



[We start on a black screen as most shows do. We fade up into a royal blue screen with a glittering silver Fox Sports logo in the center of it. A fanfare plays in the background as a voiceover begins.]

"Home to the World Series. The GFC. The Daytona 500. The 2015 Women's World Cup. The US Open Championship."

[A quick clip from each sport flashes by during the voiceover.]

"The world's biggest events are on Fox Sports."

[The logo and fanfare fade...

...as a giant robot appears, holding up a different version of the Fox Sports logo with the audio bug...]

"WE ARE... FOX SPORTS!"

[The shot fades from the graphic to another black screen with the AWA logo splashed across a starry field. A barrage of lasers flash in from all sides of the screen, etching along the borders of the letters, illuminating the plain white text into glowing and glittering gold. A deep voiceover begins. The words "American Wrestling Alliance" come up one by one at the bottom of the screen.]

"The recognized symbol of excellence in professional wrestling."

[The logo fades as the sounds of "Monuments" by the Smashing Pumpkins begins to play. The synth and drumline leads the way as the screen fills with Bobby O'Connor sailing through the air, cracking Hamilton Graham with the Fear The Reaper followed by The Gladiator gorilla pressing a helpless foe into the sky.]

#I feel alright,
I feel all right tonight. #

[Supernova comes tearing across the ring from corner-to-corner, flinging himself into the air and crushing someone with a Heat Wave splash turns into Aaron Anderson throwing Cody Mertz up into the air for the pop-up European uppercut which Mertz counters into a title-winning huracanrana on the way down.]

#And everywhere I go it's shining bright#

[Dave Bryant turns a helpless Larry Doyle over into an Iron Crab, causing him to squeal and flail about in pain becomes Johnny Detson dropping someone with the Wilde Driver.]

#Alright,
Alright, all right#

[Demetrius Lake comes sailing off the top rope onto a prone opponent with the Big Cat Pounce switches to Juan Vasquez dropping a victim with the dreaded Right Cross becomes Shadoo Rage smashing his knee into Tony Sunn's skull.]

#Alright,
Alright, all right#

[Hannibal Carver spewing beer into the camera lens turns into Jack Lynch wrapping his Iron Claw around a helpless opponent's skull which becomes the Dogs Of War sending Alex Martinez to the hospital with Pedro Perez' double stomp to the skull off the middle rope.]

#Alright,
Alright, all right#

[Travis Lynch throws a discus punch that bounces off the skull of The Lost Boy becomes Brad Jacobs breaking Dave Bryant in half with a spear becomes Calisto Dufresne spiking a skull into the canvas with the Wham Bam Thank You Ma'am turns into Sultan Azam Sharif hooking in the Camel Clutch.]

#Alright,
Alright, all right#

[The music increases in tempo as we got shot after shot - Brian James betraying TORA... Cain Jackson throwing the big boot... Hercules Hammonds delivering a backbreaker... Skywalker Jones sailing from coast to coast with a dropkick... KING Oni throwing Kevin Slater around like a ragdoll... Derrick Williams delivering the spinebuster... Dichotomy delivering the flying bulldog off the top... Callum Mahoney breaking his trophy over Sharif's head...]

#Alright,
Alright, all right#

[And as we spin off into a rockin' guitar solo, we show Ryan Martinez and Supreme Wright trading brutal head-rocking slaps for several moments...

...and then burst into white, showing a bloodied Ryan Martinez holding the World Title belt over his head! The shot holds for a moment before falling to the bottom, leaving behind a ground-level shot of fans pouring into the building underneath the marquee with the name of the building and the words "SATURDAY NIGHT WRESTLING" in block black text as "Monuments" continues to play. The trademark voice of Gordon Myers interjects.]

GM: Wrestling fans around the world, we are LIVE right here on The X! We are LIVE right here in San Francisco, California in the legendary Cow Palace! And we are LIVE for what promises to be another exciting night of American Wrestling Alliance action as we bring you SATURDAY NIGHT WRESTLING!

[Another cut brings us inside the building. It's your standard arena setup with rows upon rows of permanent seating mixed with the steel folding chairs that immediately surround the red, white, and blue roped ring. The black mats are down covering the floor and the black metal barricade is up to keep the fans at bay. Two tables can be seen at ringside from this elevated view.

A quick cut takes to a floor level shot of the entranceway which is made up of a small entrance opening covered by black curtains and surrounded by LED lighting that is currently flashing a red and white pattern. There are lights to the left and right of the doorway along with lighting above it. Above the lighting is a decent-sized video screen that has the SNW On The X logo spiraling around it. As the camera pulls back a bit, we see an illuminated ten foot tall version of the AWA logo off to one side. On the other side is a small elevated platform that will serve as an interview "stage." The entranceway leads directly out to a black carpeted ten foot wide aisleway that will take the combatants to the ring.

Another cut gets us down to ringside where we find two members of our announce team. The Dean of Professional Wrestling announcing, Gordon Myers, is smiling. He sports a black sportscoat and matching slacks with a white dress shirt and a red tie - very professional and very by-the-book for the senior play-by-play man in the industry. By his side, as always, is the colorful Bucky Wilde. Wilde is about as different from his colleague as you can get, sporting a hot pink sportscoat over a jet black shirt. He's opted for a bleached white bowtie on this night as he turns his back to the camera, jerking a thumb at "BIG BUCKS" flashing in twinkly lights across the back of his coat.]

GM: Good evening, fans, and welcome to another star-studded edition of AWA Saturday Night Wrestling right here on The X featuring all the stars of the AWA galaxy. I'm Gordon Myers and by my side for the next two hours, as always, is the one and only Bucky Wilde.

BW: Thanks, Gordo... and it's home sweet home here in the good ol' U-S of A after choking down rice and noodles for two weeks. Sheesh. Boy, what I wouldn't for a hamburger right about now.

[Gordon chuckles.]

GM: The legendary Cow Palace has seen its share of professional wrestling greatness over the years - from the 1950s when Hiroshi Goto and Kenji Kitao were the most hated men in the Golden State to the 60s and 70s when the Golden Grapplers won Tag Team Of The Year eight years running right up to recent years when the Lynches and the Samoans tore the house down... but tonight, we've got another doozy on our hands capped off by the Number One Contender match. Two former National Champions colliding with the winner becoming the next challenger for that historic title. But will it be Calisto Dufresne or Juan Vasquez coming out on top, Bucky?

BW: There's quite the history between those two and this is just another page in their history books. Who wins? My money's always gonna be on the Ladykiller but Vasquez has proved me wrong before.

GM: We've also got The Gladiator in action... Shadoe Rage defending the World Television Title against Cesar Hernandez... footage from Japan... words from the World Champion, Ryan Martinez, and so much more! But to kick things off, let's go down to the ring to-

[Abruptly, "Kashmir" by Led Zeppelin begins to play over the Cow Palace's PA system to an almost immediate negative reaction from the crowd.]

GM: An unexpected interruption here as that music can mean the arrival of only one man...

[And out from the back storms Johnny Detson.]

GM: Folks, here comes Johnny Detson and he does not look happy.

BW: Would you be, Gordo?! He should be World Champion right now!

GM: "Should" is quite the exaggeration there. He put up a tremendous effort at Rising Sun Showdown without a shadow of a doubt but in the end, our World Champion remained our World Champion as Ryan Martinez scored the victory in the middle of the Tokyo Dome.

BW: Oh sure, Gordo... rub it in.

[Detson is followed close behind by Eric Somers, who has the metal briefcase that once held the Steal The Spotlight contract still in hand. After a few moments, Calisto Dufresne makes his way out as well.]

GM: It looks like Johnny Detson is not coming out here alone either. He's got Calisto Dufresne with him - his personal advisor on his quest to become the World Champion. Of course, Dufresne has business of his own to attend to later tonight when he takes on Juan Vasquez in that Number One Contender match that we mentioned.

BW: And don't forget the big man! Eric Somers, the bodyguard, is coming to the ring too!

GM: He is but why is he still carrying that briefcase, Bucky? The Steal The Spotlight contract was cashed in to no avail. He's got no need for it any longer.

BW: Johnny Detson will decide when he's got no need for it.

[Detson has a considerable pace as he marches to the ring, taking no time at all to reach the ringside area. Grabbing a mic, he rolls into the ring followed by Somers and Dufresne. Looking at the crowd with disgust, he raises the microphone up to speak.]

JD: Shut up!

[The crowd, in fact, does not shut up but only gets louder.]

JD: Make no mistake about this as I say it. What happened at Rising Sun Showdown was a fluke... an anomaly... a miscarriage of the norm. And when... WHEN... I get Martinez back in this ring you can all expect a very different result.

[Detson cracks a smirk as he nods his head in agreement with himself even though the crowd disagrees.]

JD: Don't think I don't know what's going on here, it's a conspiracy! Ryan Martinez barely squeaks by against me, and now he's going to try and move on to a much, much... MUCH easier opponent. An opponent I have already beaten soundly...

[Detson turns towards the camera and looks straight at it holding up two fingers.]

JD: TWICE!

[Detson smiles as he turns back towards the crowd.]

JD: Well, Ryan Martinez... White Knight... I got news for you. Johnny Detson is the Number One Contender. Johnny Detson remains the Number One Contender, and Johnny Detson isn't going anywhere until you give him his well-deserved rematch for the AWA World Heavyweight Title. You can count on that, champ.

[Detson laughs as the crowd continues to give him the business.]

JD: But if I've done anything wrong these past several months, it hasn't been inside the ring!

[Detson shakes his head as he shoots a glance towards Dufresne.]

JD: Oh no, it's been putting my faith in the wrong people. Isn't that right, Calisto?

[Dufresne arches his eyebrow as Detson wheels around and faces him.]

JD: People who were supposed to have my back, but were nowhere to be found. People I trusted and put my faith in to get the job done only for them to fail me time and time again!

[Dufresne now turns and faces Detson as Detson advances right up to his face.]

GM: We've got a situation here.

BW: Uh oh. This partnership may be about to implode!

[Detson reaches into his jacket pocket and emerges with the black beauty which he slides on his hand unbeknownst to Dufresne who is nose to nose with Detson with neither man refusing to budge.]

JD: If there's one thing I cannot stand, it's when someone has failed so bad that they've worn out their welcome.

[Seeing his employer's actions, Eric Somers steps right up behind Johnny Detson, imposing his massive frame towards the former National Champion as well.]

BW: Well, I guess we know where Somers' loyalty lies.

GM: I guess we do.

[Dufresne, spotting the numbers disadvantage, shockingly holds his ground, refusing to retreat as the crowd begins to buzz with anticipation.]

GM: The crowd senses it too! This is about to get ug-

[Detson suddenly draws back his glove-covered fist causing Dufresne to reflexively throw up his arms to block...

...but the Ladykiller is not his target as Detson wheels around, driving his right hand into the jaw of Eric Somers, crumbling the big man down to the mat!]

GM: What the -? Detson just laid out Eric Somers!

BW: Of course! He said he couldn't tolerate failure! Where the heck was Somers when he was needed at Rising Sun Showdown?! He was flat on his back on the floor... just like he is now!

[Detson stares down at his former bodyguard, fist still clenched as Dufresne lowers his arms, looking surprised at what his partner-in-crime just did.]

BW: Oh, and I might add... it only took one punch!

GM: One punch with a loaded glove!

BW: Slander! You've got no proof of that!

[Detson angrily begins to stomp the downed Somers as Dufresne continues to look on in disbelief. After a few moments, the crowd booing all the while, Detson drags a limp Somers up off the mat, hooking both arms...]

GM: Oh no.

[The Number One Contender looks out at the crowd, shouting at them angrily before leaping up...]

...and DRIVING Somers facefirst into the canvas!]

BW: WILDE DRIVER!

GM: He PLANTS him facefirst on the mat! Good grief!

[With Somers down and out, Detson walks a few feet away, retrieving the metal briefcase. Using his boot, he rolls the unconscious Somers under the bottom rope, dumping him out to the floor. He holds the briefcase up so all can see it...]

...and then drops it over the ropes, unceremoniously dumping it on Somers' prone form.]

GM: Detson apparently has disposed of Eric Somers AND that briefcase.

[Mocking the crowd, Detson dusts his hands off, sliding the glove known as Black Beauty back into his pocket before picking the mic back up.]

JD: There are two things I don't need anymore. That briefcase... and Eric Somers.

[Turning back towards Dufresne, who is ready to defend himself if need be, Detson cracks a smile...]

JD: Now let's go get you that National Title shot!

[Detson extends his hand to Dufresne who slowly accepts it to even louder jeers from the crowd as "Kashmir" kicks back in and the rulebreaking duo makes their exit from the ring.]

GM: Fans, we're just getting started here on Saturday Night Wrestling and we just saw a... change in personnel so to speak in the camp of Johnny Detson who has shown Eric Somers the door in shocking fashion here in the Cow Palace in San Francisco.

BW: Somers failed Detson in Tokyo and the true and rightful champ does NOT tolerate failure, daddy.

GM: I'm not sure where Detson gets off blaming anyone for that loss but himself! He lost fair and square clean as a whistle to the World Champion, Ryan Martinez, and we all saw that, Bucky!

BW: That ain't the way I saw it and it's damn sure not the way Johnny Detson saw it, daddy!

GM: I think you both could use a trip to the eye doctor.

[We fade from the ring to a powder pink screen that "glimmers" away leaving a well-lit room where the controversial Casanova is sitting on a chair, his leather-covered legs wrapped around the back of it. He leans over it, his face covered in purple mascara, pink blush, and red lipstick. His hair is freshly bleached and curled into something resembling a perm.]

C: Bring it in, Mickey.

[A giggling Mickey Cherry comes into view, pushing a television monitor on a velvet-covered cart. He slides it towards Casanova, the image on the screen clearly showing the start of the recent clash between "Maniac" Morgan Dane and Hannibal Carver. A "tsk, tsk" escapes the corner of Casanova's mouth.]

C: No, no, no, Mickey... they don't get to see this.

[Cherry shrugs at the camera, turning the monitor towards Casanova.]

C: The footage I'm about to see is marked... for my eyes only, pretty ones.

[Casanova lifts a pink remote control, thumbing it on and watching. His lips are slightly parted, his face flushed as he views the action - apparently cut into highlights from the audio we're hearing.]

C: Ooh. So naughty, Mister Carver. After all that time hiding who you really are, you allowed yourself to dig deep... so deep... deeper than you have ever been in you before... and find your true self.

Just like me.

[Casanova tosses his platinum blonde locks.]

C: You let loose the animal. Depraved. Savage. Raw.

So did I.

[He bats his slathered eyelashes at the camera before watching the screen some more. He lets loose a gasp at what he sees, his tongue delicately lolling out to run over his parted lips obscenely.]

C: Mmmm. Your animal is quite something to behold, Mister Carver.

But I just have to wonder...

[He flutters his eyelashes again.]

C: What will happen when your animal...

[He smiles, pearly whites on display.]

C: ...meets mine.

[He exhales, long and deep as he rises from his seat.]

C: Oh, how I lonnnng for that moment.

[He leans over, planting a kiss on the lens of the camera, leaving a lipstick smudge.]

C: Toodles.

[And he walks out of view, leaving the room with the flashes of light from the TV as we slowly fade to pink...

...and then back up to ringside where Gordon Myers is shaking his head in silence.]

BW: What's the matter, Gordo? Cat got your tongue?

GM: That man continues to astonish me for sure. Again, Casanova with some words directed at Hannibal Carver. However, perhaps fortunately for Mr. Casanova, Hannibal Carver is not here tonight. Mr. Carver wanted to be here tonight we're told but due to the degree of punishment taken in that brutal Death Match with Morgan Dane - only available for U.S. fans on internet Pay Per View replay - he was not medically cleared to compete and was ordered to stay away from the Cow Palace here tonight.

BW: You mean the office didn't want us to see how busted up he is after that war with Dane?

GM: Frankly, Bucky... I can't blame them for that. I was watching that match from my hotel room in Hawaii when it went down and I was absolutely stunned at the level of carnage I was witnessing. Mr. Carver is lucky to not be seriously injured as I'm told he is expected to be medically cleared to compete by the end of this month. A lucky break if you ask me.

BW: You know what would have been a lucky break? If Dane had cracked that psychopath's skull! Hahahah!

GM: You're a real riot. Hannibal Carver will not be here tonight but I'm told we will hear from the Boston Brawler in two weeks' time when we come to you LIVE from the Veterans' Memorial Coliseum in Portland, Oregon for our next edition of Saturday Night Wrestling right here on The X - a night that we're told should be a hot one as we'll see the first round of the Stampede Cup tournament come to an end with two big matches. Air Strike will take on Wes Taylor and Tony Donovan and former World Tag Team Champions,

the Lights Out Express, will take on the Rotgut Rustlers! After that, we'll be down to eight teams... and the two men who are about to hit the ring are hoping to be one of them! Take it away, Phil Watson!

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

PW: Tonight's opening contest is a tag team match set for one fall with a ten minute time limit! Introducing first... already in the ring at this time... at a total combined weight of 432 pounds, the team of Jackie Potts and Amos Leary!

[The duo raise their arms to little reaction.]

PW: And their opponents...

[With no music and no fanfare, Wes Taylor and Tony Donovan hit the ring in a sprint, sliding under the bottom rope.]

GM: We've got an ambush!

[Wes Taylor comes up quickly, charging with a clothesline that takes Potts over the top rope and down to the floor. The bell sounds to officially start the match as Donovan throws a series of stiff forearms to the ear, knocking Amos Leary back into the corner where he switches to knees to the midsection.]

BW: Taylor and Donovan seem pretty steamed after being on the losing end of that six man tag back at Rising Sun Showdown, Gordo.

GM: Can you blame them? They lost their opportunity to win Copa de Trios when they failed to beat the TexMo Connection and Kenta Kitukawa.

[Donovan grabs Leary by the arm, fearlessly whipping him into Leary's own corner where he storms across, crushing him under his 6'6", 260 pound frame!]

GM: Running avalanche in the corner...

[The third generation grappler hooks a side headlock, charging out of the corner, leaping into the air and driving Leary facefirst into the mat!]

GM: Ohh! And a running bulldog to go along with it, driving his face into the canvas!

[Rolling up to a knee, Donovan stomps across the ring to tag his partner. Wes Taylor slips through the ropes, joining his partner as Donovan pulls Leary up, backing him to the ropes...]

GM: Taylor and Donovan shoot him across in tandem...

[They score with a double back elbow up under the chin, knocking him down to the mat...]

...where they stomp the hell out of him until the referee steps in, forcing Donovan to exit the ring.]

GM: Amos Leary's crawling away from Wes Taylor, trying to get away from the young upstart.

BW: Upstart, huh?

GM: I'm trying to be polite. That young apple has certainly fallen far from the tree.

BW: Has he? I seem to remember a certain Outlaw running his mouth ragged back in the mid-90s in Los Angeles... calling out a Hall of Famer... getting his tail kicked by a bunch of veterans who couldn't stand hearing him yap any longer. To me, Wes Taylor is JUST like his old man was before he sold out and went corporate.

GM: Not sure I'd want to be you when the boss hears you called him a sell out.

BW: The truth hurts, I suppose.

[Wes Taylor approaches Leary, grabbing the top rope, stomping Leary a few times before he drags him off, throwing him down over the middle rope. Taylor plants his shin firmly on the back of Leary's neck, choking him violently over the rope.]

GM: Taylor's choking the life out of him! The referee right here, counting him...

[As the count hits four, Taylor lets go, using the top rope to slingshot over the top, landing on his feet on the floor...

...and SLAMS an uppercut up into the chin, sending him falling back down to the canvas. Taylor turns towards the announce table.]

"You see that, Myers?! You watching, oldtimer?! You're looking at the best tag team in the world in there! Forget Air Strike! Forget the LOE! Forget Haynes and Morton! It's us, baby! It's all about us!"

GM: Okay... well, you heard that, I'm sure.

BW: They're not lacking in confidence, Gordo.

GM: Certainly not.

[Taylor slides back between the ropes into the ring, stalking after Leary who is crawling away from the ropes... and stomps him hard in the back of the head. He uses the toe of his boot, flipping Leary onto his back before leaping up into the air with another stomp, this one to the sternum. He reaches out, tagging Donovan back in.]

GM: Donovan back in off the tag, dragging Leary up...

[The duo lifts Leary up off the mat, leaning over to lift him up together...

...and DROP Leary throatfirst across the top rope!]

GM: Ohh!

[Leary falls to the mat, grabbing at his windpipe, rolling back and forth as Wes Taylor steps out of the ring, leaving Donovan in there with him.]

GM: Another brutal double team by Taylor and Donovan!

[Donovan drags Leary off the mat by the arm, throwing a few kicks into the midsection before whipping him across, catching him and lifting him by the upper thighs on the rebound, twisting around...

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

GM: SPINEBUSTER!

[Donovan throws his arms apart in a "it's over!" gesture as he settles into a lateral press.]

GM: Donovan covers for one! He gets two! He gets-

[The son of the Laredo Legend pulls Leary up by the hair, smirking and shaking his head.]

GM: Donovan pulls him up. Unbelievable.

BW: They're sending a message to Air Strike, Gordo. If they're going to face those two in two weeks, they're going to put Aarons and Mertz on notice.

[Donovan climbs to his feet, hooking a rear waistlock...]

GM: Waistlock!

[...and takes Leary up and over, dumping him down on the back of his head and neck with a German Suplex!]

GM: Waistlock suplex connects!

[Donovan climbs up, glaring down at Leary as he reaches out to slap the hand of Wes Taylor.]

GM: The tag is made... in comes Taylor...

[The third generation grappler pulls Leary off the mat, lifting him up over his shoulder as Taylor steps forward, securing the front facelock...

...and they drop down, SPIKING Leary's head into the canvas!]

GM: ELEVATED DDT! That's it!

[Taylor flips him over, covering him.]

GM: Taylor gets one! He gets two! He gets three!

"DING! DING! DING!"

[Taylor pushes up off the mat as Donovan runs past him and puts one final boot down between the eyes of Jackie Potts, putting him down to the floor.]

BW: And one more for good measure!

GM: Wes Taylor and Tony Donovan pick up a win here tonight and perhaps some much-needed momentum as they prepare to take on Cody Mertz and Michael Aarons, Air Strike, in two weeks' time.

BW: Look who's coming our way, Gordo.

GM: Oh brother.

[Inside the ring, Tony Donovan is pointing at Gordon and Bucky down at ringside, speaking to Wes Taylor who nods, starting towards the announce team.]

GM: Taylor and Donovan making their way down here...

[Gordon rises from his seat, mic in hand as Taylor and Donovan drop down to the floor. Donovan plants a hand on the shoulder, keeping Gordon in place as Taylor grabs the mic.]

WT: Gordon Myers, tell me one thing and tell it true, oldtimer... have you EVER seen a better tag team than Wes Taylor and Tony Donovan?

[Myers looks at Taylor, ready to respond... and then looks at Donovan whose hand is firmly on his shoulder, menacing the play-by-play man.]

GM: I... uh...

WT: It's okay, Gordon. I understand. To be the man that you are... to be the announcer - the LEGEND - that you are... you have to maintain a degree of impartiality. So you can't stand here and tell the world what is plainly obvious to anyone with two eyes... that Wes Taylor and Tony Donovan are - bar none - the best tag team in the history of professional wrestling.

It's not the Epitome of Cool. It's not the Fraternity Boys. It's not the Down Boys, the Outlaws, Zokugun Sangai, it's not Kentucky's Pride, Rough N' Ready, the Blonde Bombers, or SkyHerc.

[Taylor smirks.]

WT: It's damn sure not the Lights Out Express or Violence Unlimited or the War Pigs.

[Donovan leans in.]

TD: Hey Wes... maybe it's the TexMo Connection.

[Taylor looks at Donovan, holding silent for a moment...

...and then both guys burst into laughter. Taylor gasps, "trying to catch his breath" as he pats Donovan on the back.]

WT: Oh... oh brother... and they say he doesn't have a sense of humor. It's not them and you know who else it's not, Gordon Myers?

[Myers sighs.]

GM: Air Strike?

[Gordon turns, offering the mic to Tony Donovan who glares at him... and glares... and glares... before Gordon finally turns back to a smirking Wes Taylor who is more than happy to talk.]

WT: That's right. This match is three months in the making, Gordon... no, no... that's not right.

It's three months in the WAITING. For THREE months, we've stood by and waited for Aarons and Mertz to get their crap together to face us in the ring. We've waited as they ran and hid, ducked and dodged, begged and pleaded, and dove underneath any rock they could find to make sure they weren't in the sights of the hottest young guns this joint's ever seen.

Wes Taylor. Tony Donovan.

[Taylor brushes off his shoulder.]

WT: In two weeks, the wait is over... and a new day here in this company begins.

[Gordon turns the mic towards Tony Donovan again who just stares at the veteran announcer before slowly walking away. Gordon shrugs, looking into the camera.]

GM: Alright, fans... the cat apparently has the tongue of Tony Donovan but no such luck when it comes to Wes Taylor who says those two are ready to take on Air Strike two weeks from tonight in the final first round Stampede Cup matchup! We're going to take a quick break but don't you dare go away!

[Fade to black.]

A black and white shot comes up on the screen, showing the Main Event of the original SuperClash, a snap shot of "Hotshot" Stevie Scott and Juan Vasquez colliding. A voiceover begins.]

"It began with a clash of two of the AWA's greatest of all time."

[The shot of Vasquez and Scott turns into another shot of them battling at SuperClash II before we jump ahead to SuperClash III where we see William Craven, now unmasked from his disguise as The Minion, assaulting Alex Martinez.]

"We've seen surprises clashes..."

[And then to SuperClash IV where Joe Petrow and "Big" Jim Watkins are tearing each other apart.]

"Clashes of legends..."

[On to SuperClash V with some highlights from the tag team battle between the Blonde Bombers and SkyHerc.]

"Clashes of athleticism..."

[SuperClash VI's spotlighted footage is of Supreme Wright and Ryan Martinez lighting it up in the middle of Madison Square Garden, the Mecca of sports and entertainment.]

"Championship clashes..."

[The black and white footage goes to color, speeding up drastically to show match after match after match after match, getting faster and faster until slamming to a halt, showing an aerial shot of Minute Maid Field, the site of SuperClash VII in Houston, Texas.]

"What kind of clash will we see this year?"

[The shot slowly fades to a graphic advertising the big event...

...and then back up to live action inside the Cow Palace where the audience is in the midst of a (mostly) standing ovation. There are cheers ringing out from all over the building.

The target of this overwhelming praise?

Melissa Cannon who looks shocked and embarrassed all at once. She stands in a pair of black jeans and a white Combat Corner tanktop. Cannon smiles at the crowd's reaction, mouthing "thank you" to them.]

GM: Fans, what a moment this is. During the break, Melissa Cannon came out here to address the fans and... wow, what a reaction she has received from these fans here in San Francisco on the heels of an incredible

showdown in Japan with the woman who many believe is the best women's wrestler in the world today, Miyuki Ozaki.

BW: They're on their feet in San Francisco, daddy!

[Cannon slowly raises the mic.]

MC: Thank you. All of you.

[More cheers. Melissa is beaming as she lowers the mic, accepting the cheers with a nod before continuing.]

MC: Two weeks ago was the biggest night of my life. You know, being in the business as long as I have, I've heard a lot of people say that before. A lot of times they said it into a mic that I was holding for them. And I often wondered how many of them actually meant it or if it was just a good way to put a few extra butts in the seats.

[She looks down at the mat, nodding her head.]

MC: You can believe me when I tell you that I mean it with every bit of myself.

[Big cheer!]

MC: Facing the greatest women's wrestler in the world - and you will get no argument from me, she IS the greatest women's wrestler in the world... facing her was a dream come true. And quite frankly, it was a dream that I never thought I'd get to fulfill.

There's a list as long as my leg of people that deserve to be thanked for giving me that chance. From the early days training with Todd and Lori and Juvenil... to just a few weeks ago with the office putting their faith in me to deliver on one of the biggest nights of the year.

But that list isn't long enough. And it's nowhere near complete. Because while I was sitting at home as a little girl, dreaming of being a pro wrestler, there were women inside this squared circle actually doing it. Women like Jessica Starbird and Medusa Rage. When I was holding a mic and had given up on my dreams, there were women still fighting for theirs with every breath in their bodies. Women like Andrea Chandler, Stephanie Harper, and Tara Smith.

[Cannon nods at the cheering crowd.]

MC: And yes, even Miyuki Ozaki.

[Another big cheer!]

MC: But for every Miyuki Ozaki, there was a Diana Dawson who trained down in Phoenix and wrestled in every armory and Community Center in the state, looking for her break. There was a Janet Ortega who wrestled under a

mask, pretending to be a man so that she could actually compete in there even though she was outsized in every match she went into. There were girls like Susan Powers... like Lianne Walker... like Trinette Jackson... like Bobbie Alexander...

All of them great. All of them hard workers. All of them deserving to live their dreams just like I got to two weeks ago.

[She shakes her head.]

MC: But they haven't gotten their chance and in some cases, will NEVER get their chance because people like me... people who had a job in the big time... people who had some influence in the office didn't use that influence to make it happen for them.

I could've fought. I could've begged. I could've made demands just like I saw Lori Dane do so many times. But I didn't... because if she couldn't do it, what chance did I have?

I stand before you humbled by your applause for what I did two weeks ago... but ashamed at what I've done for the past twelve years when I let those girls down.

They deserved their chance.

[Cannon paces a bit around the ring now.]

MC: Just like there's a girl sitting in a living room in some Southern California suburb right now thinking that what I'm saying makes a lot of sense. Like a girl in Toronto wondering if she missed her shot when Mike Beeby - the only promoter who gave a damn about us - walked away. Like a girl in Mexico... in Seattle... in South Laredo... in Baltimore... in Chicago... in Tokyo... in London...

They all want their shot...

[She leans over the ropes, pointing to a young girl and her mother sitting ringside.]

MC: They want their shot.

[She walks to the other side of the ring, pointing to a group of teenage girls.]

MC: They want their shot!

[She walks to a third side, pointing to more women.]

MC: They want THEIR shot!

[She stops in the center of the ring, looking back up the aisle towards the locker room.]

MC: And I want to give it to them. So, for those in the back with the authority to make it happen, listen to me... listen closely...

This time, I don't intend to go quietly into the night. This time, I'm taking a stand.

[Melissa takes a deep breath, knowing she may be signing her own pink slip with every word... but speaks a handful more anyways.]

MC: This time, I'm DEMANDING that the American Wrestling Alliance start up a Women's Division!

[There's a pretty big cheer from the crowd - still not the full support of the entire crowd - but big enough to bring a smile to Melissa's face. She nods at the reaction before kneeling down. She lowers the mic to the canvas, setting it down softly, and then runs her hand across the mat, caressing it before slowly climbing to her feet and exiting the ring.]

GM: Wow! A powerful statement on the part of Melissa Cannon who says that the women of the wrestling world deserve the chance to make their dreams come true too!

BW: That's a hard one to argue against, Gordo.

GM: It absolutely is. Melissa Cannon and Miyuki Ozaki tore the house down inside the Tokyo Dome at Rising Sun Showdown 2 and you would be hard-pressed, I believe, to find a fan who did not believe they - and the hard-working women just like them all over the world - deserve the opportunity to live their dreams. Speaking of dreams, fans, as many of you know, the AWA has been honored over the past several years to be a partner of the Give A Dream Foundation, an organization dedicated to making the dreams of children with life-threatening illnesses come true. Over the weekend, a very special event took place with our friends at Give A Dream and we thought we'd show you some footage from that event. Let's take a look...

[We fade to a man in a dark suit. The graphic below him names him as "Simon Wexler, President of the Give a Dream Foundation.]

SW: In the twenty years that I have been involved in the Give A Dream Foundation, I've seen hundreds of celebrities fulfill the dreams of sick and dying children. These celebrities donate their time and effort to this wonderful cause, and they do it for absolutely no compensation except that joy that comes from seeing the smile on a sick child's face.

But in those twenty years, one man has stood out. In the span of just three years, he has granted more dreams than any other celebrity in the history of the Foundation. And this weekend, that man granted his two hundredth dream.

And that is why I am very happy to name Ryan Martinez as the recipient of our first ever Grand Dreamer award.

[As Mariah Carey's "Hero" plays, the screen dissolves into a montage of images.]

There's a hero
If you look inside your heart

[We see images of Ryan Martinez crouching down to hug young children, many of them with shaved heads, or showing signs of illness. Martinez is clearly affected by the experiences, his face filled with emotion.]

You don't have to be afraid
Of what you are
There's an answer
If you reach into your soul
And the sorrow that you know
Will melt away

[There's a quick succession of images. Martinez "losing" an arm wrestling contest to a girl in a wheelchair. Martinez and Bobby O'Connor backstage with a young boy, walking him around and showing him the sights. Martinez with another young boy on his shoulders as he walks down to ringside.]

And then a hero comes along
With the strength to carry on
And you cast your fears aside
And you know you can survive

[Martinez is in a makeshift ring, getting chopped by a pair of young children, as their parents look on, cheering on their children and crying as they are overcome by emotion. We see Martinez at the bedside of a young girl, a breathing tube in her nose, as Ryan presents her with a replica AWA title belt.]

So when you feel like hope is gone
Look inside you and be strong
And you'll finally see the truth
That a hero lies in you

[We see another boy laid up in a hospital bed, a Ryan Martinez "White Knight" t-shirt on, as he suddenly breaks into delighted screams when his hero steps into the hospital room. This dissolves to Martinez stepping out into an arena and moving towards the front row, where he high fives the same boy as his parents watch on.]

It's a long road
When you face the world alone
No one reaches out a hand
For you to hold
You can find love
If you search within yourself
And the emptiness you felt

Will disappear

[Martinez is seen at Disneyland with a group of children he's granted dreams to, and there's a quick succession of Martinez on rides with them, or at concession stands, ending with Martinez, wearing a Mickey cap, leading a procession of Mickey cap wearing children down Main Street.]

And then a hero comes along
With the strength to carry on
And you cast your fears aside
And you know you can survive
So when you feel like hope is gone
Look inside you and be strong
And you'll finally see the truth
That a hero lies in you

[Ryan Martinez gets one high five after another from sick kids in various places and at different events. As it ends, we see quick cuts of Martinez wiping tears from his eyes at the same venues.]

Lord knows
Dreams are hard to follow
But don't let anyone
Tear them away
Hold on
There will be tomorrow
In time
You'll find the way

[Another fast montage, this time of children cheering Martinez on at arenas. We see Martinez pinning various AWA wrestlers, watch as he hits his patented Brainbuster on them to the roaring approval of his young fans.]

And then a hero comes along
With the strength to carry on
And you cast your fears aside
And you know you can survive
So when you feel like hope is gone
Look inside you and be strong
And you'll finally see the truth
That a hero lies in you
That a hero lies in you
That a hero lies in you

[Finally, we cut to a ceremony where a suit wearing Martinez is given a plaque commemorating his two hundredth dream by Wexler. Surrounding him are many of the same children that have been previously seen. Once more, we cut to Simon Wexler.]

SW: On behalf of the Grant A Dream Foundation and all of the boys and girls whose lives you enriched and whose families' burdens you've helped ease, we thank you Ryan Martinez, from the bottom of our hearts.

[Back to the arena, as Gordon Myers, his bottom lip trembling, wipes at his eye.]

GM: When you think about all of the responsibilities that young man carries, and to think of how much he's given of himself. Well, even you can't say something bad about that, Bucky.

BW: You know what, Gordo? I think you're right. I'll tip my hat to you for this one, kid. Good job.

[Gordon smiles.]

GM: Fans, let's go to the ring...

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

PW: The following handicap contest is set for one fall, with a special five-minute time limit.

[The Cow Palace fans are already hip to what is about to happen and are booing and chanting preemptively.]

"U-S-A!"

"U-S-A!"

"U-S-A!"

BW: Chant all you want, kiddos; I'd like to see one of you people try to stop The Tsar!

PW: Introducing first, from Anderson, South Carolina, weighing in at a combined weight of 367 pounds... Andy... Will... The Blue Brothers!

[The Blues exchange a high ten to the notice of no one.]

GM: It's been a few weeks since we've seen Mr. Zharkov who didn't appear at Rising Sun Showdown yet had quite the showing at All-Star Showdown in Hawaii. And fans, he is still undefeated in the ring though at some point he will have to face down some higher level competition.

[The sound of an artillery strike echoes throughout the building, kicking off the "Soviet March." Enter through the curtains Maxim Zharkov-- the towering specimen from Siberia. A dark teal robe, trimmed in red and gold, conceals his frame. His thickly eyebrowed and mustached face is mostly stoic, occasionally belying a disdain for the American spectators. Behind him, adviser Jackson Hunter, a middle-aged man with a perpetual scowl on his face, his ubiquitous clipboard under one arm, a briefcase with a large red hammer-and-sickle decal in the other.]

PW: And their opponent... From Magadan, Russia... weighing 151 kilograms... MAXIM... THE TSAR... ZHARKOV!

BW: Gordo, he's almost as big as the two schlubbs in the ring put together! I assume, anyway. I don't really know metric, and if someone doesn't stop Zharkov, we all might have to learn it.

[Zharkov, with one swift motion, leaps onto the ring apron, throws his arms upward, casting his cloak off. He quickly steps through the ropes and begins a quick series of last-minute stretches on the corner. Hunter hovers over him, cajoling him with instructions -- Zharkov dispassionately ignores him.]

GM: Zharkov asked specifically for a handicap match, both opponents in the ring at the same time; if the Blue Brothers work in tandem, he may end up forking over seven-and-a-half thousand in cash to Andy and Will.

“DING! DING! DING!”

[The brothers charge to Zharkov, who thrusts both palms in front of him...]

MZ: PUSH-KAAAA!

[...Which they both run face-first into.]

BW: ...or not.

GM: And it appears that we're going to be joined by- erk!

[Gordon Myers finds his headset yanked off his head by Jackson Hunter, who stands with his back turned between him and Bucky.]

JH: Whatever happened to predictability? The milkman? The paper boy? Evening TV?

BW: What's on your mind, Jax?

[Meanwhile in the ring, Zharkov is alternating stomps to both Blue Brothers, who aren't putting up much of a fight.]

JH: I am incensed, Bucky. Now, I may be a veteran of this business, but I am still wet behind the ears as far as being a manager in the AWA goes. I seek your advice, Bucky.

[Myers holds up the very obvious spare headset that Jackson Hunter probably should have put on. In the ring, Zharkov scrapes Will Blue from the mat and Irish whips him into the corner, following up with a massive charging shoulder-block.]

BW: What the deal here, daddy?

[Hunter shows Wilde his clipboard.]

JH: For setting off that firework in Hawaii, Bucky; they FINED us. Look at figure!

BW: Whoa! More zeroes than a Martinez family reunion there!

JH: And that's for compromising! That's what we get for being diplomatic! We played along with your Fourth of July tradition with the biggest firework you've ever seen and look what we get when we arrive in the arena today! Apparently we were "creating an artificial distraction." What does that even mean, I ask you?!

[Myers has the spare headset now, and is gamely trying to call the action in the ring.]

GM: Maxim Zharkov obviously dominating the boys from Carolina...

[As Zharkov tosses Andy Blue overhead with a belly-to-belly suplex across the ring onto the fallen form of his brother, Hunter turns around and snaps at the veteran play-by-play man.]

JH: JUST GIVE ME A SECOND, MR. MYERS! Crying out loud...

BW: Yeah, daddy, I would contest this. Ain't no way this fine is justified, Jax.

JH: Thank you, Bucky.

[He finally turns to face Myers and speaks in the most patronizing tone he can muster.]

JH: That didn't take so long now, did it?

[Hunter throws down his headset, probably mightily annoying every AWA technician in the truck and turns his attention back to the match, as does the commentators.]

GM: Ladies and gentlemen, I apologize for that disrespectful display.

BW: You said it. A fine? For a firework? I'm disgusted and appalled.

GM: That's not- never mind that. Maxim Zharkov obviously has this match well in hand at the ninety second mark and neither Will Blue nor Andy Blue look like they can sustain any more punishment from the man called 'The Tsar.'

"U-S-A!"

"U-S-A!"

"U-S-A!"

[Zharkov stops his assault for a second to absorb the chants of the Cow Palace fans. His heavy eyebrows furrow and his lip curls in disgust. He guides Will Blue to his feet.]

BW: If two fellas can't stop the Mad Man from Magadan, what hope does one have?

GM: I don't know, but I have a feeling the American fans are starting to get under Zharkov's skin; Zharkov lining his opponent up here...

"U-S-A!"

"U-S-A!"

"U-S-OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

GM: Oh! Oh my...

BW: What did I just see?!

GM: My... stars... and... GARTERS. That 300+ pound powerhouse from Russia just threw... I can only describe it as a textbook standing dropkick to Will Blue, who is now flat on his face on the floor.

[The fans buzz with surprise. At ringside, Jackson Hunter is giddy with delight, egging his client on.]

GM: Andy Blue now up, but he looks out of it. Zharkov hooks him up...

MZ: TSAR BOMBAAAAAAA!

GM: ...Hits that Tsar Bomb crucifix powerbomb! I admit it, fans, I cringed when he sent this poor Andy Blue for the ride and I think a lot of people here tonight in the Cow Palace did as well after what took place in Hawaii on the 4th.

BW: I don't even know if I have it in me to wince, Gordo. A dropkick! This monster throws dropkicks now! How is anyone supposed to beat a man who can bend steel girders in his fist and throw a dropkick like a luchador?!

GM: I don't know, Bucky, but I am sure that there is someone in the AWA who can rise to the challenge. But not today it looks like. Will Blue is out cold on the outside of the ring, and The Tsar is locking in the Gorynch submission maneuver on Andy Blue. Referee Johnny Jagger right there, and no surprises here - he calls for the end of the match.

"DING! DING! DING!"

[As per usual, Zharkov responds to the submission by wrenching the Gorynch further back while Hunter has forgotten to play indignant for the moment, settling on triumphalism. He claps his hands, using Will Blue's back as a step onto the ring apron.]

GM: And if Jackson Hunter is concerned about fines to his client, he'd have Zharkov release the hold with the bell!

BW: I told you, Gordo, it's physiology: He can't unlock his muscles right away after pouring all his strength into them!

[Zharkov finally releases the hold and soaks in the jeers of the San Francisco crowd, arms raised in victory.]

GM: As I said before, someone is going to step up in a big way and put a stop Zharkov's antics, but for the time being let's take a quick break but when we come back, it'll be California boy Willie Hammer in action so don't you dare go away!

[We 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 halfheartedly 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 Carl Riddens?]

Kids: *gasp*

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

Kids: Dave Bryant!

[And... did Shadoe Rage just kick down the front door to attack Brian James from behind while he was grappling with Travis Lynch in the dining room for no apparent reason?! And is that Skywalker Jones leaping down the staircase at Calisto Dufresne? And why are Tony Donovan and Wes Taylor beating up the mailman? Oh, there's the Northern Lights turning them around and brawling with them on the lawn!]

Kids: WOAHH!

[Yes, these two kids are about to have a very badly-acted simultaneous cardiac arrest and orgasm. It happens. Especially when Bobby O'Connor is jumping off your kitchen cabinet to hit Rob Driscoll with a flying bodypress, Brad Jacobs is hiptossing Frankie Farelli across your family room, and Strictly Business and The Wilde Bunch are brawling across your driveway. Demetrius Lake has just grabbed a dish from the china cabinet and breaks it across the back of Supernova, while Ryan Martinez is ramming Johnny Detson's head into the sink in the background, Buford P. Higgins and Miss Sandra Hayes are in a shouting match, Hannibal Carver tries to clothesline Callum Mahoney, who ducks... poor Hannibal hits the boys' father who was coming in to check out the noise. Then King ONI 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 Four 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!

[Air Strike does a double throw to send The Lights Out Express over the living room divider into the kitchen! Then we see the kids playing with the Air Strike and Lights Out Express action figures.]

Announcer: Create new dream matches never before seen!

[Sultan Azam Sharif tries to smash Supreme Wright with a kitchen chair, but Wright pulls open the ironing board from the wall to block it! Then we see the kids playing with the Sharif and Wright action figures.]

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

[Jack Lynch and Cain Jackson double-clothesline Cesar Hernandez 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 Gladiator is doing a double-backflip powerbomb to Jericho Kai. 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 Derrick Williams, Manny Imbrogno, Willie Hammer, and Casanova. 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 back to live action to the ring where ring announcer Phil Watson is standing by, alongside AWA official Ricky Longfellow. Also in the ring is the pudgy Angelo Cordero, balding, with a shoulder length mullet and sporting an 80s-era bushy Tom Selleck-ish mustache, dressed in a Dominican Republic-themed singlet with black boots.]

PW: The next match is scheduled for one fall, with a ten-minute time limit! Introducing first, from San Cristobal in the Dominican Republic, weighing in at two hundred and seventy-five pounds... Angelo Cordero!

[Cordero dismissively waves off the jeers from the crowd.]

PW: And his opponent...

CALIFORNIA LOVE

[The jeers quickly turn to cheers when "California Love" by 2Pac, featuring Dr. Dre and Roger Troutman, starts to play. Willie Hammer, wide grin plastered on his face, steps through the entranceway, dressed in a Combat Corner T-shirt, white trunks, with green trim around the waist and thighs, and green boots, with white trim on the tops and white laces, his arms raised, waving them to the music. He keeps his right arm raised, pumping his fist thrice, before making his way to the ring, stepping to the beat of the music.]

CALIFORNIA #
KNOWS HOW TO PARTY #
CALIFORNIA #
KNOWS HOW TO PARTY #
IN THE CITY #
OF L.A. #
IN THE CITY #
OF GOOD OL' WATTS #
IN THE CITY #
THE CITY OF COMPTON #
WE KEEP IT ROCKIN' #
WE KEEP IT ROCKIN'

[As Hammer struts his way down the aisle, he tries to reach out to as many outstretched hands on either side of him as he can.]

PW: Hailing from South Central Los Angeles, weighing in at two hundred and eighty pounds, he is...

WILLIE HAMMER!!!

[Reaching the ringside area, he hops onto the ring apron, and heads to the corner. Hammer steps onto middle rope and, with one foot on the top turnbuckle, holds out his arms to either side of him, palms up, then curls his fingers, inviting cheers from the crowd. He steps onto the top rope and hops off, landing in the ring, where he proceeds to get down to the music.]

GM: It's "California Love" and the fans here in San Francisco are showing their love for the young man from South Central L.A.

[As the music fades, Willie Hammer pulls off his T-shirt, balling it up and tossing it into the ringside crowd.]

"DING! DING! DING!"

[Both men circle each other in the center of the ring. They lock up in a collar-and-elbow, but Hammer very quickly grabs hold of Cordero's wrist, wrenching Cordero's arm off and twisting it in front of him.]

GM: Hammer, with a wristlock, has Cordero struggling... Cordero reverses, but Hammer with a nice reversal of his own! A headbutt to the shoulder... And another to the side of the head knocks Cordero back into the corner.

[Hammer follows Cordero into the corner, laying in a shot to Cordero's ribs. Reaching behind Cordero's head and neck, Hammer pulls Cordero out of the corner, towards the middle of the ring, grabs Cordero's head with both hands, and lands another headbutt, this time to the forehead, which drops Cordero on his back.]

GM: Cover! One! Shoulder up at two! Hammer pulls Cordero to his feet and lets loose with a snapping jab to the jaw of the man from the Dominican Republic... Quick jabs in succession...

[Hammer breaks off the assault to start dancing to the thrill of the fans.]

BW: Watch him whip, whip. Now watch him nae nae.

GM: I have no idea what that means, but Willie Hammer is getting down, as it were, and the fans appreciate it. Vicious uppercut knocks Angelo Cordero back down!

BW: Some might describe that uppercut as whiplash-inducing, Gordo.

[Now Hammer runs in place, puffs out his cheeks and bugs out his eyes, as a buzz of excitement ripples through the crowd. He dashes to the ropes, leaping high into the air, crashing down onto a prone Cordero with a senton splash.]

GM: Hammer with a back splash!

BW: Shades of Juan Vasquez!

GM: Cover! One! Again, the veteran escapes at two.

[Hammer locks on a side headlock, leaning his weight on Cordero, in an attempt to wear him down. Cordero, arms flailing, manages to push himself onto a seated position.]

BW: Hammer needs to snug up on that headlock, because the veteran is regaining his vertical base, Gordo.

[Cordero lays two punches into Hammer's gut, then shoves him towards the ropes, forcing Hammer to release the hold. Hammer stops his rebound by grabbing hold of the ropes, avoiding a sloppy fat man dropkick by Cordero. Hammer whirls around towards the corner, waving for Cordero to get up. As Cordero does so, Hammer launches his body into a forward roll, then pops up to his feet to deliver an explosive clothesline.]

GM: Hammer with a kip up! He's pointing to the corner.

BW: I think he is pointing to the top rope, Gordo, and loathe as I am to say it, I believe it is Hammer Time.

GM: This isn't the first time the Bay Area's been overrun by Hammer Time as Willie Hammer is indeed climbing to the top, Bucky...

[Hammer reaches the top rope, pumping his arms up and down to another big cheer before he takes flight, soaring high into the air, pumping his arms and legs once...]

GM: And he comes crashing down onto Angelo Cordero! What elevation on that frog splash! Hammer stays on him for the cover. One! Two!

"DING! DING! DING!"

PW: Here is your winner, by pinfall...

WILLIE HAMMER!!!

["California Love" plays as Hammer gets back to his feet. The crowd cheers as he has his arm raised by the official.]

GM: Another victory for one of California's rising sons... and it looks like our own "Sweet" Lou Blackwell is going to meet Willie Hammer in the aisleway to get a few comments from him.

[Hammer exits the ring as Blackwell sets up for interview time. The young competitor is dancing and smiling in the middle of the aisle as he slowly moves back to where Blackwell is standing. Hammer nudges Blackwell, trying to get him to bend his knees and rock back and forth. Blackwell chuckles, shaking his head before speaking.]

SLB: The celebration goes on, but Willie Hammer, if I could interrupt it for a moment, I've got to ask, you weren't a part of the Rising Sun Showdown card, which meant that you did not get a chance to go on the recent tour of Japan.

[Hammer nods.]

SLB: Before that, on July Fourth, things didn't go so well for you in the Independence Day Rumble. And before that, you were choked out, costing your team the victory against the Dogs of War; a challenge, I might add, which you laid down.

[Hammer grimaces at the memory, nodding his head again.]

SLB: You've had your victories over the likes of Allen Allen and Angelo Cordero here tonight, and we've seen you have stand-out matches in the Combat Corner and even in some of your early matches here in the AWA, but it seems to be one step forward, two steps back for you right now. What's going on?

WH: Tell me, Sweet Lou, do I look like the kind of guy who is afraid of a little bit of hard work?

SLB: No, you don't.

WH: And tell me, Sweet Lou, do I seem like the kind of guy who has a problem with having to work his way up from the very bottom of the ladder?

SLB: No, you do not. I know and the fans know that that's what you've been doing all your life, not just in wrestling, and, some would say, it's what you continue to do even today.

WH: That's right. You see, Sweet Lou, I ain't the kind of guy who would stage a protest simply because the fans voted someone else into the Rumble instead of me; I might not be Mister Steal the Spotlight, and when folks talk about the stand-out graduates of the Combat Corner, Willie Hammer's name might not immediately spring to mind, but here's the thing, Sweet Lou, everything that someone like Skywalker Jones did in the Corner, I had to go through as well. And I see the likes of my mentor Sweet Daddy Williams and all he has achieved and he's still working his butt off to this day!

[The crowd cheers the mention of the AWA Original.]

WH: So, you want to know what's going on, Sweet Lou? I am what's going on, and I'll keep going, going, going till I can't go no more. Whatever hiccups there are along the way, the sweetest chocolate outside of Hershey is going to knock that dirt off his shoulder, dust himself off and keep going on going on right to the top! Watch me!

[Hammer lets out a loud "Whooo!" as he turns to leave the interview area.]

SLB: Willie Hammer certainly seems determined to not let this rough patch he's going through bring him down... and in the process, I think he may have just called out a certain former Combat Corner student as well.

[Blackwell grins as the "scoop."]

SLB: And speaking of the Combat Corner, this most recent Combat Corner Wrestling show is in the books but we've got the scoop on who was

backstage, who was watching, and more importantly, who was talking to whom about making the jump to the most competitive locker room in the sport - this one! Want to know what we know? Dial 1-900-505-5500 - calls cost \$1.99 for the first minute so kids, get your parents' permission before dialing! And with that, I'm gettin' the heck out of here because we're about to go right back to the ring for more action!

[Cut away from Blackwell to the ring.]

PW: Wrestling fans, the following contest is set for one fall. Introducing first, to my left, from Chicago, Illinois, and weighing 225 pounds... JASON JOHNSON!

[A slender man with a buzzcut, dressed in white wrestling trunks with blue trim, raises his arms to the crowd.]

A single trumpet blasts a loud fanfare over the PA as the crowd turns toward the entranceway. A deep, ominous wardrum follows shortly thereafter, accompanied by further trumpets and the sounds of many footsteps marching in lockstep.

That is when the man known as The Gladiator comes out through the entranceway. He is dressed in black trunks, kneepads and wrestling boots, and wears a gladiator helmet on his head. He stops before the entranceway, removing his helmet and dropping to one knee. He sets the helmet to the side, then bows his head down, and takes his right hand, placing it on the ground before him, as if he is feeling out his surroundings.]

PW: And his opponent, from parts unknown, weighing in at 270 pounds...

THE GLADIATOR!

[As the wardrum and trumpets come to a climax, a ram's horn blasts, drowning it all out, and immediately the Gladiator's head snaps upwards. His eyes gaze at the ring as if looking through it to the universe beyond. Wild speed metal plays over the PA, replacing everything that came before (though, notably, the chord is the same as the trumpets from earlier). Leaving his helmet laying in the aisle, the Gladiator sprints into the ring at top speed and dashes off the ropes like a human missile.]

GM: The Gladiator remains undefeated in singles competition in the AWA, and we were that close to seeing the showdown between him and another man who has yet to lose a singles match, KING Oni, at the Rumble just a few weeks ago!

BW: Gladiator is lucky that showdown didn't take place. He may be steamrolling everybody else, but there's no way he could ever take down a man as big and powerful as KING Oni!

GM: I'm not positive about that, but thanks to The Lost Boy, we never got to see it happen. I'm sure Gladiator will not be afraid if he gets that opportunity again, and I'm sure he wants it to happen!

BW: He may not be afraid if he gets another chance, but he's a bigger moron than I could have imagined if he really wants it to happen!

[The bell rings and Gladiator immediately goes on the offensive, hammering Jason Johnson with repeated rights and lefts.]

GM: Gladiator wasting no time! Look at him overwhelm Johnson with those forearms!

BW: Well, Gladiator may catch you off guard at times, but you aren't gonna knock around somebody like KING Oni like that!

GM: Gladiator with an Irish whip... Johnson hard into the buckles! And here comes Gladiator after him!

[Gladiator charges into the corner, connecting with a clothesline that causes Johnson to slump over.]

GM: Look at the impact of that clothesline, Bucky!

BW: Again, that's a 225 pound man, Gordo! Don't think Oni is gonna fold up like a cheap suit like Johnson did just now.

GM: Gladiator pulling Johnson back to his feet... there's a scoop and a hard slam!

[Gladiator runs off the ropes, leaping high into the air and dropping an elbow.]

GM: And what impact there! Elbowdrop finds the mark!

BW: And here goes this nut again... what, does he think the roof is gonna open and his gods are gonna appear above?

[Gladiator is stretching his arms skyward, as if in a trance.]

GM: Gladiator may have some unique tendencies, but then again, so does Oni, and for that matter, Doctor Harrison Fawcett's other charges, The Lost Boy and Porter Crowley.

BW: The difference, Gordo, is Fawcett is there to remind them to stay focused on their opponents. Focus is not in Gladiator's dictionary... heck, Gladiator doesn't even know what a dictionary is!

[Gladiator turns back to Johnson, dragging him to his feet and hooking him up for a vertical suplex.]

GM: Gladiator with Johnson... nice vertical suplex! And now he's pulling him back up.

[Johnson is bent forward as Gladiator runs in place, pointing skyward, the fans cheering.]

BW: Yeah, the ceiling is what's up, everyone knows that, you big goof!

GM: Gladiator running into the ropes... comes off the opposite side... SPEAR TACKLE! Johnson is down and out!

[Gladiator rises to his feet, pressing his arms upward, the crowd approving.]

GM: And it looks like the end is about to come!

BW: For Johnson, sure!

[Gladiator drags Johnson up, presses him overhead and turns around to face all four sides of the arena.]

GM: Gladiator effortlessly pressing Johnson overhead... and drops him into the powerslam!

[Gladiator kneels in front of Johnson, his knees covering Johnson's chest, and raises his arms above as the referee counts to three.]

GM: And nobody gets up from that devastating press into a powerslam, Bucky!

BW: It's put away a lot of people, but no way does Gladiator gets somebody like Oni in that move! It can't be done!

[The bell rings and Gladiator rises to his feet, allowing the referee to raise his arm, then he ducks through the ropes.]

PW: The winner of this match, THE GLADIATOR!

GM: Gladiator chalks up another victory, and it looks like Sweet Lou Blackwell is going to try to catch up with the man!

BW: Oh no, now we have to hear him talk?!

[We cut to the interview podium, where Sweet Lou Blackwell holds the mic.]

SLB: All right, fans, we've seen this man tear through most of the competition in the AWA and nobody has slowed him down yet... I am talking about The Gladiator!

[Gladiator comes up the aisle and toward the podium. Sweet Lou is about to ask a question, but before he can, Gladiator leans into the mic and shouts.]

G: SOUND THE BATTLE CRY, MY GLADIATORS!

[The crowd roars in approval. Gladiator then starts pacing around the podium.]

SLB: Gladiator, at the Rumble in Hawaii, you tore through several men in that field and were ready for a confrontation with KING Oni. But we never got to find out how you would measure up to him because The Lost Boy interfered and pulled the rope down. I have to ask you, Gladiator, do you now have a certain Lost Boy in your sights?

[Gladiator slows his pacing and...]

G: SNORT snaarrll SNORT!

[...that happens. He stops pacing, slowly raising his right finger and talking in a rather hushed tone.]

G: The Rumble was to be the night when I believed I would take further steps toward the pinnacle, but along the way, another message was sent. A message I did not take seriously at first, but now I understand what must be done for me to truly achieve the destiny that awaits me. For there are charlatans and false prophets who exist in these domains, who claim they and only they know what is the way of the world.

[He turns to the camera and raises his finger higher, along with his voice.]

G: I CANNOT ALLOW THESE FALSE PROPHETS TO REMAIN INTACT AND CONTINUE TO SPREAD THEIR DECEIT AND DEGRADATION THAT ONLY LEAVES THE BLACKEST OF MARKS ON THESE PARTS I VENTURE THROUGH! SO IT IS NOW CLEAR THAT I MUST ENTER THE PITS OF DESPAIR AND COME FACE TO FACE WITH THESE CHARLATANS, FOR ONLY AFTER THEIR DESTRUCTION IS ASSURED, CAN I COMMIT MY ATTENTIONS ONCE MORE TO THE FUTURE I KNOW TRULY AWAITS ME!

[He points the finger right at the camera.]

G: YOU, HARRISON FAWCETT, HAVE SPREAD THESE FALSE PROPHECIES AND PRETENDED THAT YOU ARE IN CONTROL OF THOSE SCOUNDRELS AND MISCREANTS YOU SURROUND YOURSELF WITH, BUT NOW YOU MUST FACE THE MAN WHO HAS BEEN COMMANDED BY JUPITER AND JUNO TO CLEANSE THESE LANDS OF THE DESECRATION THAT YOU HAVE BROUGHT TO THEM! YOU BRING YOUR KINGS, YOUR LOST BOYS, YOUR PORTER CROWLEYS, AND ONE BY ONE, THEY SHALL FAR BEFORE MY MIGHT, LEAVING ONLY YOU TO ANSWER FOR WHAT YOU HAVE DONE. AND THEN YOU SHALL HAVE NO CHOICE BUT TO STAND BEFORE ME AND MY GLADIATORS AND RAISE UP ONLY ONE THING, THE FLAG OF SURRENDER!

[He growls and raises his arms skyward, drawing cheers. He then walks away from the podium.]

SLB: All right, fans, Gladiator with his sights set on Doctor Harrison Fawcett and his men, and I can only wonder what's going to happen when they meet up! Fans, we've got to take another quick break but when we come back, it'll be the ever-dangerous Brian James in action!

[Fade to black.]

The words "December 1994" appears in white scrawly text. The black screen fades to reveal the founder of the EMWC, Adam Thompson. Thompson's years are showing at this point. He leans towards the camera.]

"In the mid-90s, getting anyone to bankroll pro wrestling was a hard sell. The whole business was in the toilet so if you wanted to stand a chance, you started small and put in the work."

[A black and white still photo of a bloodied Colt Patterson - then known as Narcissus - battling Lorenzo Vasquez appears. The word "Extreme" etched in a deep crimson is "written" across them as the voice of Patterson is heard.]

"Extreme was the thing. Hell, my dad had been doing extreme down in the South for years - cages, bullropes, Texas Death, whatever. He just didn't know it had a name. Did I like the idea of going through tables almost every night? Not really. But I was the champ. I was the guy. It was either do it or they'd find someone else who would. Ultimately, my career paid the price but it was a good run while it lasted."

[The shot of Patterson fades to a still photo of Chris Blue standing in a ring with Adam Thompson. Blue looks much younger than his modern counterpart who we see a moment later.]

"I bought out Adam Thompson as soon as I put the money together. I had a vision, he had a vision... too many cooks in the kitchen. I'll always be grateful to him but I think history has shown that he made the right call to take the money and let me run the place."

[A series of stills flash by - Casey James, Tiger Claw, Steve Kowalski, Creed, Brody Thunder, Serge Annis, and JW Hardin. Blue appears again.]

"It was a war. It was a total war between us and Portland. Talent, territory, ratings, buyrates... you name it, we fought over it. I fought a lot of those kinds of wars over the years but none of them were as fun as the fight that Spreadbury put up."

[More stills. This time with some of the most famous names in EMWC - men like Mark Langseth, Alex Martinez, Kevin Slater, Jeff Matthews, "Dreamlover" Trey Porter, Curtis Hansen, Eddie Van Gibson, Simon Ezra, Luke Kinsey, Chris Courtade, and others flash by in rapid-fire before fading back to Blue.]

"You know what they don't tell you? It's a hard fight to get to the top... but when you get there, sometimes it gets a little boring. I was constantly fighting with myself to stay motivated. I'd pick fights with promotions just to try and get my competitive fires burning. It was just never the same though."

[And then another series of shots - this time with some of the names synonymous with the end of the EMWC - names we'll choose not to name to protect the innocent... and the guilty. Back to Blue.]

"The writing was on the wall long before I shut the doors, I think. It was... I don't know. Bad timing? We were fighting to stay afloat for a while. We were having financial troubles, creative difficulties, you name it. Then out of nowhere, one of my best friends got leukemia and died. That was..."

[Blue pauses, turning his head to the side as we fade to black as a title comes up - "The Rise And Fall Of The Empire - available on DVD and Digital Download now. The shot of a smiling Blue comes back up.]

"Damn. It was a good run though, wasn't it? A hell of a run. Maybe the best ever. But even the best things have to end."

[Blue smiles, staring off-camera, daydreaming of days gone by...

...as we fade to black.

Fade back up from black to "Sweet" Lou Blackwell. He looks nervous and uncomfortable. And why shouldn't he be? He's surrounded by the Walking Dead. The massive Henri Lemarques is behind him, his mouth working aimlessly as he growls and hisses. Dirt Dog Unique Allah wanders in circles around the shot. He growls and issues strangled noises from his throat as if he is trying to find his voice. His eyes look horrified. And then the ruined Poet stands next to Lou, holding her chalice. She smiles grotesquely, the scarred rictus grin twisting as she intimidates Blackwell with her rags and scarred, skull-painted face.]

P: Yuh look nervous, Lou. 'ave yuh never been to di ceme'tree and been so close to di dead before?

SLB: Honestly, Poet, no.

[He jumps and looks over his shoulder as LeMarques twitches for no reason.]

P: (laughing) Don' worry. 'e won't bite. Not unless I tell 'im to.

[Dirt Dog drifts past the shot, wandering away from the camera. Lou follows him nervously.]

SLB: What about him?

P: 'im I can mek no promises about. A dog must chew 'im bone, y'ear.

SLB: Poet, the Walking Dead have been in the AWA for a little while now, but to most, if not everybody, they remain a mystery. Why are you here? What are your goals? What happened to those men you kidnapped? Are you planning to take more?

[That last question has Sweet Lou fiddling with his collar. The last thing he wants to hear is his name called.]

P: Yuh find yuh bravery, Lou.

[Her smile shows stained yellowed teeth.]

P: Yuh better dan most in dis place. Di Dead are feared by one and all. Di taken men were to give di dead strength. Each time dey grew stronger. And now di Dead tek on a new challenge. Di Brixton Bruisers, dey choose to be tough enough to test di Dead. We do want a challenge.

SLB: This matchup with the Bruisers should be a difficult challenge. You two have met before and there is a lot of unfinished business there.

P: The Brixton Boys 'ave di type of roughneck spirit we like. Sutekh demand only di 'eartiest soul. And we will deliver the Brixton Bruisers unto 'im. Dey shall be our trophies.

SLB: Why is it that I'm reminded of Halloween?

[Lou jumps as Allah wanders back into the shot and presses up against him. From behind LeMarques slaps his meaty hand down on Lou's shoulder and clamps his grip down enough to make Lou writhe in pain. Poet simply stares through him.]

P: Yuh really so brave as to disrespect, Sutekh?

[She snaps her fingers and the Dead stop their aimless chewing and are focussed on Lou Blackwell, teeth bared, ready to bite.]

SLB: Please, I apologize to Sutekh! Please!

[Poet snaps her fingers again and the Dead resume their trance.]

P: You and di others wan tek us fi a joke. It won't be long before yuh realise dat dis is no joke. Dis is yuh nightmare. We've come 'ome!

[The lights turn off and all the viewer can hear is Lou Blackwell stifle a yelp. When the lights come back on he is alone. He fiddles with the collar of his shirt.]

SLB: I don't know about you, but I'd prefer it if Halloween only came once a year. I think one of them licked me.

[Fade back out to the ring where Bruce Dickinson's version of "The Zoo" blares over the loudspeakers as the camera makes a sharp cut to the entranceway. Out steps the only manager in the pro-wrestling Hall of Fame, the man of a thousand quotes and a million designer suits, the one and only Brian Lau.]

BW: There's a man who's got to be feeling good about himself right now, Gordo.

GM: I've got to agree, Bucky. Brian Lau's main charge, Brian James absolutely demolished TORA at Rising Sun Showdown. And while Wes Taylor and Tony Donovan came up short in Japan, they've unquestionably made an impact here in the AWA including a victory earlier tonight.

[Tonight, Lau is in a stylish black suit, complete with a white silk shirt and a red tie, as well as very expensive looking alligator skin shoes. Over his eyes are a pair of Bentley platinum sunglasses. And if you were to ask him, he's wearing more money than most people in the audience make in a year.]

BW: Ya know Gordo, I don't know if Brian Lau has been given all the credit he's earned. He ain't as self-promoting as Larry Doyle, he didn't engineer a takeover like Percy did, and he doesn't have a mansion filled with ancient artifacts like Fawcett. But what he's done with the men under his watch is nothing short of amazing.

GM: I don't always respect his tactics, but I can't disagree with you. He took Brian James and instilled in him discipline and focus, something he'd been lacking previously.

BW: And don't forget. Its because of all the advice he gave that now Air Strike is runnin' scared of Taylor and Donovan!

GM: I don't agree with that.

BW: Yeah, then why won't they face 'em?

GM: You know as well as I do that it's a matter of scheduling, and nothing else!

BW: I've heard that story before!

GM: Besides, hasn't Lau officially said that Taylor and Donovan aren't under his control? That he just advises them from time to time?

BW: Pretty good advice from where I sit.

[Lau takes a few steps forward, and then turns, pointing to the entranceway, the curtain is forcefully pulled away, and an enormous shadow looms over the entranceway. Out steps the intimidating form of the AWA's Engine of Destruction. The six foot six, two hundred and ninety five pound son of the Blackheart, Brian James.]

BW: Admit it Gordo, that's one scary man!

GM: I never denied that, Bucky.

[James has a white towel over his head, which covers the majority of his face, revealing only the shadow of a scowl on clean shaven face. James'

chest is bare and well oiled, the muscles rippling under the overhead lights. Both of his hands are wrapped in heavy black tape, leaving only the space between his fingertips and the first knuckle of each finger bare. The tape extends to mid-forearm. On his right hand is a black compression glove type elbow pad, with a red stripe that runs along the underside. His left arm is covered in black tattoos, each a letter of the Kanji alphabet. These tattoos extend from the top of his shoulder all the way down, terminating in a much smaller line that goes all the way down his middle finger.

He wears a pair of red and black Muay-Thai style shorts. The fit over the legs is baggy, but elastic bands at the bottom cinch them tightly just over James' knees. The right leg is black, with a golden tiger embossed over the thigh, while the left side is red, the words "BRIAN JAMES" done in a highly stylized font. Across the back of the shorts is the word "CLAW ACADEMY" again done in gold. Each knee is covered in a black knee pad, with a tribal style tiger image done at the very center of the knees. Eschewing wrestling boots, James legs are instead tightly wrapped in the same black tape that covers his fists.

Where Lau is brimming confidence, James is all stoic menace. The pair make their way to the ring, with Lau ascending the stairs first and entering the ring, before James pushes down the top rope and steps over it. With Lau in front, both men move to the center of the ring.]

BW: If I'm Alex Worthey, I'm running through every decision I've ever made and wondering what I did so wrong that I deserved the beating I'm about to get!

[As the camera cuts to Worthey, based on the look on his face, that's exactly what's running through his mind.]

GM: Now we go to Phil Watson for introductions.

PW: This contest is set for one fall, with a ten minute time limit. Introducing first, hailing from Myrtle Beach, South Carolina, weighing in at two hundred and fifty pounds...

ALEX WORTHEY!!!

[There's a smattering of cheers for the doomed Worthey, as the camera cuts to Lau and James. Reaching up, James pulls the towel off his head, revealing short, dirty blond hair that's been slicked back. James hands the towel to Lau, and Lau reaches into an inner pocket of his jacket, producing a plastic box. Opening the box, Lau pulls out a half black, half red mouth guard, with the same golden tiger across the front. With James opening his mouth, Lau puts the mouth guard in place. There's a final grimace, and then James closes his lips.]

PW: And his opponent, hailing from Portland, Oregon, and weighing in tonight at two hundred and ninety five pounds. He is the Son of the Blackheart...

BRIIIIIIIAAAAAANNNNNNNNNNN JAAAAAAAMMMMMESSSSSS!!!!

[As boos fill the arena, James' head bounces from side to side, and then James' entire body is in motion, as he begins to bounce on the balls of his feet, ready for the fight.]

GM: And as Brian Lau exits, we get the final instructions from the referee, who steps back, calling for the bell.

"DING! DING! DING!"

[Intimidated but undaunted, Worthey rushes forward, meeting Brian James with a hard European uppercut to the chest, the "crack" of flesh on flesh resounding through the arena. Worthey moves in, following up with several more in rapid succession.]

GM: Alex Worthey refusing to back down!

BW: And I think, Gordo, that Alex Worthey managed to annoy Brian James.

[Brian James, who looks like the only effect Worthey's offense had was to slightly muss his hair, reaches forward, grabbing hold of Worthey by the hair. Drawing his head back, James throws his body forward, driving his forearm into Worthey's prone face.]

BW: And that puts an end to that!

[Still holding Worthey by the hair, James moves forward again, this time driving his knees into Worthey's midsection, one after the other, in rapid succession. As the Son of the Blackheart releases Worthey, he collapses in a heap.]

BW: This is just another iteration of the same lesson everyone who's faced Brian James has learned – the moment he gets his hands on you, it's all just a countdown to the end.

GM: I can't deny the truth of what you're saying, Bucky.

[With one hand grabbing hold of Worthey's hair, the other seizes him by the trunks, and James hauls Worthey to his feet, and more or less tosses him across the ring, where he lands in the corner, his shoulder connecting hard with the post. As James follows him into the corner, Worthey stands and staggers backwards, into the waiting arms of James, who captures him in a full nelson, putting his foot in front of Worthey's, tripping him forward and driving him face first into the turnbuckle.]

BW: How many times do we see it, Gordo? I've got to ask – do you think anyone has it in them to really take it to Brian James? Because I ain't even seen him be tested yet.

GM: I don't like his attitude. I really don't like the man he's taking advice from. But I'd be lying if I denied that Brian James is doing something right.

[James turns Worthey around, so the two are facing one another, and takes a step back, measuring Worthey up. As James readies himself, Brian Lau gets up on the apron, screaming taunts at the helpless Worthey. Having gauged his distance, James delivers a series of three hard kicks in rapid succession to the midsection of Worthey, the young man's body buckling with the impact. As Lau encourages him, James leaps into the air, delivering a brutal spin kick that cracks Worthey's jaw, sending spit and perhaps a tooth into the air and out of the ring.]

GM: And you better believe that what we just saw was Brian James delivering a message to the man he defeated two weeks ago.

BW: Yeah – stay home, and far away from the AWA!

[Worthey is pulled forward, James' arms wrapped around the back of his head, and forced to bend at the waist. What follows next are a series of vicious kicks to the head and chest of Worthey, each one landing with the sickening thud of kneecap upon flesh.]

GM: Brian James just methodically picking Worthey apart.

BW: You heard Lau in Japan. Engine of Destruction, daddy!

[James drags Worthey out of the corner, executing a quasi-hiptoss which leaves him in the center of the ring. James approaches him and begins to use his foot to "slap" Worthey in the face, bullying him around, occasionally kicking his hand out from under him as Worthey tries to push himself out.]

GM: James adding unnecessary insult to injury here. Look at him Bucky, do you honestly condone this kind of taunting?

BW: Condone it? It's one of the highlights of my day Gordo!

[Worthey makes it to a kneeling position, and launches a futile strike to James' gut, the blow once again only barely registering. James responds by grabbing the back of Worthey's head and driving his knee into the side of Worthey's face.]

BW: No movement wasted, every action impactful. How can you not love that, Gordo?

GM: I'll never deny the man's skills. But I'll never not miss the Brian James we used to know.

[James sends Worthey into the ropes, and follows him in, turning his back to Worthey and driving a succession of elbows into his face. Once Worthey seems sufficiently subdued, James drapes both of his arms over the top ropes, tilts his chin up, and then moves to the opposite corner. Racing towards Worthey, he leaps in the air, one boot balanced on the middle rope while the other whips forward, his shin driven into the side of Worthey's head.]

GM: Size, speed, balance, Brian James does have it all.

BW: And that's what separates him from all the other big men in the AWA, daddy! Hammonds, Oni, Gladiator, they're all big, strong men. But no one has got the technique, the finesse that Brian James does. He's a whole different breed, Gordo!

[James has now dragged Worthey to the center of the ropes, and has locked on a three quarters Nelson with Worthey's head over the top rope, choking him, Worthey's arms and legs flailing as he's choked out. The referee rushes in, laying in a count, and at four, James breaks, staring hard at the referee, who is very strong in warning the Son of the Blackheart.]

BW: That's one brave official!

GM: Bucky! You know as well as I do that the one cardinal rule is that you never lay your hands on the referee. And if you, there are severe consequences!

BW: You're telling me! I heard Hannibal Carver has been forced to go from name brand beer to the generic brown label stuff you find at the grocery store!

[Only a few warnings have come from the referee when suddenly, Brian Lau is up on the apron, putting the badmouth on the official.]

GM: This is completely unnecessary!

BW: You kidding me, Gordo? When you're a manager, your job is to advocate for your guy, and keep these crooked refs from overstepping their bounds!

GM: Are you kidding me? Give me a break Bucky!

BW: Hey, you know many guys were going to execute a perfectly legal Greco-Roman brass knuckles shot or a Marquess of Queensbury groin kick only to be stopped by some overzealous and undereducated referee? These refs will rob a match from you in a heartbeat!

[With Lau keeping the official distracted, James steps out of the ring and onto the apron. Grabbing hold of Worthey, he pulls his victim between the top and middle rope. A series of alternating knees to the chest and elbows to the back land with devastating impact to Worthey. With Lau now off the apron, the referee begins to lay a count on James, who is technically outside the ring. Nonplussed, James tips Worthey forward, hooking his legs on the top rope. Quickly, James ducks back into the ring, moves to the opposing side of the ring and rushes forward at full speed, launching his massive frame in the air, driving himself into Worthey's head with a monstrous running baseball slide]

GM: OH MY STARS!

BW: Did you just see that?

GM: What's the phrase?

BW: Engine. Of. Destruction.

GM: I hate to say it, but its true.

[A boneless Worthey falls helplessly out of the ring. James takes a step back, looking down at the prone Worthey. And then his head turns to Lau... who his shaking his head "no."]

BW: Lau ain't letting his man win on a countout!

[Quickly, James slides out of the ring, and then tosses Worthey back in, coming in right behind him.]

GM: James pulling Worthey to his feet, bending Worthey's arm over his head and pinning it behind his neck. James turning to the side...

BW: You know what's coming next, don't you?

[James' fingers curl into a tight fist, and he drives that clenched fist directly into Worthey's heart.]

GM: BLACKHEART PUNCH!!!

BW: I said it in Japan, and I'll say it again. Ain't no one getting up from that!

[Worthey is down and not getting back up. Refusing to drop down for a pin, James plants his foot in the center of Worthey's chest, as Lau screams for the referee to count.]

GM: One! Two! Three! This is over!

[Lau enters the ring, as boos rain down.]

PW: Your winner of the match....

BRIIIIIIAAAAAANNNNNNNNNNN JAAAAAAAMMMMMESSSSSS!!!!!!

GM: Another dominant display, as Brian James' winning ways continue!

BW: You gotta think it's only a matter of time before James, with his physical attributes, and Lau, with his business acumen, end up with championship gold in their ledger, daddy.

GM: Perhaps. Perhaps it'll be Ryan Martinez. Perhaps it'll be "Diamond" Rob Driscoll" Or perhaps it'll be the man standing by with Colt Patterson, the AWA World Television Champion, Shadoe Rage! Take it away, Colt!

[We fade backstage to where Colt Patterson, his eyes hidden behind aviator sunglasses and crowned with a leather gambler hat, is standing.]

CP: Gordon Myers, I would say "thank you" but I think we both know that the pleasure is all yours, jack!

[Colt smirks at the camera before continuing.]

CP: Ladies and gentlemen, as the only real broadcast journalist in the AWA, it's my job to get to the bottom of any controversy. And right now, after what went down at Rising Sun Showdown 2, the biggest controversy might be Team AWA's implosion! And the man at the center of this controversy is my guest... your WORLD Television champion, the SENSATIONAL SHADOE RAGE!!!!

[Shadoe Rage enters the frame. He is dressed in his ring gear, wearing a silver leather cape. The AWA World Television championship with its fuchsia strap is draped over his left shoulder so that the faceplate sits over his heart. Rage is wearing a hot pink bandana but this time he has foregone his trademark sunglasses, letting the world see those intense hazel eyes full bore. He extends a hand to Colt Patterson and they shake hands, biceps popping as they pump their arms vigorously.]

SR: Colt Patterson, it's been too long since I've had the privilege of standing here with you. And right now, at a time when I am most maligned, I'm glad that the AWA has stuck me with the amateur hour embarrassment that is Sweet Lou or that other guy or the woman... what's her name?

CP: It doesn't matter what her name is, Champ. You're here with me and you can trust me to be fair to you, but I've got to ask you the tough questions.

SR: I know you do and I'm not afraid! Ask away, Colt! Ask me anything and I will tell the truth... the whole truth and nothing but the truth!

CP: Well, Champ, we know you and that face-painted fool Supernova have never seen eye-to-eye, but I certainly didn't expect you to haul off and whop him in the middle of the ring with the World Television title and put Team AWA at the risk of a loss!

SR: Hold on right there, Colt Patterson! Just you hold on! If anybody was paying attention they would have seen that I didn't do anything to Supernova that he didn't deserve! I didn't betray Team AWA! Supernova did!

CP: You're going to have to explain that one, jack!

SR: I will, Colt. I will. I've been grindin' my whole life, Patterson. I've been grinding, scratching and clawing my way from the bottom to the top of this industry! To the top of this sport! Last year they didn't even want to let me go to Japan because they were scared that I might cause an international

incident. Why did they hate on me like that? What did I ever do to embarrass the AWA? All I did was fight, scratch and claw to be the best this business had to offer while the AWA's hand-picked heroes got all the opportunities and all the shots that they didn't deserve.

How many times did I get suspended? How many times was I mocked by the announce teams? How many times was I shoved down? Even when I won the AWA World Television title what did they do? Tried to create another belt and say it was more important than my title. But it isn't. It hasn't been. Nobody has been more important to the AWA than me. Each and every time those cameras roll I go out and defend MY title. The AWA World Television title. Because this title means everything to me.

CP: We all know that, Champ. We all know your story.

SR: If you know my story, Colt Patterson, then you would know how it enraged me to be unfairly held down just like my father's career had been by the politics of bureaucracy. I am a God. I am Excellence. And so finally, because I worked each and every day, the AWA started to recognize my worth. Nobody was more proud to represent Team AWA than me. Shadoe Rage... the man who had to be redeemed by the Wise Men... had finally been recognized by his peers and made captain in one of the most important matches in the company's history. You saw me out there. I drove my elbow through Jay Alana's heart and I was going to pin him for the one two three. Do you think anything meant more to me than to destroy the Dead Man's Party? Nothing meant more to me than that!

CP: But then you walked out on Team AWA! You had to have changed your mind due to something!

SR: Supernova changed my mind! Twice now he's cost me victories. He used my trust against me in the Rumble when I tried to marshall Team AWA together! He stabbed me in the back and threw me out and none of Team AWA won! And then at the Rising Sun Showdown, our moment to send a message that the AWA is the greatest promotion in the world, that coward, that cheapshot artist, that frightened fraud, that canary-colored craven hit me with a Heatwave!

CP: We saw that, Champ! But people say that was an accident! Jay Alana got pulled out of the way and he accidentally hit you.

SR: Do you really believe that, Colt? Those people out there might be fooled but not you, Colt. Not you, right?

CP: Of course not me. But just because I know the truth ... I think it's better if everybody heard what I know from your mouth!

SR: All you have to do is pay attention! The Dead Man's Party pulled that trick early in the match and Supernova stopped himself in mid leap! He has that kind of control over that move! He saved himself then from missing his opponent. All he did was put his arms out to catch the ropes and come to a stop.

CP: That's absolutely right, he did!

SR: But when it was me in the corner... in the exact same situation... he didn't! He held his arms to the side and crashed into me! He betrayed Team AWA because he couldn't handle how badly I was outclassing him in the ring and he couldn't handle the fact that I was proving to everybody that I am made for the spotlight and I am made for the privileges that he is granted for no reason!

Colt Patterson, Supernova wants to be me so badly. He wants everything that I have. He wants to be everything that I am. But he can't be. Because he doesn't have the courage. He doesn't have the conviction. I've been grinding my whole life! And he's been pampered and pushed along because he's got a look and because he sneaks around backstage sucking up to the powers that be!

CP: This is a conspiracy!

SR: Sit down, Supernova. I can't stand you! You wanted the World Television Title so badly that you ruined Team AWA for it! And I won't even discuss the ridiculous betrayal of Callisto Dufresne! There was way too much selfishness on that Team! The Dogs. Vasquez. Nobody was willing to sacrifice their pride, their ego for the good of the team. And when Supernova pulled the ultimate betrayal, I snapped. All I saw was red. And I thought one thing, Colt.

CP: What was that, Champ?

SR: I thought if he wants the belt so badly let me let him know exactly what he will never have the courage to have! And I hit him with the World Title and for that I apologize.

CP: You apologize?

SR: I disgraced the belt letting it touch his head!

CP: Hahaha, you're right, Champ!

SR: I was up every night polishing and cleaning that faceplate trying to get the taint of Supernova off the belt! But every time I look at her, I see that damn spot! I can't get it out! I can't get it out!

CP: Take it easy, Champ!

SR: I will not take it easy. Because Supernova has disgraced me for the last time. There will be no more matches for him! No more shots at the title! I win! You lose! And I swear to God!

[He puts his hand on his own chest.]

SR: I swear to God that I will defend this title with honor. And Cesar Hernandez, I've got you in the ring tonight. And I'm sorry because I have never been so focussed and I have never had more to prove. All of the AWA better pay attention because I'm sick of being put in second place. I'm sick of being humiliated. And I'm sick of people thinking that I betrayed Team AWA! Team AWA betrayed me, Colt Patterson!

CP: Thank you, Champ, for baring your soul to the unwashed masses of AWA fans. And thank you for exposing them to the truth about the coward Supernova. I always say 'Never trust a man who paints his face.'

SR: You're right, Colt Patterson, and you're welcome. Cowards die a thousand deaths. Supernova, go die a thousand times. You will never get close to me or to this title again. Do you hear me? Never!

[With that, Rage sweeps out of the camera shot leaving Colt to close the interview.]

CP: The Champ comes through with the truth and who else could get to it but me? Stegglet? Blackwell? Cannon? Don't make me laugh. Back to you, Myers!

[We fade from backstage to ringside where Gordon and Bucky are seated.]

GM: Unbelievable.

BW: What's that?

GM: The delusion that man carries with him wherever he goes. I mean... Team AWA betrayed him?!

BW: He laid out some good points, Gordo. Supernova DID stop himself from delivering that Heat Wave earlier in the match but somehow he miraculously COULDN'T do that when Rage was the victim?

GM: Supernova coming into the corner at top speed had no chance to stop himself. We both know he was trying to put a little something extra on that Heat Wave splash to try and win the match right then and there, Bucky.

BW: You believe what you want. I'm going to believe the man holding the gold.

GM: You're as delusional as he is then! Fans, coming up next, we hav-

[*CRASH!*

BW: What the heck was that, Gordo?

GM: The fans are booing and something is taking place in the aisle...

[The camera cuts to the ring aisle, where an unknown local talent was on his way to the ring. A young man with curly brown hair, light blue trunks, and

black boots and pads. Unfortunately for him, he is on the floor slumped against the barricade, because the self-proclaimed King Of Professional Wrestling, "Black Tiger" Demetrius Lake, has rammed him into the guard rail and is putting the boots to him. The crowd is irate and putting the boos to Lake.]

BW: I don't know what that kid did, daddy, but he better never do it again!

GM: Demetrius Lake! He has no business out here! This was supposed to be Randolph Cruze taking on Bobby O' Connor! But Cruze is getting the daylights beaten out of him! Oh, no... look out!

[At six feet nine inches tall, Lake towers over everyone around. The dark-skinned Missourian is clad in a very pale blue dress shirt, a royal blue tie, dark grey slacks, and brown leather dress shoes. Despite the street attire, he is clearly in fight mode as he hoists the two-hundred forty pound Cruze up with ease, presses him overhead, and drops him ribs-first into the unforgiving steel barricade! The fans jeer as Cruze collapses into a screaming pile of injured human being.]

GM: WHAT IN THE WORLD DID THAT YOUNG MAN DO TO DESERVE THAT?!

BW: Kings don't need reasons, Gordo, but I bet Lake has one. And I bet we find out what it is right now.

GM: He's coming this way. No doubt, Demetrius Lake is infuriated over what he perceives to be a humiliating defeat at Rising Sun Showdown, although it really wasn't one considering his opponent hadn't lost in over a decade.

BW: His opponent would be collecting Social Security if he lived here in civilized country. Losing to Prince Izumi is embarrassing when he's in his sixties and you're a main event talent in his prime.

[Lake has snatched away Phil Watson's microphone, and is stomping up the steps while demanding the crowd to be silent. Lake's round afro and long conical beard ring a stern facial expression. Stepping over the top rope, the King begins his statement in his familiar deep Midwestern accent.]

DL: SHADDAP!

[Well, that's probably not part of his statement. The crowd gets louder, and he puts his hands on his hips glowering at them.]

GM: Given that Lake ran roughshod over Tiger Paw Pro in an extended tour this year, I'm sure the Japanese people were thrilled to see him finally silenced at the hands of arguably their greatest legend. But it seems like our US fans may have to...

BW: It was Dave Bryant that cost him, Myers! Izumi didn't beat Lake; Bryant did. He interfered shamelessly and...

GM: He stopped Lake from using a foreign object! That's not cheating, that's preventing cheating!

DL: If I don't get silence from everyone in this building, especially ol' wrinkled-up Gordon Myers, I will go back up that aisle and break that bum's spine.

[BOO!]

GM: How d...

BW: Shhhh! You wanna see a broken spine?

GM: N...

BW: Wait, I do. Go ahead, Gordo. Keep provoking him.

GM: ...

[Finally, Lake has incited enough, and he starts to speak.]

DL: I know everybody thinks it's so funny what that egg-suckin' dog Dave Cryant did to me in Tokyo.

[Cheers!]

DL: Everywhere I go, everything I do, that no-good bum is there, suckin' on them eggs and gettin' his nose up in my business! But Dave Cryant, all this started over one thing. The World Heavyweight Championship. You've been tryin' to distract me from getting my shot at the title for the entire calendar year. You put me in that ol' Rusty Crab, you interfered in my matches, you tried to go after Hamilton Graham, and you burned one of my fans alive right in front of my face! But you made a mistake, Dave Cryant. It was an easy mistake to make for you, because you outsmarted yourself.

Dave Cryant was suspended from the AWA. He should have been fired, he should have been sent to prison, he should be workin' hard time an breakin' big rocks on a chain gang right now as we speak. Pickin' trash up off the freeway. But he got off easy, and instead of bidin' his time, he tried to get sneaky and signed a one month tour deal with Tiger Pro Wrestling, who still owe me royalties for usin' my name. A one month tour so he could be in the buildin' at Rising Sun Showdown, and cheat me out of my match when I was shovin' Old Man Izumi back in the hist'ry book where he belongs.

But that was two weeks ago, and Dave Cryant still has a week left on his deal! So he's in Japan tonight, suckin' up them eggs they was gonna put in the fried rice. And that leaves me here tonight with the window of opportunity. The chance to take care of some business without that egg-suckin' dog, green in the face with jealousy, comin' out here and stickin' his nose in it. The chance to get back to what started all of this.

The World Heavyweight Championship.

[Boos at the thought of Lake getting anywhere near that belt.]

DL: Now, I know that Whinin' Marktinez is a paper champion and would never accept a challenge for his championship belt, let alone the fact that when the King Of Professional Wrestling takes his throne, it should be on pay per view. I can't give the most important night in wrestling away for free, especially here in San Francisco. You name your arena after a barnyard animal, which shows a lack of class and dignity.

[BOO!]

DL: And speaking of a lack of class and dignity, let's talk about the bum who was going to be wrestling that boy I whupped in the aisle. Let's talk about the biggest thief in wrestling. Let's talk about Bobby No Honor.

[Many fans cheer Bobby O'Connor's mention, but many boo Lake for saying these things about him.]

DL: On July the fourth, in why-koo-lu Hawaii, we all witnessed the theft of the century. The Independence Day Rumble. Let me make one thing perfectly clear. In any Rumble match, when you get called out on your turn, you have two minutes to get in the ring. That has always been a rule. That has to be the rule, because nobody would come to the ring otherwise. But Bobby No Honor did not get into the ring for three minutes and forty one and a half seconds on July the fourth! Between the time he was called and the time he got in, Herc-a-lees Hammonds was called and entered the ring. That is an elimination by rule! Bobby No Honor was NOT the winner of the Independence Day Rumble because he was not eligible to be the winner!

[BOO!]

BW: He's right, Gordo!

GM: The referee in charge didn't make that call, Bucky. You always say yourself that if the referee doesn't catch it, it didn't happen.

BW: And you always disagree, so what are you really saying?

DL: Now, I know that Jack Lunch hit the floor before me. I knew that Bobby No Honor was eliminated, because the reason he didn't get in the ring is he saw an opening to take on the biggest threat and he took it. He backjumped me like a coward and fought through the crowd, endangering all the fans like the hypocrite he is, but he made a mistake and was eliminated. So I knew he was eliminated at the end. I figured he knew there was no disqualification, so he was in there tryin' to help Jack Lunch because Jack Lunch has never won anything without help... as the referee last SuperClash can attest with that short count. I focused on Jack Lunch, and when the time came I didn't need to protect myself so long as Jack Lunch hit the floor first. I focused only on that, which is the only reason Bobby No Honor could get me out of the ring in the first place.

And then when they called him the winner, I knew the referee was obviously pulled from the scabs they brought in the NFL last season. He didn't know the rules! How can a decision be upheld if the referee doesn't know the rules?! How can Bobby No Honor look ANY of you in the eye and call himself the Number One Contender when he KNOWS he was eliminated?! How can Bobby No Honor look at himself in the mirror, not just because of his asymmetrical face but knowin' that he is a thief and a liar and no-good down to the core?!

[If Lake expects an answer to his rhetorical questions, he just may get them. The opening guitar riff from "Godzilla" by Blue Oyster Cult starts up, and the crowd erupts. Bobby O'Connor storms out, focused totally on Lake. He is wearing his customary cardinal red tights and a gray "BOC" t-shirt. He has a microphone in his left hand as he finally breaks his staredown with Lake, finally nodding at the assembled cheering fans.]

GM: Lake had to know he wouldn't be able to dirty the good name of this young man for long before he came out to answer his ridiculous claims!

BW: That's the King you're talking about, Gordo. That's a federal offense!

DL: Well, now you know what the rule is! Either you're a thief, or you're a fool! Only a fool would enter a professional sport and not know all of the rules before they compete.

BOC: I know the rules... but I also know that you hit first!

DL: Of course you and Jack Lunch would say that! You already lied about one thing, why would anyone trust you about another?!

BOC: If anyone that knows me knows just one thing, they know I've never told a lie a day in my life. By the same token, everyone knows that Demetrius Lake would rather fall to his death telling a lie than winning a million dollars telling the truth. I don't like being called a liar, but more than that being called one by an old snake like you.

[Bobby nods as the fans cheer in agreement.]

BOC: Most of all, though. I don't like YOU. Seeing as how you cowardly took my opponent out of action, seeing as how I was on my way out here to compete before you attacked him... I think you should prove how tough you really are by facing me in that ring tonight!

DL: You just hold on there one minute! If you really don't think you was eliminated, if you question whether I'm telling the truth, if you don't know what the rules are... there an easy way to settle it. I could get my lawyers on the AWA about his. But I am the King Of Professional Wrestling and I will settle it in the ring. If you want to fight me anyway, why don't you put that title shot on the line against me one on one in a match tonight!

[The crowd cheers loudly for a big match, as Bobby nods his head aggressively in agreement.]

GM: This is a trap! This whole thing is a trap to get Bobby O'Connor to jeopardize his guaranteed title match!

BW: Only an idiot would fall for it, so O'Connor's pretty much doomed.

BOC: Anyone that questions whether I've earned what I have is more than welcome to see that I've EARNED every bit of it honestly themselves. If you think I'd even for one second hesitate to prove myself by putting that shot on the line, you're dead wrong.

DL: You're real confident about that?

BOC: Once that bell rings, you'll see how confident I am!

DL: Then I tell you what. You can verify for yourself that Hamilton Graham is nowhere near San Francisco tonight. He is making a personal appearance at a show in Greensboro, North Carolina tonight; you can go look that up on the Googles if you don't believe me. So if you're real confident, you tell Jack Lunch to leave the Cow Pie Palace before our match because he's a no-good sneak and a backjumper and a dirty scoundrel! He has it in for me, and I want him out because he wouldn't be able to resist interfering to keep me from my title match.

BOC: The only time Jack has ever taken it upon himself to get involved in my matches is when we're fighting together at the TexMo Connection, everyone knows that. He doesn't need to be told to stay away, but if it'll put your cowardly, vile excuse for a heart at rest... I'll make darn sure Jack isn't anywhere near this building when you and I settle this.

[O'Connor takes two steps towards the ring.]

BOC: But the time for talking is over. Now's the time for you to pay for wasting everyone's time with the foolish garbage you spewed all over the microphone. Right here and RIGHT NOW!

[O'Connor slides into the ring, and Lake hastily exits the other side. The "Black Tiger" holds up one palm while backpedalling away.]

DL: Hold your britches a minute! You need to settle down! The World Heavyweight Championship is the most important prize in the sport. A match for the Number One Contender spot, if the title is not on the line, that is the Main Event. You can't rush in now, I am not dressed to wrestle and you are disrespecting the World Heavyweight Championship by rushing the match!

[The fans boo the obvious stalling loudly.]

GM: Are you KIDDING me with this?

DL: You make sure Jack Lunch finishes his business and leaves, and I will go put on my gear and properly prepare like the fine-tuned professional athlete I am.

[With that, Lake drops the mic and hustles out of the ringside area. O'Connor shakes his head, frustration clearly showing on his face.]

GM: Well, fans, like it or not, we've apparently got another match to add to an already-loaded lineup here in San Francisco on Saturday Night Wrestling on The X as Bobby O'Connor will put his guaranteed World Title shot on the line against Demetrius Lake!

BW: Finally... FINALLY... the King will reign over all here in the AWA!

GM: We'll see about that. Fans, we've got to take another break but when we come back, the World Television Title is on the line!

[Fade to black.

We open to a panoramic view of a packed house at an AWA show. After a moment, the opening to Coldplay's "Sky Full Of Stars" plays in the background as we get sweeping shots of cheering AWA fans.

As the lyrics begin, we catch back-to-back clips: a dramatic staredown in the ring between Dave Bryant and Supreme Wright, then two cheering fans side by side... one wearing a Bryant T-Shirt, one wearing a Wright T-Shirt.]

'Cause you're a sky, 'cause you're a sky full of stars

[Next up we see Bobby O'Connor autographing a fan's Bobby O'Connor poster at ringside during a house show (when the wrestlers have time to do that kind of thing).]

I'm gonna give you my heart

[Then we see Johnny Detson walking down an aisle, berating the fans (who are waving a poster with a collage of AWA faces at him) as he goes by, but the one fan next to them with the gold-tinted Johnny Detson sunglasses is clearly thrilled about it. A similar shot sees Travis Lynch going by, pausing and giving a smile to a young lady with a Travis T-Shirt; she swoons.]

'Cause you're a sky, 'cause you're a sky full of stars

[And then, a super slow-motion shot of Ryan Martinez using the brainbuster on an opponent in the ring, which fades to transparency as we see a group of fans with Ry-Mart attire and merchandise cheering at ringside.]

Because you light up the path

[The music fades, but the cheering of the fans is still loud as we get another panoramic crowd shot. And then the stinger: AWAshop.com.

And as we fade back to live action, we find ourselves backstage with "Sweet" Lou Blackwell and a match-ready Cesar Hernandez.]

SLB: Fans, we're back here LIVE on Saturday Night Wrestling from the Cow Palace in San Francisco and Cesar Hernandez, my friend, you look more ready than ever to become the new World Television Champion!

[Hernandez grins.]

CH: You better believe it, muchacho! Shadoe Rage has been the champion for nine months... NINE months now, compadre! Nine months of cheating, stealing, backstabbing, backjumping, crying, whining, and some of the most delusional babble I've seen outside of a Republican party meeting.

[Blackwell raises an eyebrow.]

CH: Some of the Republicans would like to build a wall to keep people like me out of THEIR country. Right now, I'm betting Shadoe Rage thinks that's one heck of an idea because he's back here wondering just how in the world he's going to keep that title against me tonight. But it doesn't matter, Rage, how tall of a wall you build, I'm gonna climb it! No matter how big of an obstacle you put in front of me, I'm gonna get past it! Shadoe Rage walks around here calling himself the true World Champion?

[Hernandez is fired up now, spitting on the floor angrily.]

CH: Mentiroso! Liar! Shadoe Rage may be one hell of a competitor but he's nowhere near the man that Ryan Martinez is. The World Television Title deserves better. The fans deserve better. And the entire AWA deserves better.

And tonight...

[He raises a clenched fist.]

CH: They're gonna get it! Arriba!

[He throws the fist skyward, spinning away from Blackwell to head - presumably - to the ring.]

SLB: Now THAT sounds like a man who is determined to take home the gold here tonight in San Francisco! This should be something else. Phil Watson, take it away!

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

PW: The following contest is scheduled for one fall with a ten minute time limit and is for the AWA World Television Title!

[Watson pauses as the crowd cheers the title match.]

[A trumpet fanfare leads into "Himno del Chivas de Guadalajara" (<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Mr61JbHOyTo>), and the crowd cheers. Immediately, Cesar Hernandez steps from behind the curtain, and takes a deep theatrical bow to the audience.]

PW: From Guadalajara, Jalisco, Mexico... weighing two-hundred forty-two pounds... CESAR HERNANDEZ!

[A tall, rangy, dusky-skinned man with voluminous shoulder-length black hair, Hernandez sports a toothy smile as he waves to the fans, jogging confidently down the aisle. He fistpumps and claps, exhorting and greeting the fans on both sides of the aisle. It takes him little time to cover the distance to the ring, and he hops the rope, coming up in a big uppercut fistpump as the fans cheer. The clean-shaven Mexican bears the scars of years of battle, yet despite it all retains a handsome visage. He's wearing green trunks and boots (both of which are monogrammed with his initials), matching kneepads, and white wrist tape. His ring jacket is a very stylish one, with pleated sleeves and frills along the torso... it bears the color of his trunks, along with white and orange lining and trim.]

GM: The challenger in tonight's World Television Title match on his way to the ring, fans, and could tonight be his lucky night?

BW: His lucky night was when that hot-headed twerp got past my boys and broke my leg. Luckiest night of his life. I don't think guys like him get more than one.

GM: We'll see about that.

[Hernandez takes a slow jog about the ring, pumping his legs to limber up, as he greets and urges on the fans on each side.]

GM: And Hernandez looks fired up tonight in this third bout with the AWA World Television champion, Shadoc Rage.

BW: That's just because he found an extra spicy jalapeño in his enchilada, daddy.

GM: Already?

BW: I know, it's barely past supper time but he loves himself some enchiladas.

GM: Will you stop!

[Hernandez' music fades as Phil Watson calls out again.]

PW: And his opponent... weighing in at 246 pounds... from Halifax, Nova Scotia, Canada... he is the AWA WORLD TELEVISION CHAMMMMPIONNNNN...

SHAAAAAAAAADOOOOOOOOOOOE RAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAGE!

[The crowd curses the name as Irene Cara's "Fame" plays.]

GM: After the events at Rising Sun Showdown, Shadoc Rage may be more hated by these AWA fans than ever. He abandoned Team AWA in their time of need and-

BW: He defended himself against a sneak attack by Supernova! I know he picked a wrong time to do it, but why does that grease-painted backstabber get a pass?

GM: Because he didn't do anything wrong, Bucky!

BW: He picked Juan Vasquez and Calisto Dufresne on his team! That's a start!

GM: Those weren't his-

[Shadoc Rage comes through the curtains, glaring at the booing crowd. He raises the AWA World Television title high in the air and pirouettes, displaying his robes to the crowd. He has his usual mic in his right hand.]

SR: Citizens of Rage Country!

[He pauses as they boo.]

SR: I'm disappointed. You think that YOUR AWA World Television Champion would ever betray you? No, it was all Supernova's fault! Stupid Supernova! STUPIDNOVA! He ruined what would be a great win for the AWA! But have no fear! Because I'm going to give you a show as an apology for Stupidnova's deceit. Tonight, Cesar Hernandez goes down for your amusement! You're welcome!

[The crowd boos as Rage approaches ringside and locks the fuchsia and silver title into the ringside trophy case.]

BW: Stupidnova! I love it!

GM: Shadoc Rage showing all the cleverness of a 12 year old with that childish name for Supernova. And here he is in the ring, removing his robe and cursing and pointing at Hernandez.

[Who is having none of it. The 20 year veteran charges across the gap and throws four hard right hands at Shadoc Rage, sending the champion spinning to the mat in a heap. The referee physically interjects himself between the two competitors, pushing Hernandez back.]

BW: He hit a man wearing glasses! What a low down dirty coward!

[Rage charges up off the mat and clotheslines Hernandez down as referee Ricky Longfellow flinches out of the way.]

GM: And Ricky Longfellow giving Shadoc Rage an earful! He won't tolerate Rage's cheapshots!

BW: What? Hernandez started it!

[Rage immediately climbs the ropes, still wearing his glasses and leaps off with the flying double axehandle...

...and Hernandez BURIES a right hand into the midsection, sending the Sensational One flipping end over end and his glasses skittering off into the crowd.]

BW: Hey! That guy's got his glasses! He's got the champ's glasses!

[We cut to the crowd where an overweight, balding man in a fairly snug "UNLEASH THE DOGS" t-shirt has slipped on the glasses and is doing a mocking attempt of Rage's signature spin to a big cheer!]

BW: Oh, now they're ruined! The champ can't even sell them on eBay! Nobody will want them after this!

[As we cut back to the ring and the bell sounds, the challenger is staying on the attack, stomping Rage across the ring in the gut. Rage lunges under the ropes, attempting to escape...

...but Hernandez ducks through the ropes, hooking the trunks of the champion with both hands, pulling to prevent his escape!]

BW: He's trying to steal the trunks right off the champ! Disgusting!

[To avoid giving the world a full moon, Rage is forced to retreat back into the ring where Hernandez uses his head as something to bounce repeatedly off the turnbuckles.]

GM: The challenger's got Rage off his game, smashing his head into the top turnbuckle!

[Rage staggers out of the corner where Hernandez hooks an arm, whipping him across to the far ropes. The champion comes back fast and catches another right hand to the gut, flipping him over onto his back in the middle of the ring!]

BW: LOWBLOW! LOW BLOW! DISQUALIFY HIM!

GM: That was not a low blow, Bucky! That was a shot to the midsection!

BW: Not from where I'm sitting - plus, it was a closed fist! Blatantly illegal!

GM: That much is true... and look out here, Hernandez is going for the figure four leglock! His signature submission hold!

[The crowd's cheers are cut short as Rage desperately reaches up to gouge Cesar Hernandez's eyes and rolls away to the safety of the floor.]

GM: Rage bails out to the floor after going to the eyes... an illegal act of his own, Bucky.

BW: Hey, what goes around comes around! Hernandez cheated first!

[Rage crawls to the announce table to regroup. He rests his head on the trophy case, gazing at his reflexion in the shiny surface of his title belt.]

BW: The champ got out to the floor, trying to recover and- look out!

[Cesar Hernandez comes up behind the champion, grabbing him by the braided hair and SLAMS his head down into the wooden trophy case!]

GM: Headfirst to the wooden case!

BW: Hernandez is cheating in this match more than he cheats those poor dumb customers on change at his taco shop!

[Hernandez gives a shout to the crowd before rolling Rage into the ring.]

GM: The challenger not letting Rage have time to regroup out on the floor. Rage is always thinking, always plotting so who knows what he was thinking of doing out there!

[Hernandez climbs back inside the ring, hopping up to the second rope before leaping off with an elbowdrop to the chest!]

GM: Hernandez drops the elbow!

BW: Paled in comparison to the champ's elbow!

GM: It didn't have the height, the elevation, or anywhere near the impact but it did a number on the champion who is again rolling, trying to get away, trying to create space as the challenger advances on him. You know that - as confident as Rage is - he's gotta be concerned right now... he's gotta be wondering if these are his final moments as the World Television Champion and boy, what an upset that would be in my book, Bucky.

BW: A major upset. Colossal upset. And the most sickening sight since Henrietta Lynch posed for that magazine back in the day.

GM: Bucky!

[With Rage struggling to his feet, using the ropes to climb off the mat, Hernandez grabs him by the arm, swinging him around...

...and a desperate Rage reaches out, digging his fingers into the eyes, momentarily at least stopping the challenger's momentum!]

GM: Rage goes to the eyes and-

[Grabbing Hernandez by the hair, Rage rifles him over the top rope to the floor, collapsing to his knees as he does so.]

GM: HERNANDEZ GOES DOWN HARD TO THE FLOOR!

[Rage is down on his knees, breathing heavily as Hernandez is prone out on the floor. The referee moves towards the ropes, starting his ten count as Rage stays down on the canvas, trying to catch a breather.]

GM: And I think this shows just how off-balance Shadoe Rage is right now. Rage is usually diving to the floor, flying off the top rope onto a prone opponent. Right now, he's just trying to recover. Cesar Hernandez has COMPLETELY taken the champion out of his gameplan.

BW: But the great thing about a veteran like Rage is that he's been in every situation... he's gone through every set of circumstances. He knows how to fight back from any bad spot he gets himself into.

[At the count of four, Hernandez climbs to his feet, using the ropes to pull himself up on the apron as Rage rises, walking towards the ropes to cut him off.]

GM: Hernandez is stirring and Rage is coming to greet him...

[As Rage reaches the ropes, Hernandez uses his grip on the middle rope to swing himself between the ropes, driving his shoulder into the midsection of the champion!]

GM: Ohh! Hernandez caught him!

[The challenger grabs the top rope with both hands, catapulting up and over into a sunset flip!]

GM: SUNSET FLIP GETS ONE!! HE GETS TWO!! HE GETS-

[Rage clashes his legs together on the ears of Hernandez, breaking the pin attempt to the jeers of the crowd.]

GM: Hernandez stays on the champion... both men back to their feet at the same time...

[A big haymaker from Hernandez finds the mark, sending Rage sailing through the air and crashing down to the canvas. He flips to all fours, crawling quickly towards the corner as Hernandez stalks in after him, nodding his head at the cheering crowd...]

GM: Hernandez pulls him to his feet... big whip sends him across! Hernandez coming in aft- ohh!

[The crowd groans as Rage raises a knee at the last moment, causing Hernandez to smash his jaw into it!]

BW: Rage caught him coming in!

[Grabbing Hernandez by the hair, Rage SLAMS his head into the top turnbuckle, sending him staggering back as Rage leaps through the ropes, climbing to the top in two easy steps, takes aim...

...and drops down from his perch on the top turnbuckle to the ring, slamming a double axehandle down between the eyes, knocking Hernandez flat!]

GM: Death From Above on target! And Rage takes the chance to cover!

[A two count follows before Hernandez lifts his shoulder off the canvas, breaking the count in time. Rage pushes up to his knees, grabbing a handful of hair and slamming his fist between the eyes of Hernandez a few times. A mean look comes into his eyes as he climbs back to his feet.]

GM: The champion's back up... and he does NOT look happy, fans.

[Pulling Hernandez off the mat, Rage shoves him towards the corner, sending him chestfirst into the buckles. He staggers backwards as Rage slips in, leaping up, cupping his hands around the face while driving his knees into the back, falling to the mat with Hernandez in that position!]

GM: OH MY STARS!

[Hernandez flails about on the canvas as Rage rolls into another pin attempt, again earning a two count before Hernandez lifts the shoulder.]

GM: Another two count off that devastating maneuver... and Shadoo Rage - just like that - has taken control of this matchup.

[Rage pulls Hernandez off the mat, dragging him into a gutwrench, muscling him up and over in a suplex, floating into yet another pin attempt.]

GM: One! Two! No! Again, Cesar Hernandez showing that fire that has made him one of the most popular - and successful - competitors all over the globe for twenty years as he kicks out of another hard throw down to the canvas.

[Pushing off the mat, Rage glares at the official, holding up three fingers before leaping into the air, driving his knee down into the sternum with a high kneedrop!]

GM: Big kneedrop! Rage drops it down!

[He climbs off the mat, holding his arms out to full extension and shouting "IS THIS THE BEST YOU'VE GOT?!" to big jeers from the San Francisco crowd continuing to cheer on the Mexican underdog.]

GM: Shadoe Rage letting these fans here in the Golden State hear it. He believes he's the best in the world and he's determined to prove it here tonight.

BW: It takes guts to call yourself the true World Champion, Gordo... and Shadoe Rage comes out each and every week and tells the entire world that's the case.

GM: Guts or delusions?

BW: Either way, I don't see Ryan Martinez telling Rage that he's wrong, do you?

[As the announcers banter, Rage drags Hernandez to his feet, shoving him back into the corner, laying knee after knee into the ribcage before lifting the challenger up, draping him over both sides of the middle rope in the corner...]

GM: What is he- ohh! Knee to the lower back! And another!

[With Hernandez stunned, Rage steps up to the second rope, pushing high into the air before bringing both knees down into the midsection, smashing the challenger down into the canvas!]

GM: OHHH! What in the world was that?!

BW: Innovative offense out of the World Television Champion right there, daddy! Hernandez is done after that!

GM: That remains to be seen as Rage drags Hernandez out of the corner. We've passed the five minute mark in this one... less than five minutes remaining as the champion is firmly in control of this one.

[Rage slowly climbs back to his feet, planting his foot on the chest of Hernandez, ordering the referee to count as he extends his muscular arms, taunting the fans as the referee drops down to count.]

GM: Arrogant pin attempt by the champion gets one... it gets two...

[Hernandez shoves out from under the cover, breaking the pin to big cheers as an annoyed Rage looks down at the challenger.]

GM: You're not gonna pin a veteran like Cesar Hernandez that way.

BW: No, no... first you drop a nickel on the mat and when he dives for it, you waffle him with the rest of the roll! That's how you pin a guy like Hernandez, daddy!

GM: Would you stop?!

[Rage gets a vicious look in his eyes as he drops an elbow to Hernandez's heart. He drops another. And another. And another. And another. And

another. And another. And another. And another! Until he finally leaps high and drives another knee to Hernandez's heart.]

BW: That'll bust a ribcage!

[Rage climbs back to his feet, ignoring the protests of the official as he points out to ringside where the title belt rests on the timekeeper's table.]

"HE CAN'T HAVE HER!"

[With that declaration, the champion grabs Hernandez and slings him over the top rope to the floor below.]

GM: Ohh! All the way over the top and down to the floor!

[Rage brushes past the official, again climbing to the top rope in two quick steps. He stands tall, raising his arms up over his head to full extension...

...and then leaps off, soaring through the air to smash a double axehandle down across the rising Hernandez, sending him sprawling backwards and down to the barely-padded floor!]

GM: Death From Above connects again!

BW: He got all of that, Gordo. This one might be done right now if Rage wants to take the countout win.

GM: And I'm sure he'd be willing to. You're talking about a man who wants to keep that title around his waist at all costs. He wouldn't hesitate to take a countout, a DQ, a time limit draw. As long as he leaves San Francisco as the World Television Champion, he'll use any means necessary.

[Rage climbs back to his feet, looking down at the stunned Hernandez. He leans down, dragging Hernandez up off the floor...]

"CLAAAAAAAAAAAAANG!"

[...and HURLS him chestfirst into the steel barricade, causing Hernandez' upper body to pitch over the railing.]

GM: Into the steel goes the challenger! Good grief! That could crack a man's sternum, fans.

[Rage promptly rolls under the ropes, breaking the referee's count.]

GM: The World Television Champion is back in...

[The Canadian climbs to his feet, again ignoring the official as he steps to the corner, climbing the turnbuckles swiftly.]

GM: Rage is going up top again?!

BW: He's gonna do it again, Gordo! He's gonna drop that axehandle off the top on Hernandez who is draped across that barricade! He's sick and tired of Hernandez getting shots at the title by catering all the shows for free!

GM: That's not how he gets these shots and you know it! Hernandez has time after time earned his opportunities to face the World Television Champion and this isn't right, fans! This is a professional wrestling contest where the goal is to defeat your opponent - not to injure them!

[Rage stands tall, looking out menacingly at the jeering crowd. He points a threatening finger into the throng of fans before leaping into the air, sailing through the sky...

...and SLAMMING down into the steel as Hernandez rolls aside to avoid him!]

"CLAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAANG!"

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

GM: Hernandez moved! Rage goes crashing into the ringside barrier!

BW: The champ might have a broken rib!

GM: I've just been informed that we're passing the eight minute mark in this one. Less than two minutes remain now in the time limit for this World Television Title match and you've gotta wonder if Rage is regretting not just taking the potential countout win!

BW: You... what?! You WONDER that?! That piece of trash Hernandez just tried to cripple the champion and you wonder if Rage is regretting not... arrgh! I can't believe you sometimes, Myers!

GM: Hey, that was Rage trying to injure Hernandez - NOT the other way around! Don't let your bias against a competitor the caliber of Cesar Hernandez get the better of you, Bucky.

[With Rage in trouble, Hernandez pulls him off the railing, throwing him backfirst into the edge of the apron!]

GM: Uh oh! I think that attempt to injure Hernandez may have gotten him fired up!

[The wild-eyed challenger approaches Rage, grabbing him by the hair, blasting him with one... two... and a third right hand, the final blow sending Rage spiraling away, collapsing down to the mat where he attempts to crawl away from Hernandez.]

GM: Look at the champion, making a run for it!

BW: Get out of there, champ! Go! Go! Go!

GM: Hernandez is coming after him though. He's not about to let it end like this!

[The challenger hooks Rage by the tights, dragging him up to his feet again...

...and BLASTS him between the eyes with a right hand, earning an admonishment from the referee as Rage sprawls himself chestfirst over the ring apron, rolling under the bottom rope.]

GM: Shadoo Rage is running for his life as he's got a fired-up Cesar Hernandez hot on his trail!

BW: There's no telling what this lunatic might do if he gets his hands on Rage. You know he did time in Guadalajara for assault with a deadly weapon, right?

GM: He did NOT!

BW: Sure did. Taco Tuesday's Mahi Mahi... well, let's just say-

GM: Let's not!

[Hernandez pulls himself up on the apron, ducking through the ropes as Rage crawls across the ring.]

GM: And as Rage makes a run for it, you gotta think he's trying to buy himself some time now... he may realize that we're creeping up on the nine minute mark...

[The challenger grabs Rage by the leg, shaking his head back and forth as he drags Rage away from the corner, pulling him out to the middle of the ring...]

GM: He's going for the figure four!

[Hernandez wraps up the leg, applying the spinning toehold...

...as Rage reaches up, digging his fingers into the eyes, and raking hard!]

GM: Ohh! Rage goes to the eyes to save himself again!

BW: Smart move!

[The timekeeper's call of one minute remaining in the time limit fills the air as Rage scrambles to his feet, falling back against the ropes as a blinded Hernandez, arms swinging back and forth in front of him approaches.]

GM: Rage is backing off but Hernandez is still coming!

BW: He can't see a thing! Do it again, champ!

[A furious Hernandez reaches out, grabbing Rage by the hair, dragging him into the corner where he starts raining down fists on the champion, landing blow after blow after blow...

...until Rage slumps down against the ropes, still taking a pummeling from the hot-headed challenger!]

GM: The referee's ordering Cesar to step back but I'm not even sure Hernandez can hear him at this point! He needs to-

[The referee wedges himself between the challenger and his defensive champion, shouting at Hernandez who shoves him aside, moving back in...

...which is Rage's cue to lean in, yanking the legs up and out from under Hernandez, jackknifing them into a cradle, leaning over to apply pressure.]

BW: COVER! COVER!

[The official dives to the mat.]

GM: ONE!!

[With the official staring at the shoulders, Rage kicks his legs up, planting his feet on the middle rope to apply more pressure.]

GM: He's got his feet on the ropes! Ref, he's got his feet on the ropes!

[But the official is focused, slapping the mat a second time!]

GM: No, no, no! Not like-

[And a third time!]

GM: Ahhhhhh! Shadoo Rage just stole this one!

[Rage promptly takes his feet down, rolling under the ropes to the floor where he instantly throws his arms up into the air...

...but not for long as the crowd roars at the sight of Supernova charging down the aisle. The face-painted fan favorite dives headfirst under the bottom rope, speaking quickly to the official, pointing at the middle rope as a confused Hernandez listens in, hands on his hips as he glares at Rage who is staring at Supernova in open hatred.]

GM: Supernova hits the ring! And he's telling the referee exactly what happened!

BW: Who cares what STUPIDnova has to say about it?! Shadoo Rage won this match fair and square!

GM: Fair and square? Oh brother. You're lucky this arena has a roof or the Maker might be looking to smite you with a lightning bolt for a lie that bold.

[Supernova continues to argue with the official, pointing to the middle rope. The referee points at his eyes, miming counting to three.]

GM: I think the official is saying that he can't call what he can't see, fans, and he may be absolutely right about that.

BW: That's right! STUPIDnova can complain all he wants but in the record book will go down as your winner - and STILL AWA World Television Champion - Shadoe Rage!

[Supernova and Cesar Hernandez are discussing what happened, the crowd jeering the referee's decision as he leaps out to the floor, lifting Rage's arm as the champion holds the belt over his head.]

GM: Shadoe Rage will retain the title but controversy is SERIOUSLY in the air with this one, fans. Supernova's out here and... we're going to try to get a word from him about tonight and what went down at Rising Sun Showdown right after the break!

[Supernova and Hernandez are discussing the situation, still looking out at a gloating Rage at ringside who is clutching the title belt as we fade to black.]

Cut to a shot of an Aztec temple, the sun high over the brick structure. Gathered before the temple is a priest wearing an ornate headdress, his body covered in paint.]

VO: Since ancient times, warriors have gathered, testing themselves on sacred grounds. Today, that tradition continues...

[The loud guitar of Los Rabanes' "Ella Se Mueva Cruel" kicks in, amidst a flurry of shots of colorfully doing battle with each other. The cuts are quick, no more than two seconds at most, men leaping, men rolling others up into painful looking submissions, and wrestlers scoring pins on one another. It all goes by in a blur, almost too fast for the eye to follow. The last sight is the pain on the face of Caspian Abaran, as he is forced to relinquish his El Principe del Sol mask.]

VO: For those men gathered in combat, only one word can describe the action...

[As the song continues, there is a shot of El Caliente hitting the Sweet and Spicy Rana on an unsuspecting foe, the move truly spectacular, as he races across the ring towards his opponent, who is sitting on the top turnbuckle. Caliente springs off the second rope, bounces off the adjacent top rope, and then with pinpoint accuracy, hooks his legs around his opponent's neck, executing a perfect huracanrana.]

VO: LUCHA!

[Another shot, this time of Super Solar hitting a frog splash on the prone Punky Perra, Perra's pierced and tattooed body bouncing off the mat as the

camera lingers on the large sunburst tattoo on Solar's back]

VO: LUCHA!

[El Corazon Negro is shown, engaging in a brutal exchange of chops with Japanese legend GOLIATH Takehara. The large Japanese wrestler's face contorting in pain with each chop from the legend, only for El Corazon Negro to feel the sting of GOLIATH's devastating chops.]

VO: LUCHA!

[Another series of shots of SWLL action, ending with a pair of beautiful SWLL ring girls blowing a kiss to the audience.]

VO: As the march to Copa de Trios continues, the greatest luchadors in the world do battle in an attempt to showcase themselves on the massive international spectacular!

[Clips of Copa de Trios Qualifying Matches flash by as we see El Caliente corkscrewing off the top rope to the floor on top of El Lobo Grande and Super Solar takes flight with a frog splash onto a prone El Lobo Negro.

VO: Will it be the highflying trio who reigns supreme?

[El Lobo Grande digs his teeth into the mask-covered forehead of Super Solar, his mask showing bloody teeth.]

VO: Or will one of Mexico's most deadly trios conquer?

[A barrage of quick cutting shots - dueling somersault plancha by Solar and Caliente, a flying crossbody off the top by the bulky Lobo Grande, and a discus clothesline by El Lobo Gordo that turns El Caliente inside out.]

VO: You'll see all this and more this week on...

LUCHA LUCHA LUCHA!!

[Fade to black...

...and as we come back up, we find Colt Patterson standing backstage in a corridor.]

CP: We're back on The X with the man who tells it true and just a few moments ago, we saw Shadoe Rage successfully defend the World Television Title against Cesar Hernandez and, the next thing you know, Supernova is out there, trying to make excuses for why Hernandez couldn't get the job done! I'm gonna get to the bottom of what's going on and why Supernova just can't accept that the better man won!

[At that point, Supernova comes down the hallway with Hernandez, Supernova looking animated as Hernandez is trying to calm him down. Patterson turns in their direction and walks over to them.]

CP: Hold it right there! Supernova, you've got some nerve putting your nose into something that isn't your business, something that's between Shadoe Rage and Cesar Hernandez, all of this after you screwed up and hit Rage with a Heat Wave when he was supposed to be your partner in Team AWA! You have a lot of explaining to do!

[Hernandez holds up his hand.]

CH: Not now, Colt... you'll have to get your questions answered later.

S: [shaking his head] No, Cesar, it's all right... Colt wants answers, I'll give him his answers!

[Supernova takes a deep breath, trying to regain his composure.]

S: See, I was just talking to my friend Cesar about how I've had it up to here [holds his hand alongside his neck] with Shadoe Rage and his cowardice, but you know what? The fact is, they don't put asterisks by any match result, do they, Colt?

CP: [looking puzzled] Well, of course they don't! The bottom line is Shadoe Rage is still the champion!

S: Right! I don't have to like the result, any more than I have to like the result of what went down at Rising Sun Showdown, but the bottom line is, the result is in the books!

CP: And yet everyone knows the reason why Team AWA lost the match is because of what you did to Shadoe Rage and....

S: [holding up his hand] Wait one second, Colt... just wait one second. Didn't I just say that they don't put an asterisk in the books by the match result?

CP: Of course, and nor should they!

S: So how come you want to start putting asterisks to explain why and how Team AWA lost? Just like you don't put them on what happened in tonight's TV title defense, you don't put them on the Rising Sun match, either! Team AWA didn't get the job done, Shadoe Rage was part of Team AWA, so Shadoe Rage better own up to it just like I have, just like Juan has, and just like the Dogs of War have! And deep down, Calisto Dufresne knows the job didn't get done, either!

CP: So what are you trying to prove, Supernova? What exactly are you supposed to be getting at?

S: I'm saying that I make no excuses for what happened, but Rage wants to make up a lot as he goes! He may be right about what unfolded at Rising Sun, but if he thinks he's not responsible for what happened as much as anyone else was, he's more delusional than I ever thought! But seeing as

how he doesn't want to take responsibility for what he did, and what led to the outcome, then let's get things settled!

[He jams a finger toward Patterson.]

S: Since you talk to Shadoe Rage all the time, you tell him that I want him in that ring again, and we'll get things settled! Especially because, deep down, he knows that while he may have kept walking out with the title each time we met, he never did beat me, and it's eating him alive! So now is his chance to settle everything! And I'll promise you that there won't be any asterisks, any excuses for him after I beat him this time around and take that title!

[He pounds his chest several times and howls.]

S: HE'S GONNA FEEL THE HEAT, COLT! YOU TELL HIM THAT!

[Hernandez puts a hand on Supernova's shoulder.]

CH: Come on, Supernova, let's go... we just need to settle down, all right?

[He guides Supernova past Patterson, who watches them for a moment, before turning back to the camera.]

CP: Are you kidding me? Supernova really wants another shot at the World Television Champion? Just how many more times does he want to be shown up by the greatest champion the AWA has ever known? Back to you, Gordon and Bucky!

[We crossfade back to ringside where the announce team is seated.]

GM: Thanks, Colt... and that's a challenge right there, Bucky. Supernova wants another shot at the World Television Champion!

BW: Of course he does! Everyone wants a shot at the ten pounds of gold but let's face facts, Gordo. Supernova's had how many shots at the title now? And he's lost 'em all!

GM: He has not!

BW: Oh, I must be mistaken. Is he holding the gold?

GM: You know he's not.

BW: That means he didn't win... that means he lost... and that means that he's the big loser that Shadoe Rage says he is! He wants another shot at the title? I'm not surprised... but I WILL be surprised if the champ gives it to him 'cause in my book, Supernova had his last shot at the title, daddy!

GM: That remains to be seen. Shadoe Rage has got a challenge on his hands and... well, we'll find out in the weeks ahead if he chooses to accept it, I'm sure. Fans, while many of the AWA's top stars competed at Rising

Sun Showdown in the Tokyo Dome, many more made the trip to Japan with us and competed in various Tiger Paw Pro events over the past few weeks. The rising duo known as Next Gen are two such stars. Right now, we're going to take a look at some highlights from one of their matches during the tour when they got in a little Stampede Cup Quarterfinal warm-up by taking on Junya Toroyama and Bull Shindo, former members of the unit known as ACHILLES. Afterward, Mark Stegglet caught up with Next Gen. Let's take you to the highlights with Jason Dane and Colt Patterson on the call!

[We cut to footage of Howie Somers having trapped Junya Toroyama and driving his shoulder several times into Toroyama's midsection.]

JD: Somers has Toroyama pinned in the corner... what a relentless assault by the youngster.

CP: This Somers kid is a lot like his uncle. He's a powerful man and he can use that strength to wear you down.

JD: Somers with an Irish whip to the opposite corner. Look at that impact, Colt!

CP: And Somers just taking his time... I don't know, Dane, I wouldn't be wasting too much time here.

JD: Somers right on top of Toroyama... drags him to his corner and brings in Daniel Harper.

CP: And look at this... they've got Toroyama hooked up.

[Howie and Daniel stand side by side, each grabbing Toroyama by the trunks and hoisting him upward.]

JD: Double vertical suplex! What a piece of tandem offense by Next Gen!

CP: And Harper's going right for the cover.

[The referee's hand slaps the mat twice, but Toroyama gets the shoulder up after two.]

JD: Two count only, though. Toroyama showing his resiliency.

CP: Well, give Harper credit for going for the cover. Now he's got to stay on top of him.

[Outside the ring, Julie Somers claps her hands in encouragement. In the ring, Harper pulls Toroyama off the mat, standing next to him and wrapping his leg behind Toroyama's]

JD: A Russian legsweep by Daniel Harper... and look at how quickly he gets to his feet!

[Harper leaps up and drops an elbow on Toroyama.]

CP: And an elbowdrop right after that! I have to admit, I'm impressed, Dane. The kid's moving fast and striking hard. A lot of kids these days like to hit the move and then stand around and pose.

JD: You resemble that remark, Colt, as Harper dives into another cover... Harper hooks the leg... but a shoulder up after the count of two!

[We cut to later footage in which the ACHILLES duo has taken control and Shindo has thrown Harper to the canvas with a belly to belly suplex.]

JD: Harper in trouble as Shindo goes for a cover... one... two... and... NO! Daniel Harper gets the shoulder up!

CP: Harper really needs to make the tag... Shindo and Toroyama have really done a number on him... and Shindo's making the tag!

JD: And the ACHILLES members send him into the ropes... double back elbow to the face!

[Harper falls to the canvas as Shindo and Toroyama bounce off opposite side of the ropes.]

JD: And look at this... a double elbowdrop on Harper!

CP: Now that's a great double-team move... now Toroyama's going for the cover!

JD: He's got the leg hooked... one... two... three... NO! The referee says Daniel Harper got the shoulder up!

CP: I don't know about that one, Dane... that looked like a slow count! This Japanese official might be trying too hard to show that he's unbiased. I think his countryman had the pin there.

[Toroyama pulls Harper off the canvas, slapping on a waistlock and taking him over.]

JD: Toroyama with a German suplex and a bridge! And the referee's there... one... two... three... no, Harper with the shoulder up again!

CP: That's twice, Dane! That had to be a three count!

JD: Daniel Harper not willing to give in!

[Outside the ring, Julie slaps the canvas several times and Howie leans over the ropes shouting words of encouragement.]

We cut to footage later in the match, in which Harper hits Shindo with a European uppercut, then floors him with a standing dropkick.]

JD: Harper sends Shindo down to the canvas... tags in Howie Somers!

CP: And look at him go to work... he's fresh and ready to go!

JD: Somers with those hard forearm shorts and now sending Shindo into the ropes... back body drop sends Shindo down!

[Somers immediately runs into the ropes, and as Shindo rises, Somers knocks him back down with a leaping shoulder tackle.]

JD: Shoulderblock sends Shindo back down again!

CP: And look at how easily he pulls him up!

JD: Somers with Shindo, has him set up... drives him into the mat with a powerslam! And the referee is there... one... two... three... NO! Shindo gets the shoulder up! How close was that, Colt?

CP: It was close, but give credit to Shindo, a lesser man would have been down for the count there!

[Howie pulls Shindo up, who delivers a blow to the midsection, but Howie rides it out. He pulls Shindo to his feet and knocks him silly with a headbutt.]

JD: Somers backing Shindo into the corner... there's an Irish whip. He charges him... but Shindo raises a boot and catches him in the face!

CP: Shindo with a clothesline! He knocked him down!

JD: Shindo now running off the ropes...

[Shindo leaps up and extends a leg, but Howie rolls out of the way at the last second.]

JD: Nobody there!

[We cut to footage later in the match, in which all four men are in the ring, Shindo and Toroyama having cornered the Next Gen members on opposite sides.]

JD: Shindo and Toroyama working over Harper and Somers... Shindo with hard chops to Harper's chest... Toroyama kicking away at Somers' midsection.

CP: And they've got them set up... they're going to send them into each other.

JD: Shindo and Toroyama with Irish whips... no, they are reversed!

[Shindo and Toroyama are sent into one another, and as they stagger backwards, Harper leads up for a dropkick.]

JD: The former ACHILLES members collide! And Harper's dropkick sends them into each other again!

[A running clothesline out of Somers takes Toroyama off his feet, sending him rolling out to the floor with Somers in hot pursuit.]

CP: Somers is heading out after Toroyama and I think I've lost track, Dane. Who's the legal man in this one?

JD: I'm not sure I recall either. I believe it's Harper and Shindo.

[With Shindo dazed, Harper steps in behind him, hooking in a cobra clutch...]

JD: Submission hold locked in!

CP: Not for long, Dane!

[Harper plants his feet, bending his legs...]

CP: WHOA! A cobra clutch suplex! He got Shindo over!

JD: He's rolling on top of Shindo... the leg is hooked! One... two... three! Yes, he got him!

[The bell sounds and Harper rolls out of the ring, where Julie greets him with a high five. Howie makes his way around to them and high fives each of them.]

JD: What a win for Next Gen! An impressive victory against two of Tiger Paw Pro's rising stars!

[We cut to backstage where we find Mark Stegglet with the members of Next Gen. Howie Somers is to his left and Daniel Harper is to his right, both men still in their wrestling attire. Julie Somers stands next to Howie.]

MS: Daniel Harper and Howie Somers, what a victory for you just a few minutes ago. The two of you have turned a lot of heads since you arrived in AWA, and now, you'll be coming back to the States with a victory over two of Tiger Paw Pro's finest! What are your thoughts right now?

DH: You know, Mark, it feels great to go out and get a big win like this. Who would have thought just six months into my wrestling career that I'd already be making my first appearance in Japan, stepping onto a big stage with the rest of the Tiger Paw Pro roster, some of the biggest names worldwide! It's exciting, it's something I didn't dream would happen this soon, but now that we've come away with the win... we're just on top of the world right now!

MS: Now you've got the Stampede Cup waiting back in the States, and it won't be long before the two of you meet up with one of the top tag teams of all time, Strictly Business, in the quarterfinals!

HW: That's right, Mark. While we're feeling pretty good about tonight, but we know we've got a tougher task ahead of us. But it's like we've said before, we aren't going to walk around the AWA think we are entitled to anything we ask for, not simply because we're still learning our way around the AWA, but because we know that everywhere we go, you've got to earn your spot, every single night, no matter what you accomplished the night before. But Strictly Business, we can promise you that Next Gen is gonna give you everything you can handle, and when it's all said and done, we're gonna earn your respect whether you believe that or not!

[The two high five each other and walk off the set. Julie, however, stays behind.]

MS: Julie Somers, your brother and friend have certainly made their presence felt in the AWA.

JS: [nodding] Yeah, they sure have. But you know what? Just a few nights early, at Rising Sun Showdown, I could have had my chance.

[She puts her hands on her hips.]

JS: You'll recall when I first showed up here with Howie and Daniel, how I talked about how I would have loved to have stepped into that ring, and I didn't know if that chance would ever come again. Because I know enough about AWA to know that it looked they were going to bring some women's wrestling here, only for it kind of fall by the wayside. It made me wonder if the AWA was ever going to deliver on what seemed so promising...

[She sighs.]

JS: So imagine my surprise when Miyuki Ozaki shows up on Saturday Night Wrestling and lays out a challenge. And I had been so tempted to step forward and answer, but a part of me wondered if this was going to be another situation where something showed promise, but nothing was delivered afterward.

Well, Melissa Cannon took it on, and she may have lost, but she did herself proud, just like she did the last couple of times she went into the ring. But for me... I didn't step forward when I had the chance. For that, I can only blame myself.

MS: Julie, I should remind you that Melissa Cannon called you out personally for not stepping forward to answer Ozaki's challenge. Do you have anything you want to say about that?

JS: [nodding] Yeah, I do. Melissa, you were right, I should have stepped forward. Instead, I let my doubts get in the way and I forgot about what I loved to do. Like I said earlier, I can only blame myself. But I will make one promise to you, Melissa. While you can hold your head high about how you represented yourself at Rising Sun Showdown, the next time an opportunity like that comes about, I'm gonna be the first one to take it. And then maybe, just maybe, the AWA will deliver on what shows so much promise.

[With that, she walks off the set as we cut back to live action in San Francisco where the announce team is seated at ringside.]

GM: Julie Somers with some words directed at Melissa Cannon... at the entirety of the wrestling world actually as you can feel the momentum building towards what is a long-awaited moment for many wrestling fans. But how about that performance by Next Gen, Bucky?

BW: They looked good over there in Japan, Gordo... but they've got a date in the Quarterfinals with Strictly Business and two wet-behind-the-ears punks taking on a pair that many think will be enshrined into the Pro Wrestling Hall of Fame later this year. That's a hard hill to climb, daddy.

GM: We'll be talking more about the Stampede Cup later tonight but right now, let's head up to the ring for our next match!

[Cut to the ring where Phil Watson is standing near a man attired in camouflage trunks, black knee pads and black boots. That man is awaiting his opponent, shadowboxing at the air as the ring announcer speaks.]

PW: The following contest is set for one fall with a ten minute time limit. Introducing first... in the corner to my right from Watertown, New York and weighing in tonight at 235 pounds... CHARLIE STEEEEEEPHENS!

[Stephens nods his head at the scattered cheers as he rolls his shoulders a couple of times.]

GM: The first time we're seeing Charlie Stephens since All-Star Showdown in Hawaii when he was defeated by Maxim Zharkov. We'll see if he has better luck here tonight in San Francisco.

[Watson continues.]

PW: And his opponent...

[As the sounds of a lone saxophone is heard, a chorus of boos greets "Darkest Light" by The Lafayette Afro Rock Band as it begins to resonate throughout the arena. As the drums kick in, the curtain opens and out walks the one and only "Red Hot" Rex Summers and a captivating blonde beauty. She is sporting the suddenly trendy undercut hairstyle and smiles widely as her arm is wrapped around Rex's. She is wearing a skin tight emerald green, one sleeve tank top, and a short gray mini skirt.]

PW: Hailing from St. Paul, Minnesota, he weighs in at 251 pounds... being accompanied to the ring by...

[The next words are dripping with disgust.]

PW: ...the luckiest girl on the planet tonight...

"REDHOT" REX SUMMERS!

[Summers is dressed in a full length blue robe with white sequins running down both lapels and in a zig zag formation across the front. He walks slowly down to the ring, a cocky strut shows his arrogance and disdain for his opponent. Summers simply smirks as he approaches ringside, and we catch the words "Red Hot" are spelled out in more sequins on the back of the robe as he walks past the camera, his "squeeze for the night" by his side, beaming at the camera. They walk up the steps together where she sits on the middle rope, allowing Summers to easily step into the ring where he grabs at the mic.]

RS: Cut the music!

[The boos come louder from the crowd as the music stops.]

GM: You can hear the boos coming from the top row of the Cow Palace here tonight.

BW: But the squeals coming from every woman in the building, Gordo.

[A smirking Summers raises the mic as the young lady accompanying him stands off the side, rubbing his neck with her hands. He throws her a glance, smiling before speaking again.]

RS: Sweetheart, do you realize that every eye in this building is on you right now?

[She nods gleefully as he shakes his head.]

RS: Correction. Every eye in this building is NEAR you right now because the fact of the matter is that all these San Francisco sweat hogs are staring right... at... me!

[The boos pour down... mostly. Still some females squealing though.]

RS: But fair warning, ladies... later tonight when you're at home laying next to the sad state of affairs you've gotten yourself into, you're likely to feel some shaking... some quaking... and some out-and-out rockin' of every part of your bodies...

[He smirks.]

RS: It's not another Bay Area earthquake though, ladies... it's the memory of what you're about to see running through all the right places. Now hit my music as I show you all what a true man looks like!

[In a shock to no one, the arena once again fills with boos, as the sensational looking blonde begins to remove the robe from the back of Summers.]

BW: Gordo, what you're looking at right now is the best body in all of professional sports. Rex Summers is the pinnacle of what all those boys in the back want to look like!

GM: You're sounding a bit jealous, Bucky.

BW: It's a statement of fact Gordon. In fact, in between all of Gladiator's snorts he's said how he wishes he looked like Summers.

GM: I don't know about that but nevertheless, here comes the grand unveiling...

[The robe slips off into the hands of the nameless blonde who smiles at the mixed reaction that Summers receives as he plants his hands on the back of his head, clenching down to show off his chiseled abs. He leans over, allowing her to plant a kiss on his cheek before she starts to exit the ring, robe draped across her arms.]

BW: That's the luckiest lady on the planet... tonight.

GM: You writing Summers' entrances now, Bucky?

BW: Hey, he just had Watson speak the truth in there. Not a single woman in this building can be first... but any of them just might be next.

[As the blonde steps towards the ropes, Charlie Stephens grabs the middle rope, pushing the bottom rope down with his foot to aid her exit from the ring...]

GM: It's nice to see some men still believe in chivalry.

[Just as Gordon finishes his sentence, Rex Summers charges from the middle of the ring and drives his knee hard into the side of Stephens. The impact from the knee sends Stephens through the ropes out onto the apron as the official signals for the bell.]

GM: The bell sounds as this one is underway and-

BW: That's what you get when you try to steal a woman from Rex Summers!

GM: Stealing? He was helping her from the ring!

BW: Obviously you were not paying attention, Gordo. He was leering at her in a very uncomfortable way and Rex, being the real man that he is, was protecting her.

[Rex Summers reaches over the top rope and pulls Stephens to his feet. "Red Hot" fires off a right hand and a second right hand. The second right hand causes Stephens to teeter back but he grabs the top rope to stop from falling.]

GM: Stephens grabbing that top rope to keep his balance...

[Summers blasts him with a third right hand.]

BW: He may have been better off just falling to the floor as Summers again drives his right hand into the head of Stephens. And there's one more for good measure.

GM: Those are closed fists, Bucky.

BW: The referee's telling him that, isn't he?

[Stephens totters back again but he is able to grab the rope when his left hand.]

GM: Stephens desperately trying to hang on and-

[Grabbing the top rope and giving it a yank, Summers brings Stephens flipping back over the ropes, landing flat on his back with a thud.]

BW: Charlie Stephens looking like his brother Tommy, as he's counting the lights right now.

GM: You know darn well, Bucky, that Charlie and Tommy Stephens aren't related. The former military man is trying to get up off the canvas thought and- oh! Summers with a boot to the head, sending him right back down to the canvas!

[A few more stomps follow, aimed at the back of Stephens' neck. The crowd jeers as Summers pauses to strike a double bicep pose towards the fans, smirking as he does.]

GM: This guy certainly is full of himself, pulling Stephens off the mat now, dragging him right into a front facelock...

[Summers slowly but surely turns Stephens over so that they are pressed back to back, pulling Stephens' neck down against his shoulder...

...and then DROPS down into a sitting position, jolting the neck against his shoulder!]

GM: Ohh! Reverse neckbreaker brings Stephens down HARD to the canvas!

BW: There's nothing ruder than a landing like that! It'll jolt your spine from top to bottom and have you beggin' for a chiropractor.

[Rex Summers leans back with a halfhearted cover.]

GM: What an arrogant cover! One, two ... and Charlie Stephens kicks out. You have to think that Summers might've had the win right there if he'd gone for a real cover and not a mocking one like we saw.

[Climbing back to his feet, Summers approaches the ropes, leaning over the top to smile at a ringside fan. He blows a kiss in her direction.]

GM: Summers continues to waste time, now trying to get the attention of one of our female fans at ringside.

BW: Oh, he's GOT her attention, daddy!

GM: Perhaps he does but-

[With Summers distracted, Stephens drags himself behind him, pulling him down into a schoolboy rollup!]

GM: ROLLUP! STEPHENS GOING FOR THE UPSET!

[A two and a half count follows before Summers just BARELY gets the shoulder out!]

GM: Ohhh my! How close was that for Rex Summers?! He almost got this one snatched right out from under him and-

[Stephens tries to get up before Summers but fails to do so...

...and nearly has his head removed from his shoulders with a lunging clothesline to the back of the head out of Summers!]

GM: Ohh! Big clothesline turns this one right back around for the former PCW Champion.

BW: He likes to call that one the North Star Lariat!

GM: Call it what you want - I call it "effective" and as arrogant as he is, Summers does have a world of talent, I can't deny that. If he didn't, he wouldn't be able to call himself a former PCW Champion. You know Blackjack Lynch ran one of the most competitive territories in recent memory so Summers being on top there is a major statement.

[Summers pushes back up off his knees, glowering down at Stephens. He lifts his left arm, posing for a moment before dropping the elbow down into the chest of Charlie Stephens.]

GM: The elbowdrop finds the mark and as Summers climbs back to his feet, you recall his time also a former AWA Longhorn Heritage Champion... pre-dating the World Television Title but the same lineage. What do you think a match between Rex Summers and Shadoc Rage would look like, Bucky?

BW: Money. Pure money. Every promoter in the world should be trying to get that match in their town right now.

[Back on his feet, Summers stomps the chest of the fallen Stephens, keeping him in place as he turns, walking to the corner. He hops up on the middle rope, looking out at the fans, striking a double bicep pose...

...and then leaps off, still facing forward as he attempts to drive a forearm down into the throat of Stephens!]

GM: Off the ropes!

[But Stephens rolls to the side, causing Summers to slam his arm down into the canvas. The crowd cheers as Summers comes up to his feet, clutching his right arm, waving it in pain as Stephens climbs off the canvas...]

GM: Stephens rolls out of the way and now he's got a chance, Bucky! He's got a chance to turn this thing around right here and now!

BW: If he does, he'll rocket up the Top Five ratings, getting himself right in position to challenge for a championship.

[Stephens grabs Summers by the hair, blasting him between the eyes once... twice... three times, sending Summers back against the ropes.]

GM: The former Marine's got Summers on the ropes, shoots him across...

[As Summers rebounds, Stephens lifts him up by the upper thighs before dropping him down across a bent knee!]

GM: INVERTED ATOMIC DROP!

[Summers winces, his knees pulled together as he slowly walks forward. We cut to ringside where the woman who accompanied him has her hands covering her mouth in shock.]

BW: That lady's night just got ruined!

[Stephens grabs Summers by the hair, charging the corner where he SLAMS his head into the top turnbuckle. Summers bounces high up into the air, crashing down to the canvas as Stephens looks out at the cheering crowd.]

GM: The San Francisco crowd is solidly behind Charlie Stephens right now and the momentum is behind him, fans!

BW: Summers needs to find a way to cut him off and stop him cold.

[As Summers climbs to his feet, Stephens catches him with a boot in the midsection. He backs into the ropes, rebounding back with a kneelift that catches Summers flush on the jaw, again sending him flying through the air before crashing down to the canvas!]

GM: The big kneelift scores and Charlie Stephens has got Rex Summers on the run, fans! Summers just rolled under the ropes to the ring apron... and Stephens isn't going to let him get away!

[Summers' face is etched in pain and shock as Stephens hooks a handful of hair, dragging him to his feet.]

GM: He's gonna bring Rex Summers in the hard way!

[But Summers reaches back, hooking Stephens around the head in a snap mare...

...and DROPS down to his rear on the apron, snapping Stephens' throat down on the top rope, sending him sailing backwards and down to the canvas!]

GM: Ohh! What a counter by Summers!

[Summers rolls under the ropes into the ring, climbing up and throwing his arms apart in a "it's over!" gesture as he pulls Stephens off the mat by the arm, twisting it around in an armwringer...]

GM: Summers setting it up... ohh!

[He yanks the arm, pulling Stephens into a kneeshot to the gut. He quickly butterflies the arms, looking out at the crowd...]

GM: Summers hooks him!

[...and DRIVES Stephens' skull into the canvas with the double underhook DDT!]

GM: HEAT CHECK!

BW: There it is, daddy! It's academic now, Gordo!

[Summers flips Stephens onto his back before settling across him, planting his palms on the chest as the referee counts once... two... and three.]

"DING! DING! DING!"

[As Summers stands, the referee raises his right arm into the air. The smug Rex Summers pulls his arm from the referee and places both his hands behind his head and begins to gyrate his hips.]

GM: Rex Summers with another win here in the AWA.

BW: The AWA needs to follow the lead of the women here in San Francisco and watch Rex Summers. He's climbing the ladder quickly and it's only a matter of time before he's knocking on the door of championship gold.

GM: You have to believe that in order to get in that door, he's going to need to face some top level competition.

BW: What do you call Charlie Stephens?

GM: A tough challenge but I'm talking about guys like Cesar Hernandez, like Hercules Hammonds, like Derrick Williams. If Summers wants to be taken

seriously as a title contender, he needs to take on - and defeat - guys like those three men.

BW: Yeah, well... that's just like... your opinion.

GM: What's wrong with you? Fans, let's go over to Colt Patterson who is standing by!

[We cut to Colt Patterson who has taken a spot at ringside. Rex Summers has joined him alongside the attractive blonde we saw earlier. Summers is glimmering with sweat and is visibly wincing as he looks at the camera.]

CP: Fans, as always, it's my pleasure to stand here with a victorious "Red Hot" Rex Summers... one of my favorite wrestlers without a shadow of a doubt, jack!

[Patterson looks at Summers who is blowing a kiss towards a brunette in the front row.]

CP: You know, Rex... I really believed after the last time I interviewed you before All-Star Showdown, that I would be asking you tonight, when you planned on taking the AWA World Heavyweight Championship from Ryan Martinez.

[The fans in San Francisco cheer the mention of the champion's name.]

RS: 'Classy' Colt, Rex Summers may not have fifteen pounds of gold around this chiseled waist right now but make no mistake, you are looking at the cream of the crop in the AWA! The man that all the boys in the locker room want to be!

[The ever cocky Summers smirks.]

RS: That's right... every single one of them wants to be Rex Summers. The old men, Juan Vasquez and Calisto Dufresne, wish they had the youth and vigor of Rex Summers to go all night long. Shadoo Rage wishes he didn't need to have layers of make-up applied to hide the canyons he calls wrinkles, from the camera and he wishes he had the muscles of Rex Summers to carry a promotion on his back!

[Boom! Rex Summers with a double biceps pose to prove his point.]

RS: And there's little Bobby O'Connor... oh sure Bobby has a guaranteed title shot in his back pocket but Bobby wants to be Rex Summers too.

You see, Bobby wants to have the confidence to not ride on the coattails of Jack Lynch... little ol' Bobby wishes he had the ability to slap the Lynches around all over Texas like Rex Summers has done so many times before... but do you know the real reason Bobby wants to be Rex Summers, Colt?

CP: I don't but I'm hoping you're going to enlighten us.

[Summers grins.]

RS: Bobby wants to have the chiseled features and dulcet tones of Rex Summers so he can have the ladies hanging over each and every single word he utters.

But he's been hanging around the Lynches so long he's forgotten how to be a real man and what to do when a lovely lady is standing before him. Rex Summers heard that Melissa Cannon wanted an interview one night with O'Connor one night and he paid her to leave 'cause he was feeling funny inside.

[Colt Patterson begins to laugh as Rex lets out a throaty chuckle.]

RS: So Bobby is the one with the chance against the man people are saying could be the greatest champion the AWA has ever seen, Ryan Martinez. Now Rex Summers isn't taking anything away from Martinez, he's battled men who are without question up and comers for the retirement home circuit and maybe he's even finally put them out to pasture. Luckily for him though, the geriatrics keep getting up from their wheelchair saying it's their time now!

[Rex Summers pauses as his companion for the evening shakes her head in disgust.]

RS: And because of that these lovely ladies are robbed of this!

[The man carved from the finest marble in the world places his hands behind his head showing them his perfect six pack.]

RS: Picture it, 'Prime' Patterson. The gold of the championship glittering in the lights around this picturesque personification of perfection.

[There are high pitch squeals in agreement from a number of ladies in the front row. Colt looks about, having heard it.]

CP: I can picture it, Rex, and obviously so can these ladies here tonight.

RS: But because of Supernova and tJuan Vasquez, that won't be happening right now. OH NO! Those two clowns took away that image of perfection because of the jealousy they feel for "Red Hot" Rex Summers! They know they can't compete with me and how could they? Look at Rex Summers and then look at them.

Supernova covers his face in paint because when he looks into a mirror without it, the mirror cracks into a thousand pieces. And Vasquez... well he knows the sun has set on his career but his ego won't let him do what his body needs to do.

[Rex Summers runs his hand over his chin, cupping it to his ear.]

RS: You hear that? That's the sounds of channels flipping because people don't care about Supernova and Juan Vasquez.

They don't care about Bobby O'Connor and Ryan Martinez.

They care about these...

[He strikes the double bicep pose again.]

RS: ...and this.

[He gestures to his full body, prompting the blonde to run her hand over his chiseled abs before he blows a kiss at the camera and walks over with his "date" for the evening.]

CP: Rex Summers is a man to watch here in the AWA... as these ladies will happily tell you. Now let's hear some words taped earlier today with another trio who are ones to watch here in the AWA... roll it, jack!

[Fade to what appears to be the lobby of a hotel. Standing in front of the camera is "The Professional" Dave Cooper, who is dressed in a pair of black slacks, a white button-down shirt and blue tie. He has his arms folded across his chest, a slick smile on his face.]

DC: How fortunate for all of you that we invited along a cameraman to bring you an important announcement from the cream of the crop in the American Wrestling Alliance. Unfortunately, the AWA didn't bother to ask the likes of us to represent the company in Japan, so everyone in the Land of the Rising Sun was denied the chance to see who was truly the best the AWA has to offer. So we decided, why bother coming to the Cow Palace and doing the AWA any favors for them tonight. But you may consider yourselves lucky a cameraman was willing to come here, so you can stand in awe of our presence.

[He motions for the cameraman to follow him. He walks through the lobby, continuing to speak.]

DC: Everybody wants to know why I showed up at All-Star Showdown. You all know that my six-month ban from the AWA had expired, but I figured I'd bide my time a little longer -- only because I wanted to wait for the opportune moment. As I have learned in this sport, and as my friend Rob Driscoll has learned, you never show your full hand all at once, but one step at a time.

[He continues past the front desk and down a hallway.]

DC: I knew the moment I saw Rob Driscoll that he was destined to be the here and now, and the future of the AWA. What better man to stand besides. And make no mistake -- this is me standing by his side, on even ground, not some kind of pecking order like others I once aligned with.

[He shakes his head.]

DC: Let's look at the facts. Joe Petrow and Mark Langseth, all they cared about was their own agendas and I got tired of it. Along came Larry Doyle, and I was convinced he was different, but all the time he told me had nothing to do with the Wise Men, he was really in bed with them all along. Yet another man who was in it for himself, not for the whole. And ever since I parted ways with him, notice how everything fell apart and now he's at Best Buy, hawking whatever electronics he can for a lousy commission.

[Dave leads the cameraman down the hallway toward the hotel lounge. The camera can make out Rob Driscoll and Miss Sandra Hayes sitting at a table in the corner. Driscoll is dressed in a sharp grey suit, collar unbuttoned, with the AWA National title over his shoulder. Hayes is dressed in a pair of pants that match, with a black blouse, her hair let down. Cooper motions to Driscoll and Hayes.]

DC: Meanwhile, Driscoll lined himself up with two people. First, the real brains behind the Wise Men.

[Hayes smiles at that remark.]

DC: She's not somebody who tries to win you over with a bunch of one-liners or sounds like a politician kissing up to people for votes. She wants to manage the best in the business. Oh yeah, some people she managed thought they could do better than her, but as everybody has seen, the likes of Terry Shane III didn't last, and the Lights Out Express has burned out. But not the man right beside her.

[Driscoll nods.]

DC: Driscoll's star is only rising higher and higher. And as I watched him, I knew that this was the man who didn't just say something to get attention. He said it because he believed it, and he made sure what he said would happen, did happen. You all saw it at the All-Star Showdown. He said he'd be National Champion when all was said and done, and that's exactly what happened.

[Cooper takes a seat.]

DC: But don't think of this as some attempt to take over or bring the AWA to its knees. No, this is just about us proving who is the undisputed best combination the AWA has to offer, and about bringing all the gold into our possession.

[He looks at Driscoll and Hayes.]

DC: Isn't that right?

[Sandra nods, then folds her hands and addresses the camera with equal parts condescension and annoyance.]

MSH: The battle is over and the war is won, Travvy. You signed your life away because you thought you had all the answers. But it's oh-so-obvious that you didn't even know what the questions were.

For some reason you were given second chance after second chance, you hung on for dear life and were even allowed to make your own match.

But honey, let me tell you something you've probably heard a thousand times before: Rob Driscoll? Sandra Hayes? And Dave Cooper?

[Hayes smiles a smug little grin.]

MSH: We're out of your league, and we always have been. And how about we make it official, for the last time? The clock struck midnight, princess. The carriage turned back into a Pinto.

And your brush with greatness is officially over.

[Driscoll laughs as he pats the belt over his shoulder, and then gets to his feet.]

RD: At every step of the way, you brought rocks to a gun fight. Outclassed, outfoxed, out maneuvered.

Out of your league. We're not the type of people to say we told ya so, but...

[Driscoll turns to Hayes, and they both say in unison...]

"We told ya so."

[The champ cackles.]

RD: And it will be OH-so-sweet to watch you crawl to the back of the line and earn your place, Travy, that'll be special. You can't plant peppers and grow onions, pal, you always get what you paid for. And you paid for a wild ride, brother, the thrill of a lifetime, but just like in massage parlors and Disney movies, a happy ending is not guaranteed. You gotta earn that, and my friend, let's not mince words one moment longer: you're not smart enough, you're not tough enough and you're just not enough of a man to walk into the Lion's Den and walk back out in one piece.

Give my regards to Mama, tell Blackjack he can keep the change, but the Piggly Wiggly is calling, Trav, the Waffle House needs a celebrity. And that's as far as you're ever gonna make it in this line of work, so you better embrace it.

[Driscoll smiles, quite happy with himself, and pats the title.]

RD: I'm sure if you ask him, he'll tell ya, that putting the screws to Travis Lynch was an early Christmas present for Dave Cooper. Any time you can twist the knife into the back of a repugnant runt of a litter like that, it just makes ya feel all warm inside.

But before you ask the question, lemme tell ya the answer.

[Cooper, who has since stood up, reaches over and slaps Driscoll on the shoulder.]

RD: We have a common bond, Coop and I. The enemy of my enemy is my friend, and we both had a bone to pick with the Lynch clan, one way or the other. So when he reached out to me, when he took a shot in the dark that maybe I could use an ace up my sleeve at the right moment, I accepted his offer.

I accepted his wisdom, and I asked him to stay on as the last piece to the puzzle.

We have the connections, we have the money and the brain power.

[Both men point at Hayes, who smugly smiles.]

RD: And I humbly present myself as the finest athlete the AWA has to offer.

But when you storm the castle, you need someone who has been there before. You need someone with a map to the throne room. Dave Cooper is that man. Dave Cooper has put YOU on the throne before, Calisto Dufresne, and he took you OFF the throne, Juan Vasquez.

Dave Cooper is the Kingmaker. And I'm the man who craves the throne.

[Driscoll nods, deathly serious.]

RD: Dave Cooper is the last piece of the puzzle. If there's a question, he knows the answer. If there's a fork in the road, he has taken the road less traveled... and he will make all the difference.

The National Title is the most sacred belt in all of wrestling, it's lineage is unmatched. And while we love and respect the men who came before us, there's something you've got to know about us.

We don't fear history, we don't revere history. We make history. Every time I defend this title, every city I go to, every local hero who becomes a zero, I carry the prestige of the belt that revived wrestling. And Travis Lynch tried, but he failed. Brad Jacobs wanted to take it away and ended up running to Japan. Many have attempted to wear the gold, but it ain't for everyone.

Rob Driscoll is the Crown Jewel of Professional Wrestling, and the National Title is the Crown Jewel of the AWA. Dufresne, Vasquez, you had it once, but no matter who wins on Saturday Night, you won't be getting it back. The National Title makes you THE premiere champion in THE premiere sport on Planet Earth, and fellas, you're looking at him.

[Driscoll draws a thumb to himself.]

RD: And I don't blame ya for wanting the gold back, hell, I've lied, cheated and stolen just to keep it. But now that Dave Cooper is in the fold, now that the Kingmaker has chosen which horse to back, any chance someone had to get their hands on my belt just went to zero.

The Lion's Den is at full strength. We will protect our prize, we will do what we want, when we want and get EVERYTHING we ever wanted...

[Driscoll puts a fist out in front of him. Cooper stands next to him and throws his fist next to Driscoll's and Hayes completes the circle.]

MSH: ...by any means necessary.

[Fade to black...

...and then back up to ringside where Allen Allen stands preening, much to the irritation of the crowd.]

PW: The following contest is a tag team match, set for one fall with a fifteen minute time limit. Introducing first, from Jacksonville, Florida, weighing in tonight at two hundred and seven pounds, here is...

ALLEN ALLEN!!

[Allen arrogantly flips his hair, as the fans boo heartily.]

PW: And his partner...

[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: He hails from Tokyo Japan, and weighs in tonight at two hundred and fifty one pounds...

MISTER 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 climbs the steps, turns to the crowd, and bows again to the fans. He then enters the ring and offers a bow to his partner as well as the referee.]

GM: Mr. Sadisuto told me before the show that he can't believe the AWA didn't spotlight him at Rising Sun Showdown, Bucky.

BW: He's got a point, Gordo. He's one of the best wrestlers to ever come out of Japan!

GM: He is?

[We cut to Phil Watson who is, bringing the microphone to his lips, but before he can say anything, The Reverend Horton Heat's "Loco Gringos Locos Like a Party" blares over the loudspeakers, and the moment it does, the fans come alive!]

GM: They are on their feet for the Rotgut Rustlers!

BW: They're on their feet so they can run away from these two lunatics!

PW: Coming to the ring now, first, from Sweetwater Texas, he is...Hang 'Em High" Sam Turner...

[The Rotgut Rustlers come tearing out from backstage. Out front is Sam Turner, swinging his bullrope above his head. Already itching for a fight, Turner is shouting at the ring. Maybe at his opponents, maybe just at the world in general. His short, dirty blond hair crowns his head, while his face is screwed up in what would be a comical expression of anger, if it weren't so frightening.]

GM: There he is, Mr. Congeniality himself!

PW: And his partner, hailing from Hell's Half Acre, Wyoming, he is The Bad Man from the Badlands... Tombstone Anderson!

[Behind him is the Bad Man from the Badlands, Tombstone Anderson. Anderson stomps his way to ringside, hollering the entire time. And after each bellow, the crowd responds in kind. Tombstone is quite the sight. Standing six feet, nine inches tall, and weighing in at two hundred and eighty pounds of muscle and sinew, Anderson is built like a monster. His arms are thick, his legs are even thicker. His chest is well toned. He doesn't have a six pack, but he's clearly someone who's in shape, with a very slight bit of fat right at the gut serving as a testament to his love for the drink. But more astounding is Anderson's hair. He's got long black hair that's composed of tight, spiral curls that goes in every direction. Between that, and the long, thick and equally untamed beard, all anyone can really make out a part of crazed eyes. Anderson wears a simple pair of black trunks. He's got a long, black elbow pad on his right arm that extends from just below his shoulder to the middle of his forearm. His boots are covered in silver/grey fur, which look more than a little dingy.]

PW: They weigh a combined five hundred and thirty five pounds...

THE ROTGUT RUSTLERS!

BW: Watch out! It's coming right towards us!

GM: It looks like he's heading towards the ring.

BW: I'm talking about the smell, Gordo!

[Anderson lets out a loud, bellowing roar, and the audience responds in kind, as Turner stomps around the ring, still waving his rope or shaking the cowbell. Finally, after the two men confer for a moment, they enter the ring, chomping at the bit and waiting for the bell.]

GM: The referee trying to get one of the Rustlers out of the ring so that he can ring the bell.

BW: We could be here awhile. Trying to get those two bozos to fall in line ain't an easy job.

[As the referee does his best to get one of the Rustlers out of the ring, Mr. Sadisuto takes matters into his own hands, as hits Sam Turner low, rabbit punching him in the kidney. Sturdy as he is, the tough Texan doubles over. Tombstone Anderson makes a grab for Sadisuto, only to be cut off by the referee and forced onto the apron.]

GM: Mr. Sadisuto living up to his reputation for cunning, and the sadism of his namesake.

BW: He's a genius, Gordo! Never forget it.

[Turner is sent to the ropes, and Sadisuto is there waiting for him, thrusting both hands forward, directly into Turner's throat.]

GM: Oh come on! That's a blatant violation of the rules.

BW: Are you insane! I hear you chanting along every time your best buddy Ryan Martinez chops someone!

GM: Ryan Martinez has never illegally chopped someone in the throat and you know it!

BW: Don't get mad at me because the kid ain't as smart as Sadisuto!

[Turner is on the mat, grabbing at his neck, his legs flailing. Sadisuto circles around to the side and begins to thrust kick at Turner, until the Texan turns to the side to avoid the sharp kicks. It's then that Sadisuto rebounds off the ropes, delivering another hard karate thrust to the side of Sam's neck.]

GM: In these opening moments, it's been all Sadisuto.

BW: And it will be until the bell rings. Which I'm guessing is in about ninety seconds.

GM: If you're right, that would be a devastating blow to the Rotgut Rustlers who are hoping to knock off former Double Crown Champions, The Lights Out Express, in two weeks' time to earn a Quarterfinal spot in the Stampede Cup tournament.

[Sadisuto sits Turner up, and delivers a hard, whipping kick to Turner's back. And then he leans forward, one of his hands gripping Turner at the juncture of shoulder and neck, fingers digging into Turner's skin. Sadisuto uses his free hand to grip his own wrist and leans all of his weight on to Turner.]

BW: Nerve hold! Do you know how many men have been crippled by this, Gordo?

GM: There's no doubt that this is a painful and potentially debilitating hold.

[The camera goes to a close-up of Turner's face, which is bright red and screwed up in pain. Tobacco colored spittle flies from Turner's mouth as he suffers in the nerve hold.]

BW: It's all over!

[The referee goes to raise Turner's hand, holding it aloft once. As the fans begin to scream support, Turner's hand starts to drop, only to immediately jerk upwards and grab hold of Sadisuto's hair.]

BW: Where's your outrage now, Gordo? That's as illegal as it gets!

GM: And the referee is admonishing him Bucky, something he didn't do after those illegal thrusts to the throat!

[Turner is forced to release Sadisuto's hair at the four count, and in retaliation, Sadisuto grinds down harder on the nerve hold, fingers dug deeply into the flesh of the man from Sweetwater.]

GM: The fans rallying behind Sam Turner!

[And indeed they are. Slowly, hearing the cheers of the fans makes Turner's legs start to shake. And then, his arms start to shake, as the momentum of the crowd builds. Turner struggles to get to his feet, only to be put down by Sadisuto's grip.]

GM: Turner tried to get up there but Sadisuto's been using this hold for years and he knows every way to extract the most pain possible out of it.

[Tombstone Anderson stalks back and forth on the apron, shouting at his partner as the referee slips to the side, making sure Anderson doesn't come in to intervene. Allen Allen points at Anderson from across the ring, shouting at him.]

GM: This match can't be going the way that Anderson and Turner hoped it would as Sadisuto continues to bear down on that nerve hold, completely keeping Turner down on the mat.

[The crowd begins to build in volume again, rooting on Turner as he kicks his legs, stomping his heels down on the mat, getting the fans to clap in rhythm as Tombstone howls from out on the apron, clapping his hand down on the top turnbuckle, cheering him on...]

GM: Sam Turner's working his way to his feet, these fans solidly behind him!

[Sadisuto grits his teeth, digging his fingers deeper into the nerve as he shouts, "NO! NO GET UP!" Turner's arm is pumping... and pumping... and pumping...

...and then slumps to a stop again, Turner collapsing down into a seated position. Sadiusto digs in deeper, nodding his head as the crowd deflates a second time. The referee rushes forward, kneeling down next to Turner. He reaches out, grabbing Turner by the wrist.]

GM: The referee's checking on Sam Turner... he may be out, fans!

[The official lifts the arm of Turner, pausing... and then lets it drop, the arm slumping down to Turner's side.]

GM: That's once. If the arm drops three times, this one is over, fans.

BW: It's going up again...

[The official holds... and then drops, letting the arm fall to the canvas.]

GM: That's two!

BW: One more! This is gonna be a huge upset!

[The arm is lifted again as the crowd roars, cheering on Turner...]

GM: The arm goes up...

[The referee lets go as the arm starts to fall...

...and then suddenly stops, held up by a tensed arm and a clenched fist!]

GM: No! The arm is up! The arm is up! Sam Turner will not be denied!

[Turner battles his way off the mat much to the dismay of Mr. Sadisuto who tries to clench down on the nerve to no luck...]

GM: Turner on his feet! Big elbow to the gut. A second one... a third one! That grip is broken!

[As the crowd roars, Turner shoots Sadisuto into the ropes, Turner's arm cocked back as he swings for the fences.]

GM: LARIAT!

BW: He missed, Gordo! He missed!

[Actually, Turner didn't miss so much as Sadisuto ducks. Turner reaches for Sadisuto, only for the crafty Tokyo native to crawl between Turner's legs and move rapidly towards his corner.]

GM: Mr. Sadisuto tags in Allen Allen and hightails it to the apron!

BW: Strategy Gordo, strategy!

[As Allen moves towards the center of the ring, Sam Turner stands tall, windmilling his arm to return feeling to the compressed nerves.]

GM: Allen Allen showing a surprising amount of intestinal fortitude as he moves to confront Sam Turner head on.

BW: Stupidity Gordo, stupidity.

[The two men lock up and then, surprisingly, Turner catches Allen in a side headlock, and then takes him down to the mat.]

BW: Sam Turner doing a wrestling hold! I've seen it all now!

GM: Maybe this represents an evolution in the style of Sam Turner...

[With Allen on his belly on the mat, Turner opens the headlock up slightly, just enough that he can repeatedly bash his fist into Allen's face.]

BW: You were saying?

[Allen is brought to his feet, and sent to the ropes, only to be caught by Sam Turner and hoisted in the air, dropped back down a moment later with a big bodyslam. Turner stays on the attack, dropping an elbow into Allen's chest.]

GM: Turner sends Allen into his corner with a hard whip, and then follows him in... big knee right to Allen's gut.

[Tombstone Anderson helpfully reaches over the top rope, and grabs Allen by the hair, hoisting him up. Immediately, the referee begins to admonish Anderson, and Anderson responds by growling at the official.]

GM: Turner puts Allen's arm over the top rope, and now he is just hammering Allen with elbows!

[A roar comes from the crowd and Turner looks up, meeting his partner eye to eye.]

GM: The fans want to see Tombstone Anderson!

BW: And I think maybe that dummy Turner just remembered he's in a tag team!

[Obliging the fans, Sam tags in Tombstone, who comes roaring into the ring, and biels him out of the corner with a rather sloppy throw. Tombstone moves to the middle of the ring and brings up Allen, holding him by the hair. He drills Allen in between the eyes with a hard right fist, and with Allen down, Anderson begins to stomp around the ring, barking and growling and making barely comprehensible noises. And the delighted fans respond in kind.]

BW: Good lord. They've found each other!

GM: What are you talking about?

BW: Anderson's people! That's their mating call!

[Tombstone has whipped the crowd into a frenzy, and then whips Allen into the ropes, Anderson lifting his leg as Allen rebounds.]

GM: Big boot!

BW: Can you imagine the smell on the bottom of those boots?

[Anderson, still roaring, lifts Allen high overhead, pressing him up and down, before hurling him at the mat. Once more, Anderson proceeds to stomping around the ring.]

BW: You think there's enough between Anderson's ears to remember he's in a match?

GM: I don't think Tombstone Anderson has ever forgotten to fight, Bucky.

[Speaking of fighting, Anderson spies Sadisuto, and apparently, still angry over Sadisuto's earlier sneak attack, begins to point to Sadisuto. In response, Sadisuto looks over his shoulder, completely ignoring Anderson.]

GM: Mr. Sadisuto wants no part of Tombstone Anderson!

BW: What are you talking about? There's a fan in the audience asking for his autograph!

GM: Give me a break!

[Angry, Anderson whips Allen into Sadisuto's corner, but Sadisuto completely ignores Allen as he reaches for the tag.]

GM: Anderson charges in, he's putting the boots to Allen. And Sadisuto has his hands raised in the air, refusing to reach for a tag!

BW: I think I heard Allen say he's got this. He's just going to play a little rope a dope.

GM: I don't believe that for a second.

BW: That Anderson is a dope? The evidence is overwhelming!

GM: Bucky, will you stop?

[Anderson angrily pulls Allen out of the corner, and leans him against the ropes. Charging Allen, Tombstone hits a big clothesline, sending Allen over the top rope. Anderson looks from his partner to the crowd, and then back to his partner. And together, they all join together in yelling "SAM!" at the top of their lungs.]

GM: Sam Turner heeding the call!

[Indeed he is Gordon, as Turner hops off the apron and begins to stomp the proverbial mud hole into Allen Allen, only stopping when the referee's demands get through to him. Obliging the official, but only grudgingly, Turner shoves Allen in under the top ropes.]

GM: There's no reprieve for Allen, as he finds himself back in the Rustler's corner.

[After a few punches and stomps from Tombstone, the giant Anderson tags in Turner, who takes over, repeatedly driving his fists into the face and gut of Allen. Finished, Turner lets out a triumphant bellow, and throws up a pair of hook 'em horns to the delight of the fans.]

GM: Turner now setting his sights on Sadisuto, who is still refusing to look.

BW: Just wait, it's all a part of his master plan!

GM: He better execute that plan quickly.

[Turner tags in Anderson, who whips Allen into the ropes, and then drops down into a three point stance. A moment later, Anderson's tackle has sent Allen flying end over teakettle.]

GM: Another quick tag, as Anderson tags in Turner.

[Anderson whips Allen into the ropes once more, as Turner goes to the middle turnbuckle. Anderson catches Allen and hits a backbreaker, but holds on to him. A moment later, Turner drops the knee across Allen's throat. As Turner drops down for the cover, Anderson exits the ring.]

GM: WAGON CRASH... ONE! TWO! THREE! It's over!

"DING! DING!"

PW: Your winners...

THE ROTGUT RUSTLERS!!

[To the delight of the crowd, the Rustlers celebrate in the middle of the ring.]

GM: Another impressing showing from the Rotgut Rustlers. But I think one of the big stories coming out of this was how Mr. Sadisuto left his partner high and dry.

BW: Hey, it's not Mr. Sadisuto's fault if someone can't follow the plan!

[Sam and Tombstone high five, yelling "YOU DAMN RIGHT" at the cheering fans as "Sweet" Lou Blackwell comes down to the ring with a microphone in hand. He enters the ring, nodding at Sam.]

SLB: Sam, you've got to like the result of that contest!

ST: Well hell yes I do, Lou. And that's just a TASTE of what those fancy boys can look forward to when me and ol' Tombstone here run them over on our way to the Cup!

SLB: Sam, I know you must be riding on adrenaline after that impressive win, but let me assure you... the Lights Out Express aren't a team to look past.

ST: Well that depends on who you are, Lou. Because if past them is the Cup and all those government money checks with our name on 'em, then that is the kind of thing I like looking at. I know those two boys have had gold around their waists before, but they sure as hell didn't get it by beating the Rustlers, I tell you what.

[Tombstone Anderson moves in close, leans forward, head tilted to the side, as he stares, wall-eyed at Blackwell... well, almost at Blackwell, those eyes are pointing in opposite directions.]

TA: Did I hear you right, Lou Blackwell? Did you just say to me and Sam that them Lights Out Express punks aren't a team to look past?

SLB: They are two time World Tag Team Champions, Mr. Anderson!

TA: Yeah, and you know why, Lou Blackwell? Because they ain't never been in the ring with the Rotgut Rustlers! You gonna stand right there and tell me, Lou Blackwell, that there's something we got to be worried about?

Well let me tell you somethin', Lou Blackwell – when it comes to the Lights Out Express...

[Tombstone blows a raspberry after saying their names.]

TA: The only thing we got to worry about is how many teeth Sam and I are gonna have to pull outta our knuckles.

Now, I'll tell ya what, Lou Blackwell. Them Lights Out Express punks, they done won a lotta matches, and they done kicked some tail, and they done won some gold, and I'll give the Lights Out Express credit for that, Lou Blackwell.

But this ain't no fancy-boy prance party. This here is pro-fessional wrasslin'. And you can't tell me that any man with a lick of sense is gonna look at them two primped up nancies and think they're gonna beat the roughest, toughest, meanest, nastiest butt kickers who ever kicked butt!

SLB: We all are heavily anticipating the Cup, but what specifically do you two have as far as a game plan going into that prestigious tournament?

ST: Game plan? Well that's real simple.

[Sam raises his left hand, cocked into a fist.]

ST: I'm fixing' to take this here meathook, and slam it into their pretty little faces until they yell "OH GOD NO PLEASE OH IT HURTS" or whatever city boys yell when you're putting that big hurt on them. They can even trot their little buddy down to the ring and he can hold on tin of chew while he watches me slap the taste out of his pals' mouths.

[Anderson gets close to Lou, too close to Lou.]

TA: You know what Lou Blackwell, I'm glad you asked me what my game plan was, because I been thinkin' about just what I was gonna do to The Lights Out Express! And let me tell you what I am gonna do.

First, you see this one lazy eye right here, Lou Blackwell?

[Helpfully, Tombstone points to his right eye.]

TA: Well, I'm gonna take this eye, and I'm gonna put on the one with that silly haircut, what's his name? Dewey?

SLB: Donnie...

TA: Yeah, him. I'm gonna put this lazy eye on him, and I'm gonna watch him. And if he tries anything, well, I'm gonna part his hair in a new direction with my big old boot!

Then I'm gonna reach out, and I'm gonna grab that one names Louie...

SLB: Lenny.

TA: Yeah, him, I'm gonna grab him, and I'm gonna lift him up in the air, and I'm gonna keep him there until he's counted all the lights on the ceiling. And then I'm gonna slam him down, and I'm gonna drop my big old leg on his throat. I'll do that six, seven, maybe twenty five times and we'll see what he does about it. I'm bettin' nothin', Lou Blackwell.

SLB: What about Aaron Anderson?

[Those crazy eyes get crazier.]

TA: I ain't talkin' about him Lou Blackwell! That punk done stole my name! You know what I'm gonna do...

I'm gonna let Sam take care of him, that's what I'm gonna do, Lou Blackwell. And when Sam is in the ring beatin' on Mr. I-took-a-man's-name, I want everyone to be listenin', because I'm gonna be on that apron, and I'm gonna be shoutin'. And do you know what I'm gonna be shoutin', Lou Blackwell?

SLB: I couldn't begin to guess.

TA: I'm gonna be shoutin' all the things I'm gonna buy with my half of the money! A million dollars is a lotta money, Lou Blackwell!

I got things I wanna buy, Lou Blackwell. I'm gonna buy me a big fancy fur coat, so when I go out on the town, everyone will say "There's Tombstone Anderson, look at that fancy coat he's wearin'!" Then I'm gonna get me one of them watches with a chain on it, like you see in the movies. Won't that be somethin'?

ST: And that there is just the start of it. We made a big mess back East before we came back to this country I love.

[Sam takes his hat and puts it over his heart.]

ST: And that ol' boy is still after us to pay for damages. Why, I drove around town grabbing the Yellow Pages off everyone's front steps and throwing them in the damn trash...

[Sam's face turns red as he spits some chew into his tin coffee can.]

ST: ... and that horny toad's lawyer still keeps figuring out my number!

TA: Then there's your kids, Sam.

SLB: What's wrong with his kids?

TA: All those little ones need to go to the dentist, Lou Blackwell.

[Sam's face turns redder still, as he whips his rope against the canvas.]

ST: And don't think I didn't try to make it easier on them! I said to the dentist, I said Doc just tear out all them teeth and replace them with wooden ones. Just like the father of this proud country, George Washington. Now that was a man, bawh.

[Tombstone nods solemnly.]

ST: But that wasn't good enough for him! Would you believe that un-American polecat said that was cruel? If that ain't some Russkie talk then I don't know what is.

[Lou shakes his head.]

SLB: I ah... I see. Well, also to consider are the other teams you may face if you get past the Express. For instance, if you do defeat the Lights Out Express, the next team you'll be facing will be the Wilde Bunch. You two do have a connection to them. After you offered some, er, advice a few months back.

ST: Those are some good boys, I tell you what. But if it ends up that it's them or us on the road to that prize... then they are in for a country whupping.

TA: I wanna talk about another team that I do like, Lou Blackwell.

I wanna talk about Air Strike. Because me and Sam, well, we like them two little kids. We like 'em a lot, Lou Blackwell. And them two kids? Well, they been treated unfairly. And I want them to know, that if they ever need someone to have their backs against that Violence Unlimited, me and Sam are volunteerin'!

ST: And we ain't the only ones who like those boys, I tell you what. My girls stood in line to meet those kids. That line was so damn long I was able to go across the street to the bar! Slapped a tenner on the table and told that girl to keep me fresh.

SLB: Are you saying you left your children in line while you went out drinking?

[Sam explodes with anger, shaking the cowbell in Lou's face as Tombstone gets in between the two.]

TA: Why are you tryin' to stir up trouble, Lou Blackwell! Don't you go makin' trouble where there isn't none! I thought we was gonna be friends, Lou Blackwell! Now you just ask us your questions about other wrasslers, and you leave Sam's kids outta this!

SLB: But he brought them up!

TA: And I'm puttin' 'em away, Lou Blackwell. Now, you got any more questions for us?

SLB: I think that will be all gentlemen. Except that maybe, if you are out with your children you shouldn't...

TA: Don't you start nothin'!

SLB: Very well. The world is looking forward to your match with the Lights Out Express in two weeks. And though you two are very confident, I would remind you not to overlook them.

ST: Oh, we're gonna have a good ol' time looking over them after we knock them out flat on their backs! Because you better believe we're going to remember every nasty thing you just said about my kids--

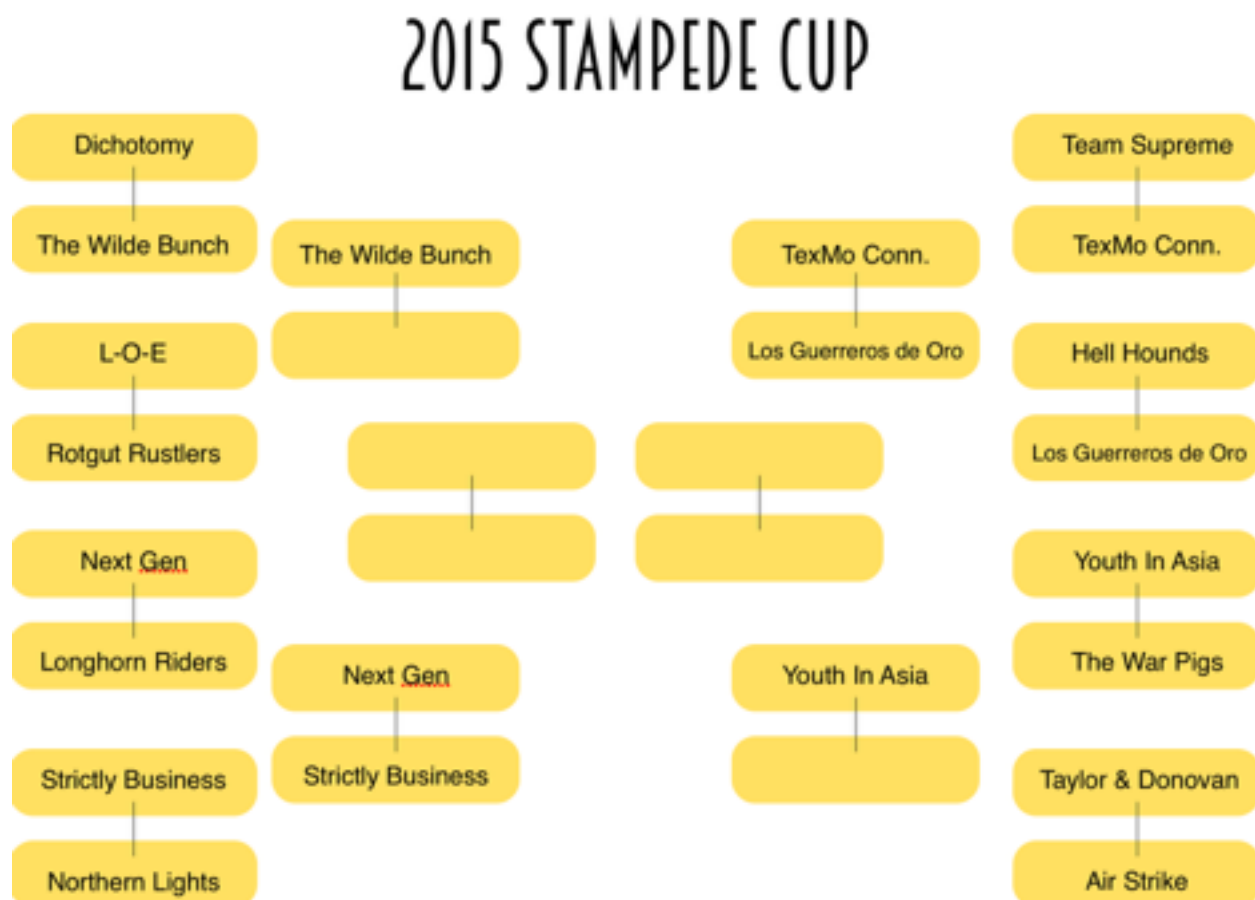
SLB: Wait a minute! I didn't say--

ST: --and take it out on those punk kids! Because this is for the Cup and it's bad news for you boys... BECAUSE THE RUSTLERS ARE IN A MEAN MOOD!

[And with that, the Rustlers stomp off, hollering and bellowing, and leaving a bewildered Lou Blackwell in their wake.]

SLB: The Rotgut Rustlers are ready for their first round battle in two weeks' time... as are Air Strike and the team of Wes Taylor and Tony Donovan no doubt. In fact, let's take a look at the updated bracket for the 2015 Stampede Cup tournament!

[The screen fades to the most recent bracket for the battle to win a million dollars, the Stampede Cup, and the right to call yourselves the best tag team in the world.]



finding out in two weeks' time right here on Saturday Night Wrestling live here on The X!

[Blackwell suddenly grabs at his earpiece. He listens for a moment, nodding a few times.]

SLB: Okay, fans... right now I'm being told that we're going to cut backstage- no, actually out to the parking lot where there's apparently some kind of a protest going on. Let's take a look...

[We crossfade to a shot outside the building, where we see Skywalker Jones and Buford P. Higgins, standing by with Mark Stegglet. In the background, we see a group of protesters, shouting "NO JONES! NO PEACE!", each holding signs that read the same thing.]

MS: Skywalker Jones, once again, you are leading a rowdy group of fans in this protest! Ever since you lost that vote to enter the Rumble, you've literally picketed in front of every building the AWA has held a show! Even all the way in Japan at Rising Sun Showdown! Why?

[Jones flashes a million-dollar smile at Stegglet.]

SJ: 'Cause I'm just letting the voices of the people be heard, Marky Stegglet!

[We hear Higgins shout, "FREEDOM OF SPEECH IS BEAUTIFUL, PLAYA'!"]

SJ: Don't you understand, Marky Mark? There was a terrible crime committed right in front of everybody's eyes and the AWA just wants to sweep it under the rug! But Skywalker Jones ain't the sort of man to just keep his mouth shut and let injustice reign! Oh no! These people behind me, those people in Hawaii, those people all the way across the ocean in Japan, people all over the world...

...THEY ALL WANTED SKYWALKER JONES!!!

[Jones whips off his designer sunglasses.]

SJ: They pressed the button, they pulled the lever, they clicked on that mouse, they sent in their postcards, but somehow, someway, the votes got lost! The votes got ignored! The people were silenced!

AND THEY GOT NO SKYWALKER JONES!

[And with that, Jones sets off the fans standing behind him...]

"NO JONES!!!"

"NO PEACE!!!"

"NO JONES!!!"

"NO PEACE!!!"

"NO JONES!!!"

"NO PEACE!!!"

[We see Buford P. Higgins motioning for the crowd to quiet down, as a flustered looking Mark Stegglet continues on.]

MS: I understand you might be upset, but instead of holding these protests, shouldn't you be proving yourself in the ring?

[Jones places a hand on his chest, looking insulted.]

SJ: "Prove myself in the ring"? "PROVE MYSELF IN THE RING"?!?!?!?

[Jones looks around in disbelief.]

SJ: Do you know who I am!? Do you know what I've done!? Marky Stegglet, just who do you think you're talkin' to!?

I'M SKYWALKER JONES!

["HE'S SKYWALKER JONES!"]

SJ: I'm the greatest, most must see tv, human highlight reel, non-stop sex appeal, edge of your seat, spectacular ath-LETE in the history of professional wrestling! I've proven myself worthy a million times over! And right now, I'm just trying to get myself the recognition and respect that I'm due!

MS: Well, a lot of wrestlers have expressed their disagreement with how you're handling things. Why, earlier tonight, Willie Hammer-

SJ: Wait wait wait...WILLIE HAMMER!? You mean Sweet Daddy Williams' biggest cheerleader, Willie Hammer!? He had the audacity to open his mouth about me?

[Jones laughs.]

SJ: Marky Stegglet, that's about as biased a source as you can get! Of course Willie Hammer, worshipper of the ground that Sweet Daddy Williams walks on would have something against what I'm doing! I'm exposin' his mentor for takin' part in the greatest conspiracy in professional wrestling history! But Skywalker Jones'll tell ya' what...

[Jones leans in slightly closer to Stegglet.]

SJ: ...you tell Willie Hammer, that if he has a problem with what I'm doing, then get in my face and TELL me that he has a problem with what Skywalker Jones is doing.

[A smirk.]

SJ: And I'll solve that problem for him QUICK.

[We hold on Jones' smirk as we slowly fade to black.]

We cut to Supernova standing before the camera. He is dressed in a tuxedo. He has his face painted as well, which makes it all the more amusing he's dressed in a Tux.]

S: My name is Supernova.

[We cut back to a wider shot. Behind Supernova, on the wall, is a lifelike facsimile of himself, which he motions back to.]

S: And this is a Fathead. A lifelike wall decal. People keep mistaking the Fathead for me, and it's ruining my life.

[Mark Stegglet enters the shot, mic in hand. He approaches the Fathead Supernova.]

MS: Supernova, you've got a title shot coming up. Are you ready for it?

[Mark seems puzzled that the Fathead doesn't respond. We go back to Supernova.]

S: I'm not the only one who is experiencing this problem. Every day, Fatheads are being mistaken for all kinds of AWA wrestlers.

Ryan Martinez.

[Cut to a shot of a Martinez Fathead, in the room of a child who is pumping his fist like he just won the World title.]

S: Supreme Wright.

[Cut to a shot of a Wright Fathead, in the room of another child, his index finger raised and mouthing "Best in the World!"]

S: Travis Lynch.

[Cut to a shot of a Travis Lynch Fathead, in the room of a teenage girl, who is jumping up and down.]

S: Even Frankie Farelli.

[Cut to a shot of a Farelli Fathead, on the wall of a New England Patriots fan's living room. We know he's a Patriots fan because he wears a Tom Brady jersey. We cut back to Supernova.]

S: A Fathead is a great addition to any room, but please remember not to confuse one for the real thing. The easiest way to tell the difference between a wrestler and a Fathead is to just ask them how they are doing. A real

wrestler is going to say they are lonely, because they aren't being talked to any more. But a Fathead will not respond, because it's a wall decal.

[Cut back to Stegglet, still standing in front of the Supernova Fathead.]

MS: Supernova, you aren't mad at me, are you?

[Fade to black...

...and then up to backstage, where "Sweet" Lou Blackwell stands again, microphone in hand.]

SLB: Ladies and gentlemen, you saw them in Japan, and you saw them earlier tonight. They have got to be considered one of the greatest pairings of manager and wrestler ever. I'm talking about my guests at this time, Brian Lau, and his charge, Brian James.

[Lau enters first, James a menacing figure behind him. James has a white towel over his face, obscuring his features.]

BL: Well, well. Changed your tune have you, Blackwell? Decided to compliment my man Brian James tonight?

SLB: You well know Mr. Lau that I always believe in giving credit where its due!

BL: And charging ninety nine cents a minute otherwise?

SLB: Well I...

BL: Calm down, Blackwell. We're both professionals. You have questions, go ahead and ask them.

SLB: In Japan, we saw...

[Lau jumps right in.]

BL: In Japan, we witnessed Brian James perform a miracle. We saw a man drop one hundred and eighty pounds of useless, pointless, worthless flab in the span of ten minutes! You tell me Blackwell, that's amazing, isn't it?

SBL: It certainly...

BL: Yeah, I know you were impressed. But let's stop talking about the past. Let's talk about the future. And why am I telling you what to do? Aren't you standing here to interview me? What's the matter, cat got your tongue?

SBL: Mr. Lau, I'm trying...

BL: Well, don't waste time, just ask your questions. What's the hold up?

[Irritated, Blackwell is silent a minute.]

BL: Well come on, I know your second job as maître d' at the Waffle House keeps the lights on your little shack, but I'm sure you're getting paid something. So ask your questions.

SLB: Brian Lau...

BL: Well, since you can't be bothered to say anything, you just stand there and let me talk. Because I've got something on my mind. Something that I can't spend the rest of the night sitting around wondering if you'll get to it or not.

There's been a grave injustice done here in the AWA. And every day I wonder why nothing has been done about it.

It's simple, Blackwell. Brian James has been deprived of something he's earned a hundred times over.

Since you've got no questions, let me ask you this, Blackwell. If I were to tell you that, since November, there's been a wrestler that has never been defeated. A wrestler who has never been pinned, heck, a wrestler who has never even been knocked off his feet. And I told you that wrestler, in that time frame, has not received a single title shot, what would you say?

SLB: I'd say...

BL: You'd say it was a travesty, that's what you would say. And if I were talking about Bobby O'Connor or Jack Lynch, or Hercules Hammonds, or Ryan Martinez or Derrick Williams or any of these other milksop mongoloids that these nine to five punchclockers worship, you could be sure that Todd Michaelson would be falling down trying to sign them up to a title match!

But when you're Brian James, do you know what happens?

You get to stand by and watch as jerks like Stupidnova...

SLB: Supernova!

BL: Will you stop interrupting me Blackwell? How rude are you?

Like I said, when you're Brian James, you're made to sit on the sidelines, watching Stupidnova get title shot after title shot as a reward for finding new and innovative ways to keep up his perfect record of being a total failure.

This man right here...

[Lau slaps James' bare chest.]

BL: Is an engine of destruction. He is the king of mayhem. And he deserves a title shot! He deserves his chance to wear AWA gold. There's no one in this company who has done more to earn a title shot. There's no one in this company who has a record of dominance and destruction.

And you mark my words – that day is coming.

Because there's only so long that O'Neill can cover for his champions. There's only so many ways that the men who wear gold can find to avoid the inevitable. Our day is coming. And you mark my words, Blackwell. There will be a new champion in the AWA, and his name will be Brian James.

And it doesn't matter if your name is Shadoe Rage, "Diamond" Rob Driscoll, or Ryan Martinez. All of you are on warning... because none of you are safe.

Now, since you can't be bothered to act in a professional manner and actually ask a question, we're out of here Blackwell!

[Lau and James exit, leaving a stunned "Sweet" Lou in their wake.]

SLB: Brian Lau and Brian James, everybody. Now let's go back down to the ring for more action!

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

PW: The following match is scheduled for one fall with a ten minute time limit. Introducing first, from Boise, Idaho... weighing 213 pounds...

CHARLIE DENNIS!

[Dennis, an athletic-looking young man with shaggy brown hair in blue tights, raises his arms to the crowd, who respond with indifference.]

PW: And his opponent...

[The lights in the arena then go out, as the opening hook to "The Baddest Man Alive" by The Black Keys and RZA begins to play.]

#I could take the pitchfork from the devil
#Keep a super suit like I'm incredible
#From the deep, blue sea to the dark blue sky
#I'm the baddest man alive

[The crowd roars with boos, when they see Cain Jackson stepping through the curtains. Their boos only intensify, as they see Larry Wallace wheeling out a wheelchair bound Supreme Wright behind him.]

#I'd grab a crocodile by his tail
#Handcuff the judge, and put the cops in jail
#Make the meanest woman break down and cry
#I'm the baddest man alive
#I'm the baddest man alive

PW: ...he hails from Goose Creek, South Carolina....weighing two hundred and eighty-five pounds...he is...

"THE BEAST"

CAAAAAAIIIIINNNNN JAAAAACCCCKKKKKSSSSSOOOOONNNN!!!

[Jackson is a large African-American male with a heavy beard and dreadlocks tied back into a high ponytail. Atop his head is Jack Lynch's beloved cowboy hat, signifying Jackson's claim as the "King of the Cowboys".]

GM: And here comes Cain Jackson, who along with Wes Taylor and Tony Donovan, came up short in Japan in a wild six-man tag team match against the team of Jack Lynch, Bobby O' Connor, and Kenta Kitazawa.

BW: That ain't the only thing that happened in Japan, Gordo. That rat, Jack Stench hit Supreme Wright with a lariat! Who the heck hits a man in a wheelchair!?

GM: Supreme Wright was the one that spit in his face!

BW: And Lynch deserved it!

[Without warning, Jackson races down the aisle and into the ring, immediately setting upon poor Charlie Dennis, knocking him over and pummeling him with a barrage of right hands!]

GM: And Cain Jackson isn't even going to wait for the bell! He's all over Charlie Dennis!

BW: I heard Jackson's been in a foul mood ever since Japan! He didn't take that loss and he didn't take what Lynch did to Supreme Wright well at all! And now he's taking it out on this schlub!

[Grabbing a handful of Dennis' hair, Jackson THROWS the poor Idaho native over the top rope and out of the ring! This gets the referee, Davis Warren on his case, but Jackson ignores him, going after Dennis on the outside.]

GM: This match hasn't even officially started, but Jackson looks like a man possessed.

BW: He hasn't even taken off his tracksuit yet...or his cowboy hat! He just went straight to giving this kid a beating!

[Jackson grabs Dennis off the ground and BIELS him into the guardrail...]

"THUUUUUUDDDD!!!"

"OHHHHHHHHHHH!!!"

GM: OHHH!!!

[Not done yet, Jackson pulls Dennis to his feet and walks him towards the ringpost...]

GM: No no no! Don't do this...

[...and SLAMS him face-first into the ringpost!]

"CLANK!!!"

BW: That'll leave a mark!

GM: And referee Davis Warren has seen enough! He's throwing this match out!

[This doesn't seem to affect Jackson one bit, as he tosses a semi-conscious Dennis back into the ring. Standing him up, Jackson proceeds to run into the ropes, rushing past Dennis, rebounding off and running into the ropes one more time to build up a head full of steam as he goes into a complete spin...]

"SMMMMMMMMMAAAAAACCCCCCKKKKKK!!!!"

[...and turns Dennis inside out with a spinning lariat!]

GM: OH MY STARS!!! What a lariat!

BW: We usually see Jackson taking someone's head off with that big boot of his, but I think he was sendin' a message to Jack Lynch with that lariat, Gordo!

[Jackson gets to his feet, dusting off his tracksuit and picking up the cowboy hat that fell from his head from the momentum of the blow. He raises his right arm into the air as the crowd boos him mercilessly. Exiting the ring, Jackson walks over to the timekeeper's table, taking the microphone away from Phil Watson and reenters the ring, planting a foot on the chest of Charlie Dennis.]

CJ: Jack Lynch.

[The crowd roars at the mention of the oldest brother in the Lynch clan.]

CJ: JACK. LYNCH.

[Another roar, but Jackson ignores it.]

CJ: You piece of trash.

[The roars quickly turn to boos.]

CJ: Are you...proud of what you did in Japan?

[Jackson points towards the top of the aisle, where Supreme Wright sits and Larry Wallace stands.]

CJ: You attacked an injured man. A man that YOU deliberately injured. A man that in every single way is your superior. A better man than you will ever be and a man that you could only WISH you could be. You saw him at his most vulnerable and you took a cheapshot at him like any single one of the honorless, cowardly members of your clan would.

[The crowd boos at Jackson's words.]

CJ: But what else should we expect from a Lynch? Your father ran from a Wright and you're no different. This should be Supreme Wright's battle to fight, but you made sure that he couldn't step into this ring to embarrass you.

But I'm here.

And I'm calling you out, Jack Lynch.

[A cheer comes from the crowd, excited at the prospect of a match between Jackson and Lynch.]

CJ: You and me. One on one. Inside this ring. Outside this ring. In a parking lot...

...it doesn't matter.

[Jackson's voice grows angry as he begins to shout.]

CJ: BECAUSE I CAN STILL FIGHT! BECAUSE I CAN STEP INTO THIS RING!

[Jackson removes the cowboy hat from his head and tosses it onto the canvas...

...before removing his foot off Charlie Dennis' chest and using it to STOMP down on the hat.]

CJ: And you can be damn sure that I can embarrass you.

[And with that, Jackson throws down the microphone as we cut to a shot of Supreme Wright at the top of the aisle, nodding in approval.]

Fade to black.

The words "December 1994" appears in white scrawly text. The black screen fades to reveal the founder of the EMWC, Adam Thompson. Thompson's years are showing at this point. He leans towards the camera.]

"In the mid-90s, getting anyone to bankroll pro wrestling was a hard sell. The whole business was in the toilet so if you wanted to stand a chance, you started small and put in the work."

[A black and white still photo of a bloodied Colt Patterson - then known as Narcissus - battling Lorenzo Vasquez appears. The word "Extreme" etched

in a deep crimson is "written" across them as the voice of Patterson is heard.]

"Extreme was the thing. Hell, my dad had been doing extreme down in the South for years - cages, bullropes, Texas Death, whatever. He just didn't know it had a name. Did I like the idea of going through tables almost every night? Not really. But I was the champ. I was the guy. It was either do it or they'd find someone else who would. Ultimately, my career paid the price but it was a good run while it lasted."

[The shot of Patterson fades to a still photo of Chris Blue standing in a ring with Adam Thompson. Blue looks much younger than his modern counterpart who we see a moment later.]

"I bought out Adam Thompson as soon as I put the money together. I had a vision, he had a vision... too many cooks in the kitchen. I'll always be grateful to him but I think history has shown that he made the right call to take the money and let me run the place."

[A series of stills flash by - Casey James, Tiger Claw, Steve Kowalski, Creed, Brody Thunder, Serge Annis, and JW Hardin. Blue appears again.]

"It was a war. It was a total war between us and Portland. Talent, territory, ratings, buyrates... you name it, we fought over it. I fought a lot of those kinds of wars over the years but none of them were as fun as the fight that Spreadbury put up."

[More stills. This time with some of the most famous names in EMWC - men like Mark Langseth, Alex Martinez, Kevin Slater, Jeff Matthews, "Dreamlover" Trey Porter, Curtis Hansen, Eddie Van Gibson, Simon Ezra, Luke Kinsey, Chris Courtade, and others flash by in rapid-fire before fading back to Blue.]

"You know what they don't tell you? It's a hard fight to get to the top... but when you get there, sometimes it gets a little boring. I was constantly fighting with myself to stay motivated. I'd pick fights with promotions just to try and get my competitive fires burning. It was just never the same though."

[And then another series of shots - this time with some of the names synonymous with the end of the EMWC - names we'll choose not to name to protect the innocent... and the guilty. Back to Blue.]

"The writing was on the wall long before I shut the doors, I think. It was... I don't know. Bad timing? We were fighting to stay afloat for a while. We were having financial troubles, creative difficulties, you name it. Then out of nowhere, one of my best friends got leukemia and died. That was..."

[Blue pauses, turning his head to the side as we fade to black as a title comes up - "The Rise And Fall Of The Empire - available on DVD and Digital Download now. The shot of a smiling Blue comes back up.]

"Damn. It was a good run though, wasn't it? A hell of a run. Maybe the best ever. But even the best things have to end."

[Blue smiles, staring off-camera, daydreaming of days gone by...

...as we fade to black.

We open back up backstage, where Mark Stegglet is standing by with "Bunkhouse" Bobby O'Connor and Jack Lynch. O'Connor is wearing the same ring gear as when we saw him earlier, as well as the same t-shirt. Jack Lynch is, not surprisingly, dressed in all black, tonight favoring a simple short sleeve work shirt and a pair of black jeans. Absent is his cowboy hat, still in the possession of one Cain Jackson.]

MS: Bobby, tonight you face Demetrius Lake with your shot at the World Heavyweight Championship on the line. First things first, are you playing right into the Black Tiger's hands as Bucky Wilde alluded to earlier?

BOC: I don't believe I am, Mister Stegglet. But that's really not the point. You see, plotting and planning like life is one big game of chess isn't my style. That's more Lake's style. Conniving and looking for any loophole to cheat his way to success. Me?

[O'Connor nods.]

BOC: I prefer to step into that ring and let my skills do the talking. Maybe the likes of Lake get the big money and fabulous prizes easy by bending and breaking the rules... but I think by following the straight and narrow, when you achieve those things they end up having all the value in the world. So did I make a mistake in agreeing to this match tonight? Maybe I did. But I was raised to never duck anyone and face my problems head on, and that is EXACTLY what I'm doing tonight.

MS: Is there a concern that this may be the straw that broke the camel's back? Between your guaranteed shot at the title, Copa de Trios and the Stampede Cup... you both have quite the full plate.

BOC: We wouldn't have it any other way, Mister Stegglet. For what seemed like an eternity Jack and I were fighting every interloper that sought to destroy this company from within. At long last, it's just about pure competition.

JL: Now hold up, that ain't exactly accurate.

I heard what you said, Jackson. I heard your little challenge to me. And I'm here to tell ya that, so long as you want a piece of me, you're gonna get that piece.

And so long as you're wearin' my hat, I ain't done with you neither.

The war ain't over yet. We won some battles, but there's a war on, and that ain't done.

[O'Connor shrugs.]

BOC: I know this is the one thing that you and I differ on, Jack. We beat them fair and square in the middle of the ring. Not only that, but their high and mighty leader is confined to a wheelchair with his flunkies running around like a bunch of chickens with their heads cut off. They're bickering with each other as much as they're fighting anyone else. Maybe that business is finished after all.

[An awkward silence, as Lynch doesn't betray any feelings he has in reply to what O'Connor just said. Sensing the tension, Stegglet turns to Jack.]

MS: Jack, tonight you're to be nowhere near the ring... in fact not in the building at all when Bobby takes on Lake. What are your thoughts on letting him face the man who many say is your greatest enemy?

JL: My thoughts?

[Lynch turns to look at his partner.]

JL: My thought is that this here is Bobby O'Connor. The man that took it to Hamilton Graham, that stepped through the fires of hell to go face to face with Caleb Temple. A man that's had my back every step of the way, and a man that ain't never backed down from a fight in his life, and never will.

And he's facin' Demetrius Lake?

I'm thinkin' that its gonna be a very bad night for the Black Tiger.

Everyone knows the history me and Demetrius have had. And everyone knows that, given half the chance, I'd love to hand that snake another butt kickin'. But I know this – there ain't nothin' Demetrius Lake can do to beat my man Bobby.

So I think I'm gonna mosey on down to the Rusty Spur, and start the celebration early, and keep it goin' for the rest of the night.

Because I know Bobby's got this, and I know that there'll never be a day when Bobby O'Connor needed someone else to help him win a fight.

MS: That is a strong endorsement. And Mr. O'Connor, while we know your partner will be at the Spur, you can never underestimate the Black Tiger's penchant for enlisting outside assistance.

BOC: That's right, and that's where we're different. Lake would never take anyone on in a fair fight, where that's the only kind of fight I've ever looked for. Rest assured, I'll have my head on a swivel tonight. I know EXACTLY the kind of games he likes to play. Tonight, if you want a shot at the World title?

[O'Connor nods.]

BOC: You're going to have to beat me fair and square. You're going to have to be the better man. And tonight... I am going to show you and the world that you just don't have the fire inside to topple an O'Connor.

[O'Connor and Lynch high five each other as Lynch heads for a door marked EXIT and O'Connor walks down the hall as we crossfade down to the ring where Phil Watson is standing.]

PW: The following contest is set for one fall with a ten minute time limit. Introducing first... in the corner to my right... from Huntsville, Alabama... weighing in at 263 pounds... Johnny Slice!

[The Alabama native jumps forward, throwing his arms down in a slashing motion - first the right, then the left with a "YEAAAAAAH, BABY!"]

PW: And his opponent... from the Land of the Rising Sun... representing Tiger Paw Pro...

HIKAAAAAARIIIIIMOOOOOONOOOOOOOOO!

[Some stock "Japanese" music comes on over the PA system as the masked man known as Hikarimono rushes through the curtain, pumping a fist to the cheering crowd.]

GM: Hikarimono, a longtime member of the Tiger Paw Pro roster, followed us back to the States where he occasionally has competed here in the AWA as well as in Combat Corner Wrestling.

BW: I hear he's gunning for a full-time gig here in the AWA, Gordo.

GM: If he is, the veteran's going to need to prove that he's still at the top of his game here tonight.

[Clad in a dark blue full bodysuit with gold and silver stars shooting across it, Hikarimono hops up on the ring apron, throwing an arm up to the fans before slingshotting over the top rope, landing on his feet inside the ring as the music fades.]

GM: Hikarimono ready for action here against Johnny Slice.

BW: Slice is a tough competitor, Gordo. Making his AWA debut tonight but he's been a champion all over the Gulf Coast and he's got quite the martial arts skills.

GM: Is that right? Well, I'm looking forward to seeing-

[As the bell sounds, Slice pulls into a martial arts stance that... well, looks like he learned it from a movie.]

GM: What in the...?

[He lets loose this guttural cry before springing forward, throwing rights and lefts at Hikarimono who sidesteps, shoving him towards the buckles. The crowd laughs as Slice slams his hand down on the top rope, shouting a threat at the masked man.]

GM: Hikarimono beckons him forward, telling him to bring it on.

[Slice comes charging out again, throwing a right followed quickly by a left - both blows easily avoided by Hikarimono who drops down, snaring the ankle between his legs, tripping up Slice with a drop toehold, taking him facefirst down to the mat.]

GM: Drop toehold takes Slice off his feet and- haha!

[The crowd laughs along with Gordon as Hikarimono scrambles up, stepping on the back of Slice and running in place before jumping off, striking his own martial arts pose.]

GM: It looks like Hikarimono's having a little fun with the Alabama native.

[An embarrassed Slice climbs off the mat, kicking the bottom rope before complaining about a hairpull to the official.]

GM: What? He came nowhere near the hair! Not that Slice has that much hair to begin with!

BW: You're one to talk.

[Hikarimono waves it off, denying the charge as Slice rushes him while he's talking to the official. The Japanese competitor again sidesteps, shoving Slice into the buckles. As he turns, he gets hit with a lightning quick series of palm strikes to the ribcage before a leaping kneelift to the jaw snaps his head back, throwing Slice's arms over the top rope.]

GM: Fierce striking combination by Hikarimono who grabs the arm and shoots him across...

[As Slice approaches the corner, he leaps up, planting a foot on the second rope, turning around and catching an incoming Hikarimono with a lunging clothesline that takes both men off their feet!]

GM: Ohh! What a counter!

BW: See?! You and Hikarimono and all these nine to fivers were making fun of the Alabama Slammah and he just showed you why he's a six-time Gulf Coast Middleweight Champion!

GM: A... huh?!

[Slice points to his temple as he climbs off the mat, shouting "Yeah! Yeah! Yeah!" to the crowd as he lifts the masked man up, scooping him up into the air in his arms and slamming him down on the mat.]

GM: Scoop and a slam by Scotty Slice who seems to have taken control of this matchup, fans.

[Slice throws his arms around, swinging them back and forth like you might imagine a martial artist in a hokey 80s movie would do...

...and then drops a chop down into the throat! Hikarimono flails about on the canvas as the official shouts at Slice, reprimanding him for the blow to the throat.]

GM: Illegal tactics by Scotty Slice and I suddenly realize why you're a fan.

BW: I'm a fan because he's a four time winner of the Best Martial Arts Influenced Pro Wrestler in Southeast Alabama Award!

GM: That's a thing?

[Slice drags Hikarimono off the mat, wrenching the arm around into an armtwist before firing him towards the buckles where the masked man leaps up onto the second rope before blindly leaping off, twisting around, and catching a surprised Slice with a crossbody!]

GM: Hikarimono catches him for one! Two!

[Slice kicks out at two, rolling the Japanese superstar off of him. He scrambles back up...

...and catches Hikarimono coming in with a knife edge chop, knocking the masked man off his feet. Slice drops to a knee, swinging his arms around again in a mockery of a true martial artist.]

BW: Scotty Slice showing off his seventh degree Black Belt skills.

GM: You're joking, right? This guy?

BW: Don't be jealous, Gordo. I know how badly you always wanted to be a martial artist. I mean, how many times can a guy watch Karate Kid?

GM: It's a fine movie, Bucky. A true classic.

[Slice goes to pull Hikarimono off the mat again...

...but gets his hand slapped away as the Japanese competitor tucks his head under Slice's chin, dropping to his knees in a jawbreaker!]

GM: Ohh! Counter out of nowhere by Hikarimono!

[With Slice dazed and reeling, Hikarimono grabs him by the arm, twisting it around, tugging him into a front facelock...

...and SPIKING him skullfirst into the mat with a DDT!]

GM: DDT! HE GOT ALL OF THAT!

[Hikarimono pops up off the mat, grabbing the legs of Slice. He looks out to the fans...]

GM: Perhaps going for a Boston Crab here?

[...but instead, he flips over into a double leg cradle!]

GM: Hikarimono changes his mind and gets the one! Two! And three!

"DING! DING! DING!"

GM: Big win for Hikarimono!

[The Japanese superstar climbs to his feet, allowing the official to raise his arm in victory.]

GM: And if Hikarimono is looking to win a spot here in the AWA locker room, he may have done exactly that. Time will tell, Bucky.

BW: It's a good win against top flight competition in Scotty Slice.

GM: Top flight... give me a break. Fans, all night long we've been talking about what went down at Rising Sun Showdown and the aftermath. One of those moments that everyone is talking about is the massive clash between MAMMOTH Maximus and KING Oni that went to a double disqualification. But is that particular battle over? A couple of days ago, the office received a request to air what you're about to see... take a look...

[We crossfade to pre-taped footage marked "KYOTO, JAPAN." The bell has sounded as our shot shows the ring. MAMMOTH Maximus is in the middle of the ring and, as usual, 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.

His opponent is a clean-shaven, chubby-faced Japanese man with shaggy, black hair. He is not fat, but neither can he be considered lean and muscular. He is dressed in black tights, knee pads and a pair of white boots.

They circle each other, before Maximus comes to a sudden stop, holds out his right hand in front of him, palm up, and curls his finger in a "Come at me!" gesture. A chyron appears at the bottom of the screen to let us know that Gordon and Bucky's commentary have been dubbed over the footage, alongside International Expert, Dale Adams.]

GM: They lock up, with Yukihiro Kanemaru giving away nearly two hundred pounds to MAMMOTH Maximus.

BW: Which is why Maximus so easily throws him off there, Gordo.

DA: Kanemaru with a look of concern as he moves in for another collar-and-elbow. Look how much torque Maximus is applying to the upper back and neck of Kanemaru.

GM: And again the big man shoves his opponent away easily. Let's not forget that this is a Maximus who just a few days prior had been in a battle with KING Oni.

[They move in for a third tie-up, but Maximus lands a quick punch to the side, followed by one to the jaw.]

DA: Alternating shots to the side and jaw by Maximus knocks Kanemaru off his feet.

BW: Those were bombs and Kanemaru is having trouble getting back to his feet.

[Maximus lets Kanemaru hang on to him and pull himself up, only to grab hold of his head and knock him back down with a headbutt.]

GM: He follows it up with another! Pulls him back up...

[Holding the arm, Maximus yanks Kanemaru towards him, flattening him with a short-arm clothesline!]

GM: OHH!

DA: Maximus has really taken to delivering that move as of late and he delivers it with body-smashing impact!

[Maximus holds Kanemaru down for a pin, but Kanemaru kicks out at two.]

BW: Kanemaru needs to stay down in my expert opinion. He's just going to get himself hurt. Maximus is a man on a mission here tonight.

DA: Kanemaru is known for his resilience and putting his body through hell; it might take more than that to keep him down.

BW: I don't know about keeping him down and out, but Kanemaru looks like he is pretty much out of his head right now.

[Maximus pulls Kanemaru to his feet again and whips him into the ropes. On the rebound, Kanemaru finds himself smashing into all of Maximus' weight, with a bell clap thrown in as well.]

GM: Maximus absolutely **FLATTENED** Kanemaru under the impact of those 420 pounds! Good grief!

[Maximus flexes his arms for the crowd, although his thick arms pretty much remain the same size as he does so.]

GM: Maximus with a bit of showboating here.

[Kanemaru struggles to regain his feet and as he gets there, MAMMOTH Maximus rushes forward, pushing him back into the corner. The referee steps in to call for a break as a defiant Maximus tucks Kanemaru's arms under the top rope, pushing him backwards to expose his chest fully.]

GM: Ohh! Big clubbing forearm across the sternum!

BW: That could cave someone's chest in, Gordo.

DA: It definitely makes it harder for a person to breathe and knocks the wind right out of you.

[A couple more shots to the sides follow, before Maximus again pushes Kanemaru's head back and lands another clubbing forearm to the chest. The referee again loudly protests as Maximus grabs Kanemaru by the hair, simply tossing him out to the middle of the ring where the Japanese native slumps facefirst to the canvas.]

GM: Kanemaru goes down to the mat again. He's obviously in a lot of trouble here in this one, guys, as Maximus measures him...

[Maximus takes a three step run, leaping into the air...]

GM: OHHH! BIG SPLASH!

BW: Perhaps a KING-sized splash?!

GM: Perhaps. And Maximus applies the cover!

[The referee counts one... he counts two... he counts...]

GM: Wow! Kanemaru kicks out of a 400+ pound splash at two!

DA: What fighting spirit!

BW: Fighting spirit... Stupidity... Same difference. Just stay down, kid.

[Maximus looks incredulous as he climbs to his feet, staring down at Kanemaru who has rolled to all fours, trying to push off the canvas.]

GM: Maximus looks shocked - just like he did back at Rising Sun Showdown when he faced KING Oni!

[The super heavyweight drags the rising Kanemaru off the mat by the hair, winding up for a punch...]

GM: Big right han- ducked! Kanemaru showing some speed!

[Maximus wheels around, throwing a second right hand that Kanemaru ducks to avoid...]

GM: Kanemaru avoids two big haymakers!

"SLAAAAAAAAAAAAAP!"

[A brutal open-handed slap to the ear seems to stun Maximus as Kanemaru gives off a shout.]

"SLAAAAAAAAAAAAAP!"

"SLAAAAAAAAAAAAAP!"

"SLAAAAAAAAAAAAAP!"

"SLAAAAAAAAAAAAAP!"

"SLAAAAAAAAAAAAAP!"

"SLAAAAAAAAAAAAAP!"

[Maximus recoils back, arms flailing to keep his balance after the barrage of hard slaps which allows Kanemaru to build a head of steam, hitting the far ropes...]

GM: Kanemaru off the ropes... CLOTHESLINE!

[The big swinging lariat catches Maximus flush but the big man shakes his head, flexing his beefy arms in front of him.]

BW: No effect!

GM: You've gotta be kidding me!

[Kanemaru looks around, his face covered in surprise before he dashes to the ropes a second time, bouncing off at high speed...]

GM: ANOTHER ONE!

[Another heavy clothesline BLASTS Maximus across the chest...

...but again he simply steps forward, shaking his head as the crowd murmurs in surprise.]

GM: Two heavy clotheslines find the mark but do absolutely nothing to the big man!

[With a shout, Kanemaru races to the ropes, bouncing off one more time...

...and runs right into a hand wrapped around his throat!]

GM: Maximus caught him!

[The super heavyweight POWERS Kanemaru up into the air, throwing him down with a ring-shaking chokeslam!]

GM: CHOKESLAM! CHOKESLAM BY MAXIMUS!

BW: Right in the corner, Gordo! I gotta think he's not done.

[Maximus steps towards the corner, delivering a stomp to the ribs of Kanemaru before he steps up to the second rope...]

GM: He's going up!

[Maximus grabs the top rope, bouncing on the middle rope once... twice... three times...]

...and then leaps up, pushing his body outwards to CRUSH Kanemaru underneath him!]

GM: PREHISTORIC PLUNGE! HE DROPS IT ALL!

[The referee drops to the mat, slapping the canvas once... twice... and three times.]

"CLANK!"

GM: MAMMOTH Maximus with the win... an impressive win... but you have to wonder if he didn't have the man beaten after that chokeslam.

BW: I'm sure he did. I think the Prehistoric Plunge was just Maximus letting off some excess steam after the double disqualification at Rising Sun Showdown.

GM: I fear you may be right, Bucky.

[We cut from the ring where the official has Maximus' hand raised to somewhere backstage after the match, where Maximus is standing by, his mask off and the straps of his ring attire pulled down.]

MM: AWA, Tiger Paw Pro, do not think a double disqualification is a satisfactory end to the battle between KING Oni and the mighty MAMMOTH Maximus! Oni, I am coming for you! On October 31st - Halloween Night - bring out the monsters once more and this time let's make it no disqualification!

[Maximus reaches out and engulfs the camera lens with one meaty hand and we cut back to live action in the Cow Palace where Phil Watson is standing.]

PW: The following tag team contest is set for one fall with a twenty minute time limit. Introducing first... in the corner to my right... from Santa Clara, California... at a total combined weight of 450 pounds... the team of Johnny Cisco and Larry Francis!

[Modest pop for the two young boys from the next town over, a reaction that grows ominous at the sound of the first *BONG*]

BW: Oh boy Gordo, we know what this is! These kids are about to have a bad night.

[The second bell tolls and AC/DC's "Hells Bells" starts playing over the arena, but this time there are no theatrics, just the two Hell Hounds, Tank and Blaster, wearing their normal in-ring gear, walking with purpose toward the ring, trailed by a VERY sour looking Charisma Knight]

PW: And their opponents... Charisma Knight presents from New-

[Watson bails from the ring as the two massive Hell Hounds storm down the aisle, diving into the ring and immediately begin pounding on the two smaller men!]

GM: Get out of there, Phil! Oh my, the Hell Hounds are waiting no- OH, Blaster turned young Johnny Cisco inside out with a clothesline.

BW: That Francis kid isn't fairing any better.

[Bucky understates that as Tank fires Francis off the ropes and plants the local with a vicious scoop powerslam]

GM: The Hounds are just putting a beating on these kids, stomping and punching and we haven't even heard a bell yet! The Hounds, fire Cisco off the ropes, and DOUBLE SPINEBUSTER! Oh my word, they just broke that kid in half!

BW: I told you Gordo, I told you... the local boys are not gonna have a good night!

GM: Charisma Knight looking as angry as her charges on the outside as she barks instructions in, and the referee has yet to get control of this. Tank fires Francis into the ropes, lifts him up for a big back bod-

[Indeed he does, and as the 225 pound Francis is airborne, the stronger Blaster stands to catch Francis perfectly in a vertical suplex position, holding him there for a mere few seconds before falling back and completing the move]

BW: UNBELIEVEABLE, GORDO!

GM: That man just caught a man flying and finished it with a vertical suplex! Amazing!

[Tank scrapes Francis off the mat and hurls him over the top to the floor as Blaster picks up Cisco and places him in a vertical headscissors, lifting him up as Tank bolts up to the top rope]

GM: Come on now, this match hasn't even-

[And Gordon can't finish as the Hounds execute Overkill on Cisco.]

BW: And I don't think it will, Gordo. Overkill and the Hounds are up, total domination!

GM: Fans, we're going to need medical attention out here for Cisco and Francis as Tank and Blaster survey their handy work. That was just uncalled for, Bucky.

BW: Those two men and that woman have a mission. And I think that might have something to do with their Stampede Cup results.

[Some doctors and staff have come to the aid of Cisco and Francis as the Hounds and Charisma jaw with fans as they make their way to the Interview platform]

GM: It's possible Bucky, its behavior like that that caused their disqualification against Los Guerreros de Oro in their Cup match and ended their run, and it's obvious now that it isn't sitting well with those three, and I don't envy Lou right now. Lou, you have your hands full.

[The camera cuts to "Sweet" Lou Blackwell standing on the platform, as the Tank and Blaster ascend first, jawing with fans, and Blaster flexing, the two seemingly proud of their quick work. Charisma follows, holding the collars with chains of the Hounds and wearing her usual attire, and the look of pure disdain on her face]

SLB: Thank you guys, Charisma Knight, just what was the meaning of tha-

[Charisma grabs the mic from Lou, cutting him off.]

CK: The meaning of that, Lou? I'll tell you the meaning of that. The meaning of that is that the AWA Officials are scared of what my Hounds can do to people in the ring. They got scared when Tank and Blaster here were tossing around those masked midgets from Mexico around and were afraid we might break them. A disqualification, really. We had till five, it's in the rulebooks. I most likely know it better than our own officials. And now we're robbed of the Stampede Cup.

So what we're going to do now Lou, is rob the AWA of its Tag Team division. You thought Tank and Blaster were violent before, you haven't seen anything yet. Tonight, those locals were in the wrong place at the wrong time. And that's exactly what every team that gets in the ring with us will get from here on out. We're after total destruction. And we ask, no, we DARE anyone to step up and stop us. Whoever you put in front of us, we will run through. We've decimated every team we've faced, ran Team Samurai out of town, who knows if Los Guerreros will be able to make their second round match? We will destroy. And that's not a threat, that's not grandeur, that's not smack talk, that's a cold, hard, fact.

[She hands the mic back to Lou as the Hounds laugh behind her]

SLB: Well, that's well and good for these two monsters, but what about you, Charisma Knight? Care to comment about what Melissa Cannon said earlier? It's no secret that you've been after getting in the ring since you got here.

[Charisma shoots a look at Lou that could melt steel before turning without comment and motioning to the Hounds to follow]

SLB: Well, I suppose that answers that for now, and a heavy challenge laid down by the Hell Hounds. Who will accept? We'll find out in the weeks ahead and fans, don't go away 'cause we'll be right back after this break!

[We 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 halfheartedly 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 Carl Riddens?]

Kids: *gasp*

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

Kids: Dave Bryant!

[And... did Shadoe Rage just kick down the front door to attack Brian James from behind while he was grappling with Travis Lynch in the dining room for no apparent reason?! And is that Skywalker Jones leaping down the staircase at Calisto Dufresne? And why are Tony Donovan and Wes Taylor beating up the mailman? Oh, there's the Northern Lights turning them around and brawling with them on the lawn!]

Kids: WOAHH!

[Yes, these two kids are about to have a very badly-acted simultaneous cardiac arrest and orgasm. It happens. Especially when Bobby O'Connor is jumping off your kitchen cabinet to hit Rob Driscoll with a flying bodypress, Brad Jacobs is hiptossing Frankie Farelli across your family room, and Strictly Business and The Wilde Bunch are brawling across your driveway. Demetrius Lake has just grabbed a dish from the china cabinet and breaks it across the back of Supernova, while Ryan Martinez is ramming Johnny Detson's head into the sink in the background, Buford P. Higgins and Miss Sandra Hayes are in a shouting match, Hannibal Carver tries to clothesline Callum Mahoney, who ducks... poor Hannibal hits the boys' father who was coming in to check out the noise. Then King ONI 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 Four 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!

[Air Strike does a double throw to send The Lights Out Express over the living room divider into the kitchen! Then we see the kids playing with the Air Strike and Lights Out Express action figures.]

Announcer: Create new dream matches never before seen!

[Sultan Azam Sharif tries to smash Supreme Wright with a kitchen chair, but Wright pulls open the ironing board from the wall to block it! Then we see the kids playing with the Sharif and Wright action figures.]

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

[Jack Lynch and Cain Jackson double-clothesline Cesar Hernandez 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 Gladiator is doing a double-backflip powerbomb to Jericho Kai. 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 Derrick Williams, Manny Imbrogno, Willie Hammer, and Casanova. 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!

[We come back from commercial and join the ending minutes of the AWA National Championship match at All-Star Showdown just as Travis Lynch is delivering a vertical suplex to Rob Driscoll.]

GM: Oh my! That'll shake the champion from head to toe!

[Lynch sits up on the mat, nodding to the cheering crowd as he uses the ropes to pull himself back to his feet...

...and holds up his left hand to a huge cheer!]

GM: Lynch is calling for the Discus Punch! He's gonna knock the champion into the middle of next week and... it looks like Davis Warren is starting to stir! He may have only caught a glancing blow from Driscoll!

[The Texan goes into a spin as Driscoll starts to rise...

...and BLASTS the National Champion right on the jaw with the closed fist, sending him flying and crashing down to the canvas. The crowd EXPLODES on impact and then again as Lynch settles into a cover.]

GM: ONE!! TWO!! THREE!! FOUR!! FIVE!!

BW: You can count to twenty, Gordo, there ain't no ref to count with you!

[Lynch angrily slaps the mat three times, getting another cheer.]

GM: Come on! Get another ref out here or something! Get someone out here to-

[Lynch climbs to his feet, shouting at the ringside officials, pointing at Davis Warren. He walks over to Warren again, leaning down to shake him a few more times, seemingly helping in the efforts to revive him...

...when suddenly, the crowd begins to buzz with concern!]

GM: Wait a second! Wait a second!

[With Lynch on his feet, the crowd noise alerts him to a problem just as someone dives headfirst under the bottom rope. Lynch rushes him, arm extended...]

GM: Who is that?!

[Whoever it is ducks the clothesline, causing Lynch to hit the ropes, rebounding back...

...and getting lifted up by the upper thighs, pivoting...]

GM: SPINEBUSTER!

[Lynch is DRIVEN down into the canvas by the textbook spinebuster as the identity of the man becomes crystal clear.]

GM: What the... that's Dave Cooper! That's the Professional!

BW: Perfect timing!

GM: What in the world is he doing here?!

[Cooper grabs Driscoll by the arm, dragging him over the prone Lynch. He grabs the official, pulling him over and throwing him down next to the pin attempt as well before moving to the floor...]

GM: No! Not like this!

[The referee tiredly hits the mat once...]

GM: Come on, Travis!

[He slowly lifts his arm, slapping the canvas a second time...]

GM: It can't end like this! Somebody needs to-

[The arm comes up again, slowly coming down...

...to hit the mat!]

"DING! DING! DING!"

GM: Aaaagh. I can't believe it!

[Dave Cooper thrusts his arms up into the air, celebrating from his spot at ringside. The crowd is ROARING with disdain for what they just saw as Cooper rolls back in, pulling Driscoll up to his feet. Slowly the screen fades to black for a moment and then fades into Mark Stegglet standing at the AWA backstage interview area.]

MS: Fans, as you just saw, at All-Star Showdown there was pandemonium in the ring when Rob Driscoll defended the prestigious AWA National Championship against my guest at this time, Travis Lynch!

[The camera pans back a bit to reveal the Texas Heartthrob, Travis Lynch, standing besides Mark Stegglet. Travis, who is attired in a trademark super smedium black t-shirt, blue jeans and his black cherry ostrich cowboy boots, does not appear to be his jovial self.]

MS: As everyone saw at All-Star Showdown, Travis, unfortunately you once again were denied the AWA National Championship.

[Travis lowers his head and slowly shakes is side to side, obviously in complete disappointment. The young Texan exhales deeply before he once again looks at the camera.]

TL: You know Mark, watchin' that footage right there...

[Travis pause and again exhales deeply as he looks up towards the ceiling for a moment.]

TL: It makes my blood boil, Mark. Every single moment of that footage pushes me to the edge ... Mark, there's so much I want to say ... but I know none of it can be said on TV. And 'cause of that I'm goin' to try hard ... real hard to be polite and calm for each and everyone of these great fans here tonight.

[The crowd begins to cheer but Travis raises his right hand, obviously requesting the fans to quiet down as he continues to speak.]

TL: At All-Star Showdown, I once again had you beat in the center of the ring, Driscoll...

[A look of annoyance and contempt is seen upon the face of Travis.]

TL: And once again by hook and crook you retained the AWA National Championship. And this time ... this time I won't get a rematch ... this time, I have to stand by and listen to you gloat. No, not gloat... lie. I have listen to you lie to these great AWA fans, how you're the best this promotion has ever seen. And you'll continue to spread the lie even when everyone has seen that you can't win on your own.

[The fans cheer in agreement.]

TL: Speaking of your own ... I don't know what retirement home you dragged Dave Cooper out of Driscoll, but I can tell both of you, there's a bullseye on his back.

[On that note, the crowd cheers loudly.]

TL: You hear that Mark, the finest wrestling fans in the world want to see Cooper receive some Lynch justice. Cooper, I don't know why you decided to take Driscoll's offer ... I don't know if you're jealous 'cause Somers is ridin' the coattails of a former number one contender or if your social security is dryin' up. But honestly I don't care, at All-Star Showdown you stole the AWA National Championship away from me! I'm sure Driscoll and Ms. Hayes have been thankin' you over and over again.

[Travis pauses.]

TL: Well I haven't had my chance to thank you yet. But when I do Cooper, I promise you it's not goin' to be somethin' you enjoy.

[Travis pats the shoulder of Mark Stegglet before he walks away.]

MS: Travis Lynch with his eyes on "The Professional" Dave Cooper and if I'm Cooper, I might be looking for reinforcements. Now, let's head back down to the ring for more tag team action!

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

PW: The following tag team match is set for one fall with a twenty minute time limit.

[The crowd cheers on cue as the punk rock anthem, "Anarchy In The UK" by the Sex Pistols, plays over the PA. Immediately, Ripper Brooks and Chaingun Harrow stride out from behind the curtain. The Brixton Bruisers each wear a loose red shirt with various silver/dark green/dark yellow/black/navy designs spraypainted and airbrushed in (skulls, motorcycles, flames, words, etc) over a black long-legged singlet, leather-and-chrome boots, and black elbow pads. Their fists are heavily taped. To the ring, they wear black leather longcoats with "BRIXTON BRUISERS" stenciled on it with red spray paint, and visor-like sunglasses which are tinted red.

The Bruisers take their sweet time walking to the ring, but they run their mouths at full speed the whole way. Pointing at the ring, waving on the fans, the dangerous duo look happy to be there... with nasty grins and intense glares indicating that their intentions are not benevolent. The crowd CHEERS the English hooligans.]

PW: Introducing first ... from London, England... at a total combined weight of five hundred-fifty-three pounds...

...RIPPER BROOKS and CHAINGUN HARROW!

...THE BRIXTON BRUISERS!

[As their names are called, Brooks and Harrow raises their fists up to the sky. They both have bulky, unathletic builds, with Harrow being a bit larger. Brooks sports an improbably blue feathery mohawk, jagged blue eyebrows and a chrome tooth. Harrow is no normal-looking fellow himself with a dark orange spiked hairstyle, thick dark orange eyebrows, and a missing front tooth. Their facial expressions are crazed and their mouths are turned into smirks. The duo proceeds to walk down the aisle at their own pace, steps through the ropes, and continue to yammer on about goodness knows what.]

PW: And their opponents... at a combined weight of five hundred thirty eight pounds... THE WALKING DEAD!

[The arena lights go black. Some fans hold up their cellphones and hit their flashlight apps.

"BLOOD ON THE LEAVES"

And the lights come back on. The Walking Dead are in the ring, dressed in ragged clothes and wearing stylized Egyptian jackal masks. Poet Wright

stands between them, the scarred crazed lady holding a chalice high. She screams insanely as the Dead move to their corner, removing their masks. Both Allah and LeMarques move around in their corner, with goggling eyes, hissing and their jaws working, chewing at the air.]

GM: And we're set for this tag-team contest. The last time these two teams met, I don't think anything was settled. Maybe this time we'll have a decisive winner.

BW: I just hope nothing crazy happens. You have four lunatics in the ring and each one gets crazier than the next.

[In the bottom corner of the screen appears an image of Jericho Kai. The dreadlocked Servant of Sutekh is framed and underlit to give him a demonic visage. He smiles sadistically.]

JK: Our time is coming. As my Walking Dead will take down the Brixton Bruisers so shall I take down the Strongest in the Land. Hercules, man, you have proven to be the strongest, but you're not the smartest, are you, man? No. You don't know what to do with your power. But I do, man. Lord Sutekh knows what to do with your strength. So I'm going to take it. Come find me, Hammonds. Find me and give me your strength.

And just like that the inset box disappears.]

BW: This guy just gives me the creeps, Gordo.

GM: Jericho Kai has been playing mind games with Hercules Hammonds. I don't understand what his game is but we're all stuck playing it it seems.

"DING! DING! DING!"

GM: Chaingun Harrow starting off the match for his team and he'll be starting off against the big man for the Walking Dead... the huge and intimidating Henri LeMarques.

BW: Gordo, doesn't even look like LeMarques knows where he is. It's kind of unnerving. Is he even alive?

GM: LeMarques totally focused on that chalice of Poet's outside the ring and she gives him the signal! I don't know what could be going through any of their minds, Bucky. I don't know and I don't think I want to know.

[LeMarques staggers forward as Harrow lunges into him. The two heavyweights crash into each other and grapple. They push and shove against each other, neither body giving much ground at first. Then LeMarques sets his feet and drives Harrow backwards towards a neutral corner. Harrow reverses and pounds away at LeMarques with a fast barrage of right hands. The giant Dead man flinches with the impact of the blows and tries to bite Harrow's arm.]

BW: The Dead's strategy is when in doubt... eat him.

GM: Harrow the faster of the two. He can land blows faster than LeMarques can defend against them. But the Dead Man seems to shrug off those blows.

BW: Harrow better be careful. He could punch himself out here!

GM: Harrow maybe realizes that and he's bringing LeMarques out of the corner with an Irish whip into the ropes. Here comes LeMarques...

[The crowd shouts involuntarily as LeMarques rebounds off the ropes and runs through Harrow with a heavy shoulder block. He turns around into a clothesline from Ripper Brooks who charges in.]

BW: He didn't drop him with that move!

GM: LeMarques absorbed the clothesline!

[The Brixton Bruisers both grab LeMarques and rocket him into the ropes again. They clasp arms and charge forward. A double clothesline knocks LeMarques to the mat with a hard thud. The crowd cheers for the double team move as referee Longfellow forces Brooks from the ring.]

GM: Harrow with the big man down. Elbow drop finds the mark. And here's the first cover of the match.

BW: Does LeMarques even know how to kick out?

[Well, maybe he does, but in this instance he gets out of the pin with a rake to the eyes and then finds a handy ear to engulf in his teeth.]

GM: He's biting him! He's biting him!

BW: If LeMarques eats brains, he's going to go hungry gnawing on Chaingun!

[The pain of the bite draws a howl from Harrow as he breaks the pin and allows LeMarques to lumber to his feet. LeMarques wades into him with a series of hard punches to the midsection that drive Chaingun into the Dead's corner.]

GM: And the Walking Dead with a double team!

[Poet shouts instructions from outside the ring and Allah wraps his arm around Harrow's throat. LeMarques rams his shoulder into Harrow's midsection repeatedly. Ripper Brooks comes running into to break up the double team, forcing Longfellow to intercept him again.]

BW: And all that idiot did was succeed in distracting the referee from saving his partner! Gordo, you get in a tag match and you've got to learn how to work that official! Brooks should have just yelled at the referee to break up the double team!

[By the time Longfellow turns back to the action, LeMarques is whipping Harrow into the ropes. Harrow puts on the brakes, reverses the whip and buries a hard knee into LeMarques midsection. The shot drops LeMarques to his knees.]

GM: LeMarques winded by that knee. He might need a tag soon.

[And Harrow makes the tag. Ripper Brooks rushes in and rakes the eyes to set up a vicious elbow to the top of the head. Harrow drops to one knee and settles into a chinlock, forcing LeMarques to carry his weight.]

GM: And Ripper Brooks with the chinlock, forcing LeMarques to carry the weight of both men.

BW: Zombies might be irresistible but apparently they don't do much cardio. LeMarques breathing hard and heavy.

[Brooks leans all his weight down on LeMarques. But his arm slips within reach of LeMarques' mouth and he falls victim to another hard bite.]

GM: And again LeMarques breaks the hold with a bite!

BW: It works well, doesn't it!

[And LeMarques goes on the offense with a scoop and a body slam. He drops down with a headbutt to the sternum and starts clawing at Brooks' heart with his fingers.]

GM: And Longfellow considering this a pin attempt!

[But Brooks is out at one and half. From the outside Poet shouts at LeMarques who staggers to his corner and makes the tag. Unique Allah clambers to the top rope and leaps off, sprawling out to splash across Brooks. Longfellow gets a two count before Brooks kicks out again.]

GM: And another two count for the Dead.

BW: I don't even know if they are trying to pin these men! I think they're looking for their next meal. The Walking Dead are strange, Gordo! They say they're here to give strength to some mythological Jackal-headed God.

GM: They certainly aren't your typical tag team.

[Allah drops down onto Brooks with a knee drop. He yanks Brooks up to his feet and twists the arm. Allah staggers into an Irish whip and yanks back, kicking Brooks in the shins with a low kick. He swarms over Brooks and moves into a Russian leg sweep.]

BW: Dirt Dog Unique Allah has had a weird wrestling history. He's been around for a while but never had any sustained success even though he was

part of one of the most infamous matches in the business! What happened to this guy that he ended up like this?

GM: I would assume he was taken too by Jericho Kai and this deranged Poet woman.

BW: It's a shame.

[Allah goes to the second rope and flops off with an elbow drop to the short ribs. He goes into another cover and gets a two count of it.]

GM: And here comes Chaingun Harrow to make the save! He grabs Allah by the back of his pants and tosses him into LeMarques.

BW: And that may have woken the big man up!

GM: Here comes LaMarques!

BW: And we've got another Pier 6 brawl here!

GM: This one is breaking down quickly!

[The four men throw hard haymakers at each other as Poet screams on the outside. Longfellow hollers at the four men and lays on his count. He hesitates at four before he finally has no choice but to waive the match.]

"DING! DING! DING!"

GM: And this one results in another double disqualification!

PW: Ladies and gentlemen, referee Ricky Longfellow has disqualified both teams!

[The announcement doesn't seem to make any difference to the Dead and the Bruisers. They continue to hammer away at each other. LeMarques hurls Brooks. Harrow hurls Allah. Allah charges into Brooks. Harrow rushes LeMarques and spears him with a headbutt. Both Allah and Harrow climb the ropes. Harrow lands on LeMarques with a buttdrop to the chest. Allah lands on Brooks with a buttdrop to the face. Both men then collapse into each other, fists flying as referees, security and low level wrestlers pour out of the back to try to control the match.]

GM: Ladies and gentlemen, we're going to commercial! Stay tuned!

[Fade to black.

A black and white shot comes up on the screen, showing the Main Event of the original SuperClash, a snap shot of "Hotshot" Stevie Scott and Juan Vasquez colliding. A voiceover begins.]

"It began with a clash of two of the AWA's greatest of all time."

[The shot of Vasquez and Scott turns into another shot of them battling at SuperClash II before we jump ahead to SuperClash III where we see William Craven, now unmasked from his disguise as The Minion, assaulting Alex Martinez.]

"We've seen surprises clashes..."

[And then to SuperClash IV where Joe Petrow and "Big" Jim Watkins are tearing each other apart.]

"Clashes of legends..."

[On to SuperClash V with some highlights from the tag team battle between the Blonde Bombers and SkyHerc.]

"Clashes of athleticism..."

[SuperClash VI's spotlighted footage is of Supreme Wright and Ryan Martinez lighting it up in the middle of Madison Square Garden, the Mecca of sports and entertainment.]

"Championship clashes..."

[The black and white footage goes to color, speeding up drastically to show match after match after match after match, getting faster and faster until slamming to a halt, showing an aerial shot of Minute Maid Field, the site of SuperClash VII in Houston, Texas.]

"What kind of clash will we see this year?"

[The shot slowly fades to a graphic advertising the big event...

...and then back to live action backstage where Mark Stegglet is standing by.]

MS: Welcome back to Saturday Night Wrestling on The X, fans, where we've got breaking news! Earlier tonight, we heard Supernova once again issue a challenge to Shadoe Rage for one more shot at the World Television Championship. We all wondered whether or not Rage would accept the challenge.

[Stegglet shakes his head.]

MS: And while we've yet to hear an official answer from the champion, we can now reveal that in two weeks' time, Shadoe Rage WILL defend the World Television Title... but it will not be against Supernova. No, instead, he puts the gold on the line against the Combat Corner graduate himself, Willie Hammer!

[Stegglet grins.]

MS: It should be one heck of a match and I personally can't wait to see it. But right now, let's head back to the ring for more action!

[We fade back to the ring where Phil Watson is standing. A short, pudgy redhead is in the ring already as well.]

PW: The following contest is set for one fall with a ten minute time limit. Introducing first... from San Francisco, California... weighing in at 252 pounds... Red Farmer!

[Farmer pumps a fist to some cheers from the hometown crowd.]

PW: And his opponent...

[The lights drop to black.]

BW: Oh brother...

[After a few chilling moments in the darkness, a set of bright orange and yellow come up... very, very slowly. The result is the look of a sunrise, casting a glow over the walkway. The camera is right by the lights so the vision is blinded for a moment...

...until darkness appears. Ennio Morricone's "Man With A Harmonica" begins to play as well, giving the whole scene quite the old Western feel.]

PW: From The Deadwoods... weighing in at 301 pounds...

THE HANNNNNNNNNNNNGMANNNNNNNNNN!

[As we cut to a long shot of the aisle and see the tall drink of water known as The Hangman striding down it in an open brown leather full-length trench coat, faded and worn from time. His brown leather gloves are a perfect match. His face is barely visible with a brown Stetson pulled down over his eyes. Gripped in his right hand tightly? A noose, by God... a noose.

Trailing a few feet behind him is another man, wearing an old-timey black suit. A silver pocket watch chain hangs into view. His eyes are locked on the ring, his face etched with focus as he runs a hand through his wild black beard.]

BW: Look at the size of this guy!

GM: This isn't the first time we've seen The Hangman, fans, but every time seems to be a new haunting experience. There's a definite chill in the air right now as this deadly apparition makes his way towards the squared circle.

[Upon reaching the ring, The Hangman and his ally climb the steps. The Hangman steps over the top rope with ease as the other man steps through the ropes, accepting the shrugged off trenchcoat. Underneath, we see a

sweat and dirt-stained dress shirt that has seen better days along with a pair of brown slacks that are tucked right into a pair of black cowboy boots.

He's close to seven feet tall, lanky and lean but with some muscle tone on him. His skin has been blasted by the sun over the years, leaving it weathered and aged. Long strings of black hair with the beginnings of aging peeking through in streaks of grey hang down to his shoulders. His coarse facial hair comes in the form of a short beard and mustache.

The Hangman stares across at Red Farmer who seems to be looking for an exit as the big man reaches back slowly, hanging the noose over the ringpost with care. The other man steps from the ring as The Hangman stares out into the crowd, right at a pale young man holding up a sign that reads "THE HANGMAN IS REAL!"]

BW: And right about now, I'm wondering what kind of a lunatic would sign on to face The Hangman, Gordo.

GM: Red Farmer is the kid's name. He used to live here, you know.

BW: He's gonna die here, you know... convenient.

[Referee Ricky Longfellow checks in with Red Farmer, making sure he still wants to compete...

...and then signals for the bell. Farmer comes rushing across the ring, hoping to get the jump on The Hangman who is still looking away from him.]

GM: Farmer from behind!

[But at the last possible moment, The Hangman whips around, catching Farmer dead to rights, using his cold gaze to still the young man who falls back, dropping down on his butt on the mat in terror. The Hangman advances, stepping once... twice...

...and BLASTING a rising Farmer with a right hand to the side of the head that sends the much smaller man falling back into the turnbuckles!]

GM: What a right hand!

[The Hangman advances, squaring up on the local and battering him with quick and impactful rights and lefts to the body before nearly removing his head from his body with a stiff uppercut that snaps Farmer's head back before dumping him down in a seated position against the turnbuckles.]

GM: Farmer may be out on his feet after that one!

[The Hangman backs off, stalking around the ring for a moment as his corner man nods confidently. He moves back, past a protesting official, and hooks a rising Farmer by the throat with both hands...

...and hoists him with ease into a two-handed choke!]

GM: That's an illegal choke, ref! Get in there!

[Farmer's legs dangle helplessly as he tries to pry The Hangman's iron grip off of his windpipe. He's turning purple at the count of four before the man from the Deadwoods spins and flings him down to the mat, sending him sprawling to the canvas.]

GM: This guy obviously has no regard for the rules and no regard for his opponent at all!

BW: That's the kind of killer instinct that makes money... lots and lots of money.

[Farmer crawls towards the corner, dragging himself up using the ropes as The Hangman lumbers in, bulldozing him with a high impact clothesline!]

GM: Clothesline in the corner!

BW: Not a lot of speed behind that. It was more him putting his weight behind it instead of momentum.

GM: He scoops him up!

[Holding Farmer under his arm, The Hangman walks out to the center of the ring before leaping up and DRIVING him down to the canvas with a ring-shaking side slam!]

GM: Big side slam by the Hangman! And I'm of the opinion that he could get him right here if he wanted to.

BW: I'm betting he doesn't.

[The Hangman proves Bucky correct as he rolls to a knee, looking out towards his cornerman who nods approvingly. The cornerman lifts a hand menacingly, turning it into a fist as the near seven-footer climbs to his feet, reaching down to wrap his hand around the throat of Farmer, lifting him effortlessly to his feet...]

GM: He's got him by the throat again, ref!

[With Farmer on his feet, The Hangman hooks an arm, slowly twisting it around...

...and then BLASTS Farmer with a right hand to the jaw, sending him falling back, going between the middle and bottom ropes with his upper body.]

GM: The Hangman is methodical in there, taking his time and making every move count in sheer impact.

[He steps forward, grabbing the legs of Farmer, tucking them under his armpits...

...and falls back, swinging him up in a catapult so that his throat SLAMS into the middle rope!]

GM: OHHHHHH!

[Farmer is still clutching his throat, coughing violently as The Hangman rises once more, walking around the ring, tugging at his leather glove to keep it in play as he circles back towards Farmer who has managed to roll back inside of the ring...]

GM: The Hangman's got him up, shoots him off the ropes...

[And as Farmer rebounds, The Hangman lifts him by the upper thighs into spinebuster position, slowly turning - essentially killing any momentum of the smaller opponent - and then lunges forward, driving his weight down onto the opponent as the cornerman applauds again, shouting "End him! Send him to the gallows!"]

GM: "Send him to the gallows?!" What in the world does that mean?

[Rising off the mat slowly, The Hangman turns to face the crowd, slowly lifting his own right hand and gripping his throat with it.]

GM: That's... disturbing.

BW: It's time to put someone on the end of that rope, daddy!

[The Hangman pulls a struggling Farmer to his feet, turning him around before lifting him up into torture rack position. He pauses, looking out at the awed crowd...]

GM: He's got him up but what's he going to do with him, Bucky?

BW: I think we're about to find out, Gordo.

[With the crowd buzzing in anticipation, The Hangman swings his opponent out to the side, hooking the head and neck as he does...

...and DROPS down into a Hangman's neck breaker!]

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

GM: That's gotta be it!

[The Hangman rolls into a kneeling pin, planting his palms on the chest and pressing his own torso up with his arms at full extension as he gets the easy three count.]

GM: Stick a fork in Farmer 'cause he's done, fans.

"DING! DING! DING!"

["Man With A Harmonica" begins to play again as The Hangman slowly rises off of his downed opponent as his cornerman enters the ring, a broad smile on his mustached face. He walks to the corner, lifting the noose from off the ringpost and walks over towards his charge who drops to a knee, looking up at the rope. The cornerman looks at the kneeling monster and shouts...]

"LET JUSTICE BE DONE OR THE HEAVENS WILL FALL!"

[...at which The Hangman rises to his feet, taking the noose from the older gentleman.]

GM: Wait a second... I'm not sure I like the looks of this...

[With the referee loudly protesting, the Hangman leans down, slipping the noose over the head of Farmer so that the rope is around his neck...

...and starts dragging him using the rope, choking him violently as he pulls him towards the edge of the ring.]

GM: The Hangman's climbing out of the ring and-

[He reaches back under the ropes, grabbing Farmer by the hair, yanking hard to pull him out onto the floor with a splat. He grabs the rope again.]

GM: Oh, come on! There's no call for this, Bucky!

BW: Hey, I can't disagree with you there but The Hangman and his friend whoever he is... they're trying to send a message - clear as day.

[The Hangman turns his back on the ring, slowly dragging Farmer up the aisle as his cornerman walks before him, a cool and satisfied expression on his face as they head back towards the locker room.]

GM: I'd say that message has been received and the entire AWA has been put on notice.

[The shot cuts from the aisle just before they vanish through the curtain, landing on the pale young man holding up the same homemade sign we saw earlier.]

GM: The Hangman is real? You got that right, pal. Fans, let's go backstage where "Sweet" Lou Blackwell is standing by. Lou?

[We open to a dark blue AWA backdrop, standing in front of which is "Sweet" Lou Blackwell. He nods at the camera with somewhat of a nervous look on his face before speaking.]

SLB: Thanks, Gordon. Before I begin, I just want it as a matter of public record that I am conducting the following interview under protest. I am a professional however, so do it I will. Joining me at this time...

[Lou shakes his head.]

SLB: ... "Doctor" Harrison Fawcett.

[Blackwell takes a quick step back, as instead of "Doctor" Fawcett walks in the hulking form of The Lost Boy. He leans directly into Blackwell's face, sniffing at him before emitting a low growl.

SLB: Now, wait--

[A dark laugh is heard, as The Lost Boy whips his head to the left.]

"D"HF: None of that. He would taste horrible.

[The Lost Boy gives Blackwell one more sniff, before shaking his head with disgust as Fawcett walks into view. He hands The Lost Boy a rawhide bone which is greedily accepted and gnawed upon as Blackwell begins to speak.

SLB: "Doctor" Fawcett, as you are no doubt aware of by now... The Gladiator--

[Fawcett sighs, holding up a hand to cut off Blackwell.]

"D"HF: My grand return to these shores, fresh from proving the world wrong when they insisted that my KING would find defeat impaled upon the tusks of a MAMMOTH... you ask me to respond to the snorts and snarls of a common heretic?

SLB: Heretic?

"D"HF: Of course. He stood here and spoke of false prophets. When you have seen it, you have ALL seen it with your own eyes. I have proclaimed my liege as your KING, and time and again he has proven that to be as true as gospel.

SLB: Well, even you have to admit that the Gladiator didn't start it... your own...

[Blackwell shrugs.]

SLB: ... "man", The Lost Boy started this by eliminating the Gladiator from the Rumble under less than respectable means.

"D"HF: The only thing I see here that is less than respectable is the insinuation that this dear boy ever had an evil thought in his head.

[Fawcett pats The Lost Boy on the head.]

"D"HF: No, that was just a dog chasing a car. Nothing but pure animal impulse. He chases, not knowing what he would do with it if he actually caught it.

[Fawcett smiles darkly.]

"D"HF: However, I DO know. Everyone else may look at the Gladiator and wave everything he bellows as the rantings of a mad man... but I know better. I know of the deities he claims to fight for, but I would know more. I will gain this knowledge and prove him wrong in one fell swoop, I will prove to him and all that once again I am unquestionably the humanitarian of the year.

[Blackwell shoots Fawcett a quizzical look.]

SLB: How exactly do you plan to do that?

[Fawcett smiles again.]

"D"HF: With the open arms of hospitality. For I have a room in my home for the Gladiator. For him to stay forever, until the secrets in his misshapen skull are open as a flower to me. For my home is one of secrets discovered, as you were sadly too cowardly to learn.

[Blackwell's face turns red with anger in an instant.]

SLB: How DARE you bring that up?! That was nothing but a kidnapping! You sick--

"I knew it..."

[Blackwell freezes, eyes going wide with fear at the sound of that familiar shaky voice.]

"... I knew you were a very rude man."

[Blackwell, visibly shaken, backs up until he backs right into The Lost Boy... who causes him to shout in fright as in walks Porter Crowley. His hair is slicked back, showing even more of his scarred face as he runs his hands down his black sleeveless shirt with a tuxedo shirt graphic printed on the front. He walks up to Blackwell.]

PC: You raised your voice to Uncle Harrison, but now I don't hear anything.

[Crowley puts his index and middle fingers to his temple.]

PC: I don't hear anything from you... only them. Chattering and laughing and mocking...

[Fawcett steps in between Blackwell and Porter.]

"D"HF: My beautiful boy, don't you see? He is stunned into silence by your perfection. Never before has he seen such a handsome visage, such a chiseled physique.

SLB: Handsome? You have GOT--

[The Lost Boy has the rawhide bone gripped between his teeth, shaking his head from side to side when Blackwell's leg accidentally knocks it out of his mouth. He begins barking loudly, causing Blackwell to finally drop his microphone and run down the hall as Crowley continues advancing towards him. Fawcett picks up the microphone, calling after the fleeing Blackwell.]

"D"HF: Yes! Go and tell all you meet of this beautiful creature!

[Fawcett then turns towards the camera.]

"D"HF: As for all you out in TV land, enjoy this generous gift from me, your perpetual benefactor. Enjoy... my HANDSOME FAMILY.

[We cut to a bathroom, a bathtub filled with bubbles as "You Dropped A Bomb On Me" by The Gap Band plays.]

#You were the girl that changed my world#
#You were the girl for me#

[A group of four figures in black hooded robes enter, desperately dragging a fourth behind them and towards the tub. As they try to drag and shove the fifth into the tub, we can see it is a howling Lost Boy. He claws at the outside of the tub, doing everything he can to not touch water. If you've ever tried to give a dog a bath, you can feel the pain of the hooded figures.]

#You lit the fuse, I stand accused#

[Just then, Porter Crowley staggers into the room with a hand mirror held high. He brings it crashing down onto the head of one of the hooded figures, sending him flying into the tub as the others scatter and flee. The Lost Boy snarls, grabbing the now wet hooded figure and forcing him back under the water the second he comes up for air.]

#You were the first for me#
#But you turned me out, baby#

[Cut to a view of The Lost Boy and Crowley sitting in an open window, shirtless. A bird flies by, and The Lost Boy lunges for it. Crowley stops The Lost Boy from leaping from a terrible height just for lunch. The Lost Boy continues to bark as the bird flies away as Crowley runs his fingers through his hair and flashes a horrifying smile for the camera.]

#You dropped a bomb on me, baby#
#You dropped a bomb on me#

[Another cut, this time to "Doctor" Harrison Fawcett leading Crowley and The Lost Boy down to the ring.]

#You dropped a bomb on me, baby#
#You dropped a bomb on me#

[Crowley stops at a pair of teen girls and blows them a kiss, they reply by screaming in disgust and throwing their drinks at him. Crowley pulls at his hair and bellows before charging at the security barricade, followed by a snarling Lost Boy.]

#You were my thrills, you were my pills#

[Cut to the interior of a barn, where The Lost Boy lays on the floor gnawing on a bone as Crowley sits on a bale of hay, admiring himself in a horrible smashed mirror.]

#You dropped a bomb on me#

[Back to the bathtub, which now has Crowley lounging in the bubbles with a glass of red wine. He smashes the glass against his forehead, laughing as The Lost Boy has the aforementioned waterlogged hooded figure on the floor in a chokehold.]

#Just like Adam and Eve, said you'd set me free#

[Back to the open window, as The Lost Boy is trying to gnaw on the side of the window frame to see how it tastes as Crowley has stepped slightly out to give the camera a view of his backside.]

#You took me to the sky, I'd never been so high#

[Just then a man in a flannel shirt jean overalls comes along, shouting at them (presumably to get out of his barn). Crowley shouts back at him before leaping off with a clothesline, followed immediately after by an insanely barking Lost Boy.]

#You were my pills, you were my thrills#

[Cut to the ring, where The Lost Boy is crawling on all fours as Crowley struts beside him.]

#You were my hope baby, you were my smoke#

[A final cut to a darkened, smoky room. Fawcett cackles wildly as Crowley checks himself out in the reflection of the ever-present gem as The Lost Boy rears his head back and howls at the moon.]

#You dropped a bomb on me, baby#

#You dropped a bomb on me#

[The Lost Boy rises to his feet, mesmerized by the gem as a heart outline formed at the edges of the screen and slowly closes until the entire view is black.

We open to a panoramic view of a packed house at an AWA show. After a moment, the opening to Coldplay's "Sky Full Of Stars" plays in the background as we get sweeping shots of cheering AWA fans.

As the lyrics begin, we catch back-to-back clips: a dramatic staredown in the ring between Dave Bryant and Supreme Wright, then two cheering fans side by side... one wearing a Bryant T-Shirt, one wearing a Wright T-Shirt.]

#'Cause you're a sky, 'cause you're a sky full of stars

[Next up we see Bobby O'Connor autographing a fan's Bobby O'Connor poster at ringside during a house show (when the wrestlers have time to do that kind of thing).]

I'm gonna give you my heart

[Then we see Johnny Detson walking down an aisle, berating the fans (who are waving a poster with a collage of AWA faces at him) as he goes by, but the one fan next to them with the gold-tinted Johnny Detson sunglasses is clearly thrilled about it. A similar shot sees Travis Lynch going by, pausing and giving a smile to a young lady with a Travis T-Shirt; she swoons.]

'Cause you're a sky, 'cause you're a sky full of stars

[And then, a super slow-motion shot of Ryan Martinez using the brainbuster on an opponent in the ring, which fades to transparency as we see a group of fans with Ry-Mart attire and merchandise cheering at ringside.]

Because you light up the path

[The music fades, but the cheering of the fans is still loud as we get another panoramic crowd shot. And then the stinger: AWAsShop.com.]

We fade up and are backstage with Mark Stegglet who is standing in between Cody Mertz and Michael Aarons, the duo known as Air Strike.]

MS: As we come back LIVE here on The X, I'm standing here with former World and Double Crown Tag Team Champions, Air Strike, and gentlemen, you have to be disappointed with how everything went down with your latest battle against Violence Unlimited.

[Mertz starts to speak but is immediately cut off by an agitated Michael Aarons.]

MA: Disappointed?! Disappointed?! Is that the emotion I'm supposed to be feeling, Steggs, after getting robbed, hosed and hoodwinked all at the same time?

MS: I'm just saying that the night surely didn't end the way you would have hoped.

MA: Well, that's where you're wrong because as far as I'm concerned the match didn't end. I know I wasn't pinned, my main man over here knows I wasn't pinned, you know it, the AWA faithful knows it! Heck, even the departed souls of Morton and Haynes dead great grand pappies even know

it! That match was a sham and the only people who don't are Morton, Haynes and THAT promotion in Japan!

MS: Tiger Paw –

MA: THAT promotion in Japan doesn't need to be named because they've sure benefitted from all the press WE helped generate—

[Aarons trails off clearly agitated but ever so slightly trying to hold his tongue as Mertz places a hand on his shoulder and a dejected Aarons just stares at the floor, hands on his hips.]

CM: What Michael is trying to say for the both of us, and to answer your question, Mark, is... no, we aren't very happy with how things went down in Japan. We think...

[Aarons shoots his head up and looks at Mertz.]

CM: ...we know the ref didn't see Michael's shoulder up and we hoped that the senior officials would overturn the call. Todd hasn't really been able to give us the answers we need. But make no mistake, now more than ever, our goal, our mission is to once again become the World Tag Team Champions! And that mission restarts two weeks from tonight!

MS: You're talking about the Stampede Cup?

[Mertz nods.]

CM: Of course, you see the way Michael and I figure it, we can wallow around and feel sorry for ourselves or we can do what we do best, go out there and prove to the world what Air Strike is all about.

MA: And while Cody and I were competing against the best of the best, we heard what Team Daddy Issues had to say. That Air Strike was ducking them, that Air Strike was scared of them. Well gents, your talk and your team are about the same... a whole lot of nothing and come two weeks from now you're going to be doing a whole lot of regretting all those words that came out of your mouths. Because the only thing the two of you have done since beating up old man Donovan is tugging on Brian James' cape. Well, boys don't expect to add us to that lackluster resume of accomplishment.

[A slight smirk from Mertz.]

CM: So Mark, again, to answer your question, disappointment? Sure, but that can only hold you down for so long. We're not filing petitions or grievances or even sitting on our hands for the right decision to come down. We're going to go out there two weeks from now and win, and then win again and again and again. Because when you're down you get back up, and winning that Stampede Cup is about as high up as you can get!

MA: And if you're talking altitude, you're talking about the high flying, death defying, Team Daddy Issues denying, Stampede Cup acquiring... Teenage Dream Team, Air Strike. And Wes? You can tell your daddy to book that!

[With that, Aarons and Mertz exchange a fist bump and walk off camera.]

MS: There you have it folks, Air Strike getting past Rising Sun Showdown and moving on to the Stampede Cup tournament! My sources inside the front office say this situation between Tiger Paw Pro and the AWA over the tag team titles is pretty tense and has caused some issues between the two promotions. When will we see Violence Unlimited back in the States to defend the title and who will they defend against? That remains to be seen. And speaking of title opportunities, let's go down to the ring to see Bobby O'Connor put HIS title opportunity on the line!

[We open up to the ring, where Phil Watson is getting ready to make an introduction.]

GM: Fans, up next is a huge one. Bucky, this matchup could change the course of the AWA.

BW: As well it should. Right now, Bobby O'Connor has a title shot in his back pocket, and that's a waste. He never earned that shot, just as the King said. So what do we have to look forward to? Some buddy-buddy slapfight for the belt while the real challengers get held off by contracts? No way, daddy. Demetrius Lake is taking that title shot, followed soon thereafter by the World Title.

GM: I'd hardly imagine any matchup involving either Bobby O'Connor or Ryan Martinez a "slapfight". Demetrius Lake manipulated the conscience of Bobby O'Connor in order to try and steal from him what he did, in fact, earn.

BW: You'd think a guy who has commentated wrestling since Abraham Lincoln was the Illinois territory champion would know the rules of the matches. O'Connor should have been eliminated. Two minutes from announcement, you have to be in the ring.

GM: I don't know if that rule is in the AWA's variant on a Rumble match or not. Different territories and companies can have different rules, and I've seen that one enforced elsewhere but never here. Had Bobby waited on a ruling, he probably wouldn't have to put his title shot on the line, but Lake talked his way into it. And you'll notice he waited until Dave Bryant was out of town.

BW: That's because Dave Bryant is insanely jealous and will interfere to cheat Lake out of anything and everything like he did in Tokyo.

GM: Dave Bryant has a week left on his Tiger Paw Pro tour, fans, and he will be here in two weeks on the next Saturday Night Wrestling. I can't imagine that the two-time AWA World Champion would be happy to see Demetrius Lake stealing a guaranteed World Title shot, when Bryant has been fighting and clawing to get another crack at the gold.

BW: Lake's never gotten a title match, Gordo, and this is the guy who beat ten men in one match.

GM: That's a major exaggeration, Bucky. For Bobby O'Connor, this is an opportunity of sorts as well. To be honest, and I think Jack Lynch touched on this at Rising Sun Showdown, Bobby O'Connor has fought for his friends time and again. But tonight, he can focus on fighting for himself. This isn't about a war with Team Supreme, backing up his close friends, or fighting for his family name. This is directly Bobby O'Connor's personal business, HIS career, and he really does need to put some focus on that if he wants to be able to walk out of an arena in the near future as the World Heavyweight Champion.

BW: That we'll agree on. The dumb kid needs to grow a spine.

GM: That's not remotely what I meant.

BW: I'll just have to mean it for both of us.

[The announcer build is interrupted by the opening piano-and-drum intro to the particular version of Louis Armstrong playing "Mack The Knife" favored by the so-called King Of Professional Wrestling. The fans boo voraciously, as the big screen above the entrance shows a dark purple screen with a "KING OF WRESTLING" logo on it, all green-screened behind a clip of Demetrius Lake glaring menacingly at the camera.]

GM: Here we go... let's go up to ringside and Phil Watson for the introductions.

PW: Ladies and gentlemen, the following contest is set for one fall with a thirty minute time limit! And it is for Bobby O'Connor's guaranteed shot at the AWA World Heavyweight Championship!

[As Satchmo's famous trumpet joins in, the curtain parts for the intimidating figure of Demetrius Lake. The "Black Tiger" takes a moment to look over the crowd, his eyes focused in a mean glare. The six-foot-nine Lake sports a fairly thick afro, connecting to an impressively long beard which extends down over an inch below his chin, where it comes to almost a point. A surly look is on his mustached face as he starts the walk down the aisle. The big Tiger is garbed in dark blue trunks, grey kneepads, and grey boots, with his initials on the trunks and boots. He also sports a dark blue ring jacket and a black fedora. The Tiger is in no hurry, taking his time to stop and jaw with some of the fans on his way down the aisle. The screen now shows clips of him in action, in and out of the ring.]

PW: Introducing first, coming down the aisle... from Kansas City, Missouri... weighing in at three hundred seventeen pounds... he is the King Of Professional Wrestling... "THE BLACK TIGER"... DEMETRIUS LAKE!

BW: I'm glad that Watson has figured out to drop that "self-professed" stuff.

GM: Given that Lake hospitalized a young man earlier tonight for merely attempting to wrestle Bobby O'Connor, it's probably best not to aggravate him if you are not yourself a very dangerous individual.

[The fans continue to boo loudly as Lake hits the ring, and enters by stepping through the ropes. He casually strolls around the perimeter of the ring, looking down on the fans and casting various threats, insults, and promises about what he's about to do to his opponent. Still in his jacket, the Black Tiger raises both hands, then hooks his thumbs at his chest. We can see that his left thumb is heavily taped. Shortly thereafter, the opening guitar riff from "Godzilla" by Blue Oyster Cult is heard as the crowd gets to their collective feet with a loud roar!]

GM: Such as this man!

PW: AND HIS OPPONENT...

[The drums kick in, and the popular young third generation brawler "Bunkhouse" Bobby O'Connor walks out onto the ramp to a large ovation. At first glance O'Connor looks like a clean cut, boy next door... but upon closer look the mass of scar tissue that is his forehead tells a different story altogether. He has light brown hair parted to the right, pale skin, very noticeable musculature without being cut or ripped by any means. He wears cardinal red wrestling trunks with gold trim and matching knee/elbow pads and boots. He also wears a white Blue Oyster Cult t-shirt; the shirt has the band's initials, B.O.C. just like his own, emblazoned across the chest. He raises his fist to the air and lets out a loud yell to a sizable reaction from the crowd.]

PW: From Jefferson City, Missouri... weighing in at two-hundred sixty-five pounds... "BUNKHOUSE" BOBBY O'CONNOR!

[O'Connor smiles and reaches over to high five several fans alongside the aisle as he makes his way to the ring. He stops before entering the ring, give the fans a big thumbs up to a big reaction.]

BW: He's tougher than I first thought, Gordo, but remember... he's never gone one on one with the King Of Professional Wrestling. He always had Jack Stench to hide behind every time he faced Demetrius Lake before. That title match is as good as gone.

GM: This is indeed a main event anywhere in the world, and a matchup I thought we'd only see on a major supercard. While I do not like how Demetrius Lake manipulated O'Connor into putting his title shot up for grabs, at least we'll get a great matchup out of... oh, come on!

[Bobby slides into the ring, and Lake puts the boots to him immediately, not even allowing him to stand! The crowd boos the ruthless assault, and referee Ricky Longfellow calls for the bell.]

BW: With these stakes, how did O'Connor not know that was gonna happen? Lake is gonna do whatever he has to do to get that World Title match. And

if O'Connor is dumb enough to let his guard down, then he deserves this beating.

[*DING*DING*DING*]

GM: A before-the-bell assault by Lake, who is ripping the shirt off of O'Connor's back! And choking him with it! That is grounds for an automatic disqualification in my book.

BW: He's got until five.

GM: With his hands, yes. He's using the man's shirt! That's a foreign object!

BW: No, it's attire. You wouldn't DQ a guy for doing a big splash with a shirt on, but you would if he was holding a chair on his belly. Have some sense, Gordo.

GM: Lake bieling O'Connor with the shirt, and if nothing else that will get the shirt out of his hands and out of the ring. Demetrius Lake is all over O'Connor! Intensity in his face as he hammers down with the heavy forearm blows. That is a six foot nine, three hundred twenty pound man driving his power and body weight into each brutal blow!

BW: An average guy would be a mat stain by now. I give O'Connor that. He's as smart as a stain on the mat, but he hasn't actually become one yet.

GM: Demetrius Lake pulling up O'Connor, who is dazed. Irish-whip... O'Connor ducks the clothesline! Left by Bobby O'Connor! Right! Lef... NO! Lake with a double chop to the windpipe! An illegal shot to the throat!

BW: Borderline, daddy, but there's no DQ so it's fair game. These fans were all up thinkin' Bobby No Honor was makin' a surge, but he got shut down immediately.

GM: The crowd booing the roughneck tactics of Demetrius Lake as he mauls O'Connor in the ropes! A knee, another forearm, and now choking the man on the second rope. Driving all three-twenty into him, leaning on the back of the shoulders with his knee! O'Connor cannot breathe!

BW: And if ya can't breathe, ya can't fight.

GM: Wind is everything in the squared circle, and Lake has driven it all out of the man from Jefferson City. The Number One Contender is suffering, and Lake breaks at 4 just to go right back to it.

[The fans are booing madly at the constant shortcuts and the damage inflicted to Bobby.]

BW: Demetrius Lake's offense is stifling, Gordo. He just overwhelms people. You used the word "maul", and that's about the size of it.

GM: He's as relentless as they come, but Lake is only this aggressive when he has an advantage. If Bobby O'Connor can get back on even keel, you'll see this six foot nine monster become a six-foot nine track star.

BW: That's a real big if for such a real small claim.

GM: Lake scoops up Bobby O'Connor, and slams him down in the center of the ring. Driving the knee to the sternum. And again. And again. Lake not even leaving his feet with these rapid knee drops.

BW: This is like a preliminary match, Gordo! A mugging! So much for Bobby O'Connor, Number One Contender! He's no match for the King, just like Lake said!

GM: Bucky, it has barely been a minute. And Bobby O'Connor isn't anywhere near beaten. There is nobody in wrestling, now or ever, who could beat Bobby O'Connor after one minute of offense.

BW: I bet the Dogs Of War could.

GM: There are three of them!

BW: Oh sure, qualify your statement after the fact.

GM: In the meantime, Lake continuing the onslaught. A big belly-to-back suplex by the King! And now he's choking him blatantly. O'Connor IS going to have to turn this around soon, or he might be in a bigger hole than he can escape from.

BW: See? Now you're agreeing with me.

GM: You were talking like it's over. Lake picking O'Connor up, and sending him to the ropes... huge high hip toss sending O'Connor crashing down!

BW: It IS over! That title shot is going where it belongs, and this just proves it.

GM: Demetrius Lake certainly thinks so! He's going to the ropes, Bucky... is he looking for the Big Cat Pounce already?!

BW: 'Already'? He's got O'Connor beat!

[The crowd erupts as Lake arrives at the top rope... only to be immediately grabbed by Bobby O'Connor, and flung to the mat with a desperate press slam! The Black Tiger sails through the air and hits the mat with a boom as O'Connor slumps on the ropes, clearly having exerted himself through great pain to recover so quickly.]

GM: O'CONNOR WITH THE PRESS SLAM! He sent Lake off the top rope in the least graceful manner a Black Tiger could manage, and he is right back in this!

BW: I can't believe he got up that quick, Gordo!

GM: He's paying for it right now, Bucky, as O'Connor has been battered. But he knew he had to get up and attack when he got any opening at all, and the opening was small but he took it! The heart of a champion... AND A HUGE RUNNING UPPERCUT SENDS LAKE BACKWARDS UP AND OVER THE TOP ROPE!

[A massive cheer rings out as Lake flops onto the floor after being driven back by BOC's massive running uppercut. Bobby takes a knee to shake off the cobwebs as the fans chant his name.]

BW: Lake got up too fast, too! He knew he had to fight through the pain to jump back on O'Connor, but... well, there's a reason people stay down after they're hurt. You get up too fast and you're wide open.

GM: And Lake not repeating that mistake, if he's even capable of it! The other reason people stay down is the inability to get up, obviously, and Demetrius Lake just tumbled head-over-teakettle over the top rope onto the floor!

BW: O'Connor making the rare smart move of giving himself recovery time. He took a King-sized beating at the start of the match, and he's still got some rubber in them legs.

GM: Safe to say that these men are both going to unload with the heavy artillery here tonight. Demetrius Lake using the ring apron to pull himself up... and Bobby with a handful of hair to help the King get off of his royal derriere. Lake gripping the ropes to keep O'Connor from pulling him in, and Longfellow doing the right thing by getting Bobby back.

[Now glaring a hole in his opponent, Bobby O'Connor steps back into center ring, and makes a 'bring it on' hand motion. Lake returns the glare, but then averts his eyes so that he can yell at the referee for allowing BOC to use a closed fist.]

BW: There you go, King. Dial it down. You're way ahead on points.

GM: There you go with the mythical point system again. Demetrius Lake taking his time getting back in... and thinks better of it the moment O'Connor approaches him. He had a leg halfway in before stepping down off the apron. Stalling. This is exactly what I was talking about. He looked like a killer when he could jump O'Connor before the match, but now that Bobby's on his feet he wants no part of him.

BW: Strategy, Gordo. Is it that hard to figure out? Sometimes you hit the gas, sometimes you pop the brakes. Then again, knowin' how you drive, I ain't surprised you consider using brakes an act of dishonor.

GM: Finally, Lake back in. O'Connor approaches, and Lake backing up into the corner. Apparently, the seven inch and fifty pound edge Lake has on O'Connor isn't enough for him to want to face the man head-on.

BW: Wait for it.

GM: Finally, the man from Kansas City coming out, and there's a collar-and-elbow tieup. Both men jockeying for position. Lake has leverage, size, and amateur background... but O'Connor has the strength, the low center of gravity, and the professional savvy of a third-generation star. Stalemate.

[The two men each work very hard for it. Lake drives his feet, O'Connor sinks his hips and tries to explode forward, and the two men each give a top effort... but the shove-off occurs and neither man gets an edge. The crowd starts a clap for O'Connor, who is so laser-focused on his opponent that his only acknowledgment is a subtle one, moving his head and arms ever-so-slightly to the beat of the clap.]

BW: Tell you what, for a collar-and-elbow lockup, that one was intense. They're measuring each other out... and there they go again!

[Once more, the two men struggle and strive to get a clean advantage on the other as the fans urge on BOC. For seven long seconds, they push and pull and wrench... until suddenly, Lake starts yelling very loudly, and Bobby is suddenly able to easily bull him back to the corner.]

GM: O'Connor finally able to get an advantage, but something happened in there! That was very abrupt.

[O'Connor clenches his fist as he corners the Black Tiger, but Longfellow immediately moves in. Lake has both hands clutching his left eye as he screams: "HE GOT MY EYE! HE GOT ME IN THE EYE!"]

BW: No wonder! That dirty cheater is usin' typical No Honor tactics again!

GM: It must have been an accident. Longfellow backing up O'Conn... oh, good grief!

[As Ricky Longfellow grills Bobby O'Connor, the young third-generation star incredulously denies any wrongdoing with genuine sincerity. And the instant they're both distracted, Demetrius Lake's hands leave his eye and he fishes into his trunks for some foreign object. His vision seems unimpaired.]

BW: It looks like the King has recovered quickly from that brutal eye gouge.

GM: He's loading up that thumb tape! Again!

BW: What do you mean "again"? He hasn't touched that thumb all night!

GM: You KNOW what I mean! He does this all the time!

[Shrill shrieks from the capacity crowd attempt to warn Bobby, who moves back in after his reprimand. Lake is back to clutching his eye by this time, staggering blindly near the ropes. O'Connor tries to pull him in, but Lake

takes a headlock, shields the hand from the referee's view, and hammers the loaded thumb right into the throat!]

BW: And one clean shot to the jaw drops Bobby O'Connor. I thought he was tougher than that.

GM: The jaw?! Lake hit him in the throat with the loaded thumb, and quickly putting the object back in his trunks as Longfellow checks on O'Connor.

BW: How can you make such accusations without evidence? Gordo, you should be ashamed.

GM: Everyone can see him, Bucky. Everyone but Ricky Longfellow, because that's the only man Demetrius Lake is actively concealing his cheating from. Longfellow checking the thumb tape, because presumably he has seen more than one Demetrius Lake match in his life. Obviously not much more than one, because he should be checking the trunks as well.

[Longfellow waves it off, and Lake goes back to work on O'Connor. He puts him in an Abdominal stretch, and crows about how he's got him now.]

BW: Ain't you a former referee? You know the ref can't check the trunks without evidence to suspect a weapon.

GM: The obscure rules that a former manager would know.

BW: If you can give me evidence that Demetrius Lake is usin' a foreign object, I'll eat my hat.

GM: Lake now grinding on Bobby O'Connor. Trying to take his wind, as we mentioned before. The fans are getting behind Bobby! Stomping their feet, and Bobby's arm is moving to that rhythm! He can feel the energy of the crowd!

BW: What good is that gonna do him?

GM: A HUGE HIP TOSS SENDS LAKE HARD TO THE MAT! That's what it does, Bucky!

BW: I'd think it was more like wrestling training and his own strength, but hey, if you wanna downplay the kid, I can't argue with that.

GM: O'Connor clutching his ribs, but fired up! Kicking Lake in the head to the cheers of the crowd! Lake is up, and catches a hard chop! Another! And a big elbow shot sends him into the ropes! The Bunkhouse elbow, and Lake's legs are jellied! Another huge Bunkhouse elbow, and his knees are going every which way but straight!

BW: He's in the ropes! Come on, ref!

GM: Bobby O'Connor wants the set of three, but Lake pulling Longfellow in! O'Connor hits the brakes and backs off. You can't manhandle a ref like that!

BW: You can't refuse to force a break on the ropes, and that's what Lake is telling him.

GM: Demetrius Lake refusing to let O'Connor get any momentum, and Bobby trying to pull Lake out of there. Longfellow making him back off... come on! Not again!

[Yes. Again. Lake loads up his thumb. The fans boo loudly... though a bit of a mixed reaction this time for some reason.]

BW: Don't make any crazy accusations without evidence, Gordo.

GM: O'Connor moving in, and Lake jamming him right in the throat! O'Connor falls; he can't breathe! For God's sake... WAIT A MINUTE!

[All of a sudden, leaping up onto the apron is the Japanese masked grappler Hikarimono, who competed earlier tonight. He reaches in, and gives Lake a sharp blow to the left elbow.

The bad news is that Longfellow sees this.

The good news is that it causes the foreign object that Lake just hit Bobby O'Connor in the throat with to fall out of the thumb tape right in front of him. It is shiny and metal. Lake's eyes go wide and he freezes in sheer shock for a second... long enough for Longfellow to reach down and grab it before Lake can step on it!]

BW: WHAT THE HECK IS THAT?! WHAT THE HECK IS THIS IDIOT DOING?!

GM: Bucky, I have no idea why Hikarimono just came out here, but you wanted evidence?!

[Longfellow looks at the foreign object, looks at the mortified Lake (who is trying to point out that he was hit in the arm by a third party), looks at Hikarimono (who is pointing at the object)... and calls for the bell!]

BW: NO!

“DING! DING! DING!”

GM: THAT'S IT! DEMETRIUS LAKE IS FINALLY GOING TO BE DISQUALIFIED FOR THAT INCESSANT FOREIGN OBJECT NONSENSE!

BW: NO! THAT MASKED LUNATIC HIT THE KING! THIS IS NONE OF HIS BUSINESS! O'CONNOR SHOULD BE DISQUALIFIED!

GM: Lake is trying to claim that Hikarimono threw the object down to make it look like it was his, but Longfellow having none of it! Let's get the official word!

PW: The winner of this contest... as the result of a disqualification... retaining his guaranteed title match... BOBBY O'CONNOR!

[Bobby is now up, pointing at Lake and grinning... he's clutching his throat in pain, but he knows that all the cheating has caught up to the King. Lake stomps on the mat, glares at Hikarimono, who is outside the ring walking off, and rolls out under the ropes to go after him.]

BW: Get that idiot, King! He doesn't even work here! He has no reason to...

[Lake rushes the masked man, who suddenly pivots and blasts him with a very familiar looking superkick to a massive cheer from the crowd!]

BW: ...oh, you have GOT to be kidding me!

GM: THAT'S GOT TO BE...!

[Hikarimono whips the mask off, to reveal the face of Dave Bryant! "The Doctor Of Love" stands over the fallen Lake, telling him all about himself as the audience voices approval. O'Connor gives him a high five as he walks by on his way to the back.]

BW: Who did this?! Who is responsible for this?! Bryant's supposed to be in Japan! He's breaching contract!

GM: But Hikarimono was sent here by Tiger Paw Pro! The only thing he just breached is Demetrius Lake's hopes of a World Title shot, and it couldn't have happened to a nicer guy!

BW: This is disgusting!

GM: Dave Bryant is heading up to the interview area...

[With nobody else on the platform to conduct the interview, Bryant snags a microphone and turns towards the ring, staring a hole in Demetrius Lake for a moment before a grin crosses his face.]

DB: So...how'd you like the mask, your Majesty?

[Bryant holds the mask up, looking up at it before returning his eyes to the King of Wrestling.]

DB: You know, Lake, I realized not long ago that I've been looking at this thing between us all wrong -- I thought it was going to end in some grand spectacle, a wrestling match for the ages, two men trying to claw their way to the top of the mountain and get a chance to knock off the champ...but I'm wrong.

[Bryant chuckles.]

DB: I'm wrong because you aren't that guy, Lake. You're a schemer, a fraud, and a coward. You're a joke, a cartoon villain -- constantly setting elaborate traps to try to get us to blow ourselves up or fall down a bottomless pit covered by a handful of twigs, and every single time, Lake, every SINGLE time, you wind up standing there, looking like an idiot, wondering why the trap you dreamed up exploded in your face.

[Bryant shakes his head.]

DB: To think, I actually had some respect for you, Lake. I thought you were a man worth taking seriously, a man who might show himself to be one of the greatest of all time, a man who might even, one day, show himself to be...well, a man at all. But, no, Lake, you're no man, just the clown, and I'm done taking you seriously. You can consider tonight another slap in your face from yours truly, go to with the literal slap Prince Izumi gave you at Rising Sun Showdown.

[Ouch.]

DB: Oh, don't look now, folks, but our King has shaken off his stupor! Let's see if I kicked him hard enough in the jaw to keep him quiet.

[Lake has made his way over to the timekeeper's table, and grabbed the house mic from there. Appearing thoroughly miserable, he can barely contain the rage in his eyes. He can't contain the pain from having his face kicked in at all, and frequently grabs his chin.]

DL: Cryant...

[He stops to clutch his jaw, and the fans get on his case about it.]

DB: You can take two Advil for that and... you know the rest.

DL: I oughta...

[Nope, his jaw still hurts too much.]

DL: SHADDAP!

DB: Probably not gonna happen. You've been ducking me all year, so I doubt you're going to come shut me up now.

DL: You... that's it. If that's what you want, Dave Cryant, I can assure you that you will be an example. An example everywhere to everyone about watchin' what you wish for. Because I am now ready to grant your wish at the very next opportunity. I will whip you like a dog in Mexico City, Mexico on September the fifth!

[The crowd has a mixed response - happy that they know this match is going down, sad that it's not going down in front of them. Bryant smirks, raising the mic.]

DB: You want to wait a month? There's nothing holding you back! Let's do this right now! Why wait until Mexico?!

[The crowd cheers this idea! Lake shakes his head, still holding his jaw.]

DL: Because I want you to never wrestle again. And up here in the USA, we got the best medical facilities in the world. I have whupped on a number of bums so bad they should never have come back. Ten, twenty years ago their careers would have been over and I was fixin' to do just that tonight to Bobby No Honor. But you took my World Title shot from me, the shot I earned at the Rumble and was stolen from me then! Now you stole that from me, and you stole my dignity when you made me lose to a sixty-five year old man in Tokyo!

So only the end of your career will do. And down there in Mexico, it's so dirty, so filthy, that they ain't got a hospital that I'd send a dog to. They are nothing but bums in Mexico, which makes them your people. You just showed you like to wear masks and steal things from hard working Americans! So I'm giving you home field advantage!

And when I hurt you, the doctors down in Mexico won't be good enough to put you back together. You gonna look like the Frankenstein monster when they get done! Fawcett will come out here and put you in a jar when I get finished, because you'll be nothing but memorabilia at that point. Like the carcass of an old classic car. Somethin' that used to be top of the line, but it got wrecked by the best thing going today. And you made it that personal.

Get you ready, Dave Cryant, because I am going to end this for good on the fifth of September.

[Lake throws the mic down and storms off... still holding his face.]

GM: Wow! That's a challenge, fans, and if I know Dave Bryant, he's going to happily accept it! Dave Bryant versus Demetrius Lake one-on-one at Copa de Trios in Mexico City! Fans, we've got to take a break but we'll be right back so don't you dare go away!

[With Bryant playing to the fans, we fade to black.]

A black screen slowly fades to a graphic that reads as follows, accompanied by a voiceover.]

"THE FOLLOWING ADVERTISEMENT HAS BEEN PAID FOR BY THE AWA."

[And then we cut to a grainy handheld camera, walking around the ringside floor of a small arena. Dimly lit and filled to capacity, the arena boasts a crowd that is loud and rowdy.]

VOICEOVER: The whole world has its eyes on Dallas, every Saturday Night.

[We get a couple of quick clips from Saturday Night Wrestling, of major stars in action. Juan Vasquez hitting the right cross on Stevie Scott. Alphonse

Green nailing Dave Cooper with the Hunger Strike. Jack Lynch chasing Demetrius Lake in an effort to Claw him. After this, we go back to the handheld. The user is climbing the ring steps, giving us a first person view of what it must be like for a wrestler to enter that ring.]

VOICEOVER: But what about those two weeks in between? You hear us promote the great action all over Texas and nearby states. And every summer, we travel all around the world. No TV production; just a gala featuring the AWA stars and a few thousand of their closest friends.

[The cameraman walks around the ring, filming the crowd. There are about five thousand here, and a sign that bids all welcome to the Cal Farley Coliseum in Amarillo, Texas.]

VO: What great matches have we never seen? How much blood was spilled in the pursuit of a dream, and we never knew?

[Now more clips... in less professionally-produced areas. The clips feature not only current, but former AWA stars. We see Rick Marley with a flying headscissors taking down Shadoe Rage. We see The Rave diving out of the ring at the Blonde Bombers. We see MAMMOTH Maximus pressing Kolya Sudakov overhead. We see Calisto Dufrense using the ringpost to free himself from the grip of Glenn Hudson. And we see Hannibal Carver slugging it out with Hercules Hammonds.]

VO: They're called "house shows". Classic matches, held in arenas all over the United States, seen only by the fans in attendance. But the AWA did have cameras at some of these events... and captured some of these intense battles. And now, for the first time ever, you can witness them too.

[We get a product screen featuring a DVD Set: AWA Signature Series Volume Three: House Show Classics. The cover features a montage of images from each clip shown above.]

VO: The AWA Signature Series, Volume Three. House Show Classics, featuring unaired matches from the entire AWA run.

[As each match below is mentioned, we get a clip of it...]

VO: See... From 2013, Calisto Dufrense defends the AWA World Heavyweight Championship against the World Television Champion Glenn Hudson.

From 2012, James Monosso defends the very same title against Dave Cooper.

From 2009, a 15-man West Texas Bunkhouse Battle Royal.

From 2010, Stevie Scott defends the National Title against Vernon Riley.

From 2013, Dave Bryant defends the World Television Title against Mr. Sadisuto.

From 2011, Nenshou defends the same belt against James Lynch.

From 2013, The Blonde Bombers defend the World Tag Team Titles against The Rave.

[Back to the product splash.]

And besides these seven great matches, there are eleven other great contests. Eighteen matches in all, on a two DVD set. Special features include...

[A clip of a variety of young wrestlers setting up a ring... some of whom we recognize as stars today.]

VO: ...a behind the scenes documentary on the travels and travails of life on the road...

[And then another of a training session at the Combat Corner.]

VO: ...and an exclusive look inside the Combat Corner over the years. See some of the friendships and rivalries that formed before they were stars!

AWA Signature Series Volume Three, House Show Classics. Available today from Amazon, Best Buy, and AWAsShop.com. Get yours today!

[One last look at the product screen, and the commercial ends.]

The camera switches to the interview stage and "Sweet" Lou Blackwell]

SLB: Ladies and gentlemen, at this time, my guest, DERRICK WILLIAMS!

[The crowd cheers as Otherwise's "Coming for the Throne" starts blaring through the arena and out from the curtain steps Derrick Williams. He slaps hands with the fans as he walks up the stage and shakes Lou's hand.]

SLB: Now Derrick, thank you for joining me here today. What I'd like to ask is, it seems you have a bit of a problem brewing with one Callum Mahoney, care to expand on that?

[Williams smirks]

DW: That's right Sweet Lou, it seems like Callum Mahoney and I have a bit of a failure to communicate. For three straight shows, he comes out right after my matches, before I can talk or even leave the ring. Then, he tosses me out of the Rumble. It seems that Mahoney has an issue with me, and I want to know why. And I'm going to make him tell me. You see, Mahoney is a guy that just hurts people. He lacks respect, he shows no one else respect. And I will make him respect-

[Williams is interrupted by the crowd breaking out into a chorus of boos. But it is not Williams that the fans are jeering. The camera pan over to reveal Callum Mahoney, dressed in a black T-shirt, with the words "I BROKE THE

SULTAN'S ARM" in a large white, blocky font across the front, over his wrestling singlet, ascending the interview stage. Staying out of Williams' reach, Mahoney stands with his hands on his hips, staring the young man from Brooklyn down.

Seconds pass before Mahoney brings up his left hand and crooks the index and middle fingers, motioning for the interviewer to bring the mic closer to him.]

CM: [Without breaking eye contact with Williams.] Who are you? I mean, with all due respect, fella, you talk like I ought to know who you are. Apparently, I threw you out of the Independence Day Rumble?

[Mahoney pauses, his face lighting up as if he suddenly remembers.]

CM: Oh... You're the fella who bit off more than he could chew by going after the Demon and got squashed for it. You're one of... What's his name? Kevin Slater? Yes, you're one of his students. Right... That explains who you aren't, because who you aren't is a former Irish National champion. Who you aren't is an All-Europe Catch Wrestling tournament winner! So the way I see it, fella, you've got nothing on me.

[Williams has an angered look on his face]

DW: No, I'm not those things, you're right. But what I am, is someone who is going to PROVE to you that you should be paying attention. And that's why, I want you in the ring. In two weeks, you and me, in that...

[Williams points to the ring.]

DW: ...right there, and when I slam your back through the mat, you'll know who I am.

[Mahoney smirks, jerking a thumb at his shirt.]

CM: I broke the Sultan's arm... And I came...

[He holds up his right hand, thumb and index finger extended, with very little space between them.]

CM: ...this close to becoming the AWA World Heavyweight champion. You're good, fella, but you aren't at the level of a Shariff or a Martinez, so, if you expect me to waste any more of my time on you? Well, fella, I'm going to have to say... No.

[The crowd jeers Mahoney dodging Williams' challenge. Williams thinks a moment, then his face lights up with an idea.]

DW: Fine then, you like breaking arms, I'll give you this one. No one's broken that armbar of yours yet, have they?

[Mahoney shakes his head.]

DW: So, in two weeks, in Portland, Oregon, you stick that Armbar on me... and I'll break out of it.

[Big cheer for Williams' confidence! Again, seconds pass as Mahoney stares Williams down, with more intensity than before, before giving his reply.]

CM: The only thing that'll get broken in two weeks is your arm. You've got a deal.

[And, with a shrug, Mahoney backs away from Williams. He turns to descend the steps of the interview stage, but continues to look over his right shoulder, keeping an eye on the young man from Brooklyn as we cut to the ring where Phil Watson is standing.]

PW: The following contest is a tag team match set for one fall with a fifteen minute time limit. Introducing first... in the corner to my right... from Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania... at a total combined weight of 455 pounds... the team of Jagger Jensen and Petey Tyler!

[The two "enhancement talents" raise their arms to little reaction.]

PW: And their opponents...

[Without warning, the arena lights cut to black.

An ominous high-pitched cackle comes over the PA system. The video walls flicker with static before an image fills the screen - it's a skeleton with an enlarged skull smiling and dancing. A top hat rests on the enlarged skull, slightly akimbo, as it holds a cigarette holder in one bony hand and a martini glass in the other. Underneath the ghoulish images rests the letters "DMP."

The infamous logo for the Dead Man's Party.]

GM: Wait a second! I thought with Rising Sun Showdown in the books, we were through with these guys!

BW: You. Thought. Wrong.

[There's a strong negative reaction from the AWA fanbase as the opening notes of Oingo Boingo's "Dead Man's Party" comes over the PA system.]

The camera cuts to the aisleway as a multitude of colored lights flash all over the Cow Palace, lighting up the crowd, hitting the ring...]

PW: Hailing from Every Young Girl's Dirty, Dirty Dream...

[Watson shakes his head.]

PW: At a total combined weight of 364 pounds... Chaz and Chet Wallace...

YOUTH! IN! AAAAAAAAAAAAASSSSSSIIAAAAAAAAA!

[Arguably the most annoying duo in wrestling today, Chaz and Chet Wallace come bursting through the curtain with a double leaping crotch chop. They square up, striking a double bicep pose to show off their scrawny physiques before jogging down the aisle.]

GM: I suppose it only makes sense that these two would still be around considering they're still in the Stampede Cup tournament. While we were in Japan, the Wallaces defeated the War Pigs in what many considered a major upset to move into the second round of the tournament where they're awaiting the winner of the battle between Air Strike and Wes Taylor with Tony Donovan.

[The Wallaces reach the ring, climbing up onto the apron. They trade a double high five, spinning to crotch chop in the direction of the crowd before leaning back, flipping over the ropes to land on their feet in the ring...

...and then sprint across, throwing a pair of dropkicks at Jagger Jensen and Petey Tyler, both men falling through the ropes to the floor. The referee signals for the bell.]

GM: We're off and running here... Chaz Wallace stepping up on the middle rope, pushing it down...

[With the second rope held down, Chet Wallace sprints to the far ropes, rebounding back...

...and hurling himself through the ropes with a tope con hilo onto Jensen, sending him crashing back into the ringside barricade!]

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

[Chaz jumps down off the apron, jogging in place, throwing punches at the air...

...and then dashes to the far ropes, rebounding back, twisting around to moonsault over the top rope onto Petey Tyler!]

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

GM: GOOD GRIEF!

BW: They may be one of the most annoying teams in professional wrestling in the eyes of the fans but they're also one of the most spectacular teams in pro wrestling, Gordo!

[The Wallaces pull Petey Tyler off the floor, rolling him under the ropes into the ring.]

GM: Tyler's back in... the Wallaces coming in after him...

[Chaz Wallace pulls Tyler up off the mat, lifting him up and hanging him upside in the tree of woe. Chaz peels off, slapping the hand of his partner who slingshots over the top rope...]

...and the duo turns towards the nearest camera, shouting
"DROOOOPKIIICK PAAAAARTYYYYY!"

GM: Uh oh.

[Chaz rushes across the ring, delivering a baseball slide dropkick. He rolls aside as Chet comes rushing in after him, delivering a second dropkick. Chaz is up, running half the distance of the ring for a third... and then Chet with a fourth.]

GM: OHHH!

[Chet pulls Tyler down, diving on top for a lateral press.]

GM: One! Two!

[Jensen comes rushing in, dropping a forearm down on the back of Chet's head...]

"WHAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAACK!"

GM: SUPERKICK BY CHAZ!

[The big superkick sends Jensen sailing over the ropes, crashing down to the floor as the illegal Chaz pulls Tyler off the mat, lifting him up across his body, flinging him down in a standing front slam...]

GM: Chet to the corner...

[Chet leaps up to the middle rope, springing off with a moonsault on a downed Tyler as Chaz leaps over him, leaping up to the top rope in a single bound...]

...and leaps off the top, corkscrewing through the air, crashing down with a Phoenix Splash on the prone Tyler!]

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

GM: ONE!! TWO!! THREEEEEEEEE!!!

"DING! DING! DING!"

[The Wallaces climb to their feet, arms raised in the air, celebrating their- uh oh.]

GM: Wait a...

[The lights are out for a moment before the sound of snarling and snapping dogs fills the air.]

GM: Oh my stars!

BW: Wait a second! This isn't fair!

[The crowd is ROARING as the midnight blue spotlights begin swirling around the building, landing on the fans...

...and then coming to a halt on Pedro Perez, Isaiah Carpenter, and Wade Walker!]

GM: OH! MY! STARS!

[The determined trio known as the Dogs of War start making their way down through the crowd towards the ring. The fans are roaring for the trio as they're looking for payback from Rising Sun Showdown.]

GM: The rumors have been swirling that the Dogs of War were LIVID at what happened in Japan against the Dead Man's Party! They were FURIOUS that the DMP stooped so low to eliminate them from the match!

BW: And if there's one thing you never want to see, it's these three guys coming for you! The only undefeated trio in professional wrestling is heading for the ring and the Wallaces are beside themselves!

[As the Dogs come over the railing, sliding under the ropes...

...and the Wallaces bail out of the ring, rushing up the aisle towards the locker room!]

GM: The Wallaces are running for it! The Wallaces are running for their lives!

[Wade Walker shouts at the fleeing Wallaces, ready for a fight as Youth In Asia runs for their very lives as we cut to backstage, where Mark Stegglet stands next to the AWA World Heavyweight Champion, Ryan Martinez. The AWA's White Knight is wearing a simple red shirt and a pair of black pants. Over his shoulder is the AWA World Heavyweight title belt. Martinez' expression is as intense as it always is.]

MS: Two weeks ago, at Rising Sun Showdown, you conquered your latest and many say greatest, challenge, as you defeated Johnny Detson. But champ, I know something more than taking a victory lap is on your mind.

[Martinez nods his head.]

RM: That's right Mark.

You know, they say that winning the title isn't what makes a champion. It's defending it. And I assure you Mark, that's been at the forefront of my mind through every title defense.

I gave Dave Bryant, a man who never fairly lost this title, a chance to reclaim it. And I proved myself as the undisputed champion when I pinned him at Turner Field.

I gave Callum Mahoney the chance to climb the ladder, and seize the opportunity that had been denied him.

And Johnny Detson, I answered every doubt you put in the minds of people who listened to you. You proclaimed yourself The Standard. But I showed you that no matter what name you gave yourself, you are not the man who is going to take my World Heavyweight title. You've come a long way, but in a fair fight, I've got your number.

You lost Detson, and now, it's time for you to step aside. Because, to coin a phrase, I've got some unfinished business to take care of.

Hannibal Carver..

[Ryan exhales slowly, eyes narrowing.]

RM: For a year, you've been talking trash. For a year, you've run me down. You've questioned my heart and you've doubted my integrity. You said I've got no guts, which is funny, because the last time you and I were in the ring, you came at me from behind.

That's something only people without guts do.

Carver, we've spent a year circling around one another. We've spent a year with men getting in between us. But Carver, right now, there's nothing between you and I but air and opportunity.

So let's do it.

MS: You're challenging Hannibal Carver to a match?

[Martinez gives a single, resolute nod.]

RM: That's right Mark. But not tonight. I know what you went through in Japan Carver. I was watching backstage, and I saw you and Morgan Dane tear into each other. And when I face you, I'm not going to allow for the possibility of anything thinking you were less than one hundred percent.

When you and I do this, it's going to be THE moment in both our careers. We're going to put everything on the line, and whoever walks away the winner is going to take everything. You're not ready for that yet. You need a few weeks to recover. And that's fine with me. Because the way I see it, there's only one place that can host a high stakes, winner take all fight like you and I are going to have.

And that's Las Vegas.

So I'm challenging you Carver to get in the ring and face me on August twenty ninth in Las Vegas, live on the X.

Take this month Carver, and heal up. Take this month, and do whatever it takes to ensure that you are at one hundred percent. Because you can bet that I'll coming at you with everything I've got.

And come August twenty ninth, you're going to find out the same thing that the Wise Men, that Supreme Wright, that Caleb Temple, and that everyone else who's faced me has discovered. When you're in the ring with Ryan Martinez, you always bet on the White Knight.

It's going to be an epic for the ages. It's going to be bloody and violent. It's going to be a match no one will ever forget. And it's going to be a night where, once and for all, I shut that mouth of yours.

Count on it!

[And with that, Martinez steps away, as we fade to black.

Fade in on a silhouetted shot of a burly man - not muscular, not well-toned at all - but big. As he speaks, he uses a heavy accented English - perhaps Russian? The title underneath him reads "Ivan Petrov."]

"For too long, big barking dog has been king of GFC. When I get these hands on him, that changes."

[We cut to shots of GFC Heavyweight Champion Rufus Harris shooting in for a double leg, lifting and slamming a nameless opponent time and time again before going back to the silhouetted shot.]

"He can bring the wrestle. He can bring the hands. But his hands are no match for mine."

[Cut again to footage of Harris dropping an opponent with a right hook... then a different one with an uppercut... then a third with a spinning backfist as the crowd goes nuts for each KO. Back to the Russian.]

"The crown rests uneasy on the head of the king. And I come to knock it off."

[Cut to footage of Petrov in the ring, physically dominating opponents as he shoves them back against the cage, hammering with fists to the skull. A bloodied opponent is down on the mat as he mercilessly drives hammerfists down onto him. What amounts to a German Suplex on a third foe, rolling right into the mount where he lands three brutal shots before the referee dives in to wave it off. The Russian is seen one final time.]

"It is time for the Rottweiler to be put down."

[Fade from the Russian to a fuming, seething Rufus Harris staring into the camera. He lets out a huge roar, taking a swing towards the camera as we cut to black.

A title comes up showing all the information for the upcoming fight event which will apparently be broadcast LIVE on The X.

Fade to black...

...and then back up to live action backstage, where Mark Stegglet stands alongside "Ladykiller" Calisto Dufresne, already clad in his wrestling attire. He has a focused, determined look playing across his face as Stegglet gets his cue to proceed.]

MS: Fans, in just a few minutes, we're going to see two AWA veterans square off in a match that has been a long time coming as we see Juan Vasquez and Calisto Dufresne go head to head to become the number one contender to the National Title! I'm backstage with Calisto Dufresne, and the first question has to be about Rising Sun Showd-

[Stegglet is cut off by Dufresne with a wave of his hand.]

CD: Let me guess, Stegglet. You want to know why I betrayed my teammates and cost Team AWA against the Dead Man's Party. I didn't betray anybody, Stegglet. I meant every word that I said about those upstart nobodies in the DMP. I came into that match with every intention of crashing their party.

But I'm not stupid.

[A shake of the head.]

CD: I'm the first to admit that I'm a ruthless pragmatist, Stegglet. I don't worry about morals; I worry about getting the job done. And when it got to 7 on 3, the writing on the wall was quite clear. Team AWA wasn't going to be coming out ahead. I applaud the DMP for doing what was necessary to win. But the idea that I betrayed Juan Vasquez and the AWA? Hardly.

If anything, I saved Juan Vasquez. From himself. I haven't made it this far in this business by running in and playing superhero for every face-painted psychopath that's getting double-teamed.

Sometimes, Juan, it takes more courage to retreat than it does to advance. I know it doesn't feel good to your savior sensibilities to duck and run, but there was no sense in risking a shot at the National Title on the count of Supernova. You're a Hall of Famer; you're above that.

And more importantly, I am above that. I recognized that with you as Management's golden boy, in order for me to get a shot to regain my National Title, that I was going to have to go through you. Which means I

couldn't afford to let you end up on the shelf for six months sipping your food through a straw.

MS: Which brings us to tonight...

CD: Exactly. Tonight we write the next chapter in a story that has been being written for over half a decade now. Dufresne and Vasquez. Vasquez and Dufresne. We'll be here until they bar the doors on this place, I'm sure. Sticking a thumb in the other's eye and meddling in the other's plans.

Well, tonight my plan is so simple that I don't mind sharing it with you: I'm going to beat you, Juan. The National Title is _mine._ It's around the waist of the usurper for now, but I'll rectify that if given the opportunity.

I've come to the conclusion that there is no way to put you down for good, so there's no point in being boisterous. I sent half the roster out at Wrestlerock to destroy you and you just came back even more grumpy than you normally are. So the plan isn't to put you down for good.

It's just to put you down for three.

[On that note, Dufresne turns and walks off screen.]

We cut to a shot backstage, where we see former two-time AWA National Champion, Juan Vasquez, standing in the dressing room. Juan is ready for action, dressed in his trademark white tracksuit with black trim. He paces back and forth, before stopping, head turned away from the camera.]

JV: So THAT was what your legacy was worth, Dufresne. The legacy that you wanted to fight so hard to protect. THAT was what it amounted to.

Nothing.

It stood for absolutely NOTHING.

[He turns to the camera.]

JV: You swore up and down that the match was about more than just any petty rivalry or stupid grudge. No, it was about the AWA. The house that YOU built. And how you'd be damned if anyone would step in and tarnish your legacy or disrespect the kingdom that YOU created out of your own two hands. It was heartfelt. It was dramatic. It was almost, ALMOST convincing.

[Juan shakes his head slowly.]

JV: And like the idiots we were, we actually trusted a lying, no good, backstabbing, eternally unreliable piece of crap like Calisto Dufresne to stand for something, to fight for something, to defend and protect something... other than himself.

[A bitter chuckle.]

JV: I could waste a lot of breath on a lot of words describing just how angry or hurt I am by what you did Dufresne, but that would give your action validation. That would give your action meaning. That would give what you did a PURPOSE. That would mean that your betrayal at Rising Sun Showdown hurt me and that's exactly what you want and that's exactly WHY you did what you did...

...so I won't.

[He stares into the camera with a grim look.]

JV: Because I'm done with it. I'm done with letting Calisto Dufresne haunt my career. I'm done with pretending he has a legacy worth a damn in this sport that should be looked at with anything but complete disgust. I'm done with letting Calisto Dufresne walk around here pretending like he isn't anything but the worst thing to ever happen to this company.

I'm DONE.

[Juan lets out a tired sigh.]

JV: This isn't just about you and me. This isn't ONLY about the National Title. This isn't just about simple revenge. This isn't about whatever hatred for you that I've held inside me ever since you stepped into that ring on that July 4th night at Wrestlerock and stole the National Title from me. This isn't about how time and time again, you find the exact right moment to do the worst possible thing to me. No, unlike you, believe me when I say this.

THIS is about the AWA.

[The former two-time National Champion shuts his eyes and draws in a deep breath, before calmly exhaling.]

JV: And amigo...

...you messed up.

You messed up BIG. I don't need to tell you, do I? 'Cause I'm sure after you were done patting yourself on the back for pullin' the wool over all our eyes, you realized it. And it was right then that fear gripped your heart, 'cause it finally hit you. For all your brilliant planning and scheming, you forgot the most crucial part and did the stupidest possible thing you could.

You left Juan Vasquez alive.

[Juan leans in towards the camera, his face a look of barely restrained anger.]

JV: And now you gotta' deal with the consequences.

[And with that, Juan shoves the camera out of his face and storms off to battle. Fade out to the ring where Phil Watson is standing.]

PW: The following contest is your MAIN EVENT of the evening!

[Big cheer!]

PW: It is set for one fall with a twenty minute time limit and is to determine the NUMBER ONE CONTENDER to the AWA National Title!

[Bigger cheer!]

PW: Introducing first...

[The arena lights begin to flicker slightly as the opening riffs of ZZ Top's "Sharp Dressed Man" begin to blare across the sound system, the crowd responding to the music with a chorus of boos.]

PW: From Avery Island, Louisiana... weighing in at 245 pounds... being accompanied to the ring by Johnny Detson...

[Big jeers!]

PW: He is the Ladykiller...

CAAAAAAAAAALIIIIIIISTOOOOOO DUUUUUUFRESNNNNNNNNE!

[The camera cuts to the entranceway, where the curtains part to reveal one of the AWA's most despised (and annoying) characters, "Ladykiller" Calisto Dufresne. Dufresne is clad in a black three-piece suit, his flowing blonde hair cascading down past his shoulders. He stands at the head of the entryway for many moments, soaking in all of the boos he probably thinks are cheers from his "throngs of adoring fans". Right behind him is Johnny Detson, applauding and smiling at his partner-in-crime.]

GM: There they are, fans. A duo that came together with the goal of putting the World Heavyweight Title around the waist of Johnny Detson comes here tonight with the goal of getting Calisto Dufresne a long-awaited opportunity to regain the AWA National Title.

[After a few moments, the duo shakes hands and begins making their way to the ring, ignoring every fan who is screaming obscenities at them. Upon reaching the ring, both men climb the ringsteps, ducking between the ropes into the ring. Dufresne removes his three-piece suit as Detson stands by applauding. The music fades...]

PW: And his opponent...

["They Reminisce Over You" by Pete Rock & C.L. Smooth begins to play over the PA system as the crowd erupts into cheers.]

MC: He hails from Los Angeles, California...standing 6'2 and weighing in at 238 pounds...

JUUUUUAAAAAAAAANNNNNN VAAASSSSSSQQQUUUUEEEZZZZ!!!!

[Juan Vasquez bursts through the curtains with a determined look on his face. He is dressed in his usual white tracksuit with black trim over his usual wrestling gear. He makes his way down the aisle, occasionally slapping a few of the fans' many outstretched hands, but otherwise keeping his focus completely on the ring. He leaps onto the ring apron, pointing a finger at Dufresne... and then one at Detson for good measure.]

GM: There's certainly no love lost between Juan Vasquez and EITHER of the other men across the ring from him. Longtime AWA fans will remember that Johnny Detson's very first AWA appearance was an attempt to get at Juan Vasquez.

BW: Yeah but that ain't the story tonight, Gordo. Tonight is the story between two men who've despised each other for years here in the AWA.

GM: You can trace the roots back to Dufresne's days in the Southern Syndicate when Vasquez was at war with them. You can look back to WrestleRock when Dufresne led the attempt to put Vasquez out of our sport forever, robbing him of the National Title in the process. Or as recently as Rising Sun Showdown when Dufresne played a direct role in the failing of Team AWA to defeat the Dead Man's Party. You take your pick but you better believe that Vasquez remembers them all.

[Detson walks over to Dufresne in the corner, giving him a double high five before the former Mr. Steal The Spotlight steps out of the ring.]

GM: Johnny Detson with some final words of advice for his partner-in-crime, exiting the ring...

[And as the bell sounds, Juan Vasquez comes charging across the ring, lowering his shoulder and driving Dufresne back into the buckles!]

GM: Vasquez wasting no time at the outset of this one!

[Holding onto the middle rope, Vasquez lays in one shoulder to the gut... and another... and another...]

GM: The referee's trying to get Vasquez out of the corner... but Dufresne's the one coming out instead... big whip by Vasquez!

[Dufresne slams into the opposite set of buckles, staggering out to the middle of the ring where a doubled-up Vasquez send him sailing high into the sky, flipping over...]

GM: BIIIIIIIG BACK BODY DROP BY VASQUEZ!

[Dufresne slams down hard on the mat, immediately rolling to his side and grabbing at his lower back. Vasquez stalks towards him as Dufresne rolls from the ring to the floor, calling for a timeout.]

GM: Dufresne wants a timeout but I think-

[Vasquez ignores the referee, leaning over to grab Dufresne by his blonde hair, hauling him up onto the apron as the crowd roars their support for the Hall of Famer!]

GM: Yes! Vasquez is going to bring him in the hard way!

[Scooping him up, Vasquez spins and slams him down to the canvas.]

GM: Bodyslam by Vasquez! We're watching a lot of AWA history in that ring right now, Bucky.

BW: We absolutely are. You're talking about multiple National Title reigns, a World Title reign for Dufresne, a Stampede Cup win... these are the best of the best in there and it really shows how important this National Title is that competitors like these two are going after it. "Diamond" Rob Driscoll's got his work cut out for him no matter who wins this one.

GM: And in the meantime, Dufresne rolls right back out the other side of the ring to the floor... but Vasquez is going after him again!

[With a handful of hair once more, Vasquez drags Dufresne up onto the apron, tugging him into a front facelock...]

GM: Vasquez sets for the suplex! He's gonna REALLY bring him in the hard way this time!

[But as he attempts it, Johnny Detson slides along the apron, wrapping his hands around the ankle, blocking the lift.]

GM: Look at that! Look at Johnny Detson flagrantly breaking the rules!

[Vasquez makes a few attempts before breaking it off and kicking the ropes in front of Detson, sending him scampering away.]

GM: Whoa! He almost got him!

[But with Vasquez distracted, Dufresne uncorks a right hand to the jaw, stunning the Hall of Famer. The Ladykiller turns Vasquez around, his back against the ropes, cupping his hands under the chin...

...and DROPS off the apron, snapping the back of Vasquez' neck over the top rope!]

GM: Ohhh! Dufresne uses the ropes to his advantage... and he lunges through the ropes and into a cover!

[The referee dives to the mat counting once... twice...

...and then peels off, pointing out the feet of Dufresne over the middle rope for leverage!]

GM: The referee caught him! That could be an instant disqualification!

[Dufresne breaks his pin attempt, climbing to his feet and arguing with referee Johnny Jagger. Jagger points to the ropes, threatening to call for the bell as the Ladykiller returns verbal fire with him.]

GM: Dufresne, as always, is willing to do whatever it takes to win this match and earn his shot at Rob Driscoll.

BW: And of all people, Vasquez can testify to that. No AWA fan will ever forget WrestleRock, Gordo.

GM: No, no they won't... and neither will Juan Vasquez. It was the night where his career was almost ended by a ring full of jealous and bitter men. And Calisto Dufresne was right at the forefront of those men.

[Dufresne turns around, booting a rising Vasquez in the chest. He grabs a handful of hair, marching him to the corner where he slams Vasquez' head into the top turnbuckle, spinning him back into the corner.]

GM: Dufresne's got him in the corner... winds up...

"WHAAAAAAAAAAP!"

GM: Big overhand chop by the Ladykiller!

[A second chop connects before Dufresne simply wraps his hands around the throat of Vasquez, openly choking him.]

GM: A chokehold applied - the referee starting a five count in the corner... but only gets to four before Dufresne breaks the hold.

[The Ladykiller backs off, arms raised as the referee reprimands him. He nods before walking back in, grabbing the top rope and swinging his knee up into the midsection...]

GM: Big knee downstairs... and another... and another...

[Grabbing a handful of hair, Dufresne walks Vasquez out of the corner towards the middle of the ring...]

GM: Dufresne's got the advantage, looking out to ringside where Johnny Detson continues to shout advice in to his cohort.

[Dufresne scoops Vasquez up, slamming him down in the center of the ring. He backs into the ropes, measuring Vasquez...

...and leaps up, dropping a knee down on the forehead of Vasquez, rolling through it into a seated position on the mat.]

GM: Dufresne drops the knee!

[He rolls to all fours, crawling into a lateral press.]

GM: The Ladykiller gets one! He gets two!

[But the shoulder comes up at two, breaking the pin. Dufresne responds angrily, swinging a leg over Vasquez' torso, grabbing a handful of hair, and proceeds to smash his fist down between the eyes a handful of times before the referee's count makes him abandon his attack.]

GM: Dufresne was all over him with those clenched fists, fans, and he's got Juan Vasquez reeling after some early offense by the Hall of Famer.

[Dufresne struts around the ring, talking down to the ringside fans as Juan Vasquez rolls to his stomach, trying to push himself up off the canvas.]

GM: Vasquez trying to get back to his feet as Dufresne taunts this capacity crowd here in San Francisco... a mistake if you ask me. Calisto Dufresne has this match well in hand and he's wasting time taunting the fans instead of getting down to business and trying to find a way to finish the man off.

BW: I have to agree with you here, Gordo. This looks like a mistake in my book. Dufresne's a veteran. He knows he needs to stay on top of Vasquez - especially a guy like Vasquez - to get this huge win.

GM: Dufresne slowly coming back towards Vasquez as he battles back to his knees...

[As Dufresne approaches, Vasquez hooks him by the front of the tights, lunging forward to slam his head up into the midsection!]

GM: Vasquez goes downstairs!

[The fan favorite soaks up the cheers as he pushes up to one knee, throwing a right hand to the jaw of the doubled-up Dufresne, snapping his head back and sending him staggering towards the ropes...]

GM: Vasquez fighting back, climbing to his feet...

[The Hall of Famer approaches slowly, feeling the effects of the offense so far...]

"WHAAAAAAAAAAAAAAP!"

GM: Big knife edge chop up against the ropes!

[A second and third chop connect, leaving Dufresne in a bad way as Vasquez grabs him by the arm...]

GM: Irish whi- reversed by Dufresne!

[The reversal sends Vasquez into the ropes as Dufresne ducks down for a backdrop...

...but Vasquez pulls up, swinging his foot up into the face of the Ladykiller, sending him staggering backwards into the ropes!]

GM: Vasquez caught him! To the ropes, building up steam...

[And as Vasquez rebounds, Dufresne drops down, pulling the top rope with him. The move sends the Hall of Famer sailing OVER the ropes, flipping to land on his back on the barely-padded concrete floor!]

“OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!”

GM: A hard fall to the floor for Vasquez as we cross the five minute mark in this one! That one took a lot out of the former champion and we may have just seen a major swing in momentum in this one.

BW: A swing in momentum? Dufresne was in total control! How do you figure that?

GM: He wasn't in control when Vasquez countered that backdrop attempt!

BW: So Dufresne beats up Vasquez for four and a half minutes and that thirty seconds of offense out of Vasquez was a switch in momentum to you?! Your level of bias towards Juan Vasquez makes me sick, Gordo!

GM: Now you know how I feel in just about EVERY match!

[Dufresne starts to go out after Vasquez as the referee steps in, backing him up. The Ladykiller grabs him by the shoulders, speaking to the official, keeping his back turned...

...which allows Johnny Detson to swing around the ringpost, pulling Vasquez off the floor by the hair...]

GM: Detson's got Vasquez up on the floor and-

“CLAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAANG!”

[The crowd groans as Detson HURLS Vasquez backfirst into the steel ringside barricade!]

GM: INTO THE STEEL GOES VASQUEZ!

[A smirking Detson taunts the front row of fans before scampering away, laughing as the official turns around. Johnny Jagger senses something went wrong as he shouts at Detson who raises his hands, pleading his innocence.]

GM: Johnny Detson's saying he did nothing wrong... and in the meantime, Calisto Dufresne's out on the floor, pulling Juan Vasquez up off the floor. He's dragging him back towards the ring, shoving him under the ropes.

[Dufresne rolls under the ropes, crawling into a cover.]

GM: No, no! Not like this!

[The referee counts once... twice... and is on his way down for a third time when Vasquez' shoulder shoots up off the canvas.]

GM: Both men working at an accelerated pace considering the short time limit in this one.

[Dufresne climbs up, stomping the raised shoulder a few times before the referee backs him off again. The Ladykiller nudges past him, leaning down to pull Vasquez off the mat...

...and Vasquez reaches up, dragging him down into a small package!]

GM: CRADLE! CRADLE! ONE!! TWO!! THR-

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

GM: DID HE GET HIM!?

BW: No! No! Dufresne kicked out in time!

[The referee leaps up, holding his fingers close together to show how close the pin count was. Dufresne scrambles up off the mat, getting there a split second before Vasquez...

...and THROWS himself into a lunging clothesline, taking Vasquez down to the mat!]

GM: Big clothesline by the Ladykiller!

[Vasquez rolls to his chest to avoid a pin attempt as a fired-up Dufresne starts raining down clubbing forearms on the back of Vasquez' neck.]

GM: Dufresne's all over him! He's hammering him down into the mat, going after that neck...

BW: And you know exactly why he's doing it, Gordo. He's softening him up for that Wham, Bam, Thank You Ma'am DDT!

GM: You're probably right but in my opinion, if he hits that, it's over whether he's softened them up for it or not.

[Dufresne drags Vasquez off the mat by the hair, swinging him back into the corner where he opens up with kick after kick to the midsection, chopping Vasquez down to his knees in the corner. He grabs Vasquez by the hair with both hands...

...and SLAMS his head back into the middle buckle!]

GM: OH!

[Vasquez slumps down to the mat, grabbing at the back of his neck.]

GM: Another hard shot to the neck by Dufresne and Juan Vasquez is in a bad, bad way at this stage of the contest, fans.

BW: If you're a Juan Vasquez fan, you better be on your knees praying for a miracle because if he loses this, I'm guessing it'll be a long, long time before he gets another chance to earn a title opportunity.

GM: I don't know about that, Bucky, besides don't forget that Juan Vasquez won that right to be Matchmaker For The Night back in the Mayhem match at the end of May. I'm told that show is coming up very, very soon. He just might give himself a title opportunity on that night!

BW: That hardly seems fair.

[Dufresne starts to move in again but the referee steps in, forcing him back...

...which allows Johnny Detson to pull Vasquez by the hair so that his head and neck are facing the floor, draping off the apron.]

GM: Look out here!

[Detson winds up and SLAMS the point of his elbow down on the back of Vasquez' neck. A second elbow is delivered before Detson scampers away again, leaving Vasquez reeling on the mat...

...and Dufresne tugs him in by the legs, dropping an elbow across the sternum before rolling into a pin attempt.]

GM: Doesn't even bother to hook a leg as we get another two count. You gotta do more than that to beat a man - a legend like Juan Vasquez, Bucky!

BW: Maybe you do and maybe you don't. Maybe Dufresne's just making him expend energy in kicking out.

GM: I highly doubt that.

[Dufresne drags Vasquez up by the hair, blasting him with a right hand to the jaw, sending him falling back into the ropes. The Ladykiller shakes out his hand in pain, wincing as he throws a boot into the gut.]

GM: Dufresne grabs the arm, looking for another whip...

[But Vasquez loops his arm around the top rope, preventing the whip.]

GM: Vasquez blocks it!

[Yanking his other arm, Vasquez pulls Dufresne towards him where he lunges forward to drill him between the eyes with a headbutt!]

GM: Ohh! What a shot! Vasquez with a headbutt that'll cross your eyes!

[Dufresne staggers back as Vasquez pushes off the ropes, leaping up, and snapping his foot into the back of Dufresne's head!]

"WHAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAP!"

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

GM: HEAD KICK! HEAD KICK TO THE BACK OF THE SKULL!

[The blow stuns Dufresne, causing him to slump down to his knees...

...and then falls forward to all fours as the crowd roars for the flurry of offense out of Vasquez!]

GM: Both men are down! Both men are reeling! But this is the chance for Juan Vasquez to get himself back into this match, Bucky! This is his opportunity to get back up and put this guy away!

BW: You know that "Diamond" Rob is sitting back somewhere watching this. Who do you think he'd rather face, Gordo?

GM: I think either man will be a tough test for Driscoll but if I was a betting man, I'd imagine he'd move heaven and Earth to avoid facing Juan Vasquez.

BW: Really? I think a man like Rob Driscoll recognizes that beating Vasquez with that title on the line would cement his place in history. He might welcome that chance. But on the other hand, Calisto Dufresne's a former AWA World Champion and a win over one of those does wonders for your legacy too.

[As the referee's double ten count reaches seven, both men stagger up to their feet.]

GM: Both men up... and Dufresne with the right hand!

"WHAAAAAAAAAAAAAP!"

GM: Vasquez fires back with the knife-edge chop!

[Dufresne reels backwards, winding up to throw another haymaker.]

GM: Dufresne with the right!

"WHAAAAAAAAAAAAAP!"

[Vasquez connects with an overhand chop, sending Dufresne fall back into the ropes as Vasquez advances...]

"WHAAAAAAAAAAAAAP!"
"WHAAAAAAAAAAAAAP!"
"WHAAAAAAAAAAAAAP!"
"WHAAAAAAAAAAAAAP!"
"WHAAAAAAAAAAAAAP!"
"WHAAAAAAAAAAAAAP!"

[...and uncorks a handful of knife edge chops, causing Dufresne to hang onto the top rope to keep himself from falling to the mat.]

GM: And now it's Dufresne who is in trouble at the hands of Juan Vasquez!

[Grabbing an arm, Vasquez shoots Dufresne into the ropes, catching him with a right hand to the gut on the rebound - a blow that causes Dufresne to flip over into a seated position on the mat.]

GM: Dufresne down on the mat right where Vasquez wants him!

[The Hall of Famer dashes to the ropes, bouncing off them...]

"WHAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAP!"
"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

[...and DRIVES two feet into the face of Dufresne with a seated dropkick!]

GM: VASQUEZ SCORES WITH THE DROPKICK! IS IT ENOUGH?!

[Vasquez flips over, hooking a leg.]

GM: ONE!! TWO!! THR-

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

GM: SHOULDER UP! SHOULDER UP IN TIME!

[And this time, it's Vasquez who takes the mount on Dufresne, hammering fists down between the eyes of the Ladykiller!]

GM: Vasquez is pounding Dufresne into the mat! The referee's admonishing him, starting his five count...

[Vasquez pulls off at four, climbing to his feet, angrily stalking around the ring. Johnny Detson steps back from the ropes, shouting at Vasquez who returns verbal fire at him as the sound of Phil Watson's voice rings out over the PA.]

"TEN MINUTES HAVE EXPIRED! TEN MINUTES REMAIN!"

GM: Ten minutes to go - we're halfway through the time limit!

[Vasquez walks back around the ring, heading towards Dufresne as he starts to stir off the canvas. The Hall of Famer pulls him the rest of the way up, scooping him up in his arms and slamming him down to the mat...]

GM: Big slam by Vasquez!

[Winding up his right arm, Vasquez drops an elbow down into the chest. He scrambles up, dropping a second... and a third... and a fourth...]

GM: Elbowdrop barrage!

[After a half dozen elbows, Vasquez climbs back to his feet, leaping up and STOMPING the side of Dufresne's face!]

GM: Ohh! He stomps Dufresne's face into the mat...

[Vasquez throws his arms apart in a "it's over!" gesture, leaning down to pull Dufresne up...

...and gets fingers jabbed into his eyes!]

GM: Dufresne goes to the eyes!

[Vasquez stumbles back, taking a swing at the air as Dufresne climbs off the mat, measuring him from behind...

...and connects with a running forearm to the back of the head, sending Vasquez falling through the ropes and out to the floor!]

GM: Ohh! Dufresne sends him back outside the ring!

[Dufresne backs off, waving an arm and calling for the countout.]

GM: Look at Dufresne!

BW: Hey, we said it earlier, Gordo. He's willing to take the win however he can get it!

GM: He absolutely is - telling Johnny Jagger to count Juan Vasquez out of the ring after sending him out to the floor.

[Jagger reluctantly steps towards the ropes, starting his ten count on Vasquez who is sprawled out on the thin mats covering the Cow Palace floor.]

GM: Johnny Jagger starts the ten count and if Vasquez is counted out, Calisto Dufresne will be the new Number One Contender to the AWA National Title currently held by "Diamond" Rob Driscoll.

[Jagger's count is slow and steady despite Dufresne's pleas to "count faster!"]

GM: Dufresne isn't happy with the count - neither is Johnny Detson who is giving Jagger a hard time from out on the floor.

BW: Neither am I! That's the slowest count since someone asked Travis Lynch to count to ten!

GM: Will you stop?!

[The count is up to four as Vasquez stirs on the floor, pushing up to his knees.]

GM: Vasquez climbing up off the mat... and Dufresne shouting from inside the ring, telling him to stay down. No chance of that if you ask me.

BW: No one asked you!

GM: You're getting a little testy out here, Bucky.

BW: I want to see the Dream Match - Driscoll vs Dufresne!

GM: Whose Dream Match is that?!

[As the count gets to six, Vasquez grabs the bottom rope, pulling himself up to his feet...

...and Dufresne comes towards the ropes, convinced that Vasquez is coming back in. Johnny Jagger turns his back to Vasquez, blocking Dufresne's path towards the ropes...]

GM: No, no, no!

[Johnny Detson comes charging down the length of the apron, **BLASTING** Vasquez with a forearm smash to the ear. He grabs him by the hair, smashing him facefirst into the ring apron!]

GM: Detson strikes again!

[The Rising Sun Showdown challenger rolls Vasquez back under the ropes as Dufresne stalks in, dragging him up by the hair...

...and yanks him into a front facelock!]

GM: He's going for it! He's going for it!

[With Vasquez in trouble, Detson pulls himself up on the apron, shouting encouragement to Dufresne!

GM: Get him down from there!

[Dufresne looks on confused as Detson shouts to him, miming delivering the DDT. Johnny Jagger rushes to confront Detson, arguing with him...

...and the momentary distraction is all Juan Vasquez needs as he surges forward, slamming Dufresne's back into Detson, sending the latter sailing off the apron, crashing down to the floor!]

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

GM: DUFRESNE AND DETSON COLLIDE AND DETSON HITS THE FLOOR!

[Vasquez straightens up, lifting the stunned Dufresne over his shoulder, reaching back to hook Dufresne's head and neck...]

BW: NO! You've gotta be-

GM: CITY OF ANGELS!

[...and with a quick run, Vasquez leaps into the air and DRIVES the back of Dufresne's head into the canvas!]

GM: THAT'S IT!

[Vasquez rolls over, tightly hooking the leg as the referee drops down to count.]

GM: ONE!! TWO!! THREEEEEEEEEEE!!!

"DING! DING! DING!"

[Vasquez rolls off of Dufresne, shoving his leg aside disgustedly before he climbs to his feet, allowing Johnny Jagger to raise his hand in victory.]

GM: Juan Vasquez has done it! Juan Vasquez has won this Number One Contender match and that means that somewhere, sometime down the road, we WILL see Juan Vasquez challenge "Diamond" Rob Driscoll with the AWA National Title on the line!

BW: Goodbye, Dream Match.

GM: Calisto Dufresne looked like he was about to hit that signature DDT of his. He looked like he was on the verge of victory but Johnny Detson... for some reason... got involved in the match. He got up on the apron and was cheering on Dufresne and... well, that directly led to Dufresne's loss. You gotta think he won't be happy about that.

BW: Probably not but... accidents happen, Gordo. I'm sure it was just an accident.

GM: I'm sure you're right but it's a costly one nonetheless.

[Dufresne rolls out to the floor where Detson kneels down to comfort him as Vasquez ascends to the second turnbuckle, celebrating his victory.]

GM: What a win for Vasquez! It's been a long, hard road back to the top ever since WrestleRock a few years ago for Juan Vasquez and now he's within reach of the title that many feel he never should've lost in the first place! Rob Driscoll, wherever you are, get that title belt shined up because you may be enjoying your final days as the AWA National Champion!

[Vasquez stands atop the second rope, doing the "belt gesture" over and over as the San Francisco crowd continues to cheer...

...and we fade to black.]