge. But I didn't say that. No, not at all. This isn't a boast about what I've done in other companies from me, it's just the facts from fans like each and every one of you.

[Hayes holds the microphone in his left hand, while urging the audience to protest.]

GH: But it doesn't matter now, does it? I'm the enemy. No matter what I do in this company, no matter how it's positioned, I'm the "outsider". I'm like a leper... good, I like it like that... except I'm glad I'm not losing body parts. Anyhoo, I've got news for you: there isn't a glass ceiling. There isn't anything stopping anyone from succeeding here... except being Detson or Marley. Those two? They're going to make the same mistakes as usual. Yeah, I fought both of them. Yeah, I think Johnny Detson is something you scrape off a the heel of a boot and that Marley is a casting call reject from Burton's Charlie and the Chocolate Factory. Big woop. It isn't as if they've made their mark as anything more than henchmen. What I'm saying won't make me any friends here. However, I don't have friends here and I'll never have friends here. Even the Buckster hates me... but I don't care.

[Get to the point, Gibby.]

GH: No, I'm here to flaunt the fact I exist, that no matter how hard the "victors" try to re-write, re-interpret, and re-edit history, that I'm always going to have my precious visage right there, in a prominent place. I'm here to be hated, to poke, prod and agitate. That's why I slack off. That's why I mock everything you like. That's why I voted Fred Hoyle. Because I'm not a nice person, and, Nenshou, I'm tired of of you. You just won't take the bait, and, to be frank, I don't think the language barrier is going to do us any favors.

So... I'm just going to come out and say this: since I made Devon Case a cripple, how about you and I see if I can't give him a hospital roommate? I don't care if it is in Japan, the United States, or even Texas. You want to prove to these people that you can go, that's all well and good. Do it. You beat me. You show off them fancy Oriental moves...

[A few boos for a taboo term.]

GH: Oh hush, it means Eastern; for goodness sake, I'm Occidental! Anyhow, that's all wanted to say. Love you!

[Gibson blows a kiss and saunters off...

...and we slowly fade back up to Gordon and Bucky, the former of which is shaking his head.]

GM: There's just something not right about that man. Well, folks, it's about time for Dave Bryant to come out here and make his challenge...any idea what's going on with that, Bucky?

BW: Dave and I aren't exactly on speaking terms anymore, so no, Gordo, I have no idea what he's doing. I wouldn't be surprised if he was trying to set the champ up for another sneak attack, though!

["Bad Seed" by Metallica fires up over the PA...]

GM: I'd say whatever he's planning, it's happening right now!

[...and from the curtain emerges one "Doctor of Love" Dave Bryant. He's apparently dressed in his ring gear, robe and all, and seems to be all business as he strides up the ramp, walking right up to the edge of the ring, stopping to wipe the soles of his boots on the apron before stepping through the ropes and to the center of the ring, taking a moment to point to the fans, who cheer appreciatively. Bryant walks over to the ropes opposite the ramp and leans over them, asking for and receiving a microphone, which he takes back mid-ring.]

DB: Two weeks ago, you all got a little preview of the World Title match coming up at Rising Sun Showdown...

[Bryant grins as the fans cheer.]

DB: Yeah, I got the feeling a lot of you liked the sight of Supreme Wright getting knocked on his can as much as I did. I told you that you'd always see me coming, Wright, and I kept my word. I didn't sneak up on you, I didn't hit you in the back, and I was even polite enough to warn you that Kenta Kitzukawa was about to make a dent in your skull!

[Bryant looks around at the fans and shrugs slightly.]

DB: I get the feeling that none of that is going to make you very happy, though...at least, I hope it doesn't. You see, Wright, I planned to come out here and lay down a challenge tonight. Everybody knows it, they just don't know whose punk card is getting pulled tonight.

[Bryant pauses.]

DB: I'm not interested in playing games, Wright, and I don't really feel like leaving everybody in suspense, so right here, in front of all these fans at Crockett Coliseum...

I'm calling YOU out, Wright!

[The crowd pops big for that one as Bryant points down at the curtain.]

DB: I'm nowhere close to done repaying you for what you did to me at SuperClash, and I'm sure you're hot under the collar after I made you look like a fool in front of the world two weeks ago, so why don't you come on out here, step into the ring, and see how you fare against me when I know you're coming, Wright?

[And with that, Bryant crosses his arms over his chest and waits for a response.]

GM: Dave Bryant is calling out the World Champion! The question now is, will Supreme Wright answer this challenge or will he ignore it? The old

Supreme Wright...the one that I THOUGHT I knew, would certainly accept. But with the Supreme Wright we know now, I'm not so sure.

BW: And that's a bad thing? Wright SHOULD be ignoring this challenge! For all we know, Bryant's flown in a couple more mercenaries to jump him from behind!

[The crowd is growing restless as it appears that Wright won't be showing up, when suddenly, "Black Skinhead" by Kanye West, begins to play over PA system, drawing a massive roar of boos(and some cheers) from the crowd as the curtains part and we see first Cain Jackson emerging from the back, wearing a "#ScumbagTravis" t-shirt. However, the boos intensify when we see the second man emerge with the whole of Team Supreme following behind him and the crowd sees that he's not dressed to wrestle at all...the AWA World Heavyweight Champion, Supreme Wright.]

GM: Here's the World Champion, but it doesn't look like he has any intention of wrestling tonight.

BW: And he shouldn't! He has nothing to gain by wrestling Bryant this close to Rising Sun Showdown!

[Wright is dressed in one of his usual tweed suits, cradling the World Title in his left arm and holding a microphone in the other. He stops short of entering the ring, standing beside Jackson as Team Supreme stands directly behind him. Raising the microphone to his lips, he begins to speak.]

SW: You have a lot of nerve, Dave Bryant.

[The crowd jeers.]

SW: But why should I be surprised? It should be expected that a coward like you, would try to take advantage of the situation and challenge a man when he's at less than one hundred percent.

[The crowd roars with boos at the sheer audacity and hypocrisy of that statement, while Bryant shouts, "ARE YOU KIDDING ME!?" at Wright from inside the ring.]

SW: I assure you, I'm absolutely and completely serious. When you orchestrated that sneak attack on me with Kitzukawa-san, I suffered several injuries from my fall into the crowd. The doctors assure me that I'll be ready for Rising Sun Showdown, but they've advised me not to aggravate my condition by wrestling between now and my next title defense. And as much as I'd love to teach you a lesson inside MY ring, I will have to respectfully DECLINE your challenge.

[The crowd REALLY lets him have it with that announcement. Inside the ring, Bryant shakes his head in disbelief, shooting Wright the dirtiest look.]

SW: BUT...if you're so determined to have a match tonight, I'm sure I can still provide you with one. You see, I'm not the only one who was a victim

two weeks ago. Right now, I have a group of young men standing around me that YOU personally attacked.

[Bryant smiles.]

DB: I'll gladly take on any one of your brainwashed lackeys, Wright. Hell, I'm sure Jackson still remembers how I pummeled him! Get your bodyguard in the ring and I'll give HIM the beating that YOU deserve!

[BIG POP!]

SW: If that's the way you want it, then...

"NO!"

[Suddenly, Wright is interrupted by...one of the members of Team Supreme. From the group of tracksuit-wearing ex-Combat Corner students, emerges the largest of them all. His face is hidden by the hood covering his head, but it's obvious that he cuts an imposing figure, standing at about eye level with the six foot six inch, Cain Jackson.]

"LET ME FIGHT HIM! HE CAN'T DISRESPECT US LIKE THAT!"

[Supreme puts up a hand, signaling for his student to stop, but Bryant interrupts them.]

DB: It doesn't matter to me, Supreme! It doesn't need to be Jackson! I'll fight any one of your students!

[Supreme turns to his student and looks underneath his hoodie to see who it is, before a smirk forms on his face and he turns his attention back to Bryant.]

SW: Fine.

[Supreme turns to his student.]

SW: Well? Don't be so rude. Take off your hood and introduce yourself.

[The Team Supreme member pulls off the hood over his head, revealing a bearded young man with dark blonde hair and familiar light blue eyes, bearing more than a striking resemblance to a member of the current AWA roster. He leans into the microphone that Supreme holds up to his face.]

???: My name is Tony Donovan, Jr.

[The crowd reacts with some mild shock at the name.]

SW: And who is your father, Tony?

[There's a slight look of disgust that flashes over Tony's face before he answers.]

TD: ROBERT DONOVAN.

[And with that, the crowd goes wild. Inside the ring, Dave Bryant frowns, just as shocked as everyone else.]

SW: Well Dave Bryant, you have your match. But try to take it easy on Tony...

...it's his first match.

[And with that, Tony Donovan steps into the ring, as Supreme Wright and the rest of Team Supreme make their way towards the announcer's table.]

GM: OH MY STARS! On the last edition of Saturday Night Wrestling, we heard Robert Donovan saying that his son was one of the Combat Corner students that had REFUSED to accept Supreme Wright's offer to join Team Supreme, but here he is, ready to take on the number one contender, Dave Bryant!

[A loud "CLUNK!" is heard, as another voice joins the broadcast.]

GM: Fans, it looks like we're going to be joined on commentary for this match by the World Heavyweight Champion, Supreme Wright. Mr. Wright, can you shed some light on this situation? We were led to believe that Tony Donovan had declined your invitation.

SW: Does my answer even matter, Mr. Myers? What was it that you said about me?

[...]

SW: Oh yes...I'm "lying [my] face off" every time I speak.

BW: HAHA! He's got you there, Gordo!

SW: But I'll still give you the courtesy of providing an answer. It seems to me, that Mr. Donovan doesn't know or understand his son as well as he thinks...and I'll leave it at that.

[Inside the ring, Dave Bryant looks apprehensive about taking on Donovan. Not out of fear, but more out of reluctance to hurt the youngster. Meanwhile, Donovan talks some major trash at Bryant, trying to provoke him.]

GM: Do you care to make a prediction on this match?

SW: It shouldn't take Dave Bryant more than five minutes to defeat Mr. Donovan.

GM: WHAT?

SW: Tony simply isn't ready for an opponent of this caliber at his current level of training. That's my unbiased opinion as his teacher, Mr. Myers...unless of course, you think I'm lying again.

[Back in the ring, Donovan shoves Bryant hard in the chest, but Bryant restrains himself, doing his best to hold back from walloping, the kid.]

GM: No, it's just that if Tony Donovan has no chance of winning, why did you let him enter the ring?

SW: It'll be a good learning experience for him. I have high hopes for Tony in the future. But for now, I want him to understand the level of difference in skill between him and the very top of this sport.

BW: You think Dave Bryant is at the very top of this sport?

SW: No, Mr. Wilde. *I* am the very top of this sport...but Dave Bryant is close. Just not close enough.

[Bryant tries to talk some sense into Donovan, but is suddenly met with a hard slap across the face! The crowd gasps, as Donovan quickly trips Bryant up with a textbook double-leg takedown!]

GM: OH! A double-leg takedown by Tony Donovan and he's wailing away on Dave Bryant!

BW: That was picture-perfect, Gordo! You taught him that, didn't you, champ?

SW: He learned it in the Combat Corner...but I taught him how to execute it properly.

[Dragging Bryant up by the hair, Donovan shoves him into a corner and continues to punch away, as the former world champion does his best to cover up. Ricky Longfellow administers a five count, before Donovan backs off, warning him about using closed fists.]

GM: Donovan is certainly taking the fight to Dave Bryant, but Bryant seems hesitant to fight back.

SW: That's his problem, Mr. Myers. He certainly wasn't hesitant in leaping onto all my students and he certainly wasn't hesitant in having Kenta Kitzukawa blindside me.

GM: Speaking of Kitzukawa, he seems to have a personal vendetta against you for what you did to Todd Michaelson.

SW: "What I did"? Mr. Myers, don't distort the facts. I didn't cause Mr. Michaelson to do anything. He willingly chose to quit on The Combat Corner and his students on his own.

BW: I keep telling Gordo that, but he just won't listen!

SW: That seems to be a problem that a lot of people have around here, these days.

[Donovan whips Bryant into the ropes, going for a clothesline, but Bryant ducks under, bouncing off the far ropes and leaping into the air, nailing Donovan with a flying forearm!]

GM: OH! And here comes Dave Bryant, roaring back!

SW: Tony got sloppy there. We're going to have to work on that in training.

[Bryant grabs Donovan and whips him into the ropes, nailing him with a dropkick that sends him falling to the outside!]

GM: And what a dropkick by Dave Bryant! It sends Donovan out of the ring!

BW: Uh oh Gordo, it looks like they're coming this way!

[Dave Bryant rolls out of the ring in pursuit of Tony Donovan. He grabs him...

...and then launches him AT the announcer's table, ramming him into Supreme Wright and knocking the champion out of his chair as the crowd goes wild!]

GM: OH MY STARS!

BW: THAT LUNATIC JUST TRIED TO KILL US!

GM: The World Champion is down, here at ringside and Dave Bryant is taking the fight to Tony Donovan inside the ring!

[There's a lot of static and feedback heard, as Supreme Wright rips off his headset. Meanwhile, in the ring, Dave Bryant PLANTS Tony Donovan into the canvas with a DDT!]

GM: OH! There's Dave Bryant's patented DDT! I think this match is close to being over!

[As Cain Jackson and the rest of Team Supreme help their leader back to his feet, Bryant points a finger at the world champion, before grabbing Tony Donovan's legs and turning him over into The Iron Crab!]

GM: AND THERE'S THE IRON CRAB!

BW: That's the move that injured Calisto Dufresne's back! What kind of sick man does this to a kid!?

[Tony holds out for a seconds, but soon, he's tapping furiously on the canvas, as the referee calls for the bell!]

GM: And that's it! Young Tony Donovan tried, but Dave Bryant was simply too-OH MY STARS!

[Gordon's thoughts are interrupted, as we see Cain Jackson sliding into the ring and CRACKING Dave Bryant in the back of the head with a swinging lariat, breaking the Iron Crab he had on Tony Donovan, as the crowd roars with boos. Team Supreme pulls Donovan out of the ring, as Supreme himself, slides into the ring while Jackson holds Bryant in a full nelson.]

GM: Dave Bryant wins the battle, but he just might lose the war! He's at the mercy of Supreme Wright and Cain Jackson!

BW: That's what he deserves and more! He took a cheapshot at the world champ and now he's getting his just desserts!

[However, before any damage can be done, the crowd ERUPTS at the sight of Kenta Kitzukawa running down to the ring!]

GM: OH! HERE COMES KENTA KITZUKAWA!!!

[Kitzukawa meets Jackson head-on, battering him with forearm shots, before knocking the bodyguard clear out of the ring with a roaring elbow!]

GM: OH!

[As Kitzukawa helps Dave Bryant back to his feet, Bryant suddenly breaks out into a sprint, diving between the ropes and taking out Jackson and Team Supreme with a tope!]

GM: DAVE BRYANT DIVES ONTO TEAM SUPREME YET AGAIN!

BW: THIS IS CRAZY, GORDO!

[Meanwhile, Kitzukawa points a finger at Supreme Wright, as the World Champion takes a step forward, coming face-to-face with his challenger.]

GM: Oh boy, this is the showdown we've all been waiting for!

BW: Kitzukawa isn't gonna' do anything, Gordo! He ain't got the guts to do anything when it ain't an ambush!

[What is said between them isn't certain, but as soon as Wright is finished talking, he turns to walk away. However, Kitzukawa's eyes suddenly open wide and he grabs Wright by the shoulder, spinning him around and booting him in the midsection, right before placing him into a standing headscissors!]

BW: Wait a minute! Wait a damn minute!

[Kitzukawa hooks both arms and then lifts Wright into the air, driving the World Champion back into the canvas with...]

GM: THE BILLION DOLLAR BOMB! KITZUKAWA JUST HIT WRIGHT WITH THE BILLION DOLLAR BOMB!!!

[Dave Bryant slides back into the ring, making a mock pin count as the crowd counts along...]

"ONE!!!"

"TWO!!!"

"THREE!!!"

[The crowd goes WILD, as Kitzukawa gets back to his feet and Dave Bryant raises his hand into the air!]

GM: OH MY STARS AND GARTERS! KITZUKAWA PINNED THE WORLD CHAMPION! HE JUST PINNED THE WORLD HEAVYWEIGHT CHAMPION!

BW: NO HE DIDN'T! That wasn't a match! It wasn't sanctioned! Dave Bryant isn't a referee!

GM: We all saw the three count, Bucky! And if that happens two weeks from tonight in Tokyo, Japan, we're going to have a new World Heavyweight Champion!

[By now, Wright has gotten out to the floor and is absolutely seething as he glares up into the ring where Bryant and Kitzukawa are standing...]

...and we fade to black.

The screen is completely black, and over the darkness, can be heard a voice familiar to all movie goers - Liam Neeson's.]

"We've been through this before. I don't know why you can't learn."

[On screen, as two women are grabbed, lifted by the waist, thrown into the back of a van, the van's tires screeching and throwing up sparks, as Neeson steps onto the street, watching it speed away.]

"But let me tell you one more time."

[Close up on Neeson's face, contorted in anger, as he speaks into a cell phone.]

"I'm a man with a very particular set of skills. Skills I have acquired over a very long career."

[There's a rapid succession of shots, all of them of Neeson killing various bad guys with his bare hands.]

"Skills that made me a nightmare for people like you."

[Neeson begins moving forward, following the tire tracks laid down by the van, moving past a long line of cars parked on the street. Then, there is a quick cut to a sinister looking Eastern European man, also holding a cell phone to his ear.]

"You're wrong, Mr. Mills. We know exactly who you are."

[There's a sudden explosion, as one of the cars erupts into flames. Neeson is thrown back, landing on his back.]

"You're a man with a problem."

[From the shadows emerges a man. A very tall man, dressed all in black. The camera doesn't show his face, only his broad back. He leans over Neeson, lifts him by his collar, and tosses him against another car, the window shattering from the impact.]

"A very, very big problem."

[The camera circles around, and we see the face of Neeson's big problem. Angry, with a scar running diagonally across his face. A face every AWA fan knows - the face of Alex Martinez. The Hall of Famer lifts his hand, curls his fingers into a fist, and drives that fist repeatedly into Neeson's face. With the final punch, Neeson slumps down, and the screen goes black again. Red text fills the screen.

MARTINEZ

NEESON

TAKEN 3

SUMMER 2014

[We fade from the graphic back to live action in the backstage area where Jason Dane is standing.]

JD: Welcome back, fans. We stand just two weeks away from the Rising Sun Showdown and one contest that has been heating up is the six man tag pitting a team headed by ACHILLES ringmaster, November versus a team led by soon to be AWA competitor, TORA. The junior heavyweight grew up in love with the wrestling business and now lives his dream trying to live up to the standards his idols put before him. November and LION Tetsuo were two of those men and have been nothing short of a major thorn in his side of late in Tiger Paw Pro. Interference, harsh words and attacks are all leading to Rising Sun Showdown. Let's go to a recent match in Japan, a match that Colt Patterson and I had the privilege of calling a match for an English DVD release and see what went down to further this fiery rivalry.

[We fade into a Tiger Paw Pro show. In the ring, two men are in a heated affair. The unmasked TORA has another in a grounded chinlock, wrenching it in tight. The man in the hold is attired in a pair of dazzlingly bright yellow tights that cover his entire lower body. His upper body is exposed, his back covered with a giant burning sun tattoo that ends just before his yellow mask.]

JD: Super Solar is down after that big move by TORA. He was able to kick out, but no doubt is on the ropes after the exchange. What a quick five minutes it's been so far!

CP: And this is what these men and this category of wrestler brings to the AWA. Rocket paced wrestling, high risk maneuvers and the ability to thrill a crowd like few others.

[Getting his knees under him, the aforementioned Super Solar tries to stand up, TORA switching to a side headlock. A pair of elbows loosen the grip as Solar gets some space and hits the ropes. He ducks a clothesline, ducks a back elbow and hits the ropes, going for a leaping crossbody, only TORA is able to duck and Solar goes skidding hard to the mat, rolling under the ropes and to the floor.]

CP: The speed on these men is incredible!

JD: Tiger Salvaje, lucha libre legend, called Super Solar his best student. TORA grew up in this business and has a true passion like few others. Those facts are showing in the effort in this match so far.

CP: It's incredible how these two Tiger Paw Pro athletes, both soon AWA bound, are able to go at such a rigorous, bone rattling pace.

[Solar tries to clear his head outside the ring, clutching his neck. Seeing an opportunity TORA charges... hooking his arms on the top rope and stopping himself from diving out, instead flipping over and landing on the apron. Solar tries to grab at him but takes a kick to the chest staggering him back. Facing into the ring, TORA takes a look back, the crowd gasping as he leaps to the second rope, catapulting backwards in a flip. Solar is faster, believe it or not, ducking down and sliding into the ring beside him as TORA lands on the floor post moonsault, on his feet! He turns...

...and is wiped out by a Solar plancha! The entire frenetic section gets a big applause from the crowd.]

JD: Incredible speed by both men! Just breathtaking!

CP: And now Solar has the advantage. He just needs to get TORA into the ring and pin him while he can!

[And he does that, rolling TORA in. Only instead of going for a pin he hops onto the apron and slingshots himself over, hitting an elbow drop... THEN goes for the cover.]

CP: Far side leg hook... NO! TORA kicks out!

JD: The American, TORA, is showing immense heart as he always has in Tiger Paw Pro. He became a quick fan favorite with his exciting entrance, his charisma and his lightning-like, Barry Allen pace he puts on in a wrestling ring.

CP: Wow... comic book reference?

JD: Hey, it's 2014, Colt!

CP: Yeah... but we could have went with Wally West.

[Grabbing TORA, Solar hits a few hard forearms to the spine, placing him in the corner and following with a forearm across the ribcage.]

CP: That's where the advantage is in these smaller wrestlers, the wind. Solar hitting the chest, battering the lungs, it makes it harder for someone like TORA to breathe and that's going to take a lot out of him. It will take away a lot of speed.

JD: Super Solar is an eight year veteran of the sport, TORA has been wrestling for three or four years around the world. You can definitely tell who has the experience advantage in situations like this.

[One more hit puts TORA into a daze. Solar uses the time to roll across the ring, turn and charge in... and eats a boot! He staggers back, TORA leaping with a hard knee strike to the jaw that floors the lucha wrestler parallel with the ropes. Not skipping a beat, TORA springs over the top rope, hits the apron and immediately leaps back up, legs curling. He lands on the top rope with his shins, the momentum shooting him up and over into a somersault leg drop! POP!]

JD: WHAT A MOVE!

[And he covers Solar quickly, getting only a two count before the fire emblazoned masked star kicks out.]

CP: This is something we will all be seeing soon in an AWA ring, Jason!

JD: And I, for one, can't wait!

[TORA gets up, taking a deep breath before pulling Solar up and hitting a kick to the breadbasket. He himself hits the ropes full speed, coming back and getting caught with a dropkick to the jaw! He staggers back, hits the ropes and comes back, but is taken down with a drop toe hold that deposits him chest first on the middle rope!]

JD: Anyone who has seen a Super Solar match from SWLL or right here in Tiger Paw knows what's coming next!

[Solar runs the ropes this time and back towards TORA, grabbing the middle and top for a 619 style move, only TORA ducks and Solar swings right back around landing on the apron! The dazed American high flyer turns around right SMACK into an enzugiri!]

CP: Concussionizing kick by Super Solar!

JD: TORA is hurt!

[And has no defense as Solar climbs quickly to the top turnbuckle and flies off, arms and legs spread, chest connecting with TORA's to put both men down in the middle of the ring!]

JD: CROSSBODY FROM THE VERY HEAVENS AND BOTH MEN ARE DOWN!

[And the crowd starts applauding loudly for the effort of both men thus far...

...those cheers turning to equally loud boos.]

CP: Wait... who... Nijikon! Nijikon is out here!

[The colorful rudo heel slides in and right past Solar, mounting TORA and raining punches down on him. The referee tries to interfere and stop the beating but is pushed right back down, the bell ringing in anticipation of the disqualification!]

JD: This match has obviously been thrown out! Nijikon, the third member of November's team at Rising Sun Showdown is out here and waylaying TORA!

[Or was until Super Solar pulls him off, standing off with him between him and his downed opponent. This, of course, garners some cheers!]

CP: What have we got here, Jason! Super Solar is standing up for TORA! Everything I've heard about this young man is true, he has some heart!

JD: The fire isn't just on his gear.

[Nijikon shakes his head, yelling at him in Japanese. Exasperated, he turns around... and then back going for a wild swing, only Solar ducks and starts lacing him with right and left kicks to the thigh, inner leg and then to the chest. The impact on the last one turns him around...

...right into a TORA leaping and spinning back kick to the jaw! The crowd cheers AGAIN and AGAIN turns to boos as more men hit the ring, going after both Super Solar and TORA in a wild assault of punches and stomps.]

JD: ACHILLES!

CP: Where did they come from!?

JD: The most hated group in perhaps all of Japan is out here and the two men already in are being all out assaulted!

CP: And look at him! November thinks he is high and mighty, sauntering down like he owns the place.

[Ego dripping from his pores and the best women's wrestler in the world, Miyuki Ozaki, at his side giggling and twirling her hair, November climbs slowly up the steps. LION Tetsuo has Super Solar down in a corner, a boot driven into his windpipe. The much-larger-than-TORA Bull Shindo has the high flier down on the ground, hitting him with a big fist to the forehead before dragging him up and staggering him further with a kick to the gut before slamming him to the ground.]

JD: It's an all out assault by ACHILLES on both Super Solar and TORA! Nijikon is back up and these two are drastically outnumbered!

CP: They stand no chance in there at all! And look at this, Jason! November is motioning for Bull Shindo to pull TORA up.

JD: They have nothing but the worst of intentions right now and are looking to send a venomous message leading into Rising Sun Showdown.

[Stepping back, November pulls his hair off to one side. He leans over to look TORA in the eyes before raising one hand, open palm. He spits into it, winds up and charges...

...only TORA ducks! November goes flying in with the palm strike, stopping juuuuuuuust before hitting his stable mate! Shindo covers up, November taking a biphew of a breath. The relaxation doesn't last long though as the fired up crowd cheers, TORA dropkicking November in the back, the moody cruiserweight leader colliding with Shindo!]

CP: There they go!

[LION Tetsuo releases Solar and goes after TORA, only Super Solar catches him by the back of the mask and runs with him, depositing him over the top rope to another tremendous cheer! Nijikon, alone, ducks out and goes to escape. It's right then and there that a highlight reel spot is made, TORA running and diving between the ropes into him, Solar slingshotting himself over and onto the rest of ACHILLES and everyone in the crowd rising to their feet in contagious excitement!]

JD: WE HAVE A FIGHT, COLT! ACHILLES HAS A FIGHT ON THEIR HANDS RIGHT NOW!

[TORA and Super Solar, out for justice, are pulled back as security, officials and other wrestlers swarm to ringside to disengage the situation. ACHILLES makes for the hills, ducking through the mocking and jeering crowd as they are chased off by other Tiger Paw stars.]

JD: Things are getting VERY interesting leading into Rising Sun Showdown, Colt. I can't wait!

[From the chaos in ring, we head backstage. Two men stand together, as they did to end the previous clip. To the left is TORA. His dark hair is a frazzled, sweaty mess. He wipes his brow of perspiration, looking deep into the camera. To his right... Super Solar. Super Solar's back is turned to the camera, showing off the large yellow and orange tattoo of a burning sun. Slowly the masked man turns around and the bright yellow mask stares at the camera.]

T: Again. Again it happens. November... ACHILLES... the whole crew out to interfere in what was a fantastic wrestling contest. I was having a fantastic time out there, entertaining the fans of Tiger Paw Pro and testing my mettle against Super Solar, this man right here.

[He looks at Solar, nodding his head in appreciation.]

T: But you just had to come out. You just had to slink down the aisle like the snakes you were and strike your venom into our match. NO MORE! No more is it just me versus you. NO MORE is it just TORA versus ACHILLES. You see, snakes in the grass, you made a new enemy. You made someone else very angry. And you... you snakes gave me my first partner in the six man tag match at Rising Sun Showdown.

[Again he turns to Solar, patting the lucha star on his back.]

T: Isn't that right?

[Super Solar stares at the camera for a moment before he begins to speak.]

SS: Orale!

[The masked man begins to rub his hands together.]

SS: I'm tired of you, ACHILLES! Tired of watching as a bunch of thugs attack men like TORA, COBRA Kobiashi, and GEMINI Hashimoto! You're not men! You're thugs hiding behind a skirt!

[Super Solar runs his hands over the front of his mask.]

SS: Tonight, your skirt ordered up to jump me and TORA and yet here we stand. Did any of you really think we wouldn't still be standing? I grew up on the streets ... I clawed my way from the gutters to get here ACHILLES, so it will take more to keep me down!

ACHILLES, you think people are afraid of you ... you think that your gang style tactics make people cower.

[Super Solar shakes his head.]

SS: NOT TRUE! This man right here ...

[Super Solar motions at TORA.]

SS: Does not fear ACHILLES! I ...

[He now slaps his chest.]

SS: Do not fear ACHILLES! At Rising Sun Showdown we will stand side by side against three of you and trust me ACHILLES ... Es el momento de pagar!

T: There you have it, boys. We have two!

[Two fingers! Peace sign style.]

T: ...and I think I know just who will make a perfect final partner. See you snakes soon.

[The two partners high five as we fade out...

...and go right back to the ring where Phil Watson is standing by with a very muscular young man with short brown hair, and a long face. He wears red trunks and black boots, red kneepads and spandex forearm bands.]

[*DING*]

PW: The following contest is set for one fall with a ten minute time limit.

Introducing first, already in the ring... from Topeka, Kansas... weighing two-hundred seventy-two pounds... LEE HARRIGAN!

[The crowd mildly boos Harrigan, who holds his arms up and out to invite this reaction. A clap of thunder peals out over the PA, and cheers begin to be heard as "Raijin's Drums" by George Sakalis plays.]

PW: His opponent... about to make his way down the aisle... from The Land Of The Rising Sun... weighing two-hundred thirty-five pounds...

...he is the Asian Assassin... NENSHOU!

[Shortly thereafter, a long red robe, containing the aforementioned Asian Assassin, swooshes through the entrance. The robe itself has no hood, but a loose red cloth mask is draped over Nenshou's head which has silver highlights and designs. The cheers continue as Nenshou strides down the elevated aisle, grasps the top rope, and slingshots himself into the ring.]

GM: Nenshou in action this week. We've heard a great deal of talk from Gibson Hayes about his allegedly wanting to get rid of Nenshou, but as of yet, he has not agreed to a match with him in terms of signing on the bottom line.

BW: He said he'd do it. He didn't say when. Let Nenshou get all bent out of shape first, then take him on at a time and place of your choosing. That's what Hayes is going to do. And without Percy Childe, Nenshou has no way to prevent any of that.

[The music dies down as Nenshou whips off his robe to reveal a pair of baggy black pants and red boots. His hood follows suit; Nenshou's facepaint is black with green and silver highlights this week, and the kanji for "betrayal" is still shaved into his black brushcut. He stands still, extends his right index and middle fingers (like all of his fingers, they are individually taped) in front of his face, and begins to enter his meditative state.]

GM: I believe that you're underestimating Nenshou's intelligence.

BW: Wisdom is always better than intelligence. And I think you know what I mean.

[*DING*DING*DING*]

GM: Harrigan waving Nenshou on, but the Asian Assassin is focusing himself. Nenshou enters that strange "battle meditation" state and becomes very difficult to handle.

BW: Forget the meditation state; I think he's entered a fugue state, Gordo! The way he's rejected Percy and is picking fights with guys like Gibson Hayes... it's like he forgot who he is!

GM: I'm impressed by your ability to use "fugue state" correctly and in context.

BW: I was lookin' up random stuff on the Internet this week, what can I say?

GM: Harrigan moving in for a tieup, but Nenshou evades him. Lee Harrigan is a very strong man, and it would serve Nenshou well to stay out of his grasp. A second attempt...

[When Harrigan moves in for the collar-and-elbow, Nenshou slams his fists down on Harrigan's forearms to drop his guard, spikes him in the face with a front elbow block, kicks the front of his knee, and hops back into one of his jumping spinning hook kicks right under the jaw. The rapid combination fells the Kansas native and electrifies the crowd.]

GM: Bro-THER! Nenshou with a furious flurry!

BW: I'm thinking Harrigan probably doesn't want to try and exchange strikes. If he's gonna get close to Nenshou, he better be able to grab him.

GM: Powerdrive elbowdrop by the, as Hayes says, "Oriental". Who uses that word anymore?

BW: Obviously, Gibson Hayes does. It's no occident... I mean accident!

GM: That's awful. Nenshou gathering Harrigan up, snapmaring him back down...

[*CRACK*]

GM: ...and unloading with a hard, hard kick to the spine! He may have trouble finding one of those to kick, if he ever gets in against Gibson Hayes.

BW: You heard Hayes. He challenged Nenshou. So maybe he's ready to get with him now. It is a process, Gordo. You set a guy up and then you take him down.

GM: Nenshou applies a nervehold on Harrigan. Controlling his man on the canvas, keeping him down and in great pain.

BW: Some would call this move an Oriental Nervehold.

GM: That would be somewhat archaic.

BW: You know Hayes likes archaic things because he still thinks Fred Hoyle's better than I am. Just wait, he'll come around. He's got more than four brain cells, so I am sure I'll grow on him.

GM: Like a fungus.

BW: Exac... hey!

GM: Lee Harrigan using his strength to power his way to his feet. Nenshou still pushing down on the nervehold, but Harrigan is too strong.

BW: That's what Nenshou wants! Pushing up against a nervehold increases the effects... look, Harrigan's stumbling.

GM: Down to a knee...

[*WHAP*]

GM: ...STANDING KNEESMASH! Nenshou stepped right on the knee of Harrigan and used the back leg's knee to smash his jaw!

BW: One thing's for sure; there'll be no postmatch promo from Harrigan. All he'd be able to say is "mmmmwww!"

[Dazed on the mat, Harrigan weakly rolls over to his stomach in an attempt to get up. Nenshou takes the opportunity to step over the left leg, cross his legs at the ankle and tuck the ankles behind his left leg, and then bridge backwards, cupping Harrigan in a chinlock to bend him in a bow shape with a bridging deathlock! The fans cheer the maneuver's application.]

GM: Nenshoulock is applied! Lee Harrigan is strong, but he does not have great flexibility, Bucky. This is a legitimate submission threat.

BW: That's a legitimate submission threat against anybody, Gordo... and he just got it.

[*DING*DING*DING*]

[Nenshou immediately releases the chinlock and straightens up back to his feet in a subtle show of body control. The referee raises his hands as the fans cheer.]

GM: A relatively easy submission victory here for Nenshou, but it will not be that easy should he manage to get Gibson Hayes in the ring.

BW: Not until he rediscovers that killer instinct. The Nenshou I know would still have the Nenshoulock on. He'd make any idiot who stepped in with him suffer for it. He's goin' soft!

GM: He just annihilated a man in under three minutes. This must be some new definition of 'soft' of which I was unaware. Let's get the official word.

PW: The winner of this match... by submission... NENSHOU!

[As Phil Watson says the name of the winner, Nenshou walks over to him and puts his hand out for the microphone. Watson is taken aback, but acquiesces. Nenshou heads to the center of the ring, and the crowd hushes to hear what he may say.]

BW: Uh,oh. Nenshou has something to attempt to say!

N: Gibson. Hayes.

[As usual, Nenshou speaks slowly because his mastery of English isn't great. Being a perfectionist, he takes his time to make as few errors as possible, which is why he often. Sounds. Like. This.]

N: I accept.

[The fans cheer.]

N: I will have a contract send to you. But now. One more thing.

I want to wrestle in Japan. I see one man needs a partner. TORA.

[Nenshou switches to Japanese, because he's kinda speaking to a Japanese audience and it would be silly for him to speak in English. The WKIK people do an admirable job of subtitling.]

Subtitle: <<TORA, I will be your partner at Rising Sun Showdown. The men you will face are good wrestlers, and it would please me to face them. I have much to prove to certain people in my country, so I hope that you will accept. If you do, you will not regret the decision. I will fight with spirit and we will be victorious. The men who threaten you will not do so twice.>>

BW: Aw, come on. Speak English! You ain't in Japan!

[After saying this, Nenshou returns to English.]

N: Last. Percy. Childs. I know you think I will fail.

Wrrrrrrroooooooooonnnnnnnng!

[That's all that needed to be said. Nenshou hands the microphone back to Watson, and "Raijin's Drums" plays him out as he exits to the cheers of the fans.]

GM: Major news, as Nenshou is offering to team up with TORA at Rising Sun Showdown in the big six-man tag!

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

GM: Context.

BW: I bet he told TORA to not even show up. Oh, wait, that would be good advice. Never mind. If Nenshou sticks his nose into the wrong people's business, he's going to get beaten like a rug: an Oriental rug!

GM: Ugh. Let's go to Jason.

[We crossfade into a shot of Jason Dane, standing by with the AWA World Tag Team Champions, Skywalker Jones and Hercules Hammonds. Jones is dressed stylishly in a tailor-made grey suit, designer sunglasses and a big ol' million dollar grin plastered on his face. On his shoulder, he holds his half of the tag team titles. Standing beside him, with his arms folded over his chest is the monstrous Hercules Hammonds, dressed in an all-black suit and black feathered fedora hat. Behind them, is Buford P. Higgins, holding up Herc's title belt in the air, dressed in his usual all-white suit.]

JD: Gentlemen, you said that you had a big announcement to make tonight regarding The Stampede Cup, so the floor is all yours.

[Jones removes his sunglasses and places them into his suit jacket pocket, before shaking his head at Dane.]

SJ: Little man, lets get one thing straight. EVERY announcement we make is a big announcement!

[He cackles.]

SJ: But this one? It's gotta' be the biggest one of all!

[In the back, we can hear Buford: "BIGGEST ANNOUNCEMENT EVER, PLAYA'!"]

JD: Well, what is it?

[Jones waggles a finger at Dane.]

SJ: Nuh uh uh! Not so fast, little man! Before I make this historical announcement, lets go back in time to last year's Stampede Cup. Lets go back to when, me and Herc, were preparin' to take on the so-called, quote unquote, "Greatest Tag Team in AWA history", The Bishop Boys. The same Bishop Boys that had held the AWA National Tag Team titles at that point, for an eternity plus a day! The same Bishop Boys that we went on to defeat!

Do you remember what we called'em, Dane?

[Dane tries to recall the interview, but eventually just shakes his head.]

JD: I'm sorry, but it's been such a long time, I don't remember at all.

[Jones turns to Hammonds and nudges him with his elbow.]

SJ: Hey, Herc! Tell the man what we called'em!

[The big guy responds with his typical booming bass.]

HH: COWARDS.

SJ: And why did we call'em cowards, Herc?

HH: 'Cause they wouldn't put up the gold.

SJ: That's right, Herc! 'Cause they wouldn't put up the gold! 'Cause they didn't have the heart, the courage, the self-confidence or the mental FORTITUDE to put their titles on the line at The Stampede Cup! Just like Larry Doyle and The Bombers, they lacked ambition! They lacked vision! They lacked that lust and greed for everlastin' glory!

[Jones pats the title on his shoulder.]

SJ: But lemme' tell you something right now...that's something that me and Herc DON'T.

[Suddenly, a lightbulb goes off in Jason Dane's head.]

JD: Wait a minute, are you two saying what I think you're saying?

[Jones nods.]

SJ: You're damn right we are! We don't wanna' leave ANY doubt! Me and Herc are making sure that the team that walks outta' Japan truly IS the best in the world! At The Stampede Cup, for the first time ever...

...the World Tag Team titles will be defended in EVERY match the champions are in!

[The crowd roars HUGE!]

JD: Holy cow! That IS big news! But why? Why would you risk your World Tag Titles like this?

HH: 'Cause for years, we've had the AWA Tag Team champions walkin' into the Stampede Cup refusin' to ACT like real champions. The world deserves to see the champions at their best! They deserve to see their champions PROVE that they're the best, by goin' out there and successfully defendin' their titles match, after match, after match...all the way 'til they're raisin' that Stampede Cup up in the air!

[Almost as if on cue, Buford thrusts the tag team title back into the air, behind Hammonds.]

SJ: What better to prove that, than to take away the safety net! Now we have ALL the motivation! ALL the incentive! ALL the pressure in the world to win! The only way we're walkin' outta' Tokyo with these titles, is if we walk outta' Tokyo with The Stampede Cup!

HH: 'Cause we ain't good enough to win the Cup...

... then we don't DESERVE to hold these titles.

SJ: But that ain't gonna' be a problem, Herc, because we WILL win the Cup!

[Pop!]

SJ: We WILL win that million dollars!

[Pop!]

SJ: We WILL walk outta' Tokyo with the AWA World Tag Team titles!

[An even bigger pop!]

SJ: And when all's said and done, there ain't gonna' no doubt in ANYONE'S mind who the greatest tag team in the whole damn world is! When all's said and done, ask The Bombers! Ask Violence Unlimited! Ask The War Pigs! If you can find'em, ask The Bishops! Ask'em all! Ask'em who the greatest tag team in ALLLLL the world is! 'Cause there will only be ONE answer! The team of HERCULES HAMMONDS! And Skywalker...

[The crowd doesn't even need prompting, responding with Pavlovian excitement...]

"JOOONNN
NNNNNNNNNEEEESSS!!!!"

[And with that, Jones simply laughs, before putting his sunglasses back on and walking off, with Hammonds and Higgins following close behind him.]

JD: Wow! A HUGE announcement by the World Tag Team Champions...but will the AWA approve? We'll try to find out before we go off the air later tonight but right now, let's go back down to the ring for more action!

[Crossfade to the ring where Phil Watson is standing. The distinctive strings of the koto are heard over the PA. The Japanese stringed instrument plays the traditional folk melody "Sakura Sakura" unaccompanied as the fans boo.]

PW: Ladies and gentlemen... the following contest is scheduled for one fall with a ten minute time limit. Introducing first, he hails from Tokyo, Japan and weighs in at two hundred and fifty one pounds, this is ...

MR. SADISUTO!

[From the back, the short, pudgy, unassuming form of Mr. Sadisuto enters the ring area. He smiles widely as if the fans were cheering him, and bows gracefully. Then he marches to the ring, idly stretching his arms and taking a few warm-up swipes into the air at an almost leisurely pace. Mr. Sadisuto is a middle-aged Japanese man with slick black hair, a thin mustache and Fu Manchu beard, and bushy black eyebrows. He wears midnight-blue full length tights with the Japanese flag on the waistband and "NIPPON" written down the sides in red and white. He wrestles barefoot, with some athletic tape for ankle support. His wrists and fingers are also heavily taped. Upon reaching ringside, Mr. Sadisuto turns to the crowd and bows again to the fans. He then enters the ring and offers a bow to his opponent as well as the referee.]

PW: And his opponent... hailing from Dallas, Texas. Standing six feet, three inches, and weighing in tonight at two hundred and fifty two pounds...

TRAVIS LYNCH!

[The curtain pulls back to reveal the youngster of the Lynch brothers and as it does so the screams of the ladies in attendance nearly drown out the classic "Tom Sawyer" by Rush.]

GM: And listen to the reaction for this young man!

BW: I don't know how these Texas sweatogs can cheer for him after what he did to Sunshine two weeks ago.

GM: She fell, Bucky.

BW: After he shoved her! There's a reason the #ScumbagTravis t-shirts are the hottest selling shirt in AWA history!

GM: They are not! Now you're just making things up!

[Travis makes his way down the aisle and the screams from the ladies get louder with each. He pauses for a moment, allowing the females to take a long look. He is wearing a his trademark super smedium T-shirt that he pulls off and tosses into the crowd. He is also wearing black chaps, with silver

studding forming the belt and along the edging. Upon reaching the ring, he looks about to walk down the steps so that he can circle the ring and get closer to the fans...

...but Mr. Sadisuto shouts in his direction, holding up a #ScumbagTravis t-shirt to jeers from the crowd. Travis pauses, angrily shaking his head before stepping through the ropes into the ring where Mr. Sadisuto awaits.]

GM: The Japanese veteran appears to be trying to get under the skin of Travis Lynch a bit with that t-shirt.

BW: Gave him a good deal on that one. Buy six, get one free.

GM: Will you stop?!

[The referee signals for the bell, starting off the match as an angry Travis marches across the ring, looking for a collar and elbow but getting a kick to the midsection instead.]

GM: Oh! The match is underway and Sadisuto strikes hard to start us off! Lynch is doubled over... look out here...

[Sadisuto drops down to a knee, driving his taped hand into the throat of Lynch, sending him stumbling backwards, gasping for air as he falls down to the mat.]

GM: Illegal shot to the throat by Mr. Sadisuto and that leaves Travis Lynch in a bad way right out of the gate.

BW: Mr. Sadisuto knows how to weaken a man, Gordo. And there's a knee to the mid-section. He's showing Stench how he used to handle his daddy back in the day.

[Winding up, Sadisuto blasts Lynch with a chop to the back of the head, knocking him down to his knees where the wily veteran walks around Lynch, getting behind him...

...and throws a sharp thrust kick to the back of the head, knocking Travis flat on his face on the mat!]

GM: Oh my goodness! What a shot out of the veteran!

[The gasps from the females in the building fill the air as Travis slumps down in a heap in the center of the ring.]

BW: This scumbag can't take too many shots to the head like that, Gordo...

GM: It WAS a pretty brutal shot.

BW: Actually, I was referring to the face that he doesn't have any more brain cells to lose.

GM: Would you stop?!

[Sadisuto drags Travis to a seated position on the mat before digging his fingers into the trapezius muscle on Lynch.]

GM: Nervehold slapped on by Sadisuto! And this can be incredibly painful, Bucky.

[The dastardly villain grins as Travis cries out in pain, nodding his head with an evil gleam in his eyes as he digs his fingers in deeper, telling the referee to ask him.]

GM: Travis Lynch might have to give up from this nervehold... but no, he says no to the official!

BW: A Lynch submit in Texas? He'd never do that.

GM: Well, they do have a lot of heart, Bucky.

BW: Yeah, and they've also got an old man at home who isn't about to watch his meal tickets lower their value in their home state.

GM: I'd love to see you tell Blackjack Lynch that to his face. In the meantime, Sadisuto has this hold locked in deep, fans. Travis Lynch is in tremendous pain at the hands of Mr. Sadisuto who I'm told will be making the trip to Japan to participate in the tour.

BW: He's a real legend over there, Gordo. Big star back in his day all over Japan.

[The area around Sadiusto's grip is becoming white from the pressure being applied. The pain is etched upon Travis' face but the youngster continues to shake his head as the referee once again asks if he wants to submit. The fans in the Crockett Coliseum begin to clap and stomp their feet.]

GM: Listen to these fans, Bucky! Listen to this support for Travis Lynch!

BW: Do I have to?

[With the fans filling Travis' body with their support, Lynch battles up to a knee... then keeps on pushing up to his feet, taking away Sadisuto's leverage...]

GM: Travis is fighting back... ohh! Big elbow down to the gut! And there's a second one that lands as well!

[The grip starts to loosen before Travis delivers a third shot to the midsection, breaking the hold. With a window of opportunity, Travis rushes to the ropes, rebounding off them...]

GM: Here comes Travis!

[The crowd ROARS as Travis connects with a running shoulder tackle, knocking the veteran down to the mat. He reaches at his shoulder, wincing in pain and showing the effects from the nervehold before he reaches down, pulling Sadisuto up to his feet...]

GM: Big scoop... and a big slam by Travis Lynch!

[Lynch stumbles back, grabbing his shoulder and neck again from the exertion. He moves in, leaping up and driving a leg across the throat!]

GM: The legdrop from Lynch connects! And he makes a cover for one! There's two!

[But Sadisuto kicks out at two, causing Lynch to straighten up, grabbing his shoulder and neck again.]

BW: It's going to take more than a bodyslam to put Sadisuto down for the one-two-three, Gordo.

GM: I believe you're on target about that as both men climb back to their feet.

[They come together again, Travis landing a pair of right hands that stun the Japanese veteran before grabbing an arm, whipping him across...

...and dropping him with a standing dropkick on the mush!]

GM: Ohh! Nice dropkick out of Lynch... but he's not done, Bucky!

BW: That's a shame.

[Lynch pulls Sadisuto up by the arm, looking for an Irish whip...

...but Sadisuto reverses, shooting Lynch off into the ropes.]

GM: Reversal! Travis off the ropes...

[Sadisuto drops his head, looking for a backdrop but a running Travis shows off his agility, leaping into the air and clearing his opponent.]

GM: Leapfrog by Travis and he keeps on going into the far side, springing back off...

[But this time, the Japanese veteran blindly swings his leg back, catching Travis on the side of the head!]

GM: Ohh! Hook kick by Sadisuto!

[With Lynch back down on the mat, Sadisuto looks to cover but Travis isn't staying down, pushing up to all fours.]

GM: Travis is trying to get back up... and Sadisuto brings him up!

[The Japanese superstar drags Lynch up by his blonde locks, firing off a chop across the chest.]

GM: Oh my! Big chop by Sadisuto!

[Backed against the ropes, Travis Lynch's chest begins to turn a bright shade of red as the Japanese grappler connects with chop after chop to the pectorals.]

GM: A barrage of chops by Sadisuto!

BW: Mr. Sadisuto is unloading those chops like the Stench owes him money. Actually... wouldn't surprise me if Blackjack owed him a payday or two.

GM: What are you talking about? Stop spreading these ridiculous rumors about the Lynch family.

[Swinging Travis around, Sadisuto shoves him throatfirst into the middle rope. He slips his knee onto the back of Lynch's head, choking him violently as the referee shouts at him to break the illegal hold.]

GM: Sadisuto's choking him! Trying to get an illegal advantage... and the referee forces him back...

[The Japanese grappler drops to the floor, rolling under the ropes.]

GM: What's he got in mind here? Travis Lynch is draped over the middle rope, gasping for air again...

[Another taped hand thrust into the throat sends Travis falling back into the middle of the ring, grabbing his windpipe as the referee warns Sadisuto.]

GM: Repeated blows to the throat and the referee should consider a disqualification, Bucky.

BW: Hey, he's been warning him!

GM: What good does it do to warn the man if there's no teeth behind the warning?!

[Sadisuto stands at ringside, glaring at the female fans who are screaming bloody murder at him. He makes a taunting bow in their direction before turning back into the ring.]

GM: Mr. Sadisuto is taking his sweet time in there right now as he gets back into the squared circle, moving back in on Travis Lynch who seems to having a lot of trouble breathing right now.

BW: Sadisuto is stalking his prey and I, for one, can't wait until he finishes this scumbag off!

[He pulls Travis off the mat, scooping him up...]

GM: Big slam in the center... ohh! Hard stomp right down on the heart!

[Sadisuto drops to a knee, nodding at the jeering crowd as he waves for a louder reaction. He pushes back to his feet, leaning over to grab Travis by the hair...

...but Travis reaches up, hooking his hands behind his opponent's head while tucking his skull up under the chin!]

GM: JAWBREAKER!

[Sadisuto falls back, collapsing down to the mat on his rear as he grabs his mouth in pain. The crowd roars as Travis slowly pushes back up off the mat...

...and points a threatening finger at the downed Sadisuto to a huge cheer!]

GM: Oh yeah! Travis says it's time to take the fight to his opponent!

[Back on his feet, Lynch grabs the rising Sadisuto, muscling him up over his shoulder...

...and DROPS him down in an atomic drop!]

GM: Ohh!

[With Sadisuto holding his tailbone, Lynch rushes into the ropes, springing back off...

...and leaves his feet, cracking the Japanese grappler on the jaw with a flying forearm!]

GM: He flattens him with the forearm! He covers!

[Lynch's cover gets him a two count before Sadisuto kicks out in time.]

GM: Two count only for Travis Lynch but this crowd is once again alive and on their feet as Travis pulls him up, hooks him...

[The cheers get louder as Travis Lynch muscles Sadisuto up into a vertical suplex... and holds... and holds... and holds for about ten seconds before driving him into the mat!]

GM: Oh my! An impressive show of power out of Travis Lynch! That delayed suplex is really something else.

BW: And like the Stenches love to do he's showboating after it.

GM: Showboating? He's rolling back to his feet. How is that showboating?

BW: Can't he just get back to his feet without winking at a fan? Of course he can't... he's a scumbag who's trying to lure another defenseless woman into danger!

GM: Knock it off, Bucky!

[Back on his feet, Travis leans down to drag Sadisuto back up...

...and gets a thumb in the eye for his efforts!]

GM: Ohh! He goes to the eyes!

BW: Are you kidding me? Travis just has dust in his eye.

GM: I just can't believe you sometimes. Sadisuto grabs the head of Travis and there's a knee to the skull!

[Travis stumbles back into the ropes, staggering back off them...

...and gets dropped with a knife edge chop to the throat!]

GM: Ohh! Come on!

[Lynch again rolls around on the mat, clutching at his throat as Sadisuto backs off, hopping up on the middle rope...]

GM: Sadisuto sets!

[He swandives off the middle rope, aiming his skull for a stunned Lynch.]

GM: HEADBUTT!

[BIG CHEER!]

GM: He missed! He missed!

[Lynch, having rolled out of the way of the headbutt, climbs back to his feet. He motions for his opponent to rise with his right hand as he raises his left high in the air...]

BW: Don't let him do it, ref!

[Sadisuto shakes his head, trying to clear the cobwebs as he slowly stands. Travis begins to spin...]

GM: Discus punch!

[...and CRACKS Sadisuto on the jaw, knocking him flat. Lynch dives across quickly, hooking the far leg.]

GM: He got all of that and that's a one... two... and there's the three!

"DING! DING! DING!"

GM: Travis Lynch picking up another big victory here tonight.

BW: Big victory? The dirty, woman beating Stench once again uses that illegal closed left fist to steal a victory! That move needs to join the Claw on the banned list!

GM: The Iron Claw is not banned. Neither is the discus punch. And whether you like it or not-

BW: And I don't.

GM: -Travis Lynch has scored another victory here tonight in Dallas.

[Travis nods to the fans as Jason Dane begins scaling the ringsteps, ready to conduct an interview with one of Texas' favorite sons. We cut to a shot of the front row, showing some overzealous Lynch fans screaming their support of Travis.]

BW: Those women better be careful. Travis is liable to come out there and smack one of them across the face like he did to Sunshine.

GM: That did NOT happen and you know it.

BW: Then tell me why the lovely Sunshine was on the mat crying, Gordo.

GM: Well, first off, she wasn't crying... not that I saw at least. And secondly, you know as well as I do that she lost her balance and slipped.

BW: Gordo, I spoke to her after the show... did you?

GM: No, no I didn't.

BW: Then I think the entire world - including you - should believe me when I say that Travis Lynch shoved her to the mat and then laughed about it when she cried.

GM: I will not believe that... and no one else will either.

BW: Gordo, you want to buy a t-shirt?

GM: I certainly do not. Jason Dane, please get us out of this.

[Travis slaps Jason on the back and smiles as Jason begins to speak.]

JD: Hard fought victory for you here tonight, Travis.

[Travis nods.]

TL: Mr. Sadisuto is still a heck of a competitor, Jason. I'm sure your brother Morgan, much like Blackjack, can tell you that he's tougher than a woodpecker's lips. Heck, I'm still feelin' those chops of his.

But like you said though, it's another victory under my belt. A much needed victory, Jason. 'Cause I told y'all I was going to take the bulls by the horns and make the champions of the AWA take notice of Travis Lynch.

[Piercing screams fill the Crockett Coliseum.]

JD: It's obvious these fans take notice of you.

[Travis smiles and winks at the camera.]

TL: And I take notice of them as well.

[Travis smiles again as the screams once again fill the Coliseum. Those screams quickly become hisses and boos as the buxom blonde, Sunshine, begins to make her way down the entrance ramp in a pair of blue jeans and a strategically low-cut #ScumbagTravis t-shirt...

...with a neck brace resting just above her exposed cleavage.]

JD: It looks like we are about to be joined by Sunshine.

[Travis closes his eyes and shakes his head as the boos and catcalls aimed at Sunshine become louder. She reaches the ring, looking expectantly at Jason Dane who suddenly gets the hint, rushing to hold the ropes open for her. She bats her eyelashes at him, stepping into the ring while holding her neckbrace with both hands. Dane offers the mic as she steps in.]

S: Thank you, Jason. It's good to know that there are SOME gentlemen still left in this world.

[The crowd boos this assertion as Travis shakes his head.]

JD: Sunshine, earlier tonight, Travis came out here and apologized for what happened two weeks ago when you lost your balance, slipped, and fell inside the ring. Are you here to accept that apology?

[Sunshine looks incredulously at Jason.]

S: Are you serious? This man, two weeks ago, after weeks of verbal and mental abuse of a poor, defenseless woman like myself...

[She looks down, shaking her head as her voice gets shrill and weak.]

S: ...decided to upgrade to PHYSICAL abuse by shoving me down to the floor, revealing his true colors to the entire world. The true colors of his entire FAMILY to the entire world. You... just like your brothers... and even your father... are nothing... but...

[She jerks a well-manicured thumb at her #ScumbagTravis t-shirt.]

S: Like the shirt, Trav?

[Sunshine flashes a big grin at Travis, not sounding so weak anymore.]

TL: What do you want, Sunshine? Why are you out here?

[The smile remains, getting more ominous with each moment.]

S: They say that you're the lover of the family, Travis... the heartthrob, the ladies man...

[The women in the building cheer to Sunshine's great amusement as she giggles.]

S: Yet you don't know a thing about women, do you? I came out here, week after week, and I threw myself at your feet. I begged for your pity... your mercy... your...

[She plants a hand on his sweaty, bare chest.]

S: ...body.

[Travis disgustedly slaps her hand away. She lifts her hand, staring at it like it's been burned with an enraged expression.]

S: You turned me away. You THREW me away. Just like Jimmy did. Just like Adam and Rob and Dick did. You all threw me away like some piece of trash that would get picked up and hauled out to the city dump, never to be heard from again.

[A shake of the head. A determined shake.]

S: I will NOT be treated that way again. Two weeks ago, Travis, you showed the world your true colors when you shoved me down.

[The smile comes back, menacing and threatening.]

S: When the AWA comes back to Texas...? I'll show the world MY true colors.

[And with a flirty wink, Sunshine pats Jason Dane on the shoulder, gesturing to the ropes where he returns to hold them open, allowing her to exit. The fans are booing, Travis Lynch looks puzzled, and we're fading to black.

...and then slowly fade to a graphic that reads and is accompanied by a voiceover.]

"THE FOLLOWING ADVERTISEMENT HAS BEEN PAID FOR BY THE AWA."

[Cut to the silhouette of a man sitting on a stool, bathed in shadows, talking to the camera.]

"They say too much of a good thing can ruin it for everyone..."

[The camera zooms in on the now illuminated face of the man sitting on the stool, all short blonde hair and blue eyes, dressed to the nines in a tailor made suit.]

Marcus Broussard: ...but they've never seen this DVD before.

["Super Bon Bon" by Soul Coughing plays in the background as Broussard speaks.]

MB: The AWA is proud to present the AWA Superstar Series. A collection of DVDs that focus on the greatest wrestlers the AWA has ever seen. And it's even prouder that the first volume is all about me.

[Broussard points to himself as clips from Broussard's AWA career fly by.]

MB: I'll take you to the first Memorial Day Mayhem with never before seen footage as I win the first ever AWA National title.

[A clip of Broussard celebrating in the ring with the title, and hugging his wife backstage.]

MB: I'll take you to the Broussard Estate, and we'll walk through the state of the art fitness center on the South Wing of the house, where I prepared to go one hour with the "Natural" Adam Rogers.

[A clip of Broussard walking through what looks like a gym in warmup pants, and then to the First Year Anniversary Show, where Broussard and Rogers still stood after a 60 minute draw.]

MB: We'll tour the Combat Corner, where men like Aaron Anderson, Eric Preston and Supreme Wright were trained by yours truly and Todd Michaelson, and we'll go behind the scenes as I returned to take on the Southern Syndicate.

[A clip of Broussard announcing his return to the AWA, with the crowd going crazy in the background.]

MB: We'll go to WarGames on the Bayou, we'll go to WrestleRock. We'll Steal the Spotlight at SuperClash and we'll go one on one with Stevie Scott in my last match ever. Over three hours of the very BEST the AWA has ever seen, blazing trails and setting the standard like only I can do. All handpicked by me, so you know you're getting that Broussard guarantee.

From the early days of feuding with Ron Houston, ruling the roost with the Super Ninja, to coming home to preserve the company I built, it's all here. Marcus Broussard...

[The San Jose Shark hooks a thumb at himself.]

MB: ...you can't be me, but you can be just like me. Learn to love it, my friends.

[The camera fades out to the cover of the DVD collection, as the voice of Mark Stegglet speaks.]

MS: Marcus Broussard: Learn to Love It is available at Wal-Mart, Target and wherever AWA videos are sold!

[We fade from the shot of the DVD back to black...

As we fade back up from black, we find ourselves staring at the sea of active television monitors that can only mean the return of the Control Center. A quick fade takes us to Jason Dane standing in front of a similar set of monitors, a Rising Sun Showdown logo splashed above his right shoulder and a big grin on his face.]

JD: Welcome to another edition of the Control Center where we stand just two weeks away from the big event - the historic event! For the very first time, the American Wrestling Alliance is heading to Japan for a two week tour headlined by the Rising Sun Showdown - a joint promoted show with our friends at Tiger Paw Pro! March 29th is the date, the legendary Tokyo Dome is the place, and it will be coming to you Stateside exclusively on Internet Pay Per View so that we can bring you the show that WE feel you deserve.

[We fade to a shot of the World Heavyweight Title, Supreme Wright on one side and Kenta Kitukawa on the other.]

JD: The AWA World Heavyweight Title will be on the line when the current champion, Supreme Wright, defends the title against one of Tiger Paw Pro's biggest stars, Kenta Kitukawa! Remember, Kitukawa was the first student to graduate under the guidance of Todd Michaelson and he's burning mad at what Wright has done to his former teacher. To add one more burning ember to the mix, the top contender to the World Title, Dave Bryant, will be in Kitukawa's corner in the Tokyo Dome to counteract the presence of Cain Jackson, the bodyguard of the World Champion.

[Another fade reveals the words "DEATH MATCH."]

JD: It's the match that was too hot for television here in the States - the match that forced us onto Internet Pay Per View. The legendary Screamin' Demon, Demon Boy Ishrinku, will take on Juan Vasquez in a death match... a death match that we can now reveal will take place as an Exploding Ring Double Hell Death Match.

[Dane shakes his head with a smile.]

JD: I have to admit that I never thought I'd say those words on Saturday Night Wrestling but hardcore wrestling is treated very differently in Japan. In a culture that treasures their warriors, their people who step forth with tremendous fighting spirit, the death match is often seen as the ultimate badge of honor and respect. Two warriors clashing under extreme circumstances and only the strongest will survive. It very much epitomizes the world of wrestling in Japan and it is only fitting to feature it on this show - no matter how much it differs from our usual presentation.

[Dane pauses as "EXPLODING RING DOUBLE HELL DEATH MATCH" overtakes the screen.]

JD: Let's go over the rules for this one! Two sides of the ring will have the ropes taken down and replaced with strands of barbed wire. The other two sides will have the ropes taken down completely and left empty. Out on the floor, there will be boards wrapped in barbed wire placed on the floor... boards that will trigger a small explosion if hit with enough impact.

The match will have a time restriction... and when that limit is reached, the entire ring will explode! And very few of these matches continue after that point, fans.

[The graphic fades back to Jason.]

JD: Two weeks ago, we learned that Juan Vasquez would be stepping into this very dangerous, ultraviolent showdown against one of the most dangerous competitors to ever lace a set of boots in the history of this business... Demon Boy Ishrinku.

[We fade from Jason Dane and open on Demon Boy Ishrinku standing before a nondescript black curtain background. He is wearing black BDU pants, black boots, a black t-shirt with a red stylized screaming demon face on the front, black wrist tape and his trademark red demon mask facepaint over black paint that covers his bald head completely. He is cradling a barbed-wire baseball bat in his hands...almost lovingly.

Next to him stands a man dressed almost identically to Ishrinku. His facepaint is the more traditional demon mask and his hair is spiked red. Behind them stands a massive tattoo covered nearly 7 foot tall monster of a man. The bearded giant stands stock still, his massive arms folded across his chest as Ishrinku addresses the camera.]

DBI: We are the Shingami Desi....the disciples of the Death God.

[The smaller of Ishrinku's companions lets out a loud high pitched scream. Ishrinku immediately lashes out with a free hand to club him in the head.]

DBI: Urusai baka!!

[The man falls silent and bows his head in shame. The larger man remains motionless.]

DBI: Shingami requires a sacrifice...yes?

[The smaller man turns, as if to answer and his cut off with several vicious slaps to the face from Ishrinku that send him reeling and ultimately falling to his knees at Ishrinku's side.]

DBI: YES!!!!

[As the smaller man supplicates and grovels at Ishrinku's feet, the Demon Boy sickly smiles and presses the barbed-wire bat into his face. The vicious barbs snag in his flesh.]

DBI: However... Shingami will not accept the lesser creatures... No.

[The smaller man shakes his head and lets out incoherent grunts.]

DBI: It must be the strongest of souls to satisfy my God. Vaaaaassssquez...

[The name of his opponent is drawn out in a hiss of pure pleasure and Ishrinku presses the barbed-wire into his flesh even harder, dangerously close to his left eye.]

DBI: Shingami is smiling Vasquez. Smiling, smiling, smiling...

[The smaller man now howls with pleasure and claws at the ground. Ishrinku ignores his wild gesticulations.]

DBI: He waits with opens arms for me to deliver you soul. I know you shall fight. You shall struggle. You shall bleed and tear and bite and spit venom til your dying breath.

[Ishrinku takes inhales deeply his black and red eyes shining.]

DBI: How sweet that dying breath shall be. What a prize you shall be for my God. I cannot imagine greater.

[Ishrinku pulls the barbed from his face. He takes a moment and flicks out his tongue to the wire and it is quickly stained with flecks of freshly drawn blood.]

DBI: Rejoice Vasquez. Rejoice in knowing that you will have such a great honor. To be our sacrifice. Words can hardly describe it.

[Ishrinku's smile fades and the smaller man falls silent and suddenly seems filled with fear, scampering away from Ishrinku.]

DBI: To refuse this honor. To throw it away would be a great sin against all we believe in Vasquez. Do no do this. Do not. Accept your fate Vasquez. It is the only way.

[Ishrinku turns away from the camera for a moment. He then grips his throat and surges forward. He lets lose with his trademark blood mist

fogging the camera lens and then as he lets out his trademark scream the scene fades to black and then back up to...

The words "Recorded earlier today" flash across the top of the screen, as we open to a shot inside what appears to be the interior of Vasquez's home. Inside the room, we see trophy cases are on the wall, showing replicas of various titles and awards that he's won. Pictures are neatly organized on the wall; images from throughout Vasquez's career. And most prominently, we see a marble topped desk is set up to face the doorway, with Juan Vasquez himself, seated behind it.

Juan is hunched forward, elbows propped on the table and head lowered, cradled in his hands. He wears a faded, green Combat Corner hoodie and without many pomp and circumstance, begins to speak.]

JV: Two weeks ago, I wanted to give everyone the answers they wanted.

[Juan raises his head, revealing his left eye, covered with an eyepatch, the result of the assault he suffered at the hands of Dave Cooper.]

JV: Because of Dave Cooper, we just ended up with more questions.

[He shakes his head.]

JV: There'll be a time and place for me to give those answers, but right now, I'll answer the simplest question people've been asking.

[Juan leans back into his chair, folding his arms over his chest.]

JV: Why did I volunteer myself to face Demon Boy Ishrinku?

[He almost smirks at the question. Almost.]

JV: Is that even a question that really needs to be asked?

[He cranes his head back, looking at the various framed photos on the wall behind him. Old pictures of Juan wrestling men such as Chris Courtade and Hannibal Carver in EMWC, more recent photos of Juan in the AWA, participating in War Games, battling Ebola Zaire, and bloodying Raphael Rhodes inside a steel cage.]

JV: Before I stepped foot into the AWA...long before I wanted to be a hero, a protector, an avenger, or the man that I am today...

...I cut my teeth in the land of extreme and I was baptized into this sport in a bed of flaming barbwire.

[He runs his finger along a barely visible scar running across his throat.]

JV:I can still remember the feel of Chris Courtade's barbwire-wrapped arm obliterating me with a lariat. I can still remember the rush of leaping twenty

feet off a steel cage and crushing The Gremlin below me. I can still remember...

[Juan rummages through his pockets...and pulls out a fork, holding it up for the camera.]

JV: ...making the monster Ebola Zaire know fear.

[He lets the fork drop onto his desk with a loud "CLANK!"]

JV: And some of you still wonder why I would want this match?

You wonder what I know about hardcore? You wonder what I know about extreme? You wonder what makes me think I can survive wrestling in Ishrinku's world?

[Juan smiles. He just smiles, as if to show just how ridiculous these questions really are.]

JV: For eighteen years, I've wrestled in cage matches, ladder matches, barbwire matches, and yeah...DEATH MATCHES; just about any type of hell you can imagine that can happen inside a wrestling ring. I survived the attack at WrestleRock and I've survived two War Games. I've broken more bones, ended more careers, and spilled more blood than you can even begin to believe. I've been burnt by fire, stabbed by glass, sent through tables and mutilated by barbwire.

I'm no stranger to this world.

[He points a finger towards his eye patch.]

JV: Anyone that knows a damn thing about Juan Vasquez knows that something like THIS, isn't gonna' stop me from getting on that plane to Japan and stepping into that ring.

[His expression hardens.]

JV: I'll be ready for Ishrinku, whether the eye is or not.

[A beat.]

JV: So lets ask the question one more time.

[Juan clears his throat and stares straight into the camera.]

JV: Why would Juan Vasquez willingly and literally put life and limb on the line against one of the most violent, vicious, and bloodthirsty wrestlers to ever step foot inside a wrestling ring?

[He leans in close.]

JV: Because JUAN VASQUEZ...

...is one of the most violent, vicious, and bloodthirsty wrestlers to ever step foot inside a wrestling ring.

[There's no smirk, smile or grin. Just an uncomfortable silence and stare. And then...we fade out.]

JD: Two of the all-time greats in our sport are set for a major clash in the Tokyo Dome and I can't believe I'm going to have the great honor of being seated at ringside alongside Bucky Wilde to call all the action in Tokyo, Japan on that historic night.

[Fade to a graphic showing Kolya Sudakov and Callum Mahoney.]

JD: In addition to those two matches, we're going to see what our friends at Tiger Paw Pro are deeming a "Shoot Fight" between former AWA National Champion and former Mixed Martial Arts superstar Kolya Sudakov and the Irish Armbar Assassin Callum Mahoney. There will no countouts and no pinfalls in that one. You've gotta win by submission, knockout, or referee's decision! That should be one heck of a fight. Our friends at Tiger Paw Pro sat down with Kolya Sudakov earlier this week. Let's take a look...

[The shot fades to a darkened studio. The footage is black and white. All we can see in the barely-lit shadows is the man known throughout the professional wrestling world as the Russian War Machine. In the world of Mixed Martial Arts, he's known as the Pro Wrestler Hunter/Killer. He is a former AWA National Champion. He is a former MMA champion as well.

He is Kolya Sudakov.

Sudakov's head is shaved clean as he sits in a loose fitting t-shirt that reads "RED SICKLE FIGHT CLUB" across the front with a red hammer and sickle logo right below it. Sudakov is speaking in Russian but someone is voicing over a translation for us Americans.]

"I trained for many years to be the best fighter in the world. To be the best inside that ring... that cage... whatever they put me in. I wanted to be the elite and I trained for that."

[We cut to a highlight reel, showing a very young Sudakov inside a steel hexagon where he hits a high kick to the skull of a large Samoan whose upper torso is completely covered in tattoos. A second clip shows a devastating right hand knock an African-American with tight cornrows down to the mat where Sudakov pounces, hammering with a clenched fist until a referee dives in to stop it. A final clip shows Sudakov with a downed opponent under him, tapping out wildly as Sudakov lands punch after punch.]

"I won gold. I was champion. That meant I was the best and had conquered the sport I was in. But in Japan, they thought differently. They thought their pro wrestlers were the toughest in the world.

They were wrong."

[More highlights flash by - Sudakov in a pro wrestling ring with Giant Koji, laying in punches to Hiro Yoshida on the mat, and knocking out "Big" Bobby Colton with a high kick.]

"I took every fight I could with a pro wrestler... and I won them all. Soon, they were calling me the Pro Wrestler Hunter/Killer. I would chase down the so-called tough guys in the pro wrestling world... and I would break them. I'd leave them embarrassed... humiliated... finished in their sport.

Soon I was a champion in the pro wrestling world too. But it wasn't enough. I needed a new world to conquer."

[The footage changes to show Sudakov in the United States, training for the world of pro wrestling alongside Ben Waterson. We get still photos of Sudakov being put through the paces by Todd Michaelson.]

"The AWA was my ultimate test... and I conquered there too. But soon, I grew bored... I grew soft. I let men beat me who did not deserve to share the ring with me. I threw aside the men who had helped shape me into a champion. So, I came back to Japan... and rediscovered my warrior's fire."

[Cut to footage from SuperClash where Callum Mahoney hooked in his armbar, forcing Sudakov to tap out.]

"Some say there is no shame in giving up when the alternative is a broken limb."

[Sudakov holds his arm out.]

"If that armbar comes again at Rising Sun Showdown, I promise you, Callum Mahoney... you will have no choice but to break my arm.

I will not give up.

I will not surrender.

The Pro Wrestler Hunter/Killer lives once again.

And Callum Mahoney..."

[A barrage of quick shots, high kick after high kick after high kick landing on the temples of countless opponents.]

"You're next."

[Fade away from the eyes of a determined Sudakov and back to Jason Dane.]

JD: One of the toughest men in the world is set to face the Armbar Assassin in two weeks' time!

[The graphic fades to show the words "SIX MAN TAG CHALLENGE."]

JD: The Six Man Tag Team Challenge is set! On one side of the ring, November, LION Tetsuo, and Nijikon. On the other, TORA, Super Solar... and it's official, Nenshou will be the final member of the team! Six of the most athletic competitors that I can think of will collide in what should be one heck of an impressive matchup!

[The graphic fades and returns to a shot of Jason.]

JD: All of that action is going to be tremendous but at the end of the day, there's one big reason that this event is sold out... there's one big reason why the AWA was invited to run this show with Tiger Paw Pro... there's one big reason this event will be LIVE on Internet Pay Per View.

The Stampede Cup.

[Cue the graphic of the Cup.]

JD: Twelve of the best tag teams in the world battling it out to determine who is the best tag team in the wrestling world today. In the balance also hangs the Stampede Cup trophy itself as well as one million dollars! Two weeks ago, we announced the seedings for the tournament... now let's take a look at the first round matchups!

[A new graphic comes up, highlighting the first round matches.]

JD: Remember, the top four seeds automatically advance to the second round. That's the World Tag Team Champions of Skywalker Jones and Hercules Hammonds... that's the Blonde Bombers... that's Violence Unlimited... and that's the War Pigs. They're automatically into the second round. But in the first round, we're going to see Strictly Business take on Air Strike as was discussed earlier tonight. We'll see the shocker of the tournament, The Surfer Dudes, take on the legendary duo of Raya Oscura and The Banshee. We'll see the Tiger Paw Pro Grand Crown Champions, the Shadow Star Legion, take on the winner of tonight's Gauntlet Match. And we'll see the Baddest Thangs Runnin' meet Dichotomy. Speaking of Dichotomy, I spoke to them earlier tonight about the tournament. Let's see what they had to say.

[We go to the interview area marked "EARLIER TONIGHT", where Jason Dane stands by with Matt Ginn and Mark Hoefner, Dichotomy. Ginn is a very tall but slender man (not to be confused with any murdering eldritch horror) who has a reddish-brown Caesar hairstyle, mustache, and goatee. The MIT graduate is wearing a dark green tweed jacket with brown leather elbow patches, a white undershirt, and a brown ascot. He is also wearing brown corduroy slacks. Conversely, Hoefner is shorter but pretty well-built, with latte-colored skin and short black hair which shows lots of forehead for such a young guy. He's wearing a more sedate light blue shirt and navy blue tie, along with navy slacks. Their clothing is a bit threadbare and worn, if you look closely.]

JD: With me at this time, Dichotomy. On the last Saturday Night Wrestling, gentlemen, you tried to terminate the career of preliminary wrestler JP Driver. You would have even done the same to his tag team partner Alex Worthey, had Eric Preston not intervened! What were you trying to prove?

MG: There is a simple lesson there about precedence. Certain unimportant individuals felt safe intruding on Mister Hoefner and my interview time. It needed to be clearly demonstrated that this is not a safe course of action. We are no longer non-entities to be dismissed.

JD: Driver only suffered a broken clavicle and severe bruising of the trachea. Doctors say he'll return in four to six weeks.

MG: We do not care.

JD: That was obvious when you dropped him eight feet throat first into a barricade.

MG: Then let us do what we intended to do by eliminating those pests, and move on to subjects that matter. Pertinently, the Stampede Cup.

MH: We knew that they'd give the big stars a pass. We knew they'd put us in the toughest bracket. That's our lives in a nutshell. But Matt and I don't care anymore. Whatever we have to do, however we have to do it, we're getting that million dollar purse.

MG: And then we'll leave you all to your continued delusions that professional wrestling is an acceptable past time. Perhaps I, too, will occasionally tune in just to watch these cretins destroy themselves week in and week out, so that I can laugh about the nightmare I've left behind.

JD: What do you mean by that? You're retiring if you win the Stampede Cup? You're... a bit young to be able to retire on a half-million dollars.

MG: I understand that someone of your limited intellect has difficulty imagining the world outside of your own meager life, but trust me, the wrestling business is a circus. And I have no need to spend my life being fed peanuts and gawked at by these rubes when I could be advancing scientific research. I require funding to resume my studies, so by all means, if you don't like to hear me tell you about yourself, cheer your little heart out for us to win the Stampede Cup.

JD: By all means, gloss over the fact that the reason you're here is because you were expelled for assisting with human experimentation. Illegally, and without the knowledge of your subjects. Let's ignore the fact that you literally couldn't get back into any legitimate doctorate program, and that your amateur wrestling background was the only thing between you and flipping burgers.

MH: What do you know about anything?! You're just a corporate shill. People tell you what to say and you parrot it like a drone. Who are you to

judge him? Those winos he experimented on probably got off better than what they do to us in the military!

JD: These mythical experiments couldn't be that bad. After all, you apparently didn't do anything about it... but you went AWOL one day after getting deployment orders. Then you lied to Todd Michaelson to get a scholarship to the Combat Corner after you got your dishonorable discharge.

MH: I didn't lie! I told him I was an American military hero. And I was. I heroically stood up to them! Like Ali. I didn't have any quarrel with the Taliban, so I stood up for myself.

JD: He was drafted! You enlisted! During wartime, no less.

MH: It's always wartime. We're going to be at war from here on, because the military industrial complex needs its profits. We're going to go have a phony war with Russia now, so the MIC can get its profits from both sides. Their people and our people are in on it, they're going to pretend to war over the Ukraine, when really...

MG: Why were we forced to endure your provocations?! We came here to speak about the Stampede Cup! Are you pleased with yourself, now that you've parroted all of the lies and propaganda about us? Because even if there were any truth to your allegations, that would only serve to underline one fact: we must win the Stampede Cup.

MH: We have the toughest first round match, but we're going to survive. Gunnar Gaines has succeeded all of his life. He even won matches tagging with that poster child for birth control, Ryan Martinez. And because of that, Justin has never had to work his way up from the bottom like we did. So the one has forgotten what it means to be hungry, and the other one never learned in the first place. They might have won this tournament, because they know to do whatever they have to. But we're the ones who have to. We're coming through Tokyo in two weeks like a South Korean running through Pyongyang; we won't stop until they kill us. And we are not planning to die.

MG: Despite my partner's overly dramatic euphemism for desperation, the fact remains that the Gaineses seem to lack conviction. And should we emerge victorious, we've no alternative but to face the World Tag Team Champions, completely rested. At which point, anyone who truly believes in competitive fairness will need some rather severe dissociative psychosis to go on. Much like Santa Claus, the Easter Bunny, and effective representative democracy, there will be no competitive balance at the Stampede Cup unless we make it ourselves.

MH: But we'll survive. The chain is only as strong as the weakest link, and there's a pretty obvious weak link on that team.

JD: Oh, really? Who?

MH: If you don't know which one I'm referring to, you've obviously never watched their matches! How did you get this job, anyway? Oh, wait, nepotism. The usual. I forgot.

MG: Regardless. We feel that our current champions leave much to be desired in every way. Their victories over the Blonde Bombers were statistical anomalies. Statistical anomalies that we'll soon correct.

JD: That's rather bold, but we're out of time.

MH: What? We get half as much time as Eric Preston got two weeks ago? How'd that work out for him, by the way?

MG: It was most amusing. The same man who came out here to try and make anyone feel sorry for Todd Michaelson, to downplay his crimes, and to overlook his deficiencies... and yet nobody can do the same for him. Much like Santa Claus, the Easter Bunny, and competitive balance at the Stampede Cup, the notion that the white knights always triumph is a myth.

MH: On the plus side, Dane, I heard that Preston's attempts to get us all to forget about Michaelson's shortcomings were at least marginally effective... your sister plays them every night before...

JD: GET OUT!

[Ginn and Hoefner walk away snickering as Dane throws his microphone at them (and misses)... as we fade back to Jason, shaking his head, in the Control Center.]

JD: Could they be any more childish and hypocritical? Yet, at the same time, Dichotomy is still something of a wild card in that field of 12, I think. They have yet to face many of the teams in the field since their reinvention last year, and we know they'll do something desperate. They told us as much just now. But the real question just might be - who do they think the weak link is in the team of Skywalker Jones and Hercules Hammonds? They spoke it true, the winner of their match with the Gaines family moves on to face Skywalker Jones and Hercules Hammonds, the World Tag Team Champions, in the second round. Moments ago, you heard Jones and Hammonds make a special challenge. They want to put the World Tag Team Titles on the line in the tournament in EVERY match that they're in.

[Dane shakes his head.]

JD: It's a bold proclamation. A bold challenge. And we'll have to wait and see if the Championship Committee will approve of it. But let's look at the rest of the second round... The War Pigs will take on either the Shadow Star Legion or our gauntlet match winners. Strictly Business or Air Strike will meet the Blonde Bombers. And Violence Unlimited will meet either the Surfer Dudes or the combination of Raya Oscura and The Banshee!

[Back to the Cup graphic.]

JD: Twelve teams... one million dollars... and the only question about the tournament that remains is just who will fill the final spot in the tournament. I spoke to one of the men who hopes it'll be him... and ultimately, his partner... earlier tonight. Let's roll that footage and then, we'll go down to Phil Watson for the Main Event!

[We crossfade to footage marked "EARLIER TONIGHT" where Jason Dane is standing alongside Eric Preston. Preston, in blue jeans and a Rusty Spur t-shirt, can only nod.]

JD: Eric Preston, I must say that I'm not sure anyone expected you to throw your name in the ring for the tag team gauntlet after your actions on the last SNW.

EP: The only thing I did on the last SNW was stand up for someone who needed a friend. I've been on both sides of the coin in that situation, Jason, I've been the youngster who needed a partner and didn't get one. And I've been the vulture picking someone off for an easy meal. So when those two guys in Dichotomy took out that kid, what Driver needed was someone to put their foot down and say the same thing we've all been saying these last few weeks.

[Preston leans in to the mic and makes sure to eye the camera.]

EP: Not anymore.

[Preston backs off for a second and contemplates.]

EP: What Dichotomy is gonna learn, what we all learn one day is that all the accolades and all the wins in the world don't mean a thing if they're hollow. Because I've been there before. I've been desperate for a win, I've been desperate for respect, hell I've been STARVING for respect.

So I stole wins. I picked off the weak, I manipulated and masterplanned. I took what was easy. And what I found about those wins is the same thing Dichotomy is gonna figure out one day: it's empty. There's nothing inside. You've gotta earn it, you've gotta sweat for it, you've gotta go through the pain, the blues and the agony. Because when you don't, when you cheat someone else out of a victory, when you backjump and you plot, my friend, in the end the only man you're cheatin' is the one lookin' back atcha in the mirror.

It's a hard lesson learned, Jason Dane, but how can you call yourself the best in the world when you build your empire on faulty bricks? When everything you win, when everything you earn has an asterisk next to it, when every match you win starts with a, "See what had happened was...", you're not foolin' these people, buddy, you're not foolin' those of us who've been there before.

You're just foolin' yourself. Dichotomy, I'll see you boys again, but in the mean time enjoy that hollow vase of a victory, so pretty to look at but empty inside.

[Eric nods, but then holds a finger up.]

EP: Or maybe what I'll do is I'll win this tag team gauntlet, I'll take that plane ride to Japan and I'll work my way across the bracket to knock out you two rats on my own, just for fun!

[Eric nods, getting into a groove.]

JD: Which brings up the real question, who will be your partner in tonight's Tag Team Gauntlet?

[But before Eric can answer, both pairs of eyes drift suddenly to the side. Why? Because someone has joined Preston and Jason at the interview area. Standing there, at Eric Preston's side is none other than the AWA's white knight, Ryan Martinez. Martinez wears a pair of black jeans, and a blue "Affliction" t-shirt, the logo across his chest in white. As always, young Ryan's face is set in an intense expression, as he and Preston stare each other in the eyes.]

LD: Mr. Martinez, what brings you out here?

RM: For a couple of weeks now, you and I, Preston, we've been talking about each other. But we haven't been talking to each other. Well, I think that needs to change. So let's do start this right. My name is Ryan Martinez, and I'm pleased to meet you.

[Ryan puts his hand out, lifting his chin up, as if to say "shake my hand." Preston pauses a moment, as the two men continue their stare down. And then, Eric's hand goes out, and the two men shake. After a moment, Eric tries to pull away, but Ryan squeezes his hand, refusing to let him go.]

RM: I said that was the start. But you need to stay right there. Because there's one thing I know, Eric. And its this. The only way to truly know what's in a man's heart is to look him dead in the eyes and see it for yourself. Because I've got questions for you. And I'm going to get my answers.

[Not the sort to back down, Eric's eyes narrow, the two young lions facing off.]

RM: You've talked about redemption. And so far, you've walked the walk you've talked. I said before that I'd give you the second chance you want. But I need to see it in your eyes. Eric Preston... can you be trusted? Are you as good as your word? Are you ready to do the right thing? Not just now, but even in the hardest times?

[The staredown continues as, Preston not budging.]

RM: And do you understand, Eric, that if you cross the line again, that if you betray me or the people that are giving you this second chance, that you've

go me to answer for. Do you understand that this second chance is also your last?

[At that, Eric leans over and directs the microphone to himself.]

EP: I know what's at stake for me. I know where I stand. But do you?

Do you realize that I was the golden boy around here, long before you? Do you realize that every promise made to you was made to me a few years ago? You might be looking in the eyes of someone who is out of chances, but I'm looking in the eyes of an old friend.

Me. Before I took a few wrong turns.

[Now it's Martinez who is stoic.]

EP: I already gave in to temptation. I bottomed out. There's nowhere for me to go but up. I'm blue collar, part of the working class. Flawed, just like they are. But you?

You've got a lot to lose. You're the new golden child. And you need an ally like me to mark off the land mines so you don't end up back at square one, putting yourself back together. So if by shaking my hand you can _accept_ that we both could use help getting to where we want to go, then I say let's go do it.

[Satisfied, Ryan nods.]

RM: Then Eric... if you're still looking for a partner, I'd say you found one. Last year I got to the finals of the Cup, this year I want to win the whole damn thing!

[The two shake once more, and this time, after it ends, Ryan lets go.]

JD: And there you have it folks, Eric Preston and Ryan Martinez will be in the tonight's tag team gauntlet.

[We fade away from Jason Dane...

...and finally back to live action where Phil Watson is standing in the ring, ready to get going.]

PW: The following contest is your MAIN EVENT of the evening! It is the Tag Team Gauntlet Match and the rules are as follows. Earlier tonight, every participating team drew a number. In a moment, Teams #1 and #2 will enter the ring to compete. A team can be eliminated by pinfall, submission, disqualification, or countout. The winning team moves on to face the team who drew #3 and so on. The losing team is done for the night.

However, each fall will also have a ten minute time limit. So, if the time limit is reached... then BOTH teams will be eliminated!

[The crowd cheers the idea of a fast-paced battle.]

PW: The last team standing will move on to the Stampede Cup tournament at Rising Sun Showdown! And now... the team who drew #1...

[A throaty yell emanates from the arena speakers.]

IT'S MINE...

IT'S MINE...

THE WORLD IS MINE!

[The crowd erupts into a mixed response, as Black Sabbath's "Heaven and Hell" starts to play. MAMMOTH Maximus, a masked mountain of a man, with lightly-tanned skin and brown eyes, emerges from the entranceway. He has on a black mask, with silver markings around the back forming two icy peaks; a black singlet, with a silver M across the front; black tights, black fingerless gloves, black knee pads, and a pair of black boots with silver trim.]

SING ME A SONG, YOU'RE A SINGER

DO ME A WRONG, YOU'RE A BRINGER OF EVIL

THE DEVIL IS NEVER A MAKER

THE LESS THAT YOU GIVE, YOU'RE A MAKER

SO IT'S ON AND ON AND ON

IT'S HEAVEN AND HELL

OH WELL

[Maximus stands to the right of the entranceway, balls up his fists and holds out his arms to either side of him, then points to the entranceway, just as an Asian man, with tanned skin, a sculpted physique, short black hair and a neatly-trimmed goatee, strides out. He is dressed in a pair of black tights, black knee pads and black boots.]

BW: That's... That's...

GM: Kenichi Noda! Tiger Paw Pro competitor and one of Maximus' fiercest foes when he was competing in Japan! And here he is walking alongside MAMMOTH Maximus to the ring!

[As Noda comes down the aisle, he occasionally reaches out to slap the hands of the fans standing on either side. Maximus, on the other hand, pays little attention to them.]

PW: Coming to the ring, at a combined weight of 640 pounds, representing Tiger Paw Pro AND the AWA, they are the team of...

"SEIRYU" KENICHI NODA and

MAMMOTH MAAAXIIMUSSS!!!

[Reaching the end of the entrance ramp, Maximus steps through middle and top ropes, into the ring, followed by Noda, who holds his right arm in the air, acknowledging the fans. They bump fists, as the music fades.]

GM: What a surprise this is, fans. A team representing BOTH promotions taking part in the Stampede Cup this year. This is a shocker to me.

BW: You're not the only one. I bet there's a whole lot of people in Japan who are stunned as well.

GM: But what a major impact these two would have if they could run the gauntlet and win this whole thing.

BW: The odds are slim of ANY team being able to do that, Gordo, but if any team could, it might be these two.

GM: An imposing duo to face in this opening fall for sure...

[Noda steps out to the apron, watching as his massive partner turns towards the entrance ramp, shouting down the aisle as he waits...

...and the crowd erupts into cheers as "Compter Les Corps" by Vulgaires Machins starts up over the PA system!]

GM: The Northern Lights draw #2!

[Phil Watson makes it official.]

PW: Drawing #2... weighing in at 448 pounds... Rene Rousseau and Chris Choynet...

THE NORRRRRTHERRRN LIIIIIGHTS!

[The duo jogs into view, wearing jackets with crossed flags of the state of Maine and the province of Quebec. "Northern Lights" is embroidered across the back of the jackets as they head towards the ring.]

GM: Chris Choynet and Rene Rousseau have their work cut out for them here tonight against MAMMOTH Maximus and Kenichi Noda, Bucky.

BW: They absolutely do. These guys ain't got enough muscle to beat the big man and his partner, Gordo.

GM: The Northern Lights are an excellent tag team and a lot of wrestling experts will say a good tag team will always beat two good singles wrestlers, Bucky.

BW: Some people say that but we'll see about that right now 'cause they're facing two of the best - both here and in Japan.

[Rousseau and Choynet huddle up, shrugging out of their jackets and discussing strategy while waiting for AWA Senior Official Johnny Jagger to start the match.]

"DING! DING! DING!"

GM: And it's going to be Rene Rousseau starting off against MAMMOTH Maximus. Rousseau is a seasoned veteran, a three-time Canadian Roundup Wrestling Heavyweight Champion in his native Quebec. He's yet to find major success here in the AWA but tonight just might be his night.

BW: Both of these teams have a long road to walk if they're gonna last all the way to the end of this thing though. This one might turn out to be just as much about the luck of the draw as the skill in the ring.

[Rousseau ducks under a lunging Maximus, avoiding the tieup. The Canadian grappler throws a pair of forearm shots to the jaw, stunning Maximus before he drops down, trying to grab a leg for a single leg takedown...

...and gets an impactful double axehandle across the back for his efforts!]

GM: Ohh! Maximus cuts off that takedown attempt.

BW: Did Rousseau really just try a single leg on Maximus? What kind of an idiot does that?!

[Maximus raises his right arm slowly, dropping a big elbow down into the lower back of Rousseau...

...and promptly rolls him over, going for a cover.]

GM: Are you kidding me?! Maximus is going for the pin!

[Rousseau slips out from under the 420 pounder at the count of one and change.]

BW: It's not a bad idea, Gordo. You get into the match this early, you want to get to the next team as quickly and with as little effort as possible. Plus, Maximus is over four hundred pounds. You put him down, lay on him a bit, and wear the heck out of 'em.

[Maximus climbs to his feet, dragging Rousseau off the mat by the back of the trunks. He tugs the smaller man into a back waistlock...]

GM: Maximus sets for a back suplex...

[But as he lifts, Rousseau flips over the top, landing on his feet behind the big man. The Canadian delivers a two-handed shove that sends Maximus falling into the ropes, rebounding back...

...where the four hundred pounder leaps into the air, clapping his arms together on the ears of Rousseau, knocking him down on the mat.]

GM: The big man drops him again!

[Maximus stands over Rousseau, barking angrily at him and gesturing to the crowd with a "THE WORLD IS MINE! MINE!" before slapping his partner's hand.]

GM: The tag is made and we're about to get our first look at Kenichi Noda here in the AWA!

[The 220 pounder out of Tokyo quickly pulls Rene Rousseau off the canvas, pulling him into a side waistlock...

...and SNAPS Rousseau over into a belly-to-back suplex!]

GM: Ohh! The back of Rousseau's head bounces off the canvas!

[Noda quickly rolls into a lateral press, following his partner's lead in the quick pin attempt, getting a two count before Rousseau lifts the shoulder.]

GM: The Canadian kicks out again. Rene Rousseau slips out in time. We've got an international flair in this one with wrestlers from Canada, Japan, and here in the States and you know how much Rene Rousseau would love to represent his home nation in the Stampede Cup.

BW: More than Noda would love to actually compete on this massive show in his home country and represent Tiger Paw Pro?

GM: Perhaps we will find out who wants it more.

[Noda pulls Rousseau off the canvas, whipping him into the corner, crashing hard into the buckles. Noda backs off, giving a shout in Japanese before barreling across the ring, raising his leg...]

GM: RUNNING BIG BOOT!

[...and Rousseau drops into a front somersault, rolling under the running big boot attempt, Noda's foot slamming into the turnbuckle as Rousseau scrambles to all fours, crawling across the ring...]

GM: Rousseau's making a move!

[The Canadian gets to his feet, fairly close to the corner as Chris Choiset extends his hand...]

GM: There's the tag! The Northern Lights are- NODA!

[Noda barrels across the ring again, lifting the leg...]

GM: BIG BOOT AGAIN!

[...but the incoming Choisnet sidesteps, flinging Noda chestfirst into the turnbuckles. Noda staggers back into a rear waistlock...]

GM: Choisnet hooks Noda from behind...

[The Maine native rushes forward, smashing Noda chestfirst into the turnbuckles. He drops back, rolling him into a rolling reverse cradle...]

GM: White Lightning rollup...

[...and throws himself back into a bridge!]

GM: AND THE NATURAL BRIDGE!! ONE!! TWO!! THREEEEEEEE!!!

"DING! DING! DING!"

PW: MAMMOTH Maximus and Ken-

[Watson is cut off by the sight of a surly Maximus stepping into the ring, snatching his defeated partner off the mat, burying a boot into his midsection.]

GM: No, no, no!

[Maximus steps forward, hooking a standing headscissors before powering his presumably former partner into the air...

...and DRIVING him down with a thunderous powerbomb!]

GM: OHHHHH!

BW: I'm guessing Maximus didn't like the idea that Noda robbed him of his shot to compete in the Tokyo Dome!

[A furious Maximus glares down at Noda as Choisnet backs off, giving plenty of room to the big man.]

GM: Maximus just laid out his own partner and-

[Phil Watson speaks up anew.]

PW: And now... the team who drew #3...

[Phil Watson lowers his mic just before the horrific sound of a swarm of bees fills the air followed by a cartoonish sounding "There's nothing in here but BEES!" which is followed by the At Vance hard rock version of "Flight Of The Bumblebee" which whips the crowd (especially the kids) into a head-banging frenzy!]

PW: From Parts Unknown... weighing in at 338 pounds...being accompanied by The Queen Bee...

Yellow Jacket and Bumble Bee...

THE HIIIIIIIIIIIIIVE!

[The crowd's cheers only get louder as the two masked men come rushing from beyond the curtain accompanied by their buxom manager. Yellow Jacket takes the lead - he's in a full-length bodysuit that covers his entire body from head to toe with alternating yellow and black stripes. His mask is a basic yellow mask with black "antennae" coming off the top.

Bumble Bee is right behind him in a matching bodysuit that is primarily yellow but with a few black stripes to break it up. He sports a matching mask to his partner.

Queen Bee brings up the rear, waving her arms to the cheers of the crowd. She wears a similar bodysuit with the chest area cut-out to reveal some cleavage... and yes, she also sports a matching mask.]

GM: The Hive draws #3 and this could be quite the exciting showdown between them and their fellow fan favorites, The Northern Lights!

[Bumble Bee leans over, slapping the outstretched hands of fans on one side of the aisle as Yellow Jacket does the same thing on the other side of the ramp. Queen Bee gives multiple thumbs up to people as she takes the lead, heading towards the ring. Upon reaching the ring, all three bees grab the top rope, catapulting in unison over the top rope into somersaults, rolling up to their feet and "buzzing" to a loud cheer from the fans...

...and right into a massive double clothesline from Maximus that Queen Bee luckily avoids!]

GM: OHHHHH! COME ON!

[The fans explode in jeers for Maximus as he stands over the motionless Hive, glaring at the two bees with ferocity. The protests of Johnny Jagger finally get Maximus to step from the ring, walking back up the ramp to the deafening jeers of the fans as Rene Rousseau and Chris Choisnet look on in surprise at what just happened.]

GM: The Hive got into the ring... the match hadn't even started yet... and MAMMOTH Maximus laid out both Yellow Jacket and Bumble Bee with that double clothesline!

BW: The referee got Maximus out of there... but he doesn't know what to do, Gordo. If he rings the bell to start the fall, then The Hive are easy prey for Rousseau and Shwanay.

GM: But the Northern Lights don't want to win that way, Bucky. You better believe that.

BW: You better believe they better take a win however they can if they want to stand a chance to make it to the end of this thing, Gordo.

GM: The referee is conferring with the Northern Lights and... fans, I'm being told we're going to take a commercial break and try to give The Hive some time to recover after that devastating attack by MAMMOTH Maximus.

BW: WHAT?!

[Fade to black.

Cut to a very long shot of the exterior of a pretty dingy looking building.]

"Have you ever dreamed of fame?"

[Cut a little closer.]

"Of glory?"

[A little closer.]

"Of your friends and family seeing you on television?"

[And just a little closer, revealing a red, white, and blue sign that reads "AWA Combat Corner."]

"Well, now you can make all your dreams come true by signing up today at the AWA Combat Corner - the official training school for the American Wrestling Alliance!"

[We cut to the interior of the building where we can see lots of standard gym equipment surrounding a very basic wrestling ring. There are people lifting weights, running on treadmills, and of course, working out in the ring.]

"With the very best trainers in the business, the AWA Combat Corner is the most-equipped training facility to get you in shape and get you in the ring in the shortest amount of time!"

[Cut into the ring where an unseen instructor is barking out instructions to two young students who are grappling on the canvas.]

"So, stop by the Combat Corner today... call our offices... visit our website... and let them know that you want to be the next AWA Superstar! You want to be the future of the business! You want to wrestle!"

[Fade to a graphic that has all the info on the AWA Combat Corner before we fade back to black...

We fade back up just as the bell sounds and a slightly dazed Yellow Jacket pushes out of the corner, stumbling towards a waiting Chris Choisnet. The two come together in a collar and elbow as Gordon Myers begins to speak.]

GM: Welcome back, fans. One team has been eliminated in our Tag Team Gauntlet here tonight as we battle to determine the final team headed to Japan to compete in the Stampede Cup tournament. Before we went to break, we're told that the Northern Lights actually requested that The Hive get recovery time after being assaulted by MAMMOTH Maximus.

BW: Suckers! They should've taken advantage of it and got the easy three count!

[Choisnet, a decorated amateur wrestler in both high school and college, goes quickly into a fireman's carry, lifting the masked Yellow Jacket off the canvas, pushing up to his feet. He carries Yellow Jacket around the ring before trying to upend him into a fireman's carry slam...

...but Yellow Jacket lands on his feet to a cheer!]

GM: Whoa!

[Yellow Jacket throws a quick one-two with his right and left elbow bouncing off the jaw of Choisnet before the masked man rushes to the ropes, rebounding back...]

GM: Clothesline ducked by Yellow Jacket...

[The masked man leaps up to the second rope, springing back and twisting over into a somersault...

...and nails the approaching Choisnet, knocking him flat with it!]

GM: Oh my! What a high flying takedown by Yellow Jacket!

[The masked man scrambles back up to his feet, grabbing the rising Choisnet in a side headlock. He rushes towards the ropes, running right up the turnbuckles before shoving himself off...

...and flipping Choisnet down to the canvas with a headlock takedown!]

GM: Another high flying move out of Yellow Jacket!

BW: That's one of those bizarre things I never understand out of aerial wrestlers, Gordo. A headlock takedown is a headlock takedown. That running up the ropes stuff just seems to be a risk not worth taking. Yeah, it gives you extra momentum... extra leverage... but... you might bust your skull trying it!

[Yellow Jacket, back on his feet, is waiting as Choisnet gets back to his feet. He grabs Choisnet by the arm, attempting an armdrag by Choisnet stops it cold, muscling Yellow Jacket back around into a stiff forearm on the jaw!]

GM: Oh, what a shot!

[With the masked man dazed again, Choisnet hooks him, lacing a leg between Yellow Jacket's...

...and SNAPS him back down to the canvas with a side Russian legsweep!]

GM: Whoa! What a takedown with that Russian legsweep... and Choisnet goes for a cover!

[The Maine native earns a two count before Yellow Jacket kicks out in time. Choisnet climbs to his feet, giving his partner a signal. Rene Rousseau lifts his foot up onto the middle rope, allowing Choisnet to slam the masked face into his foot!]

GM: The tag is made and in comes Rene Rousseau.

[The Northern Lights make to doubleteam the masked man, each grabbing an arm as they shoot him across the ring...]

GM: Ohh! Double back elbow takes him down!

[Each member of the Lights grab a leg on Yellow Jacket, pulling him back into a back somersault that rolls him back to his feet right in between the Lights who pick him up, dropping him down on their bent knees with a double atomic drop!]

GM: A beautiful pair of doubleteams by the Northern Lights as they look to string together a pair of wins here and get themselves a little bit deeper into this gauntlet match!

[Choisnet exits the ring as Rene Rousseau pulls Yellow Jacket off the mat into a gutwrench, elevating him up and over with a suplex!]

GM: Textbook gutwrench suplex by Rene Rousseau who certainly knows his way around a wrestling ring. He's a well-respected veteran in this locker room who just needs to find his break to go all the way if you ask me.

BW: But he's saddled himself with Schwanay so...

GM: Chris Choisnet is an excellent competitor in his own right, Bucky, and together, they make one heck of a tag team.

[Rousseau slides into a lateral press, earning a two count before Yellow Jacket lifts the shoulder up. The Canadian claps his hands together as he climbs to his feet.]

GM: I think Rousseau thought the gutwrench was enough for the three count.

BW: That's his first mistake. Never assume you've done enough to beat your opponent. Beat 'em first and then celebrate.

[Rousseau leans down, grabbing the legs of Yellow Jacket.]

GM: He's going for the Quebec Crab! The signature hold of Rene Rousseau!

[The Canadian struggles and strains, trying to turn him over onto his stomach in the submission hold but Yellow Jacket is fighting hard, knowing the end is near if he gets turned into the Crab.]

GM: Yellow Jacket is fighting it!

[Rousseau abandons his efforts, switching his stance and falling back into a catapult...

...that Yellow Jacket uses to spring himself into a standing position on the second rope.]

GM: He counters!

[The masked man steps up to the top, the crowd rising to their feet as Rousseau scrambles to his feet...

...and gets caught flush in the chest with a moonsault! Yellow Jacket grabs both legs tightly, hanging on in a cover!]

GM: ONE!! TWO!! T-

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

GM: Kickout! Rousseau kicks out in time! Yellow Jacket almost got him with that surprise move off the top rope!

[The masked man crawls to the ropes, using them to pull himself to a knee as Rousseau climbs to his feet, moving in on him with his hands raised for a double axehandle...

...and Yellow Jacket lunges forward, slamming his skull into the midsection!]

GM: Yellow Jacket caught him coming in!

[Rising up to his feet, the masked man BLASTS Rousseau with a standing kneelift to the jaw, sending Rousseau stumbling back, falling on his rear as Yellow Jacket drops back into the neutral corner, looking down the length of the ropes at his waiting tag team partner!]

GM: Bumble Bee is looking for a tag and-

[Yellow Jacket suddenly rushes forward, swinging his knee at the face of Rene Rousseau...

...who drops back, hooking the leg as it goes by, and rolls right up to his feet in a half Boston Crab!]

GM: HALF CRAB!

BW: Wow! Even I'm impressed by that and you know I don't impress easy, Gordo!

GM: The rolling half Crab applied in the middle of the ring by Rene Rousseau! What a counter by the Canadian who continues to impress on the mat!

[Rousseau grits his teeth, leaning back in the painful submission hold.]

GM: Rousseau's trying to force a submission out of Yellow Jacket so that he can move into the next round of this gauntlet match!

BW: Who knows who is waiting for 'im there though?!

[Yellow Jacket claws at the canvas, looking towards his partner who has his arm outstretched but is a long way from making a tag. At ringside, Queen Bee is slamming her arms into the canvas, causing the fans to break out into a repeated clap for her men.]

GM: Yellow Jacket needs to escape this hold but Rene Rousseau has it locked in deep, fans! I'm not sure how much longer he can last inside of this hold!

[Having seen enough, Bumble Bee slips through the ropes, slamming a forearm into the back of Rene Rousseau's head, breaking the hold and knocking him down to the mat. Some of the crowd cheers, some jeers the break.]

GM: Well, I don't think Bumble Bee wanted to do that but he had no choice. He had to do it to break the hold and save the match for he and his partner.

[Bumble Bee slips back out to the apron as Chris Choynet shouts across the ring at him.]

GM: Tempers flaring a bit between these two fan favorite tag teams.

BW: And I like to see that, Gordo. I like to see these goody two shoes show a little fire. Maybe Shwenty will pop him with a closed fist next and really show us something.

[Rousseau climbs to his feet, glaring at Bumble Bee as he drags Yellow Jacket by the ankle to the corner, slapping the hand of his partner.]

GM: The tag is made to Chris Choynet who comes over the top and right down onto the leg!

BW: I hate to admit it but that's a smart move, Gordo. If you take the wheels out from under a high flyer, you really limit the attacks that they can bring to the table.

[Choisnet gets back to his feet, again shouting at Bumble Bee as he pulls Yellow Jacket back to his feet, tugging him into a front facelock and slinging the masked man's arm over his neck.]

GM: The man from Portland, Maine hoists him up... and drops him down with a spine-rattling suplex!

[Upon hitting the mat, Choisnet floats over into a lateral press.]

GM: The suplex gets a count of two for Chris Choisnet. We're about six minutes into this thing and that starts to become nervous time for these teams, Bucky. Only a ten minute time limit in these falls, remember that. If they go to a draw, both teams will be eliminated.

[Choisnet climbs back to his feet, pulling Yellow Jacket up but steering him into a neutral corner where he slams a back elbow into the jaw. He grabs an arm, whipping Yellow Jacket across into the opposite corner.]

GM: The masked man hits the corner hard... here comes Choisnet!

[At the last moment, Yellow Jacket leans back, lifting his legs and causing Choisnet to run right into the raised knees!]

GM: OHHH!

[Choisnet falls backwards as Yellow Jacket hops up to the middle rope, lifting his hands in the air... and leaps off, snaring Choisnet's head between the legs, swinging around and flipping Choisnet down to the mat with a rana!]

GM: Oh my! Yellow Jacket takes him down... and now he's gotta make the tag!

[The crowd is cheering loudly, some "buzzing" at Yellow Jacket as he tries to get to the corner where Bumble Bee is waiting for him.]

GM: Yellow Jacket's on his hands and knees, crawling towards the corner. Can he get there in time?

[Chris Choisnet staggers to his feet, facing the wrong way. His partner shouts at him, telling him to turn around. He slowly does, surging forward as Yellow Jacket makes a lunge...]

GM: TAG!

[The crowd roars to life as Bumble Bee deadleaps to the top rope, springboarding off at full extension, knocking Choisnet down with a cross body and rolling off to his feet!]

GM: Bumble Bee takes down Choisnet and gets right back up!

[Bumble Bee throws an arm into the air to the cheers of the fans as he waits for Choisnet to get back to his feet, rushing towards him...]

...and leaping up to connect with a high knee to the jaw, sending Choynet sprawling back into the neutral corner!]

GM: Bumble Bee grabs an arm, sends him across...

[The masked man barrels across the ring, leaping up to slam his rear end into the face of a stunned Choynet!]

GM: STINGER SPLASH IN THE CORNER!!

[Bumble Bee backs off, waving Choynet forward. The staggered Maine native stumbles out into a boot to the gut...]

GM: He goes downstairs on Choynet and-

[Grabbing two hands full of hair, Bumble Bee leaps up, driving Choynet's face into the canvas with a split-legged faceslam...]

...and then backrolls up to his feet to a cheer!]

GM: Choynet's in some serious trouble as Bumble Bee is using everything in his arsenal on him!

"SEVEN MINUTES EXPIRED! THREE MINUTES REMAIN!"

[The crowd buzzes with urgency as Bumble Bee quickly moves to the corner, pulling Choynet up. A rapid-fire barrage of forearms to the jaw connect, leaving Choynet on Dream Street.]

GM: He's out on his feet, fans!

[Bumble Bee ducks down, lifting Choynet up, dropping him down into a seated position on the top turnbuckle. The masked bee races across the ring to the opposite neutral corner, then sprints back the opposite direction...]

GM: What in the world is he...?

[The flying bee leaps into the air, snaring Choynet's head between his legs...

...and FLINGING him from the top turnbuckle down to the canvas with an astonishing rana!]

GM: HOLY- WHAT LEAPING ABILITY OUT OF BUMBLE BEE!

[Bumble Bee races across, flinging himself into a lateral press.]

GM: ONE!! TWO!! TH-

[But Rene Rousseau slips in, lifting Bumble Bee by the foot out of the cover!]

GM: Ohh!

BW: Turnabout is fair play! Rousseau did to Bumble Bee what Bumble Bee did to him earlier in the match.

[Bumble Bee buzzes angrily in Rousseau's direction who responds in French. The masked man climbs to his feet, pulling Choisnet towards the corner where Yellow Jacket is standing on the apron.]

GM: The tag is made... Bumble Bee lifts Choisnet up... and hangs him upside down in the corner. He's tied him to the Tree of Woe and both members of The Hive are backing off now, heading to different corners...

[At a signal from Queen Bee, both members of The Hive go tearing across the ring, leaping into the air...

...and DRIVING four feet into the head of Chris Choisnet!]

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

GM: DOUBLE DROPKICK BY THE HIVE!!

[Bumble Bee rolls from the ring as Yellow Jacket pulls Choisnet down, diving across his chest.]

"EIGHT MINUTES EXPIRED! TWO MINUTES REMAIN!"

GM: Just two minutes remain - cover!

[The referee dives to the mat.]

GM: ONE!! TWO!! THR-

[The referee leaps up, pointing down.]

GM: He got a foot on the ropes! Chris Choisnet escapes with a foot on the ropes and-

[Yellow Jacket gets up, slapping his partner's hand.]

GM: Another quick tag...

[Yellow Jacket grabs the top rope as his partner does the same, catapulting him over the ropes...

...and DOWN across a prone Choisnet with a somersault senton!]

GM: Bumble Bee connects!

[He rolls Choisnet away from the ropes, diving across again.]

GM: ONE!! TWO!! THRE-

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

GM: Shoulder up! Chris Choynet kicks out again! He's showing tremendous heart in this one, trying to stay alive and help his team get to the next phase of this gauntlet match!

BW: About ninety seconds to go by my watch, Gordo!

[Bumble Bee pulls Choynet back to his feet, lifting him up for a scoop slam...

...but gets dragged down in an inside cradle!]

GM: CRADLE!! ONE!! TWO!! THRE-

[Bumble Bee kicks hard, breaking the pin just BARELY in time!]

GM: He gets out just before the three count! Oh my!

[Bumble Bee scrambles to his feet, lifting him up again and slamming him down in the middle of the ring. Moving to the corner, he slaps his partner's hand, again rushing to opposite corners.]

GM: They're both going up! This could be Buzzworthy!

[Yellow Jacket and Bumble Bee reach their perch, looking across at one another...

...and then taking flight, sailing through the air. Bumble Bee extends his leg as Yellow Jacket extends his arms and legs...]

GM: OFF THE TOP!

[Both men crash down on the prone Choynet with the legdrop/splash combo!]

GM: BUZZWORTHY CONNECTS!

[Bumble Bee rolls out of the ring as Yellow Jacket hooks a leg.]

GM: ONE!! TWO!!! THRE-

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

GM: SHOULDER UP!! SHOULDER UP!! MY STARS, HE KICKED OUT JUST IN THE NICK OF TIME!

"ONE MINUTE REMAINS!"

[Yellow Jacket quickly gets to his feet, looking a bit panicked as he pulls Choynet off the mat, ducking down to hoist him up into a fireman's carry. He walks around the ring, heading into the corner with him...

...and starts to highstep out into the center of the ring where Choynet shifts his weight, dragging him down in a crucifix!]

GM: ONE!! TWO!! THRE- wow! Another near fall! Chris Choynet almost managed to steal that one away for the Northern Lights with under a minute of action remaining in this fall!

[Yellow Jacket scrambles to his feet, slamming a knee into the midsection of the rising Choynet. A second one connects before Yellow Jacket lands two quick forearms on the stunned Choynet.]

GM: Yellow Jacket backs off... spins...

[He goes for a rolling elbow only to have Choynet duck under it, hooking him around the waist...

...and powers him up and over, dropping him down in a Northern Lights suplex!]

GM: SUPLEX! BRIDGE! ONE!! TWO!! THRE-

[Again, Yellow Jacket lifts a shoulder off the mat, breaking the pin!]

"THIRTY SECONDS!"

GM: Choynet's crawling to the corner... tag!

[Rousseau moves in quickly, dragging his partner off the mat. He signals, pointing to Yellow Jacket as he whips him into the ropes.]

GM: Rousseau shoots him in... backdrop!

[Choynet leans over, backdropping Yellow Jacket into the air, flipping him down to the mat where Rousseau quickly grabs the legs, flipping Yellow Jacket onto his stomach!]

GM: QUEBEC CRAB! LES BOMB DE ROUSSEAU TURNS IT INTO THE CRAB!

[The crowd is roaring, surging to their feet as Rousseau leans back, wrenching the back of his opponent.]

GM: Bumble Bee's in and-

[Chris Choynet rushes at him, throwing himself into a double leg takedown. He gets Bumble Bee down, using his amateur background to hold him there as Rousseau leans back in the Quebec Crab!]

GM: Rousseau's got him trapped! We're almost out of time! Can Yellow Jacket hang on?!

[Yellow Jacket claws at the mat, trying to escape the hold as Bumble Bee tries to get out from under Chris Choisset to save his partner from the hold...

...when suddenly the bell sounds!]

"DING! DING! DING!"

GM: That's it!

BW: But did the time expire or did he give it up?

GM: I'm not sure. The referee's speaking to Phil Watson and the timekeeper right now. We're about to get an official announcement.

[Phil Watson takes the mic as Rene Rousseau slumps to the mat.]

PW: Ladies and gentlemen... after ten minutes of action, the time limit has EXPIRED!

[The crowd jeers.]

PW: Therefore, BOTH teams have been ELIMINATED from the match!

[Even more jeers pour down for the elimination of two fan favorite teams.]

GM: They're both gone! The Hive AND The Northern Lights have been eliminated from the match! They went to the ten minute time limit and they're both gone, Bucky.

BW: Well, I won't shed any tears over not seeing those two teams head out to Japan. Maybe our next team will be more worth-

[Bucky gets cut off by the sounds of "YOOOOOOOOO!" over the PA system.]

BW: Seriously? Why don't we just give the Cup to the Japanese teams now?!

[The crowd cheers the sight of BC Da Mastah MC and Manny Imbrogno coming into view.]

PW: The team who drew #4... from the land of rhythm and rhyme... at a total combined weight of 611 pounds... BC Da Mastah MC and "Mr. Mensa" Manny Imbrogno...

Together, they are known as BCIQ!

[The fan favorite duo walks down the ramp, pausing to embrace and slap hands with the quartet exiting the ring.]

GM: BCIQ was one of the sleeper surprise teams of 2013 and they're hoping to make 2014 their year. The first place to start with that is to win this

gauntlet, win the Stampede Cup, and then go on to take aim at the World Tag Team Titles.

BW: You've gotta be kidding me, Gordo. We're really going to sit here and pretend that Manny And The Fat Man stand a chance of winning this thing?

GM: Of course they stand a chance. They've got as good of a shot to win this match as any of the teams entered.

BW: Except for the three teams already eliminated.

GM: Yes, of course.

[With a final pat on the back, BC and Manny step into the ring. A quick conversation with the official follows and BC steps out on the apron as Manny hops up and down, swinging his arms across his chest to stay loose.]

PW: And now, the team who drew #5...

[Some electric guitar and then...]

#THIS!
#IS!
#SURVIVAL OF THE FITTEST!

#THIS!
#IS!
#DO OR DIIIEEEE!

["Survival" by Eminem screams over the loudspeaker in the Crockett Coliseum, and Eric Preston walks out, dressed in glossy looking dark purple tights with teal X's up the side, and an old fashioned shield on the seat with swords crossed behind it and a crown on top of it, showing the letters "EP" interlocked inside of it in teal outlined in white and silver. His boots and kneepads are black, and over top of it he wears a black, sleeveless, sequined robe, with the same shield imprinted on the back in teal, outlined in white and silver. He stops at the top of the aisle, looks around, and then points to the curtain as the music changes.

There is the light tinkling of heavily synthesized music, which begins to grow in intensity, as Thirty Seconds to Mars' "Vox Populi" blares over the loudspeakers.]

GM: It's Preston and Martinez! They're #5!

[As the song builds, the heavy percussion of drums shakes the arena, the sound replicating the stomping of hundreds of feet.]

PW: At a total combined weight of 495 pounds... the team of Eric Preston and Ryan Martinez!

[Ryan Martinez emerges at the top of the entrance ramp, wearing a black hoodie, the hood pulled up over his face. He steps down to the center of the entrance ramp and pauses, throwing his head back to reveal his face. He pauses, first looking out over the cheering crowd and then shaking hands with his new partner before they walk the ramp in unison.]

GM: What a team this is, Bucky. Two young lions, two potential future World Champions standing side by side to face down the darkness of the AWA - the Unholy Alliance, the Shane Gang, the Wise Men.

BW: Martinez was the first one who said Eric Preston deserved a second chance and now he's putting his money where his mouth is. He made it to the Finals of the Cup last year as Gunnar Gaines' partner and he's hoping Preston can help him cash his ticket into the Cup one more time.

GM: The duo steps in there - another pair of fan favorite tag teams are about to square off and that means-

BW: That means that MY favorites - teams like the Longhorn Riders and the Moonshiners got a REAL nice draw, Gordo.

GM: It would certainly appear that way.

[Martinez and Preston huddle up in the corner, pointing across at Manny Imbrogno who confidently stares back.]

GM: Manny Imbrogno doesn't seem the least bit bothered by Martinez and Preston being their opponents.

BW: He's the World's Smartest Man. He had strategies for every team possible, Gordo.

GM: Perhaps you're right but he really shouldn't be overly confident.

BW: Maybe he buys into that a good tag team beats two good singles wrestlers, Gordo.

[Eric Preston opts to start for his team, the bell sounding as he dances out of the corner, looking to tie up with the World's Smartest Man. The collar and elbow comes shortly as the two men jockey for position. Preston immediately grabs the wrist, twisting the arm around into a wristlock.]

GM: Preston goes right to the wristlock, cranking on the arm of Manny Imbrogno who immediately begins searching for an escape.

BW: Shouldn't be too hard for the World's Smartest Man to outthink a rube like Eric Preston.

GM: A rube?!

BW: He's fallen for the oldest trick in the game. He actually thinks the support of these nine-to-fivers in the crowd means something to his success. What else would you call him?

GM: A man who has seen the light, who has had a change of heart.

BW: Exactly. A rube.

[Imbrogno backs to the middle of the ring before snapping off a one-handed cartwheel to reverse the pressure on the wristlock. He drops down to his knees, using the free arm to slip up between the legs of Preston and taking him down with a fireman's carry. Imbrogno pops up, a big smile on his face as the fans applaud the nice counter.]

GM: Mr. Mensa living up to his nickname there with an excellent counter and Eric Preston seemed a little taken off-guard by that one.

[Preston slowly gets to his feet, looking across at Imbrogno with a nod. They circle one another for a few moments before coming together in another tieup as Ryan Martinez shouts, "Let's go, Eric!" from the corner to cheers.]

GM: Collar and elbow tieup again... both men muscling each other back and forth, looking for an advantage...

[Imbrogno pulls Preston into a side headlock, using his well-toned arms to crank away on the skull of the former Combat Corner student.]

GM: Imbrogno goes to the side headlock, trying to keep Preston grounded, trying to wear him down...

[Shifting his weight, Imbrogno tosses Preston down to the mat with headlock takeover, settling in on the mat still holding the wear-down grip.]

GM: Down to the mat they go... Preston rolls him over! One! Two! No, Imbrogno rolls back the other way.

[Preston throws a pair of weak forearms from his back into the ribcage of Imbrogno who squeezes tighter. Suddenly, Preston wraps his arms around the waist, rolling Mr. Mensa to his shoulders again.]

GM: We've got one! Two! But again, Imbrogno's out at two.

[As they roll back to Imbrogno's control position, Preston reaches up, pushing Mr. Mensa's head back, lifting his legs to secure a headscissors to a cheer.]

GM: Preston secures the headscissors on Imbrogno!

BW: This is a whole lot of mat wrestling for something with a ten minute time limit, Gordo. These two teams just saw The Hive and The Northern

Lights both get eliminated with a time limit draw. You would think they'd be bringing the fire in this one to avoid the same fate.

GM: I think this is just a feeling out process for these grapplers at this point in the contest. Preston's using those powerful legs to really squeeze the head and neck of Imbrogno who keeps shifting his feet around on the mat, looking for a better position.

[After a few more moments, Imbrogno gets Preston to his rear end in a sitting position as Imbrogno slips his legs straight out. He plants his hands on the mat, pushing up into what essentially looks like a piledriver position...

...but settles back down as Preston slams his arms into both sides of the ribcage, knocking Manny Imbrogno back to his knees.]

GM: Nice counter to the counter by Preston! Both of these men are showing us something here in the early moments of this one.

[Preston suddenly pushes up off the mat, throwing himself over the kneeling Imbrogno into a makeshift sunset flip, earning another two count before Imbrogno slips out, flipping back to his feet where he grabs Preston by the legs, flipping forward into a double leg cradle of his own!]

GM: ONE! TWO! No! Preston's out at two!

[And at that kickout, the two men separate, quickly scrambling to their feet ready to strike...

...and pause as the crowd cheers their tradeoff so far. A grinning Preston points to the fans, reaching a hand to Imbrogno who shakes it.]

GM: And now both men are going to make the tag to their respective partners.

[Ryan Martinez steps through the ropes to a big cheer as BC Da Mastah MC comes in across the ring, doing a Cabbage Patch in Ryan's direction.]

GM: Yo baby, yo baby yo indeed.

BW: Tell me you didn't just say that.

[Martinez edges out to the center of the ring where the much-larger man is waiting for him.]

BW: This'll be an interesting one, Gordo. Ryan Martinez has been in the AWA for almost two years now but very rarely have we seen him in there with a competitor this much larger than him. He's giving up over a hundred pounds to the... what is it you call this fat slob? The Round Mound of Hip Hop Sound?

[Gordon chuckles at the disgust in Bucky's voice as BC and Martinez tangle up in a collar and elbow.]

GM: Into the tieup they go... and as you predicted, the much larger man is using his size advantage to easily back Ryan Martinez into the corner. The referee steps in, asking for a break...

[BC steps back, raising his arms up to a cheer.]

GM: Clean break there by BC and the fans certainly appreciate that considering the alternative.

BW: Shoulda slipped a knee in on the break.

GM: Bucky, when are you going to realize that not everyone wants to approach with the same mindset that you do?

BW: Oh, I realize there are plenty of dumb losers in the world, Gordo.

[Gordon sighs as the two fan favorite grapplers tie up in the middle of the ring. Predictably, BC pushes Ryan Martinez back towards a neutral corner again...

...but at the last moment, Martinez swings him around, pushing BC back into the buckles.]

GM: Into the corner they go again... and you can be sure that Ryan Martinez will break cleanly.

BW: Oh, of course he will. He's dumber than most of these goody two-shoes in the locker room. Why take a chance and get ahead in the match if these idiot rednecks will boo you for it?

GM: You call these Texas fans rednecks when you, yourself, live in Georgia which... last I checked... is part of the South as well.

BW: Georgia is made up of fine Southern gentlemen and ladies. Texas is made up of redneck hicks and inbred trash.

GM: BUCKY!

BW: I call 'em as I see him, Gordo.

GM: You know that BC Da Mastah MC is from Georgia, right?

BW: Every family's got a black sheep. The Wildes have a few including my idiot nephews.

[While the announcers banter, Ryan Martinez did indeed break cleanly, backing out to the middle of the ring again.]

BW: These two are going to polite themselves into a time limit draw, Gordo.

GM: They certainly should be looking to pick up the action at any time here and Manny Imbrogno seems to be pointing that out to his partner as we speak.

[The third tieup goes down, BC powering Ryan Martinez back to the corner for a third time...]

...and this time, he drops down, burying his shoulder into the midsection as the referee calls for a break.]

BW: About time!

GM: Apparently BC felt a sense of urgency and goes downstairs with that shoulder tackle... and a second one leaves Ryan Martinez gasping for air.

[BC backs off, grabbing Ryan by the arm...]

GM: Irish whip coming up!

[The rotund rapper sends Ryan Martinez bouncing off the turnbuckles, stumbling back out...]

...and right up into a gorilla press!]

GM: HE'S GOT HIM UP! ALL THE WAY UP TO THE PENTHOUSE!

[BC takes a few steps across the ring, holding him high in the air...]

...and HURLS him down to the canvas to a big cheer from the crowd!]

GM: Wow! What a slam out of BC!

BW: Ryan Martinez is wishing he'd raked the eyes or something right about now, Gordo.

GM: I highly doubt that.

[BC hits the ropes, building up a head of steam as Ryan Martinez staggers to his feet off the slam...]

GM: The big man on the rebound and-

[He runs headlong into Martinez who does a full spin, cracking him with a back elbow to the jaw!]

GM: OHH! What a shot by Martinez!

BW: And that's what he's going to need to do to stand a chance in there with a much larger man. He needs to use those dangerous strikes that he has in his back pocket. The elbows, the chops, the kicks. No slams, no suplexes... don't even try it.

[With BC dazed off the elbow, Ryan Martinez dashes into the ropes, rebounding off...

...and throws a big running boot that hits the chin of the rotund rapper!]

GM: Ohh! Another hard shot by Martinez!

[Martinez grabs the big man by the head, slamming his skull into the eyebrow of BC, sending him staggering back into the ropes. Ryan looks out at the crowd who roars in response. He nods as he moves in, shifting his feet...]

GM: Martinez is looking for those big chops in the ropes.

[He winds up then lets loose with a barrage of chops. As always, a signal to the crowd gets them to chant along to his rapid fire chops, each syllable of his name punctuated by another chop.]

"MAR [CHOP!] – TI [CHOP!] – NEZ [CHOP!]"

"MAR [CHOP!] – TI [CHOP!] – NEZ [CHOP!]"

"MAR [CHOP!] – TI [CHOP!] – NEZ [CHOP!]"

"MAR [CHOP!] – TI [CHOP!] – NEZ [CHOP!]"

"MAR [CHOP!] – TI [CHOP!] – NEZ [CHOP!]"

GM: MACHINE GUN CHOPS!

[Martinez pauses, taking a breath, as the fans chant for more. Ever a man of the people, young Ryan obliges. This time, the barrage of chops is slower, as is the fans' chant.]

"MAR [CHOP!] – TI [CHOP!] – NEZ [CHOP!]"

"MAR [CHOP!] – TI [CHOP!] – NEZ [CHOP!]"

"MAR [CHOP!] – TI [CHOP!] – NEZ [CHOP!]"

"MAR [CHOP!] – TI [CHOP!] – NEZ [CHOP!]"

"MAR [CHOP!] – TI [CHOP!] – NEZ [CHOP!]"

[Finished, Ryan Martinez steps back, watching as BC stumbles off the ropes, slumping down to his knees on the canvas. He nods to the crowd again, dashing to the ropes facing BC, rebounding off with a raise of his leg...

...and BC raises up as well, lifting the leg up onto his shoulder, powering him up into the air, spinning once, and DROPPING down in a sitout powerbomb!]

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

GM: WHAT A COUNTER!! BIG COUNTER BY THE BIG MAN!!

[The referee drops down to the mat.]

GM: ONE!! TWO!! TH-

[Martinez' shoulder fires up off the mat, breaking the pin!]

GM: Oh my! A near fall there for Ryan Martinez who just barely broke the pin in time!

BW: BCIQ almost went to the next fall!

GM: And what a devastating loss that would be for Eric Preston and Ryan Martinez who are hoping to earn that final slot on the tour of Japan here tonight!

[The Round Mound Of Hip Hop Sounds gets back to his feet, breathing a bit heavy as he grabs Martinez by the leg, hauling him towards the corner where he slaps the hand of Manny Imbrogno.]

GM: The tag is made...

"FIVE MINUTES GONE BY! FIVE MINUTES REMAIN!"

GM: We've hit the halfway point in the time limit of this one as BCIQ has established control...

[Imbrogno grabs the top rope with both hands as BC yanks the ropes, flipping his partner over the top into a big splash!]

GM: Nice doubleteam! Mr. Mensa hooks a leg for one! He's got two! He's got thr- no!

[The crowd cheers as Martinez kicks out, just barely avoiding the three count again.]

GM: Another close fall for Preston and Martinez.

[Imbrogno pulls Martinez off the mat, blasting him with a pair of European uppercuts that sends Martinez back into the ropes. A whip sends him across...]

GM: Spinning back kick to the gut!

[With Martinez doubled over, Imbrogno leaps into the air, smashing his knee into the back of his victim's neck, knocking him down to the mat. He drops a big elbow... and a second... and a third. He kips up to his feet after the third, dropping into a slight bow...

...and then leaps HIGH into the air, burying a fourth elbow into the back of the head!]

GM: Elbowdrop connects!

[He flips Martinez to his back, diving across for a lateral press.]

GM: Another cover gets one! Gets two!

[Another kickout causes the crowd to roar in response. A nervous-looking Eric Preston slaps the top turnbuckle a handful of times, shouting encouragement to his partner as Imbrogno pulls him back up, scooping him into the air, and slamming him down.]

GM: Big slam... and Manny's heading for the corner!

[Imbrogno steps up to the second rope, then places one foot on the top...

...and uses that one foot to push off into a backflip, soaring towards the downed Martinez...]

GM: KNEES UP!

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

GM: IMBROGNO HITS THE KNEES!

[With both men down on the mat, the crowd surges to their feet, cheering on their respective favorite to get to the corner and make the tag to their waiting partner.]

GM: Both men looking for a tag but who's going to get there first?!

BW: Whoever does may turn the match in their favor for good, Gordo.

GM: Absolutely. Imbrogno crawls towards BC as Ryan Martinez does the same towards Eric Preston!

[Both corner men have their arms outstretched, begging for their partner to get there in time...]

GM: TAG!

[BC Da Mastah MC comes through the ropes, charging across as Martinez pushes up to his knees, making a lunge towards Preston's outstretched hand...]

GM: TAG ON THE OTHER SIDE!

[Preston catapults over the top rope into the ring, throwing big bombs at the jaw of the near four hundred pound rapper.]

GM: Preston's firing away, hammering the skull of BC!

[With BC stunned, Preston dashes to the ropes, leaping up to the second rope, springing back, and slamming his elbow back into the jaw!]

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

[But the big man doesn't fall, until just stumbling back a pair of steps, staying on his feet.]

"THREE MINUTES REMAIN! THREE MINUTES!"

GM: Preston to the ropes again, coming back...

[And the dazed BC shocks the crowd by leaving his feet, connecting with a dropkick on the incoming Preston! BIG CHEER!]

GM: WOW!

BW: That's 366 pounds getting off the mat for the dropkick, daddy!

GM: What a dropkick! How in the world can someone that size get up and show that much agility?!

[With Preston down on the mat, BC drops a heavy elbow down into the chest, rolling into a cover.]

GM: He covers for one! He's got two!

[But Preston fires a shoulder up!]

GM: Two count only for BC who gets right back up...

[A pair of stomps keeps Preston down as BC steps out to the apron. He swings his arms around to a cheer from many of the fans in the Crockett Coliseum.]

GM: He's calling for the Turntable!

[BC starts to climb the ropes, heading for the top turnbuckle. He gets to the second rope, placing a foot up on the top...]

GM: PRESTON'S UP!

[He leaps up to the second rope, grabbing a shocked BC by the head, swinging his right leg up...

...and SLAMMING his knee into the jaw of the big man!]

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

GM: DREAM MACHINE _ON_ THE SECOND ROPE!!

[BC slumps down, dropping into a seated position on the top turnbuckle. An eager Preston reaches up, grabbing BC by the high top fade, pulling him down into a front facelock...

...and then swings around, hooking a three-quarter nelson, and DRIVES BC skullfirst into the canvas!]

GM: OHHHHH!

BW: That's a modified version of the Godsend! Marcus Broussard taught him well!

GM: BC's out!

[Preston struggles, flipping BC to his back, diving to hook a leg. The referee lunges to the mat as Ryan Martinez rushes in, cutting off an incoming Mr. Mensa as the referee counts to three!]

GM: HE GOT HIM!

"DING! DING! DING!"

GM: Eric Preston and Ryan Martinez pull off what has to be considered a minor upset and they're moving on in this gauntlet match!

BW: That's the halfway point, Gordo. I'm told there were ten teams entered into this thing... and here comes #6!

[The crowd jeers at the sight of The Longhorn Riders striding down the elevated ramp, carrying bullwhips and plenty of attitude.]

GM: Pete and Jim Colt step in as Manny Imbrogno helps his partner out of the ring.

BW: Too bad. I'd love to see the Colts take some of the blubber off that whale's hide with one of those whips.

GM: BUCKY!

[The near three hundred pound "Texas" Pete Colt shouts at Eric Preston who has backed into his corner, making sure he has backup in case the Riders get rowdy. Pete gets cut off by the referee, pacing back and forth in his blue jeans and big brown leather cowboy boots. He's a broad-shouldered, thickly-built man with reddish brown hair. His barrel chest and barrel gut might make you think he's not tough but as the son of the legendary Sam Colt, "Texas" Pete is not one to be trifled with. He tugs at his thick horseshoe mustache.]

GM: Straight out of Gun Barrel City, Texas, the Longhorn Riders are two of the toughest brawlers you'll ever run across. Martinez and Preston are going

to have their work cut out for them if they want to knock off this burly duo and make it to the next opponent.

[Jim Colt seems to want to start the match for his team but Pete Colt shakes him off, pointing out to the apron.]

GM: Pete Colt seems insistent. He wants to start things off with Eric Preston.

[The referee signals for the bell...

...and Preston barrels across the ring, throwing himself at Colt and knocking him back into the corner.]

GM: PRESTON BRINGS THE FIRE!

[Grabbing a handful of reddish brown hair, Preston opens up with a series of brutal right hands to the skull of the Texan. He launches into a series of big knees to the body before grabbing an arm, whipping him across...

...right into the raised boot of Ryan Martinez to a big cheer!]

GM: Ohh! "Texas" Pete Colt runs right into the boot!

[Ryan Martinez reaches in, pulling Colt into the corner as Preston winds up...

...and gets stopped by Jim Colt who grabs two hands full of hair, yanking Preston down to the mat!]

GM: Oh, come on!

BW: Martinez started it, Gordo! He got involved first!

[Martinez comes in, quickly tangling up with Pete Colt, trading haymakers as the crowd roars to life. "Slim" Jim Colt steps in on the other side of the ring, barreling across...

...and full body tackling Martinez back into the buckles! He slams his shoulder into the midsection as Pete hammers away at Ryan Martinez from the top!]

GM: The Colts are taking the fight to Martinez!

[Backing up, each Colt grabs Martinez by an arm, dragging him out of the corner...

...and HURLS him back into the buckles, snapping his head back in a whiplash-style motion!]

GM: The Longhorn Riders are working over Ryan Martinez who, by the way, is NOT the legal man!

[With the Colts taking turns hammering away on Martinez, ignoring the protests of Senior Official Johnny Jagger...

...when Eric Preston comes racing into view, leaping into the air, smashing a fist into the ear of Pete Colt! Big cheer!]

GM: We've got a fight on our hands!

[Preston hammers away at Pete Colt, knocking the bigger man back into the ropes...

...and CONNECTS with a big clothesline that takes him over the top to the floor!]

GM: PRESTON SENDS PETE COLT TO THE FLOOR!

[A fired up Preston slams his arms into the top rope, grabbing it with both hands as Pete Colt staggers up to his feet...

...and CATAPULTS himself over the ropes, crashing down onto a stunned Pete Colt!]

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

GM: PRESTON DIVES TO THE FLOOR!

[Preston takes the mount on the floor, hammering Pete Colt with big right hands to the skull! The camera cuts back into the ring where Ryan Martinez is hammering away at the torso of the young lion with balled up fists in the corner.]

GM: Jim Colt's in the ring, taking the fight to Ryan Martinez! Neither of these two are the legal men, Bucky!

BW: Johnny Jagger's losing control of this!

[Jim Colt grabs Martinez by the arm, winging him across to the opposite corner. "Slim" Jim stampedes across the ring, throwing out his right arm...]

GM: Ohh! Big clothesline in the corner!

[Colt yanks Martinez out of the corner, lifting him up under his right arm...

...and DROPS him down across a bent knee!]

GM: Oh! Backbreaker and nice execution on that one!

[Martinez writhes in pain on the canvas as Jim Colt gets to his feet, stepping out on the apron...

...and leaps off, dropping a clubbing forearm down on the back of Preston's head, knocking him down to the floor!]

GM: The Colts are both out on the floor, working over Preston! They're stomping the heck out of him on the floor!

[The Longhorn Riders pull Preston back to his feet, grabbing him by the arms...]

"THUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUD!"

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

GM: DOUBLE WHIP INTO THE WOODEN RAMP!! GOOD GRIEF!

[Preston collapses in a heap on the floor as the two brothers trade a high five to the jeers of the crowd. A particularly rowdy fan in the front row throws a beverage in their direction, earning a glare from Pete Colt before security intervenes.]

GM: Pete Colt is in a dull rage right now, dragging Preston up and throwing him back into the ring.

[Pete Colt climbs up on the apron, shouting at the ringside fans as he ducks through the ropes.]

GM: Colt drags Preston off the floor... snapmares him over...

[With Preston in the seated position, Pete Colt DRIVES a knee into the back of Preston's head, sending a jolt down his spine and leaving Preston writhing in pain on the mat.]

GM: Preston's down... he's in a lot of pain...

[Pete Colt puts the boots to Preston, stomping and kicking the former Combat Corner student to big jeers from the crowd. The big Texan drags Preston off the mat, pulling him into a front facelock and dragging him to the corner where he slaps Jim Colt's hand.]

GM: The tag is made... in comes "Slim" Jim Colt...

[Colt drives a boot up into the ribcage of Preston, forcing him down to his knees. A second boot to the skull knocks Preston down to the mat as the Longhorn Riders stand over him.]

BW: This is what we're talking about, Gordo. This is a tag team! This is a team ready to make the Stampede Cup! This is a team ready to head to Tokyo!

GM: Eric Preston and Ryan Martinez want to go to Tokyo as well, Bucky.

BW: How's that working out for them right now?

[Jim Colt pulls Preston off the mat, scooping him up, and slamming him down in the center of the ring.]

GM: Big slam...

[Colt stands over Preston, pointing a menacing finger at a recovering Ryan Martinez who is on the apron...

...and leaps high in the sky, dropping a huge leg down across the chest!]

GM: Leaping legdrop and a beauty!

[Seated on the mat with his leg across the torso, Jim Colt barks at the official to count.]

GM: ONE! TWO!

[Preston lifts a shoulder, breaking the count.]

GM: Two count only... and Jim Colt is all over the referee immediately. That looked like a good count to me, Bucky.

BW: It would. Put your glasses on, Gordo.

GM: Colt's dragging him off the mat, pulling him into a front facelock...

[Jim slowly turns him over, facing the lights...

...and DROPS, jolting the back of Preston's neck into the shoulder!]

GM: Reverse neckbreaker!

[Jim stays seated, a big grin suddenly on his face as he settles back, just resting an arm on the chest of Eric Preston.]

GM: ONE!! TWO!!

[Preston again lifts the shoulder!]

GM: A sloppy cover by Jim Colt and Eric Preston slips free again!

"FIVE MINUTES EXPIRED! FIVE MINUTES REMAIN!"

GM: Five minutes left - the halfway point in this fall. The fans are unsettled here in Dallas. They want to know... they NEED to know... can Eric Preston and Ryan Martinez defeat The Longhorn Riders and keep their battle going to go to Tokyo?!

BW: Or will the Riders kick their teeth in and send themselves to the Cup?

[An angry Jim Colt marches to the corner, slapping his brother's hand.]

GM: "Texas" Pete back in off the tag...

[The Longhorn Riders pull Preston off the mat, each holding an arm as they whip him across...

...and drop him with a running double clothesline!]

GM: OHHHH! Down goes Preston!

[Pete Colt settles to his knees, moving into a lateral press.]

GM: ONE!! TWO!! THR-

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

GM: Shoulder up! Shoulder up!

[A furious Pete Colt again barks at the official before launching into a barrage of stomps on the downed Preston. The big burly brawler hauls Preston up to his feet...

...then ducks down, hoisting Preston up into a fireman's carry.]

GM: He's got him up! Pete Colt's going for the Last Roundup!

[Colt walks out to the center of the ring, glaring over at Ryan Martinez who shouts at his partner, trying to cheer him on...

...and giving Preston just enough time to drive his elbow down into the temple a few times, breaking free of Colt's grasp, landing on his feet behind him. As Colt spins around, Preston lifts him up, dropping him into an inverted atomic drop...]

GM: Ohh! Preston hits the ropes behind him and-

[The crowd ROARS as Preston throwing himself into a lunging clothesline, wiping out Pete Colt as Preston hits the mat on his knees, turning his attention towards the corner...]

GM: Preston's making the crawl! He's closing in on the corner!

[A wobbly Pete Colt gets to his feet just as Preston makes a dive...]

GM: TAG!

[The crowd ERUPTS as Ryan Martinez rushes into the ring, throwing a big knife edge chop across the chest of Pete Colt, knocking him off his feet and down to the mat. Jim Colt wastes no time in stepping in, shoving the referee aside as he rushes at Martinez...]

GM: Clothesline takes Colt off his feet!

[Martinez throws his arms apart, giving a roar as Pete Colt slowly rises back up off the mat. He buries a boot into Colt's midsection, doubling him up.

The young lion grabs a front facelock, giving a whoop before he DRIVES Pete Colt skullfirst into the canvas!]

GM: DDT! MARTINEZ SPIKES 'IM!

[He rolls Pete Colt to his back, attempting a lateral press...

...but we don't even get a one count before Jim Colt lunges forward, smashing a double axehandle down on the back of the head!]

GM: Ohh! Jim Colt breaks the pin!

[Jim Colt gets to his feet, stomping and kicking Martinez. The AWA's "white knight" battles up to his knees, throwing rights and lefts at the midsection as quickly as he can, fighting up to his feet with the crowd roaring behind him!]

GM: Martinez is taking the fight back to Jim Colt!

[A spinning backfirst catches Jim Colt on the cheek, sending him falling back into the turnbuckles. Martinez rushes in after him, throwing a back elbow to the chin...

...and then stampedes out, catching the rising Pete Colt with a massive running lariat that dumps him down on the mat! The crowd explodes in cheers as Martinez leans down, slapping the mat with both hands!]

"THREE MINUTES REMAIN! THREE MINUTES!"

[Martinez grabs Pete Colt, dragging him off the mat. He ducks down, muscling the near three hundred pounder up into a fireman's carry...]

GM: HE'S GOT HIM UP! HE'S GOING TO-

[As Martinez turns, Jim Colt rushes out of the corner, jumping up and lashing out with a float kick...]

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

GM: BIG BOOT TO THE JAW!!

[Martinez collapses to the mat, Pete Colt slipping into a cover as Jim Colt spins around, ready to defend.]

GM: ONE!! TWO!! THRE-

[The crowd roars as Eric Preston lunges past Jim Colt, smashing a forearm down on the back of Pete Colt's head!]

GM: PRESTON BREAKS THE PIN!

[Jim Colt yanks Preston off the mat, slugging him with repeated right hands backing him into the ropes. Colt backs off, rushing forward for another float kick...]

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

GM: HE MISSED! Preston ducked out of the way and Jim Colt crotched himself up top!

[Preston leaps up, lashing out with both feet, connecting with a dropkick that sends Colt flailing off the ropes, crashing down on the wooden platform.]

GM: Down goes Jim Colt!

[Pete Colt rushes Preston from behind, connecting with a running forearm to the back of the head, sending Preston sailing through the ropes and out onto the ramp.]

GM: "Texas" Pete sends Preston out!

[The near-three hundred pound Pete Colt slowly turns, leaning down to lift Martinez up off the mat...

...and gets pulled down into an inside cradle!]

GM: ONE!! TWO!! THREEEEEEEEE!!!

"DING! DING! DING!"

GM: MARTINEZ GOT THE WIN!!

[A furious Pete Colt climbs to his feet, glaring at the referee. He shoves Johnny Jagger back to the corner, jabbing a finger into his chest...

...while the next team comes rushing down the aisle.]

GM: IT'S THE MOONSHINERS!

BW: What the...?!

[The wild-eyed Southern brawlers are storming down the aisle...

...carrying steel chairs.]

GM: What are they...?

[Jug and Zeke are quickly in the ring, chairs in hand...]

"WHAAAAAAAAAAAAAACK!"

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

GM: A steel chair shot across the back of Ryan Martinez!

[Zeke backs off, holding his dented chair in hand as Jug takes his shot.]

"WHAAAAAAAAAAAAACK!"

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

GM: TWO CHAIRSHOTS ON MARTINEZ!

[Both Moonshiners stand in the middle of the ring, soaking up the jeers of the crowd. They both are wearing tattered, ripped up jeans that are a mix of faded blue and dirty mud brown. Both are stocky, barrel-chested, and sporting a pair of guts that hang over their beltline. Referee Johnny Jagger gets instantly in both of their faces...

...and signals for the bell!]

"DING! DING! DING!"

GM: Wait a second!

BW: He can't do that!

[Jagger confers with Phil Watson briefly.]

PW: AWA Senior Official Johnny Jagger has THROWN the Moonshiners OUT of this match! They are eliminated!

BW: How the hell can he do that, Gordo?! He doesn't have the right to do that! He doesn't-

GM: He just did it, Bucky! The Moonshiners went after them with those chairs and... hey, look at this!

[The camera cuts to the entrance curtain, showing Mange holding a large duffel bag, a big yellow-toothed grin on his face.]

GM: What is Mange doing out there?

[He reaches into the bag, holding up a handful of cash.]

GM: What are we seeing here? He's got a handful of... did the Moonshiners get PAID to do what we just saw?!

[A grinning Mange reaches his arm up, dragging his thumb across his throat. A nodding Jug winds up with the chair again...]

"WHAAAAAAAAAAAAACK!"

[Zeke does the same.]

"WHAAAAAAAAAAAAACK!"

GM: MARTINEZ IS TAKING A BEATING WITH THOSE CHAIRS!

[Eric Preston crawls into the ring, diving across his prone partner, trying to shield him...]

"WHAAAAAAAAAAAAACK!"

GM: Jug cracks Preston across the back as well!

[Johnny Jagger jumps into Jug's face, shouting at him...]

GM: The AWA's Senior Official is ordering these chair-swinging thugs to get the hell out of the ring! He's seen enough of this and-

"WHAAAAAAAAAAAAACK!"

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

GM: HE HIT JOHNNY JAGGER! Zeke hit Johnny Jagger across the back with the chair!

BW: Oh my god.

[Jug looks down at the floored referee... and bursts into laughter!]

GM: They hit an AWA official with a steel chair and they're LAUGHING about it?!

[The curtain parts...

...and the crowd erupts as Bobby O'Connor and Hannibal Carver come charging down the aisle, carrying steel chairs of their own!]

GM: HERE COMES THE CAVALRY!

[O'Connor comes in first, swinging his chair up to block a shot from Jug. He quickly throws a boot to the gut, wheeling around and CRACKING the veteran brawler across the back, sending through the ropes and out to the floor as Carver comes in, jabbing the edge of the chair into Zeke's midsection, knocking him down to his knees.]

GM: Uh oh!

[Carver flings the chair aside, throwing his right arm into the air, going into a spin...

...and TURNING OUT Zeke's lights with a rolling elbow to the back of the head!]

GM: Good grief! The Mind Eraser by Hannibal Carver and the Moonshiners just got their tails kicked by Carver and O'Connor!

BW: Are they the next team? If they are, this thing is over already!

[O'Connor flings his chair to the floor, kicking Jug's chair under the ropes. He's fuming mad as he takes a knee next to Preston and Martinez. Carver is still standing, waving for the other Moonshiners to try something as a pair of AWA officials run down, trying to restore order.]

GM: Fans, we're going to take a final break right here to try and figure out where things stand but when we come back, it'll be for the conclusion of this gauntlet match so don't you dare go away!

[Fade to black.

After a three second pause, cut to the living room of a house, where two kids are playing an Atari 2600. Some pathetic bleeps and bloops are coming from the screen, as they have in every media portrayal of video games ever. The kids are half-heartedly going through the motions. One of them seems to be having trouble staying awake.]

Kid #1: This is boring.

Kid #2: I wish we had toys that could _really_ fight.

[Suddenly, a body is flung through the large front window with a loud crash. A hard-rock background track plays as the body gets to his feet... wait, is that Rick Marley?]

Kids: *gasp*

[And... is that Stevie Scott running through the broken window to attack him again?!]

Kids: Stevie Scott!

[And... did Dave Cooper just kick down the front door to attack Alex Martinez from behind while he was grappling with Calisto Dufrense in the dining room for no apparent reason?! And is that Supernova leaping down the staircase at Nenshou? And why are the Blonde Bombers beating up the mailman? Oh, there's the Bishop Boys turning them around and brawling with them on the lawn!]

Kids: WOAH!

[Yes, these two kids are about to have a very badly-acted simultaneous cardiac arrest and orgasm. It happens. Especially when Skywalker Jones is jumping off your kitchen cabinet to hit Chris Staley with a flying clothesline, Juan Vasquez is hiptossing Johnny Detson across your family room, and the Lynches and the Beale Street Bullies are brawling across your driveway.

Percy Childes takes a dish from the china cabinet and breaks it across the back of Danny Morton as he had Stevie Childes in a headlock while Jackson Haynes is ramming Daniel Tyler's head into the sink in the background, Buford P Higgins and Miss Sandra Hayes are in a shouting match, Glenn Hudson tries to dropkick Dave Bryant, who ducks... poor Glenn hits the boys'

father who was coming in to check out the noise. Then Alphonse Green wanders by and stomps the poor guy. Because he can.]

Kids: THIS IS AWESOME!

[And cue the sales pitch!]

Announcer: And now you can bring the awesome home with Series Two AWA action figures from Hasbro!

[We cut to the product line, where action figures of all of our favorite AWA characters stand in dramatic action figure poses~!]

Announcer: Relive the greatest matches!

[RyGunn does a double throw to send The Rave over the living room divider into the kitchen! Then we see the kids playing with the RyGunn and Rave action figures.]

Announcer: Create new dream matches never before seen!

[Luke Kinsey tries to smash Terry Shane the Third with a kitchen chair, but Shane pulls open the ironing board from the wall to block it! Then we see the kids playing with the Nenshou and Dufrense action figures.]

Announcer: Form brand new alliances and teams that you'd never see live!

[Brian Von Braun and Tully Brawn double-clothesline Vladimir Velikov in the kitchen... then both grab for the paper towels to wipe off their hands with disgusted 'yuck' expressions. Then we see the kids playing with these three action figures.]

Announcer: Perform the great signature moves of the AWA wrestlers, or invent totally new ones!

[The magic of blue-screen editing makes it look like William Craven is doing a double-backflip powerbomb to Alex Martinez. Well, his body is doing flips in the air as if someone were just spinning the footage around (because that's exactly what it is). Then we see the kids do the same 'move' with the action figures.]

Announcer: The base set comes with the Crockett Colosseum ring and four of the top stars in the AWA!

[Cut to a posed shot of Staley, Green, Marley, and BVB. See, you have to buy the ring, and you get some reasonably-popular-but-not-first-choice guys (GLASS CEILING~!) and then you HAVE to spend money to get the popular guys! Clever!]

Announcer: AWA Action Figures... get them today! Because it's the only way to get this close to the action... AND SURVIVE.

[With that, we cut to the post-fight devastation of the house... it looks like a tornado went through here. And exploded.]

Announcer: Ages 8 and up!

[Fade to black...

We come back to live action where Hannibal Carver has taken his spot out on the apron. Bobby O'Connor is bouncing up and down, punching at the air as Ryan Martinez kneels on the apron and Eric Preston leans against the turnbuckles in the corner. Referee Marty Meekly has replaced Johnny Jagger in the ring and seems to be waiting for the cameras to go live before...]

"DING! DING! DING!"

GM: Here we go, fans! Just one more team to go after this one. Whoever wins this fall will battle... who is left?

BW: If you can't do the math, I'm not tellin' ya.

GM: One more team remaining, standing between these two fan favorite squads and a trip to Tokyo! But quite frankly, I'm not even sure how Eric Preston and Ryan Martinez expect to continue this match after the beating they took with those steel chairs at the hands of the Moonshiners.

BW: Yeah, you like to talk about what heart they have... I think they might be oozing it through their ears right about now.

GM: I don't know what got into the Moonshiners to throw away their chance at a million dollars like that but it appeared to be whatever was in that duffel bag that Mange was holding.

BW: That bag looked pretty hefty. If you're right and they got bought off, they got bought off by someone with a whole lot of money.

GM: But who would walk the Moonshiners to try and take out Eric Preston and Ryan Martinez like that?

BW: I can think of a few people but it wouldn't be... wise... to speculate.

GM: Are you saying-?! Did the Wise Men pay off the Moonshiners to go after Preston and Martinez?!

BW: Hey, they told Martinez he had taken a warning shot in that Battle Royal for the TV Title. They told him to back off but he's kept on running his mouth about the Wise Men. And then there's Preston who... well, he's the wild card in this, isn't he? If he turns his focus towards them to, they might have some real problems to deal with.

GM: The Moonshiners took a payoff from the Wise Men! Of course they did! It makes perfect sense for them!

BW: Yeah but that little chairshot on Johnny Jagger was all them... and it just might cost them whatever cash they got from... whoever.

GM: You just said it was the Wise Men.

BW: Did not. I said it wasn't wise to speculate and it's not. I don't want any part of the Wise Men's business and neither should you. Those guys play for keeps. Ask Stevie Scott... Supernova... Louis Matsui. Take your pick.

[Bobby O'Connor questions Marty Meekly about Eric Preston's ability to continue as the Combat Corner graduate edges out of the corner...

...and cracks O'Connor on the jaw with a right hand!]

GM: Well, I'd say Preston's come to fight, Bucky!

[O'Connor steps back, spitting on the canvas. He runs the back of his hand over his mouth, checking for blood...

...and then flashes a grin.]

BW: We don't know a ton about this kid yet but we know he likes a fight. He was known all over the Midwest as "Bunkhouse" Bobby O'Connor for the wild brawls he liked to get in in places like St. Louis and Kansas City. So, if Preston's here for a fight... O'Connor will give it to him!

[The six foot two, 265 pound grandson of the legendary Strangler pauses a moment, rubbing his hands together...

...and then throws himself forward in a tackle, grabbing Preston around the waist and hauling him down to the mat!]

GM: Here we go!

[O'Connor swiftly takes the mount, raining down closed fists on the skull of a shocked Preston who brings up his arms, trying to cover up from the attack...

...and then rolls him right over, switching up to land some blows of his own before peeling off, dashing to the ropes.]

GM: Preston rebounds off...

[With O'Connor a little slower to get up, Preston goes for the homerun with the Dream Machine kneelift but O'Connor pivots away from it, causing Preston to whiff on it. As Preston turns, he gets caught with a series of quick, stinging left jabs to the jaw...]

GM: O'Connor's lighting him up with the left hands!

[...and then flattens him with a short running clothesline!]

GM: Oh my! Bobby O'Connor has really developed into quite the talent since his tag team, the Young Bloods, fell apart several months ago. It looked like O'Connor might not be long for the AWA at that point... perhaps being shuffled off to another territory for more seasoning when he fell under Hannibal Carver's wing after Rick Marley and Johnny Detson tried to put him through a windshield.

BW: That's all lies and speculation.

GM: They assaulted him and dragged him out to the parking lot!

BW: Maybe they were going to give him a ride home.

GM: Give me a break.

[O'Connor pulls Preston off the mat by the arm, whipping him into the nearest neutral corner. He rushes in after him, dropping into a tackle to the midsection...

...and then pops Preston with an uppercut, snapping his head back and straightening him up!]

GM: The 23 year old from Jefferson City is taking the fight to Eric Preston in the early moments of this fall... grabbing a handful of hair now...

[The AWA rookie runs from post to post, slamming Preston facefirst into the top turnbuckle. Preston staggers out, slumping to his knees as O'Connor slaps the hand of his veteran partner.]

GM: The tag is made and in comes Hannibal Carver!

[The cheers pick up as Carver comes in, leaning down to slap the mat as he raises his right arm behind the kneeling Preston...]

GM: He's going for the Mind Eraser again!

[...but before he can go for it, Preston somehow flattens out, reaching back to scissor the leg of Carver between his own, taking him down to the mat with a drop toehold!]

GM: Oh! Nice counter by Preston and-

[The crowd ROARS as Preston grabs the left arm of Carver, pulling it across his face as he looks to hook in the Cobra Clutch Crossface!]

GM: Preston's trying to end this one right now!

BW: If he hooks this in, he'll do it!

[But Carver rolls to his right side, throwing a pair of back elbows with his free arm that absolutely blast Preston on the cheekbone, breaking up the

submission attempt. Carver is swiftly back up as Preston attempts to get off the mat, only to be met with an overhead right down between the eyes.]

GM: Big haymaker by Carver, dragging Preston off the mat by the arm...

[Carver shoots Preston into the ropes, catching him on the rebound by the upper thighs, rotating...

...and DRIVING him into the canvas with the spinning spinebuster!]

GM: OHHHH! That might be it!

BW: Right down on the back that the Moonshiners waffled with the chair. Carver may be on the fans' good side right now but he's still one nasty son of a gun inside that ring.

[Carver swings his arms apart in a "it's over!" gesture as he settles into a lateral press, not bothering to hook a leg.]

GM: ONE!! TWO!! THRE-

[The crowd ROARS as Preston lifts a shoulder off the canvas. An annoyed Carver gets up, promptly dropping a knee down onto the raised shoulder.]

GM: Oh! The knee slams down into the shoulder and look out here! Bombs away!

[Carver backs off, spreading his arms, and falling forward into a headbutt!]

GM: Falling headbutt by Carver... and another cover! ONE!! TWO!! THRE-the shoulder's up again!

[Carver again pushes up to his knees, looking pretty irritated at the kickout from Preston. He climbs to his feet, leaping up to stomp the raised shoulder.]

GM: Ohh! Leaping stomp right on that shoulder that Preston lifted to break the pin.

BW: That's the second time that Carver's targeted the shoulder that comes off the mat. He's sending a message to Preston right now - "You want to kick out? I'm gonna hurt you for it."

[Carver leaps again, stomping the other arm. He works his way around the body, repeatedly leaping up to stomp targeted body parts on the downed Combat Corner graduate.]

GM: It's a Boot Party out of Hannibal Carver and Eric Preston is getting stomped right into the canvas while his partner can't do a thing about it, having been laid out from those steel chair attacks by the Moonshiners who, I understand, have been kicked out of the building for their attack on Johnny Jagger.

"FIVE MINUTES EXPIRED! FIVE MINUTES REMAIN!"

[Carver finishes it with a leaping stomp to the side of Preston's head before dropping down into another pin attempt.]

GM: ONE!! TWO!! THRE-

[The crowd cheers the kickout again!]

BW: You've gotta wonder if Carver would have won this by now if he'd bothered with a good pin attempt. It's sloppy because I think he believes this one is in the bag for them.

GM: So did the Longhorn Riders. Ryan Martinez and Eric Preston are proving to be a stronger team than anyone could have imagined, fans... but when you see Martinez down in the corner like that, you have to wonder if their night is just about over.

[Carver climbs to his feet, dragging Preston up with him...

...and a desperate Preston fires a right hand into the mush, causing Carver to step back from it!]

GM: Preston slips in a right hand!

[But Carver shakes his head before grabbing a handful of hair and blasting Preston with a headbutt between the eyes, sending the Combat Corner grad falling back into the corner where Carver slaps his young partner's hand.]

GM: The tag is made to Bobby O'Connor who steps in, grabs the arm...

[O'Connor whips Preston across, sending him crashing into the turnbuckles.]

GM: Ohh! Hard whip to the corner by O'Connor!

BW: A rookie mistake though! He whipped him into his own corner!

[O'Connor doesn't seem to notice as he comes barreling across, looking for an avalanche...

...and SLAMS chestfirst into the corner as Ryan Martinez, fueled by a burst of desperation, yanks his partner out of the way by the arm, causing O'Connor to miss!]

GM: Ryan Martinez saves his partner and-

[The crowd ROARS!]

GM: AND HE TAGS HIMSELF IN!

[Martinez steps through, hobbling with every step as he rushes in, throwing a clothesline that takes O'Connor down to the mat. He falls back against the ropes, breathing heavily as Carver shouts encouragement to his young protege.]

GM: Carver's cheering on O'Connor who, like you said, made a rookie mistake. He's not used to being a tag team wrestler... in fact, Ryan Martinez is the only man in the ring right now with extended experience as a tag team wrestler. Remember, he made it all the way to the Finals of the Stampede Cup a year ago and almost won the World Tag Team Titles back last summer.

[As O'Connor struggles up to his feet, Martinez swoops him behind him, grabbing him by his light brown hair and bending him back...

...before SMASHING an overhead chop down across the chest!]

GM: BURNING SWORD BY MARTINEZ!

[Martinez collapses into a lateral press, earning a two count before Carver slips in and buries a boot into the ribs, breaking the pin attempt. The referee steps in, backing Carver out.]

GM: Hannibal Carver was not about to take any chances right there. He wants to move on to the final fall and take his team to Tokyo to battle as part of the Rising Sun Showdown and the Stampede Cup.

[The Los Angeles native slowly drags himself to his feet, pulling O'Connor up with him...

...and yanks him into a front facelock!]

GM: He's calling for the Brainbuster!

[But before he gets a chance to attempt it, Hannibal Carver is right back into the ring, struggling to get past referee Marty Meekly who is holding his ground, shielding Carver from getting into the action...

...which allows Eric Preston to come rushing into the ring, running across...]

GM: IN COMES PRESTON!

[...and THROWS himself into a crossbody block that sends both he and Carver tumbling over the ropes, SLAMMING down into the apron before crashing down hard on the thin ringside mats!]

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

GM: PRESTON TAKES OUT CARVER!!

BW: He took himself out as well, Gordo! We're down to Martinez and O'Connor!

GM: And Martinez is looking for the Brainbuster again!

[The AWA's White Knight hooks the front facelock, slinging the third-generation competitor's arm over the back of his neck. He looks out at the crowd...]

GM: The crowd is on their feet! They're waiting to see the Brainbuster!

[...and suddenly abandons his pursuit as he spots someone hurdling the barricade, wearing midnight blue pants and a matching shirt with the sleeves cut out. He dives under the bottom rope where Martinez lunges on him, hooking a front facelock to hold him down. Martinez is shouting for security as the crowd buzzes with confusion...]

GM: We've got... we've got a fan in the ring and we'll be-

[Suddenly, two more figures emerge on either side of the ring, sliding under the ropes and coming in behind Martinez who is caught completely by surprise. They swarm the AWA's White Knight with ferocity, teeth clinched as they pummel him with fists, elbows, forearms, knees, and kicks, knocking him away from O'Connor who slumps lifelessly down to the mat.]

GM: What the hell is going on?! Where is security?!

[One of the attackers pulled back, revealing himself as a brown-skinned man with very short black hair with one line shaved on each side, wrapping all the way around the head. He sports a midnight-blue flak jacket and matching track pants. Black athletic tape is wrapped around his wrists, going all the way up his forearms. He waves for the other man to lift Martinez off the mat, the young lion still struggling and straining to fight off this assault.]

GM: Can we get some help out here for crying out loud?!

[Martinez gets shoved in the direction of the standing man who lifts him up for an atomic drop, does a quick 180...

...and then DROPS Martinez over a bent knee in a backbreaker!]

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

[The attacker backs off, throwing his arms apart as he mounts the middle rope, gesturing at himself as his ally - the first attacker - climbs off the mat.]

GM: Hey! I recognize that-

BW: It's Pedro Perez! We haven't seen him in... in...

GM: It's been a long time! What the heck is he doing in there?!

[Perez is sneering, glaring angrily down at Martinez as he starts directing traffic with his fellow assault team members. The largest of the group, near three hundred pounds, yanks Martinez off the mat, yanking him into a side waistlock as the other man does the same, waiting for Perez to give the signal. They lift in tandem, raising Martinez up for a belly to back suplex...

...and Perez leaps up, driving his knees into the back as they drop the young lion, jolting his spine!]

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

GM: This match is over, right?! I haven't heard the bell yet but-

BW: They're not done, Gordo. Pedro Perez and these two... who the heck ARE these guys?! I don't even recognize them!

GM: Neither do I but that big one... that big hoss, he's picking Martinez up again! Eric Preston and Hannibal Carver are laid out on the floor...

[Bobby O'Connor climbs up to his feet, rushing into the fray to a big cheer but Perez takes a dive, hooking him around the legs as one of his allies rushes at O'Connor, taking him down in a running STO!]

GM: OHHH!

[The big man nods at his allies, seeing a clear path to destruction as he lifts Martinez up into a powerbomb position, lifting him up...

...and DRIVING him down with a thunderous powerbomb!]

GM: Good grief!

[Martinez is down, laid out and motionless as the three men stand over him, looking out at the jeering crowd...

...when suddenly, we see two more men running down the aisle!]

GM: What in the...?!

BW: It's the Lights Out Express!

GM: I can see that but why?!

BW: They're the last team!

[Lenny Strong grabs Marty Meekly at ringside, dragging him over to the timekeeper and Phil Watson, ordering him to make it official.]

PW: Ladies and gentlemen... referee Marty Meekly has DISQUALIFIED the team of Bobby O'Connor and Hannibal Carver due to outside interference!

[The crowd ROARS their disapproval of that news as the three men in the ring depart the squared circle, making their exit through the crowd just as they arrived moments ago.]

GM: What?! How in the world is THAT a fair decision?!

BW: Hey, what choice did he have, Gordo?! Martinez got assaulted by outside interference! By the very nature of the rulebook, that means that the other team is disqualified!

GM: But Carver and O'Connor had nothing to do with this attack!

BW: Prove it.

[And with the announcement made, Aaron Anderson races around the ring, pulling Eric Preston off the floor...

...and DRIVING him skullfirst into the steel ringpost!]

GM: OHHHHH! You've gotta be kidding me!

[Lenny Strong slides in, tugging his elbowpad down to expose his bare elbow...]

GM: No, no, no!

[...and yanks Martinez off the mat a split second before spinning and DRIVING his bare elbow into the jaw, knocking the young lion flat!]

GM: Oh, come on! Not like this!

[Strong drops down on all fours, making a lateral press.]

BW: Count him, ref!

GM: No! Do not do this, Marty Meekly! Do not-

[Meekly reluctantly slides into the ring, slapping the canvas once... twice...]

GM: NO!

[...and three times!]

"DING! DING! DING!"

GM: Ahhh, what a miscarriage of justice!

[Strong leaps up, celebrating with a big embrace with his partner as the referee speaks to Phil Watson who makes it official.]

PW: Ladies and gentlemen... your winner of the Gauntlet Match, advancing to the final spot in the Stampede Cup tournament...

THE LIGHTS OUT EXXXXXPRESSSSSSSSSS!

[The boos are pouring down on Anderson and Strong as they celebrate their victory, leaving an unconscious Martinez and Preston on the mat and floor respectively.]

GM: Anderson and Strong have won this Gauntlet Match in very controversial fashion but nonetheless, they're heading to Tokyo, Japan as the final team in the Stampede Cup!

BW: Two years in a row, Gordo! What a win! What a streak!

GM: It took outside interference... bad referee decisions... steel chairs... you name it. This match was filled with all sorts of crazy stuff and it took every bit of it for Anderson and Strong to somehow... someway... luck their way into another trip to the Stampede Cup.

BW: What a moment! 2014 is the Year of the Shane Gang!

GM: We'll see about that. Fans, we're out of time... we've gotta go! We'll see you again in two weeks' time from the Land of the Rising Sun! So long everybody!

[With Anderson and Strong still celebrating in a ring filled with laid out bodies, we slowly fade to black.]