

# THE BATTLE OF



# SASKATCHEWAN

NIGHT TWO - JULY TWENTY-THIRD - MOSAIC STADIUM

PART TWO  
PART THREE  
PART FOUR   PART FIVE

[A black screen.]

White text appears on behalf of the AWA legal team to inform you of the penalties involved if you happen to do things with the Pay Per View that you're about to watch that you shouldn't.

From that, we fade 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."

[Back to black for a moment...

...and then up on a television monitor showing the closing moments of the Prophets of Rage's victory over Violence Unlimited on Night One. At the sight of the three count, someone claps their hands together and the screen abruptly turns off.

The camera pans back to reveal Sweet Daddy Williams dressed in a pair of black athletic pants and a t-shirt that might be a tad too small for SDW's swelling retirement belly.]

"I'll be damned. I've seen a lot of crazy things in this business in my time but to see the two-time Cup winners knocked out in the first round?"

[He lets out a low whistle, shaking his head.]

"It just goes to show you that anything can happen. What once was 24 is now 16. Sixteen of the best teams in the world coming together to see who is number one... who is the best in the world. Teams coming from Japan..."

[Cut to a quick clip of the Kabukicho Assassination Maniac Squad and the Lights Out Express in action.]

"...from Europe..."

[Now it's on to Ringkrieger in action.]

"Teams coming back to the business for the first time in a long time."

[Cut to a promotional shot of Dynasty and then onto Kentucky's Pride.]

"Teams who've never teamed up before at all!"

[We see a shot of Raphael Rhodes and Sid Osborne from Night One's action and then fade to one from SuperClash VII of Hannibal Carver and Ryan Martinez standing toe to toe.]

"Legends..."

[Another shot of the Prophets of Rage, fresh off their victory over Violence Unlimited.]

"The future..."

[Clips of the Shooting Stars and the Soldiers of Fortune.]

"We've got Idols..."

[Cut to the American Idols clowning for the camera.]

"...Dogs..."

[To the Dogs of War holding aloft their SWLL Trios Titles.]

"...rockstars..."

[To The Band.]

"...local heroes..."

[To Blake Colton and Jackson Hunter.]

"We've even got an Olympic gold medalist."

[To the Gold Standard.]

"And the champs are here too.]

[Cut to Next Gen holding their World Tag Titles over their shoulders.]

"Sixteen teams. All with the same goal. The same thing pushin' them forward... drivin' them on. The same dream. The same reality. One night to beat the best and become the best.

To win it all.

To win the Stampede Cup.”

[A shot of the glistening cup in the spotlight... and then we fade to black.

We fade back up to an aerial shot above the field of Mosaic Stadium, pointing down at the ring surrounded by a mass of over 40,000 fans on the field and in the stands, hooting and hollering for the remaining night of action about to come their way.

Bursts of red, white, and gold pyro streak towards the sky as the fans get even louder and the sounds of Rush’s “Fly By Night” rocks the Canadian fans to their very souls.

More pyro flies into the sky as we get a panning shot of the stadium “floor” where we see the ring set up with red and white ropes. The AWA protective mats surrounding the ring are present as is a metal barricade keeping the rabid fans at bay. We catch a glimpse of the two tables at ringside before cutting to a shot of some screaming fans with their faces painted red and white, holding up a several person long banner that reads “CANADA LOVES THE AWA!”

One more burst of pyro goes screeching towards the sky, drawing our attention to the entrance stage where it erupted from. There’s a very large video wall hanging above the metal stage... but it doesn’t stop there. Above the video wall is a giant LED maple leaf flashing red and white. Right next to that is already one of the most Instagrammed locations of the night - a giant animatronic brown bear tipping back a can of Mooselips with a giant LED “neon” sign of the Mooselips logo right underneath it.

As the smoke starts to clear, we get another elevated shot showing the long metal ramp leading from the video wall and stage down towards the ring. We can see steel chairs have been set up all over the field in addition to the permanent seating of the stadium.

The voice of Gordon Myers cuts through the rabid Canadian din.]

GM: Hello, Saskatchewan! The AWA has ventured once more to the Great White North and we are ON! THE! AIR!

[Another huge cheer goes up as the bear takes a big drink.]

GM: If you didn’t join us last night here on Pay Per View, you missed one of the most exciting nights in recent memory but don’t worry because you’re here tonight for one of the BIGGEST nights in AWA history with an enormous SEVENTEEN matches scheduled to go down tonight!

BW: Seventeen?! I should’ve worn dark pants.

[Gordon chuckles as we cut to the video wall flashing that BoS logo to even more cheers.]

GM: Joining me of course for Night Two of this special Pay Per View event is my longtime broadcast colleague, Bucky Wilde... and Bucky, welcome to the Battle of Saskatchewan Night Two!

BW: Night Two is here! Sixteen teams are left! The whole world wants to know who is gonna walk out of here with the Stampede Cup and the million bucks... American dollars by the way... and we’re going to find out before this night is over.

GM: But the tournament isn’t the only reason we’re here tonight, fans. We’ve got two big non-tournament matches as well - the mysterious No Man’s Land battle between Supreme Wright and the Korugun hired gun King Kong Hogan.

BW: We have no idea on the stipulations for this one but if Supreme cooked them up, I have no clue what to expect.

GM: And of course, we've got the AWA World Title on the line here tonight when Johnny Detson - the champion - defends the greatest prize in professional sports against the Number Three contender and according to Javier Castillo, the winner of the Memorial Day Rumble this year, Kerry Kendrick.

BW: Of course he won the Rumble! We all saw it!

GM: No, what we saw was the man known as the Masked Outlaw win the Rumble. A man who would later unmask to reveal Sup-

BW: Tut tut, Gordo. You know how El Presidente feels about promoting people who don't work for the company.

[Gordon sighs.]

GM: I know that Kerry Kendrick being declared the Rumble winner is a sham. You know it, Bucky, and these fans know it too. So, he may be deserving of a title shot based on his ranking in the Top 10... but it is someone far more deserving who won that Rumble.

BW: You're skating on thin ice, Gordo.

GM: What's he gonna do? Send the Mounties after me?

BW: I hear the Mounties always get their man.

GM: In just a few moments, fans, we're going to head to Rebecca Ortiz for the introductions of our first Stampede Cup matchup of the night. We'll see the second round, the Quarterfinals, the Semifinals, and the Finals themselves here tonight and speaking of the second round, we're going to kick things off with a very intriguing clash of styles. It'll be the legendary duo known as the Prophets of Rage taking on the upstart controversial squad of the Soldiers of Fortune. Let's go backstage and hear from both teams!

[We fade to "Sweet" Lou Blackwell backstage, standing in front of the Battle of Saskatchewan logo.]

SLB: Thank you, Gordon and Bucky! I'm looking forward to the second round of this tournament that's going to kick off momentarily. My guests at this time are part of the first match of the second round of the Stampede Cup, they are the number one contenders to the AWA World Tag Team Titles..

[The Soldiers of Fortune, Joe Flint and Charlie Stephens, walk onto the screen. Flint is standing on Blackwell's right side, while Stephens is standing on Blackwell's left side. Both men are already dressed for action. They are both wearing camouflaged pants. Flint is wearing a black singlet underneath the pants, while Stephens is wearing a t-shirt with the "Soldiers of Fortune" shield logo on it.]

SLB: The Soldiers of Fortune, and thankfully Joe Flint's not puffing on a cigar..

JF: Just you wait, "Sweet" Lou, we have a box of the finest American made cigars waitin' for us and you're gonna join us after we light 'em up after each and every one of our victories!

SLB: No thank you! Anyway, gentlemen, this is gonna be...

[Flint interrupts with a laugh.]

JF: We've been ridin' the Fat Man up and down this desolate land all week, and now we're finally here. We got it gassed up once again, ready to show these idiots who have never seen a fantastic piece of work like this in their lives.

SLB: The Fat Man..

[Blackwell looks confused.]

SLB: Are you referring to...

JF: Our custom made Hummer, I don't think any of these people have ever seen anything like it in their lives. Probably ridin' around in their stupid electric vehicles, all environmentally friendly... only to break down on the highway at the worst possible moment. Maybe a good idea on paper, but poor in execution.

CS: They suck.

[Flint nods his head, as Stephens starts to look a little bit agitated.]

JF: If they need any help, we have the know how to put together a vehicle. No car can ever match anythin' that was American made, and that's the truth.

SLB: Well, if we were talking about cars, I guess this would be a good starting point. However, Joe, I want to talk to you about your match tonight. This might be the second round, but this match against the Prophets of Rage would likely be a great Finals match in any tag team tournament - that's how stacked this tournament is!

JF: It's true that once upon a time the Prophets of Rage were the cream of the crop when it comes to tag teams. There were a lot of great teams twenty years ago and the Prophets put up a Hall of Fame resume in that era. They absolutely should be Hall of Famers, yer never gonna get an argument from me. Much like Curt Schilling, another person with an easy Hall of Fame resume, they could never keep their mouths shut long enough, and they continue to dig their own grave. They couldn't even beat Violence Unlimited without the help of John Law!

[Flint shakes his head.]

JF: Unlike Violence Unlimited, the Prophets of Rage are gonna need a whole police force to stand a chance. Hell, they could even bring out some members of the...

[Flint chuckles.]

JF: ...Canadian Army if they want to beat us tonight. They certainly don't have each other's back, so they're gonna need all the help they can get. Look at it this way, Lou, ya got two brothers that can no longer get along versus a well oiled American Made machine. You have the greatest team of an era long gone vs. the greatest team of an era that's just begun. We're gonna make the Prophets of Rage kneel and acknowledge us as the best tag team in the business when we get through with them. Maybe we'll beat the only thing they can agree on into 'em tonight.

SLB: I gotta say...

CS: Lou.

[Stephens clamps his hand on Blackwell's left shoulder, which makes Blackwell jump in confusion.]

CS: LOU.

SLB: Oh! Goodness!

[Blackwell pauses a moment to regain his composure.]

SLB: Can I help you, Charlie?

CS: Lou. Does the date November 14, 2015 ring any bells?

[Blackwell pauses again, then nods his head.]

SLB: We had a show that night...

CS: All Star Showdown, that night rings my bell. On that night, something got knocked loose and it's been rattlin' around in my head ever since then. On that night, I wanted to come out and win myself the Television Championship. No one wanted to step in the ring with that stark ravin' mad lunatic, Shadoe Rage, but I was the only one that night that had the stones to come out and confront him while he was in his Television Title induced haze...

...all it got me was a knee to the side of my head and I woke up forty five minutes later, asking the doctors if I left my oven on.

[Stephens spits off to the side.]

CS: In the end I ended up being nothin' more than yet another forgotten victim of a madman's rage while he tried everything necessary for months... by hook, or by crook, to keep his Television Title. The name Charlie Stephens never crossed his mind again until tonight. I've never forgotten. That was the night where I needed to do something. My career was in a tailspin and all I ever thought about was gettin' revenge on almost every single damn name that has ever crossed my path. It wasn't working. I was a broken mess until this man, Joe Flint, came to my side. Without him, I'd have never gotten these opportunities again. An opportunity...

[A rare grin crosses Stephens' face.]

CS: Smack dab in the middle of Rage Country, forty thousand people frothin' at the mouth. After everything Shadoe Rage has done in his career, even to his own brother, these are the only people left that'll have him.

Rage Country, it's time to get these boots on the ground. Every damn time we've had these boots on the ground, we've came away the winner.

[Sweet Lou raises his eyebrow in confusion. Flint just stands there, grinning, not caring enough to correct this obvious inaccuracy.]

CS: You better have broken bread with your brother, Shadoe, because tonight, he'll be the only thing saving you from being broken by me.

[Stephens turns and marches off camera. Flint puts his hand on Blackwell's shoulder, the grin never leaving his face.]

JF: That right there is a true soldier. A true hero, and I couldn't be any prouder.

[Flint follows Stephens off camera as Blackwell turns towards the camera.]

SLB: Alright, the Soldiers of Fortune are definitely ready for their match with the Prophets of Rage, especially Charlie Stephens who has been looking forward to another shot at Shadoe Rage. This is certainly going to be a barn burner... and now

let's head over to Mark Stegglet who is standing by with the Prophets of Rage!  
Mark?

[We fade to another part of the backstage area where Mark Stegglet stands with the massive Derek Rage. The younger half of the Prophets of Rage stands before the camera, arms folded across his powerful chest. He stares down at Stegglet with condescension. He is garbed in new ring gear: red and white togs in honor of his home and native land.]

MS: Thanks, Lou... and... well... I'm certainly standing by with one-half of the Prophets of Rage at least.

[Stegglet looks around in confusion.]

DR: Lost something?

MS: I was going to ask the same thing of you. Where's your partner? Your brother, Shadoe Rage.

[Derek snorts derisively.]

DR: Don't worry... he'll be along shortly. He likes to make an entrance.

[Stegglet looks up, fidgeting a bit.]

MS: Should we wait?

DR: You good at your job, Stegglet? It's kinda all about asking questions.

[Stegglet grimaces then shakes it off.]

MS: Fine. You want questions, I've got a question for you. Do you think you deserve to be standing here ready to face off against the Soldiers of Fortune in the opening match of Night Two of the Battle of Saskatchewan?

[Derek Rage quirks an eyebrow. His mouth tightens and the corners slightly pull downward.]

DR: Why shouldn't I be standing here? Didn't I pin Danny Morton? Didn't I put the Hammer down? Didn't the greatest team of all time - the Prophets of Rage - defeat the greatest team in AWA history, Violence Unlimited?

[Stegglet shrugs.]

MS: The record book says you won, sure. But...

[Rage arches an eyebrow.]

MS: But you won with the help of Javier Castillo and John Law!

[Derek shrugs.]

DR: So you're saying the Prophets of Rage won.

[Rage stares down at Stegglet until he shrinks back into place. Rage mutters "thought so" before he looks off-camera and sucks his tongue as his eyes roll. The camera pans over to show Shadoe Rage entering stage right. The hyperbolic Rage brother has his back to the camera and his arms up to show his new robes, a sequined cape of the Canadian flag. Red on the edges, white in the middle with a giant red maple leaf in the center of his back. Shadoe Rage stops in front of his

brother, swirling so the cape smacks up against his brother and forces him to back up a little.]

MS: Likes to make an entrance indeed. Shadoe Rage, that's quite the spectacular robe you're wearing here tonight.

[Rage preens a bit in front of the camera.]

SR: You like this, yeah. You like this? Yeah, you give me \$20,000 and I can get you one, too, Stegglet!

[Stegglet's jaw drops.]

MS: Twenty thousand! Dollars? Wait, is that Canadian or U.S.?

[Derek Rage rolls his eyes. He mutters "Doesn't matter. Waste of money."]

SR: Extravagant is my middle name! But if you want to wear the robes like these, Stegglet, you're gonna have to swear your allegiance to Canada! You're gonna have to swear your allegiance to Rage Country and 35 million screaming Canadian people! Because tonight, it's all about patriotism! You understand me? It's about patriotism! IT'S ALL ABOUT PATRIOTISM! And I don't care if you feel like taking a drink every time I repeat myself, Stegglet.

[Rage points off camera.]

SR: And I don't care if you do, either! Nor you!

[Rage pivots to the camera, pointing directly into the videoscope. Behind him Derek Rage sighs.]

SR: And I don't care if you do, too! Pour yourself some liquor. Some rum. Some bourbon. Some gin! I don't care. Get yourself nice and drunk because you're going to need a drink to take the edge off what will be an uncomfortable display of athletic violence. This is going to be an unpleasant experience for the Sons of Anarchy!

DR: Soldiers of Fortune.

[Shadoe turns to Sweet Lou.]

SR: They're the ones that like to make political comments. They got a lot to say about the world today! Charlie Wilson and...

[He snaps fingers repeatedly, struggling to remember the other person's name.]

DR: (irritated) Charlie Stephens and Joe Flint.

SR: Charlie Stephens and Joe Flint. Charlie Stephens and Joe Flint. Charlie Stephens and Joe Flint! Let's step into the wayback machine. Set the year for eighteen hundred and twelve. The second salvo of the Revolutionary War. A bunch of Americans thought they could stick it to the British by invading Canada. What happened, Stegglet? What happened?

MS: That war as declared a draw.

SR: A draw? That what teach you down there? Then tell me why does Canada still exist? The Americans lost. And no amount of propaganda and revisionist history can change that. Outnumbered 10 to 1, we persevered and thrived! And your little White House got burned down, didn't it? Burned to the ground!



And do you know what's going to happen here in 2017 when these American mercenaries invade again? They're going to lose again! And again! And again! We'll be damned if they advance in the Stampede Cup! This is Canada! This is Rage Country! And no amount of jingoism is going to change the outcome, boys! We're going to tread all over you!

[Stegglet nods.]

MS: Strong words there from Shadoc Rage... but I don't have to tell you two that the Soldiers of Fortune are a formidable team that has been proving themselves in AWA rings week after week. They are, dare I say it, tag team specialists.

[Bristling at the statement, Derek Rage puts a hand on his brother's shoulder and yanks him behind him. Stegglet shrinks as Derek Rage towers over him with every inch of his 7'2 frame.]

DR: Tag team specialists? And what do you think we are? We're the greatest tag-team in the history of wrestling. We just beat the toughest team in the world today, Stegglet. You think we're afraid of the Soldiers? This is a battle of soldiers versus generals, Stegglet. The Soldiers of Fortune are going to capitulate. Completely.

SR: WAVE THE WHITE FLAG! They're done! Outta here! Finished! Kaput!

[Stegglet shakes his head.]

MS: That remains to be seen but shifting gears here - I watched the two of you out there last night and you didn't seem to be on the same page at all. The two of you seemed to be going after each other as much as you were Violence Unlimited and if it hadn't have been for John Law-

[Derek Rage steps to the other side of Mark Stegglet so he is surrounded by the Prophets.]

DR: Maybe we weren't on the same page then, Stegglet. But we still showed Morton and Haynes that they was indeed a limit to their violence. But Soldiers of Fortune? No, we're on the same page for you.

Soldiers of Fortune... we're going to tread on you. We aren't scared of snakes. You're no necessary militia. You're no protective force. You're invaders on our land. And we're going to defend this country with our last breath.

SR: We hold these truths to be self-evident! The Prophets of Rage are back for the Stampede Cup! And the Prophets of Rage are going to send you crazy America-worshipping jackasses back over the border ... battered ... broken ... beaten! The Prophets of Rage are building a wall at the border and the Soldiers of Fortune shall not pass!

[Derek Rage pats Stegglet on the head like a slow child.]

DR: You have a nice night now. Don't watch if you don't have a strong stomach.

[With that, the giant walks off camera. Shadoc Rage pauses for a bit, waiting for his brother to be fully out of frame before he turns his back to the camera, spreading his arms wide again for everybody to see his Canadian-themed cape before he exits the screen.]

MS: Well, this is going to be a wild start to the night! Let's get down to...

[Stegglet's words trail off as he spots something off-camera. He urgently yet subtly gestures with his head for the cameraman to pan in that direction...

...and as he does, we find the Prophets of Rage now confronted by AWA President Javier Castillo and his Head of Security, John Law.]

JC: Gentlemen.

[Shadoe Rage starts to step around Castillo but Law impedes his path. The two men glare at one another for a hard few moments.]

SR: Don't think I forgot about last night... nuh uh... neither of you!

[He points a menacing finger at Castillo who bristles but keeps on smiling.]

JC: Forgot about it? I'd hope not. When I do a favor for someone, I expect them to remember.

SR: A favor, huh? That's how you see it?

[Castillo shrugs.]

JC: This whole weekend is about doing favors for people, Mr. Rage. Our friends at Mooselips and the tourism office wanted to... how did they put it... show Canada the love this weekend. And so we have. We've honored the UWF... we featured the Canadian Dream Girl... we even let Jackson Hunter back into the building...

[He gestures to the Prophets.]

JC: ...and we've reunited Canada's greatest tag team. And yes, last night... it looked like that reunion would be a one and done scenario. It looked like the two of you would go down in defeat to Violence Unlimited. Until...

[He casts his gaze over to John Law who continues to glare at Shadoe Rage.]

JC: We did you a favor.

[Shadoe shakes his head.]

SR: No favor to me... uh uh, no way! You think the greatest tag team of all time was going to lose to-

[Castillo interrupts.]

JC: Yes. I do.

[Shadoe grimaces, his eyes flicking back and forth between Law and Castillo who sighs.]

JC: What's the problem, Mr. Rage? I know you have no issue with... bending the rules... to achieve your goals.

[Rage nods his head, his muscles tensing.]

SR: Yeah... no problem, no... but on MY TERMS! NOT YOURS!

[He gets closer to Castillo, close enough for the AWA President to feel Rage's hot breath on him, turning his face to the side.]

SR: This whole things has been on YOUR TERMS... and I don't like it... not one bit...  
no, no!

[Derek Rage reaches out, placing a hand on Shadoe's shoulder.]

DR: Relax. Mr. Castillo is just looking out for our best interests.

[And Shadoe SLAPS the hand off his shoulder, causing Derek Rage's eyes to flash with anger.]

SR: HIS INTERESTS! NOT MINE! NOT OURS!

[Javier Castillo looks concerned as Derek and Shadoe square off.]

JC: Gentlemen... gentlemen, control yourselves. Look... when this is all done, if you want another chance to rip each other apart like you did in Philly, I can make that happen. Whatever match you want. Whatever rules you want. Consider it done.

IF...

[He raises a finger.]

JC: And only if you play this weekend my way. The sponsors love you. The people love you. And never let it be said that Javier Castillo doesn't give the people what they want.

Do we understand each other?

[Derek Rage glowers down at his brother for a few more moments before giving a nod and brushing past John Law as he walks out of view.]

JC: Shadoe?

[Shadoe Rage is staring at his brother's back... then shifts his gaze to Castillo... and then to Law.]

SR: Fine. But you two stay back here.

[Castillo grimaces.]

JC: Agreed. But we'll be watching. Do NOT disappoint me.

[Shadoe Rage turns his gaze onto Castillo, a stare burning a hole through El Presidente...

...and then bursts past him, brushing HARD past John Law as he storms out of view. Castillo smirks, placing a light hand on John Law's shoulder.]

JC: Easy, Mr. Law. Let him have his moment as long as he does what we say.

[Law sneers at Rage's back, tugging on his gloves as he watches him depart...

...and we fade to a panning shot of the Mosaic Stadium crowd. After a few moments, the shot cuts to the ring where Rebecca Ortiz is standing.]

RO: The opening contest of Night Two of the Battle of Saskatchewan is set for one fall with a thirty minute time limit and is a second round match in the Stampede Cup tournament!

[A big roar goes up from the crowd!]

RO: Introducing first...

[A faint buzzing noise echoes throughout the stadium. There's crackling noise and static accompanying the buzzing. The buzzing intensifies, and after a few moments, a distorted voice starts to sing over the buzzing.]

# Land where my fathers died!  
# Land of the pilgrim's pride!  
# From every mountain side,  
# Let freedom ring!

[The buzzing and crackling grow louder and louder, seemingly trying to force itself over the booing from 40,000 faithful Canadians. The buzzing then slowly fades into the opening guitar wailing from the Damn Yankees' "Don't Tread On Me.". The Soldiers of Fortune's new logo: a large golden shield, with a soldier front and center, and two Apache helicopters off in the distance appears on the video wall. The words "Soldiers of Fortune" are at the top of the shield.

Two men in combat fatigues appear, and they march out onto the stage. The two men are not the ones competing here tonight, instead, they appear to be flagbearers. The man on the left holds the American flag, while the man on the right holds the Gadsden "Don't Tread On Me" flag. The crowd, seeing the two flags, boo at the top of their collective lungs, drowning out the vocals from Jack Blades, lead vocalist of the Damn Yankees.]

GM: The Soldiers of Fortune have spent the days leading up to this event disrespecting our gracious hosts, and these fans are letting them have it!

BW: What did you say? I can't hear you over all of this booing. This is ridiculous!

[Suddenly, behind the two flagbearers, a camouflaged Hummer appears. Behind the wheel of the Hummer is Charlie Stephens, one half of the Soldiers of Fortune, with Joe Flint in the passenger's seat. Ortiz, who had been waiting for the appearance of the Soldiers, continues her announcement.]

RO: ...at a total combined weight of 523 pounds...

CHARLIE STEPHENS....

"CAPTAIN" JOE FLINT....

THE SOLDIERS OF FORRRRRRTUNNNNNNE!

[The Hummer rolls down the aisle with the two flagbearers keeping up. The crowd continues to boo, with some members of the crowd waving the Canadian flags they brought into the arena in response to this excessive show of patriotism.]

GM: I can't believe the Soldiers were able to bring this monstrosity into the stadium.

BW: Hey, that monstrosity represents freedom!

GM: Freedom to drive a gas guzzling, environment destroying tank that shouldn't be on the road??

BW: Yes! Isn't it great?

[Gordon grunts as the Hummer makes finally makes its way to ringside. The Soldiers exit the vehicle, as the flag bearers hand the flags over to Flint and

Stephens. Flint and Stephens turn towards the crowd, as Stephens makes his way over to a group of fans holding various Prophets of Rage signs, including several "Rage Country" signs. Flint accompanies him, and both men start waving their flags. Stephens starts to hurl insults, shouting out "BOOTS ON THE GGGRRROOOUUUNNNDDDD!!!!" while waving the Gadsden flag and the fans hurl insults in response.]

GM: Oh boy, things might be getting ugly here. The Soldiers are waving their flags in the faces of a bunch of fans at ringside.

BW: You and I both know that anyone that are fans of the Prophets are likely to riot at any time, Gordo. Besides, you heard Stephens earlier, he's been chomping at the bit for almost two years to get his hands on Shadoc Rage again after Rage cleaned his clock in eight seconds.

GM: We both know the Soldiers won't help matters any, and that wasn't even an official match that night. You're right, though, Stephens has been waiting a long time for a chance at revenge on Shadoc Rage, and now he's getting his chance, right in the middle of Rage Country!

[Several AWA officials, seeing how tense things are becoming, have appeared on the scene.]

GM: The Soldiers are as tough as they come but I don't know how they'd do against 40,000 people! Let's get some order restored out here, and let's get that monstrosity out of here! Who knows what four dangerous men like these are capable of around such a vehicle.

[The officials coax the Soldiers to enter the ring, and the Soldiers back off from their ringside confrontation. Some barked orders later sees the flagbearers and the Hummer heading back up the aisle as Stephens and Flint take their flags into the ring.]

GM: Well, it looks like we've got matters under control for now and... wait a second... who gave Joe Flint a mic?!

[Ortiz looks confused as Flint brings out a Soldiers of Fortune brand custom microphone.]

JF: Hold yer horses, Ortiz. Since we're the first match of the night, tonight, and we had to sit through "O Canada" before we came on the air tonight... which is a very lousy National anthem, I might add... I figured we should lead off with a REAL National Anthem!

[The crowd boos and several members throw rolled up paper and other trash into the ring. Flint smirks at the reaction.]

JF: So all you forty thousand pieces of trash better stand up and salute! Not only because I have a much better singing voice than that screeching banshee from earlier in the night, but because we're the only thing saving your country from total fascism!

....OH SAY...

[Suddenly, the mic cuts out as the crowd erupts in cheers. As Flint looks at his mic in confusion before...

"BONG"  
"BONG"  
"BONG"

All the lights go out in the Mosaic Stadium. The Canadian crowd cheers as the bell tolls for the arrival of the Prophets of Rage. Dry ice smoke starts to roil around the stage. As the mist rises, a new song plays over the PA system.

"O' CANADA! Our home and native land!"

The Canadian crowd explodes as their national anthem plays for the second time in the evening.]

GM: The Prophets of Rage certainly playing up the patriotic theme tonight as they go up against the Soldiers of Fortune.

BW: And these fans are eating it up! I never thought I would hear people cheer the Prophets like this. Canada is truly a Bizarro land.

GM: You would think these fans would have a problem with the way the Prophets advanced in the tournament. But they are getting cheers by the hometown crowd who just really don't like what the Soldiers of Fortune represent, I suppose.

BW: Well, this should be an interesting second round matchup. Because both these teams are known for taking no prisoners and not being concerned with the rules. The Prophets have a big size advantage, Gordo, but the Soldiers of Fortune are a cohesive unit and they don't have a wild card like Shadoe Rage to worry about.

[Red and white spotlights illuminate the entranceway as Shadoe Rage emerges first, arms spread wide so that his Maple Leaf cape billows around him. He twirls down the aisle in time with the anthem. He is dressed in red and white: white trunks with three maple leaves across the front, red knee pads and elbow pads, white boots with red highlights.

Behind him emerges the giant Derek Rage. The 7'2, 340 lbs monster is robed in a satin black boxers robe, a Canadian flag towel wrapped around his neck and a hood pulled up over his head. He follows his brother down the long walk, his head kept low the whole way.]

RO: Weighing in at a combined weight of 584 pounds ... both men hailing from Halifax, Nova Scotia, Canada ... [Native land cheers]

They are Shadoe and Derek Rage... the PROPHETS OF RAAAAAAAAAAGE!

[The cheers get louder as the brotherly duo reaches the end of the ramp. Shadoe Rage points a finger at the Soldiers of Fortune, scrambling up on the apron right away as Joe Flint threatens to hit him with the flagpole he's holding. Rage leans back, threatening from a distance as referee Pete "Blue Shoes" Miller stands between the two, trying to keep them apart.]

GM: This one is threatening to break down before we even get going... some serious national pride going on here in this one.

[Derek Rage ignores Flint and Stephens, slowly walking his way around the ring to climb the ringsteps. He swings a leg over the top rope, joining the other three combatants in the ring as Charlie Stephens shouts a few words in the giant's direction.]

GM: All four in the ring now. The crowd's going nuts... these guys are trading words early... they really just can't seem to wait to get this thing going. Referee Pete Miller's going to have his hands full with this one.

[Stephens turns towards Shadoe, shouting loudly about their previous encounter.]

GM: Charlie Stephens is obviously very focused on the last time he and Shadoe Rage were in the ring together... some two years ago...

[The referee backs Stephens up as Shadoe mounts the second rope, pointing to the fans...

...which is when Stephens rushes past the official, winding up...]

“OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!”

[The crowd groans as Stephens SMASHES the metal flagpole into the back of Shadoe Rage’s left knee, sending him falling off the ropes and down to the canvas!]

GM: What the-?!

[Stephens raises the flagpole again, smashing it down across the kneecap... and a third time before anyone can get close enough to stop him!]

GM: The referee gets in there but... my stars, what kind of damage did Charlie Stephens do to the knee of Shadoe Rage?!

[Shadoe is rolling around on the mat, grabbing at his knee in obvious pain. The audio cuts out for a moment as Shadoe shouts to the heavens.]

GM: We apologize for that, fans. Shadoe Rage obviously in a lot of pain after that sneak attack and...

[Miller orders both Flint and Stephens to surrender the flagpoles, handing them out to a pair of ringside attendants as Derek Rage stomps across the ring, standing over his brother to prevent any further damage from being done.]

GM: Derek Rage standing guard and-

BW: And what a brilliant move by the Soldiers of Fortune! An attack before the bell - no disqualification for it - and now they’ve put Shadoe Rage in a situation where he’s going to have to either forfeit or fight this match injured!

GM: Well, I think we know which one he’ll choose.

BW: If he has a choice! Dr. Ponavitch is jogging down that ramp right now and he’s gotta look at that knee before he’ll let Rage compete.

[The AWA’s head trainer arrives at ringside, leaning through the ropes as Shadoe Rage sits up against them with the aid of the official, his leg dangling off the apron as Ponavitch pokes and prods at it.]

BW: What a story it would be for the Soldiers to go to the Quarterfinals by forfeit. Remember, fans... the winner of this one will get either The Band or the Lights Out Express in the Quarterfinals.

GM: Stephens and Flint looking on... and Stephens seems quite pleased with himself.

[Derek Rage stands nearby as well, listening to the conversation between his older brother and Dr. Ponavitch. Shadoe is swatting Ponavitch’s hand away, shouting “GET AWAY FROM ME!” at him.]

GM: Shadoe Rage is defiantly refusing to allow Ponavitch to examine him.

BW: Well, we've all known for a long time that Shadoe Rage is about thirty-three cards short of a full deck.

[Ponavitch insistently tries to get in again but Rage tries to lash out with his good leg at him, causing the doctor to back off. He shrugs at the official who kneels down next to Shadoe Rage.]

"I'm good, ref... I'm good. Just... get me up."

[Pete Miller does indeed help Shadoe Rage to his feet as the former TV Champion leans over the ropes, trying to keep his weight off his hurting knee.]

GM: Derek Rage is trying to talk to his brother...

[But Shadoe shakes his head insistently, turning away from Derek, leaning against the ropes...]

GM: Okay... well, even if he's going to wrestle... he's NOT going to start this match, is he?!

BW: Who knows?! It's Shadoe Rage!

[Derek Rage glares at his brother... and then angrily stomps back across the ring, climbing out on the apron.]

GM: Are you... you've gotta be kidding me!

[The referee looks puzzled at Derek Rage.]

"He wants to fight? Let him fight."

["Blue Shoes" Miller looks back and forth as Charlie Stephens insists on starting the match for the Soldiers of Fortune, looking across with a grin on his face as Shadoe Rage continues to lean against the ropes.]

"DING! DING! DING!"

GM: And here we go! Thirty minute time limit to move on to the Quarterfinals!

[Stephens watches as Rage pushes off the ropes, hobbling towards Stephens, fists balled up in front of him...]

GM: Shadoe Rage isn't backing down from this fight. If Stephens wants it, he's gonna get it!

[Rage does a little hobble bounce out towards Stephens, throwing a wild right hand that comes nowhere near Stephens but leaves Rage horribly off-balance as Stephens dives at him, snatching the injured leg and shoving Rage down to the canvas with a single leg takedown.]

GM: Nice amateur style takedown by Stephens...

[Stephens rolls right through the takedown, taking the mount on Rage as he drills him with a right hand to the head... and another... and a third. The referee steps in, calling for a break as Stephens flails with both right and left hands down on the former TV champion!]

GM: Stephens is all over him, taking out that frustration from nearly two years ago!



[At the referee's four count, Stephens pulls away to his feet, stomping around the downed Rage as the crowd jeers loudly. He watches as the referee checks to see if Rage can continue...

...and then dives into another mount, smashing his fist down between the eyes again... and again... and again...]

GM: Stephens won't let up! And again, the referee's count is the only thing that gets him away from Shadoe Rage.

[Stephens stomps around the ring, throwing a glare at Derek Rage who is standing near motionless in the corner...]

GM: Derek Rage not budging here, not taking a single step towards helping his big brother.

[The former U.S. Army private moves back towards Shadoe Rage as the referee backs off, clearing space as Stephens steps down on Rage's bad ankle, pinning his leg to the canvas...]

GM: No, no, no!

[...and leaps into the air, coming down with a vicious stomp on Rage's injured knee!]

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

[Rage flails about on the mat, kicking his legs and slamming his arms into the canvas in pain. Charlie Stephens smirks, grabbing the ankle of Shadoe Rage and dragging him across the ring.]

GM: Back to the corner... and there's the tag to Joe Flint.

[Captain Joe Flint steps through the ropes, measuring Rage as Stephens holds him by the ankle...

...and KICKS the knee violently, leaving Rage grimacing down on the mat.]

GM: A quick tag by the Soldiers, showing that tag team specialty that Mark Stegglet mentioned earlier. And it raises a good point, Bucky. The Soldiers have been a unit for quite some time now while the Prophets have spent years wrestling as singles competitors. How does that come into play here tonight?

BW: It's a valid point. I think the Prophets showed last night that some things are natural... instinctual... especially between brothers...

GM: How does that work when it's two brothers with the worst relationship since Cain and Abel?

BW: Also a valid point... but right now, I think the X Factor in this match is that knee. Shadoe Rage is down.. he's hurt... he's immobilized... and he's alienated his brother again. They came into this match on the same page because of their patriotism but Shadoe refused to listen to his brother... refused to talk to his brother... and I don't know what their relationship is at this specific moment.

[The crowd jeers as Joe Flint tortures Shadoe Rage with a stepover toehold, bending the knee at an awkward angle.]

GM: Well, Shadoe Rage is a man of severe - almost maniacal - determination so it's hard to imagine a submission out of him but anything is possible for sure.

[Flint twists the knee into a loose spinning toehold...

...and then leaps into the air, driving his knee down onto Rage's, causing Shadoe to sit up with an anguished scream.]

GM: Good grief!

[Flint clocks Rage with a right hand, knocking him back down prone as the fans continue to jeer.]

GM: The Soldiers of Fortune are working together, continuing to do damage to that knee... continuing to go after the leg that Charlie Stephens injured before the bell with that steel flagpole.

[Flint grabs the ankle, dragging Rage back to the Soldiers' corner where he makes another tag.]

GM: Another tag by the Soldiers.

[Stephens steps in, dropping to the ropes behind Flint, and leapfrogs over his own partner, dropping his 241 pounds down on Rage's elevated knee.]

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

[Stephens rolls to a knee, looking down at Shadoe Rage who is cradling his knee in pain on the canvas. The New York native climbs to his feet...]

"Do you remember me now, Rage?! Do you remember me now?!"

[Rage is crawling across the ring, trying to get to the neutral corner as Stephens strides after him, watching as Shadoe Rage uses the ropes to pull himself up to his feet, fists balled up in front of him as Stephens corners him.]

GM: Stephens has him trapped in the corner..

[But as he steps closer, Rage snaps off a jab to the face of Stephens to a big cheer!]

GM: Left hand on target!

[A second jab lands, the crowd getting louder!]

GM: Rage is trying to fight out of the corner, trying to get himself back into this match...

[Rage winds up his right arm, bringing his elbow down between the eyes of Stephens, knocking him down to the canvas to a huge cheer!]

GM: And down goes Charlie Stephens!

BW: That's huge, Gordo! We're early in this match but Rage is starting it out behind the eight ball and he's gotta find a way to get his defense off the field and get back on the attack.

[Still hanging onto the ropes, Shadoe starts limping alongside them, heading towards the corner where his brother stares stoically at him.]

"Oh, now you want a tag, tough guy?"

[Shadoe doesn't respond, still moving towards Derek, arm outstretched...

...which is when Charlie Stephens kicks him in the back of the injured knee, sweeping the leg out from under him, sending him flipping backwards and landing hard on the back of his head on the canvas!]

BW: OH! He just kicked his leg right out of his.. leg!

[Stephens glares down at him.]

"You're not going anywhere, Rage! I'm not done with you yet!"

[Derek Rage grimaces a bit, shaking his head at his downed brother as Charlie Stephens grabs the top rope, stomping Shadoe a few times on the canvas before ducking through the ropes and dropping down to the floor.]

GM: Charlie Stephens outside the ring now...

[Stephens takes a moment to trade a few words with a rabid Canadian fan with a maple leaf painted on both cheeks.]

GM: Stephens not making himself any fans out there at ringside...

[He turns back to Rage, grabbing the injured leg, giving it a jerk to pull his lower body under the bottom rope...

...and then lifts the leg high before SLAMMING the back of the knee down on the edge of the ring apron!]

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

[Rage cries out, sitting up on the mat, grabbing between the ropes at his leg as Stephens reaches through and cracks him in the jaw with a right hand, knocking him back down again...]

GM: Charlie Stephens trying to do even more damage to that knee now, using the ring as a weapon as he-

[Stephens lifts the leg again, slamming it down a second time!]

GM: Goodness! The back of the knee smashing into the hardest part of the ring!

[Rage is groaning in pain now, trying to grab at his leg as Stephens shakes his head, grabbing the leg a third time...]

GM: Not again! He-

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

GM: Make it three! And Shadoe Rage is in some serious, serious trouble now, Bucky.

BW: He definitely is... and we talked about how it's early in the match still... just under five minutes but the way Stephens is going after that leg, Shadoe's gotta feel like he's been out here a half hour, Gordo.

GM: You could be right about that.

[Stephens rolls back under the ropes, making sure to get up between Shadoe and Derek Rage. He shouts something in Derek's direction but the seven footer just throws a dismissive gesture at him, watching to see if Shadoe can recover.]

GM: Charlie Stephens now dragging Shadoe Rage all the way back across the ring, heading towards his corner... and yet another tag to Joe Flint.

[This time, Stephens drops to his knees, pinning Shadoe's leg to the mat as Flint hits the ropes, bouncing off... ]

GM: Ohhh! 281 pound elbowdrop down across the injured knee!

[Stephens rolls out as Flint takes a knee, a sneer on his face as the Canadian crowd lets him have it.]

GM: And the Soldiers of Fortune - while not endearing themselves to the fans here in Regina - are certainly having their way with the potential Hall of Famers right about now.

[Flint drags Shadoe Rage back to his feet, throwing a big right hand that sends him falling back into the Soldiers' corner.]

GM: And this is NOT where Shadoe Rage wants to be right now, fans.

[Flint slaps Stephens' hand, bringing his younger partner back in.]

GM: Another quick tag by the Soldiers...

[Stephens steps in, squaring up as the Soldiers take turns booting Rage in the stomach for a referee's four count, earning more jeers from the crowd.]

GM: Simple but effective as the Soldiers continue to dominate one-half of the Prophets of Rage...

[Stephens grabs Rage by the hair, dragging him out of the corner as Flint ducks back out.]

GM: Stephens pulls him out of the corner a bit.. scoops him up...

[But Rage slips out over the top on the peak of the lift, landing on one knee behind Stephens.]

GM: Rage is loose! Slipped out of the slam and-

[And as Stephens turns around, Rage throws himself at full force forward, smashing his extended arm across Stephens' collarbone!]

GM: Ohhh! What a clothesline!

BW: And this may be his chance, Gordo! He's gotta make a run - well, hobble - for it!

[Rage, down on both knees, slowly twists his body around to face his corner and starts crawling across the ring to where his younger but much larger brother awaits him.]

GM: Derek Rage is fresh - he hasn't been in the ring at all yet!

BW: Shadoe's on his hands and knees, crawling like a dog... he's not very fast at this but he IS making progress!

[The Canadian crowd gets louder and louder with each inch covered, urging Shadoc Rage onward as the former TV Champion looks to make the exchange and get some much-needed recovery time.]

GM: Shadoc Rage is desperately crawling across the ring - Derek Rage is waiting for him!

[And this time, Derek Rage extends his long arm towards his brother, eager to get in the ring and do some damage to the Soldiers of Fortune...]

GM: Can he get there? Can he... look at Shadoc! He lunges!

[But comes up short, faceplanting from the effort before he tries to push up again...]

GM: Tag!

[But it's on the other side of the ring, bringing Joe Flint rampaging across...

...where he DRILLS Derek Rage with a right hand, knocking him off the apron to the floor!]

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

GM: Cheapshot! Cheapshot by Joe Flint!

[The crowd jeers the blow by Flint who sneers as the referee reprimands him...

...and then the referee jerks around, trying to prevent a pissed-off Derek Rage from getting inside the ring!]

GM: The seven footer's coming after Flint! He's trying to get in there!

[But as Miller struggles with the giant, Charlie Stephens comes back in, grabbing one leg as Flint grabs the other...

...and with the crowd jeering, they drag Shadoc Rage back across the ring to the Soldiers' corner.]

GM: Illegal assist from Charlie Stephens gets Rage back to the corner and...

[Holding the leg aloft, Flint DROPS the elbow down on the knee, driving it into the kneecap as the crowd jeers louder. The referee turns around, having calmed Derek Rage down for the moment. Miller looks confused, throwing a question or two towards the Soldiers who ignore him as Joe Flint gets back to his feet, standing over the downed Shadoc Rage.]

BW: And that's the kind of thing that an experienced tag team brings to the table, Gordo. That kind of thing is an instinct... something you gain by being in the ring each and every night with your partner. These guys see each other more than they see their own families.

GM: Don't we know it.

[Flint pulls Rage off the mat by the hair, looking out on the jeering crowd...

...which is when Rage slips a right hand in, bouncing off Flint's jaw!]

GM: Oh! Rage with a right hand and-

[Flint swings his knee up, catching Rage in the gut... and then uses a handful of hair to SMASH his skull into the top turnbuckle.]

GM: Flint twists him around, pinning Rage against the buckles...

[He pifaces his head back, exposing the chest...]

"WHAAAAAAAAAAAP!"

"WHAAAAAAAAAAAP!"

"WHAAAAAAAAAAAP!"

[...and lands three thunderous clubbing forearms that leaves Rage reeling, arms draped over the ropes to stay on his feet.]

GM: The referee backing Flint out of the corner, giving Rage a chance to recover.

BW: Not for long though. Flint's right back in there...

[Grabbing the top rope, Flint buries his knee into the gut of Rage once... twice... three times, leaving him gasping for air in the corner.]

GM: Shadoe Rage continues to struggle to get out of the corner... continues to just be assaulted by the Soldiers of Fortune and this is not a position we're used to seeing him in, Bucky, as we're a little over eight minutes into this thirty minute time limit.

BW: Absolutely not. Shadoe Rage is in a bad way and his partner's gotta seem miles away from him at this point.

[With a handful of Rage's hair, Flint drags him out of the corner, scooping him up and slamming him down on the canvas...]

GM: Hard scoop slam puts him down on the mat... and Flint's not done...

[The Captain pulls him off the mat, scooping him up a second time, and slams him down even harder...]

GM: Make it a double for Shadoe Rage, pain shooting up his spine now to go with the debilitating pain in his left knee...

BW: Bartender, the Duke needs a refill!

[Flint pulls Rage up again, scoops him up, spins him around once, and throws him down with a third bodyslam!]

GM: Joe Flint with a third slam... and when you look at Joe Flint in there, Bucky, I can't help but remember the loyal American patriot who fought so many foreign menaces over the years in places like Texas, like Georgia, like the Carolinas.

BW: He was your standard journeyman wrestler for a long, long time. The AWA is his big break and since he just turned 40 last fall, it couldn't have come at a better time. Flint knows he's got fewer days ahead of him in the ring than behind him so he needs to do things like... say, win a million dollars here tonight...

GM: Flint makes the tag here... Flint out, Stephens in...

[Climbing through the ropes, a determined Stephens quickly wraps up the legs of Rage under his arms... and flips him over into a Boston Crab!]

GM: Boston Crab applied by Charlie Stephens, looking to do even more damage to the leg of Shadoe Rage...

BW: This isn't just to torment Rage, Gordo, this is Stephens looking to pick up a submission win and embarrass Rage in front of these Canadian fans.

GM: Shadoe Rage clawing at the canvas now as pain blasts the knee where the Soldiers did so much damage with that metal flagpole before this match even got started.

[Rage stretches out an arm, trying to get to the ropes as Stephens sits back, shaking his head as the fans try to root the Canadian Wildman into an escape of whatever kind he can manage.]

GM: Joe Flint cheering his partner on as Charlie Stephens looks for a submission that would send the Soldiers on to the Quarterfinals to face either the current CCW Tag Champions - The Band- or the former AWA World Tag Team Champions, the Lights Out Express.

BW: This tournament is stacked, Gordo. Champions, former champions, top contenders, superteams of singles competitors. Any team who makes their way through this thing truly can hold themselves up as the best team in the world.

GM: And you know the Soldiers would like that distinction to go to them as they look towards a future World Tag Team Title shot at Next Gen who we'll be seeing in action later tonight as well.

[Rage scoots himself on his elbows towards the ropes, forcing Stephens to backpedal a little to keep the hold applied...]

GM: So far, Shadoe Rage has been able to choke down that pain as he tries to find a way out of this... his brother is looking on... not much emotion on the face of the giant though, Bucky.

BW: No, there's not... and it makes you wonder if there weren't a million dollars and the expectations of Javier Castillo on the line, would Derek Rage care one bit that this was happening to his big brother?

[Rage gets a little closer now, clenching his jaw as Stephens nearly stumbles.]

GM: And look at this now! Look at Shadoe Rage battling towards the ropes! These fans are going wild for him!

BW: Rage Country is JACKED tonight!

[Shadoe stretches out his arm, still a few inches away as he drags himself along the mat annnnnnnnd...]

GM: He made it! He got there!

[The crowd ROARS as Rage grabs the bottom rope, forcing the referee to start his five count.]

GM: Come on, Stephens! Break the hold!

[But Stephens hangs on until four, refusing to break until the last possible moment when he abruptly stands up, raising his hands...]

GM: Finally, he breaks the hold... but you've gotta wonder how much further damage has been done to the knee of Shadoe Rage in the meantime.

[Rage flips over onto his back, leaning against the ropes as he rubs vigorously at his knee.]

GM: Shadoe Rage trying to get the blood flowing through that knee area, trying to-

[But Stephens grabs Rage by the legs, dragging him away from the ropes and back to the center of the ring...]

GM: And Stephens pulls him out! He's going to slap it on again!

BW: Smart move by Stephens as-

GM: SMALL PACKAGE BY RAGE!

[The crowd cheers the surprise rollup but grumbles at the near fall that comes up just short.]

GM: Whooooa my! We almost saw Shadoe Rage pluck that one away from the Soldiers of Fortune!

[A shocked Stephens is still down on the mat, looking up at the official who holds up two fingers...]

...which gives Shadoe Rage a window of opportunity as he starts crawling towards his corner again...]

GM: And look! Look here! Shadoe Rage making a run for it!

BW: Well, crawl at least.

GM: He's trying to get to his corner, trying to make that tag...

[But Stephens sees him on the move and quickly cuts him off with a well-placed boot between the eyes. Stephens wags a finger at Derek Rage who looks on, seething with annoyance at the Soldiers.]

GM: Stephens won't allow it though... keeping Shadoe Rage down...

[Grabbing the legs, Stephens lifts them up...]

GM: Another Boston Crab perhaps and...

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

[The crowd roars their disapproval as Stephens drops an elbow down between the split legs in a move that looks dangerously close to a low blow.]

GM: Oh, come on now! A blatant low blow!

BW: I don't think so, Gordo. The referee is saying it was above the belt line.

GM: If it was, it was BARELY above it. A questionable location for that elbowdrop for sure but it accomplished its goal as Rage isn't moving towards his corner any more.

[With Shadoe momentarily paused, Stephens again drags him by the legs back to the corner, reaching out...]



GM: Another tag for the Soldiers, moving in and out very quickly, keeping the fresh man in...

BW: Being a tag team?

GM: No doubt about that... and as Flint comes in, he's pulling Rage over into the neutral corner now, up on his feet.

[The Captain shoves Shadoe back into the buckles, smirking as he grabs him by the wrist...]

GM: Irish whip on the way and...

[The crowd groans as Rage gets a few steps out of the corner and simply collapses, grabbing his knee as he grimaces on the mat.]

GM: He couldn't even do it. Flint tried to whip him across but the knee gave out on Shadoe Rage and... I don't know how much longer he can do this, Bucky.

BW: I don't know either. He needs to find a way to get his brother into this match - and soon - or this comeback story is going to be all over.

[Flint drags Rage up, paintbrushing him across the face a few times to jeers from the crowd as Flint shoves him back to the corner...]

GM: Back into the buckles he goes... this time, it's Flint simply backing away to mid-ring and... ohhh! Howitzer clothesline in the corner!

[Rage's arms are hooked over the top rope, trying to stay on his feet as Flint holds up that big right arm, backing up to mid-ring again...]

GM: Here we go again!

[...and connects with a second running clothesline in the corner!]

GM: Flint laying in the heavy artillery now... backing down...

BW: He's going all the way across this time, staring across the ring...

[Lowering his head, the Captain sprints from corner to corner towards his injured opponent...]

GM: HOWITZER!

[...who somehow manages to use the ropes to drag himself clear, sending Flint CRASHING chestfirst into the buckles where he bounces out, falling to the canvas to a HUGE ROAR from the Canadian crowd!]

GM: HE MISSED! HE MISSED AND FLINT HITS THE CORNER HARD!

BW: And don't look now, Gordo, but Shadoe Rage is on the move!

[Having collapsed to his knees after pulling himself clear of the charging Flint, Rage starts crawling towards his waiting brother yet again...]

GM: This is his best shot so far! Flint is down! Flint is hurt! And he's got a wide open path to that big ol' giant waiting in the corner!

[Shadoe Rage is crawling closer and closer, the crowd getting louder and louder as Charlie Stephens implores his partner to "do something!" from the corner.]

GM: Rage is just a couple feet away now, reaching out towards his brother... looking to make that much-needed tag...

[And finally, Charlie Stephens has seen enough, ducking through the ropes and charging across...

...only to be cut off by Pete "Blue Shoes" Miller!]

GM: There you go, Pete! Get him out of there!

[Miller and Stephens engage in a shouting match over Stephens' illegal entry into the ring when...]

GM: TAG!

[The crowd EXPLODES as Derek Rage slaps his brother's hand, stepping over the ropes into the ring. The seven footer quickly pulls a dazed Joe Flint from his knee to his feet, hammering him with a series of right hands to the skull.]

GM: Down goes Flint off that big right hand...

[And speaking of the big right hand, Derek Rage shoots it skyward to a huge cheer!]

GM: Rage is ready and waiting... Flint to his feet and...

[The crowd gets even louder as Rage wraps a hand around the throat of the Captain...]

GM: He's going for a chokeslam! He's got him hooked! He's got-

[And suddenly, Pete Miller whips around, waving his hands at Derek Rage.]

GM: What the...?!

[Miller points to Shadoe who is still on the canvas after having exhausted himself with the tag attempt, waving his arms back and forth.]

BW: Blue Shoes didn't see it! He didn't see the tag!

[The crowd ERUPTS into jeers for the official as Derek Rage flings Flint aside, angrily backing down as the referee continues to wave his arms emphatically.]

GM: Derek Rage being put back out... I can't believe-

[And while the giant argues with Blue Shoes, Charlie Stephens strikes again, coming across the ring, grabbing Shadoe Rage by the leg, and dragging him all the way back to the Soldiers' corner as the fans jeer angrily!]

"FIFTEEN MINUTES! FIFTEEN MINUTES! FIFTEEN MINUTES GONE BY!"

GM: Fifteen minutes. We're halfway to the time limit of the opening match in Round Two here tonight... and what a battle these two teams are going through.

BW: A pretty one-sided battle so far, Gordo.

GM: Thanks to the underhanded tactics of the Soldiers of Fortune... and as Joe Flint gets back to his feet, he makes the tag again.

[Stephens swiftly comes back through the ropes, pulling Rage into position for a spinning toehold...]

GM: Figure four perhaps and- OHHH!

[The crowd ROARS as Rage plants his boot on Stephens' backside and delivers a mighty shove, sending the U.S. Army private sailing through the ropes and out to the floor!]

GM: What a counter by the former TV Champion! And THIS is really his chance, Bucky!

BW: Absolutely! Stephens is out, Rage is in... and he's gotta lower his head and keep on crawling if he hopes to get to that big son of a gun waiting in the corner for him...

[Pete Miller takes a pre-emptive step and threatens Joe Flint with a disqualification if he comes through the ropes to block Rage! The crowd roars as Flint throws a fit on the apron!]

BW: What?! Can he do that?!

GM: He just did! Good ol' Blue Shoes just told Joe Flint that if he tries to block the tag, he's disqualified!

[Flint turns, shouting to his partner as Shadoe Rage rolls over onto his chest, dragging himself across the ring as the Canadian crowd gets louder and louder with each inch he clears...]

GM: Rage is making his move! Derek Rage is waiting for him!

BW: Stephens is still down! He's shaken up but he doesn't have time to be! He's gotta get up and cut off that tag. He wants no part of Derek Rage who has been waiting for FIFTEEN MINUTES to get into this fight!

[Derek Rage slaps his hand down on the top turnbuckle, surprisingly encouraging his brother to get to him as Blue Shoes stands back, ready to signal for the tag as Rage gets closer... and closer...]

GM: Stephens is... he's up but he's wobbly!

[Stephens throws a glance up at Flint who gestures wildly across the ring...

...which is when Stephens starts running!]

GM: Where's he... where's he going?!

BW: He's not getting in the ring. Shadoe Rage is almost there! He's so close to the corner now and-

[But as Shadoe reaches up towards his brother...]

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

GM: OH, COME ON!

[The crowd jeers as Stephens yanks Derek Rage down off the apron, blocking his attempt to tag. The referee leans through the ropes, shouting at Stephens who gets ROCKED with a right hand... and another. The crowd is ROARING as Derek Rage batters Stephens with haymakers...]

...and then screams warnings to the official as Joe Flint slips through the ropes, grabbing Shadoe Rage by the leg, dragging him back across the ring...]

GM: That's a DQ! He told him if he got in there-

BW: But Miller doesn't see it! Miller's tied up with- OHHH! What a right hand by Derek Rage!

[The big blow knocks Stephens to the floor as Derek Rage turns back to the ring and then SLAMS his hands down on the apron in frustration as he spots his big brother back towards the Soldiers' corner with Flint smirking on the apron.]

GM: Joe Flint did it again... Shadoe Rage gets robbed of that tag yet again and Derek Rage is absolutely seething over in his corner.

[Derek Rage points to his brother, shouting to the official who shakes his head.]

GM: Like you said, Bucky - Pete "Blue Shoes" Miller missed the outside interference and... oh brother.

[The crowd ERUPTS in jeers at the sight of a pair of individuals walking out onto the entrance stage. The camera shot cuts to reveal the AWA President, Javier Castillo, and his head of security, John Law, standing at the top of the ramp.]

GM: We've got trouble now, fans. Javier Castillo and John Law are out here and... well, that spelled trouble for Violence Unlimited last night.

BW: Javier said he'd let the Prophets handle this as long as he got what he wanted and... well, I guess he thinks he might not be about to get that.

GM: Castillo hedging his bets perhaps... and I don't know how Shadoe Rage will feel about that.

BW: Right now, he's got bigger problems than Castillo, daddy.

[Stephens staggers back away from the Prophets' corner, rolling under the ropes and quickly stumbling to his own corner where he slaps the offered hand.]

GM: Another tag brings Joe Flint back in...

[Flint hauls Rage to his feet by the hair, snatching a front facelock alongside his partner...]

GM: The Soldiers hook him... and take him over with a double suplex! Nicely done!

[And as Stephens vacates the ring, Flint lowers into a lateral press, hooking the good leg.]

GM: The Soldiers with the cover here for one... for two... but Rage kicks out at two! Still some fight left in the former TV Champion... although I can't imagine how as we're closing in on EIGHTEEN MINUTES that he's been fighting these two on his own. Incredible!

[Flint raises up off the mat and immediately tags Stephens back in.]

BW: Look at these two, Gordo. Like a well-oiled machine in there. It's hard to imagine anyone else in the tournament working better as a team than these two have in this matchup.

[Stephens grabs Rage by the hair, hauling him to his feet...

...where he snaps a jab into the jaw... and another... and another...]

GM: Stephens returning the favor on those jab punches and-

[The former Private pauses, shouting something at Derek Rage who starts to come over the ropes after him...]

GM: Derek Rage coming in! The giant is-

[And with the referee tied up by Derek Rage, Shadoe suddenly reaches down, yanking Stephens' legs out from under him, holding them apart and...]

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

GM: And there was NO doubt about that location, fans! Right in the groin!

[Stephens' eyes go wide, sitting up and clutching his groin as Shadoe Rage rolls over to his hands and knees, crawling towards his corner once more as Derek Rage sits back with a smirk, arm stretched out...]

GM: And another chance for Shadoe Rage! Another chance!

BW: He's more than halfway there - Stephens had him in the middle of the ring! A costly mistake perhaps as Rage is dragging, scraping, and inching closer to his little brother - his little seven foot tall brother!

[The Canadian crowd is at a fever pitch now as a glassy-eyed Stephens rolls to his chest, trying to push up off the mat while Rage inches closer... and closer...]

GM: Shadoe Rage is getting close now! Just one more surge! One more... LUNGE!

[And the proverbial roof blows off Mosaic Stadium!]

GM: TAG!

[Derek Rage steps over the top rope as Joe Flint comes through the ropes illegally, trying to intervene...

...and gets run right the hell down with a running clothesline!]

GM: CLOTHESLINE ON FLINT!

[Swinging back around, Rage runs right back the other way and drops the rising Stephens with a clothesline as well!]

GM: One for Stephens as well! Derek Rage looking to do some damage after nearly twenty minutes on the sidelines!

[The seven footer catches a rising Flint by the arm, whipping him to the neutral corner. He turns back to Stephens, pulling him up and whipping him to the opposite corner...]

GM: Derek Rage setting the table for himself here...

[The giant lumbers across the ring, twisting around, and SMASHES Joe Flint in the corner with his entire body!]

GM: BOX OUT ON FLINT!

[He charges back the other way, twisting around again...]

GM: BOX OUT ON STEPHENS!

[He steps out of the corner, turning as Stephens stumbles towards him...]

GM: GORILLA PRESS!

[Rage holds Stephens high for all of Canada to see...

...and then HURLS him onto a wobbly Joe Flint, taking both men down!]

GM: DEREK RAGE TAKES THEM BOTH OUT! OH MY!

[With the Regina crowd rocking, Derek Rage lifts his mighty right hand into the air in the shape of a clawhold...]

GM: He's calling for the Hammer of God now!

BW: Already?!

[Flint rolls out to the floor, leaving Stephens all alone as he tries to get up off the canvas, spinning in a staggering circle until...]

GM: HE HOOKS HIM!

[Derek Rage nods at the roaring crowd, holding Stephens by the skull...

...which is when Joe Flint climbs back up on the apron, shouting at Derek Rage who shoves Stephens aside, making a lunge at Joe Flint!]

GM: Swing and a miss! Flint drops off to the floor!

[And with Rage's back turned, Stephens charges him, leaping high into the air, smashing a double axehandle down between the shoulderblades!]

GM: Ohh! What a shot!

[Stephens keeps throwing... right hooks to the body... left hooks to the body... forearms across the back of the neck... over... and over... and over...

...until Derek Rage slowly turns to face him, unfazed by the barrage of blows!]

BW: Oh. My. God.

[A look of terror crosses Stephens' face as he turns, dashing to the ropes, rebounding back, leaping into the air...

...and Rage SWATTS him like he's blocking a basketball, smashing Stephens across the face and sending him back down to the canvas!]

GM: Good grief!

BW: He might've just knocked Stephens' head into the fifth row, daddy!

"TEN MINUTES REMAIN! TEN MINUTES!"

[Derek Rage cups a hand to his ear, nodding as he acknowledges the time remaining. He leans down to the mat, palming Charlie Stephens by the face...

...and DEADLIFTS him straight up onto his feet to a big reaction!]

GM: Look at the power! He's got him hooked again! Set for the Hammer of God and...

[This time, Rage lifts Stephens into the air with ease and DRIVES him down into the canvas!]

GM: ...SLAMS HIM DOWN! THAT'S IT! HE GOT ALL OF THAT!

[Derek Rage drops to a knee, leaning into a lateral press...]

GM: ONNNNNNNNNNNE! TWOOOOOOOOOOOO! THREEEEEEEEEEEE-

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

GM: FLINT PULLS OUT THE REF! HE PULLS OUT THE REF! WHAT THE HELL?!

[The Canadian crowd is ROARING with dismay for Joe Flint's actions now, screaming and shouting at the Captain. The referee's got the same opinion, verbally letting Flint have it!]

GM: Pete Miller should DISQUALIFY him for that, Bucky!

BW: That would seem like an option at this point for him. He's really mad at Flint - turning a nasty shade of red that clashes with his blue shoes.

GM: Flint and Miller trading words on the floor... trading-

BW: GORDO! GORDO, LOOK!

[The Canadian crowd is buzzing horribly loud now...

....and just as our camera shot shifts, we see Shadoe Rage throwing himself sloppily off the top rope, crashing down with a Death From Above on Joe Flint, knocking him flat as Rage's injured knee slams down on the barely-padded football field, sending moans of pain up from the former TV Champion!]

GM: RAGE OFF THE TOP! SHADOE RAGE TAKES OUT JOE FLINT AND HE MAY HAVE TAKEN HIMSELF OUT OF THIS MATCH IN THE PROCESS!

[The referee is still out on the floor, avoiding the flying bodies when Derek Rage pulls Charlie Stephens off the mat...]

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

GM: STEPHENS GOES LOW AGAIN! THIS TIME ON DEREK RAGE!

BW: That'll even hurt a giant, daddy!

GM: It certainly will!

[Derek Rage stumbles backwards, clutching his groin as Stephens wobbles to the corner, hopping up on the middle rope...

...and HURLS HIMSELF off the ropes, taking the giant off his feet with a flying clothesline!]

GM: CLOTHESLINE! HE GOT HIM!

[Stephens dives across Derek Rage's massive torso as the referee slides back in, looking to count...]

GM: ONNNNNNNNNNNNNNE! TWOOOOOOOOOOOOO! TH-

[Derek Rage powers out, shoving Charlie Stephens off him, into the air, and down to the canvas to big Canadian cheers...]

...and to a concerned Javier Castillo ordering John Law down the ramp... quickly.]

GM: Uh oh. Derek Rage got out in time but apparently Javier Castillo has seen enough! These fans may be letting him have it for this decision but Castillo has put John Law onto the field of battle and who knows what happens now!

[Charlie Stephens pulls himself to his feet, holding up a disbelieving three fingers at the official who waves him off and holds up two.]

GM: Stephens thought he had him but the referee says otherwise...

[Stephens watches as Derek Rage starts to climb off the mat and then rushes towards him, smashing a forearm between the eyes. He grabs the seven footer's arm, whipping him into the corner of the Soldiers.]

GM: Derek Rage in the wrong part of town now...

[Stephens punches and kicks at Derek Rage in the corner, earning himself a four count before he backs off and slaps the hand of Joe Flint who has made his way back up onto the apron.]

GM: Another tag for the Soldiers... and Derek Rage REALLY needs out of that corner now!

[Stephens and Flint pour it on together, punching and kicking the giant as the referee shouts for one of them to get out of the ring...]

...and suddenly, Derek Rage starts fighting back, throwing fists of his own as the Canadian crowd cheers the comeback!]

GM: RAGE IS FIGHTING BACK!

[A haymaker to Stephens sends him stumbling away... one to Flint drops him back a pair of steps...]

GM: Rage is fighting out of the corner and-

[The Soldiers kick the seven footer in the gut in tandem, doubling him up as they each grab an arm, ignoring the protesting official...]

GM: Double whip by the Soldiers...

[Stephens and Flint join hands on the rebound, running towards the running Derek Rage...]

...who runs RIGHT THROUGH the clasped hands!]

GM: WHAT THE-?!

[The seven footer hits the far ropes, rebounding off again towards a shocked Soldiers of Fortune...]



...and LEAPS into the air, extending his arms out to show off his massive wingspan...]

GM: DOUBLE CLOTHESLINE! RAGE FLATTENS THEM BOTH!

[Rage hits the canvas hard as well... and as Stephens rolls out of the ring, the referee starts to count down both competitors.]

GM: Both Derek Rage and Joe Flint are down after that tremendous athletic move out of Derek Rage... and would you look at this?!

[The crowd ROARS as Shadoe Rage pulls himself back up on the apron, deliberately only standing on one leg as he insistently sticks his hand over the ropes.]

BW: Are you kidding me?!

GM: Not only is Shadoe Rage back up on the apron... but Shadoe Rage wants BACK IN THIS MATCH!

[We cut to ringside where John Law is standing, arms crossed, staring up into the ring as Shadoe Rage shouts "TAG ME!" to his little brother who is trying to push back to his feet off the mat.]

GM: I can't believe this! Love him or hate him - and outside of Canada, the majority hate him - you have to be impressed by Shadoe Rage's drive to win... his resiliency... his refusal to stay down...

BW: But that knee is a wreck, Gordo... even if he gets in there, can he actually compete? And if he somehow gets the Prophets to the Quarterfinals, can he walk well enough to fight?

GM: Those are all questions for later, Bucky. Right now, the Prophets need to win and Shadoe Rage thinks he can make that happen as his brother crawls towards him.

BW: And this might just be instinct on the part of Derek Rage - thinking back to their time in Portland or Los Angeles or so many other places. Because if Derek Rage was thinking clearly right now, I think there's NO WAY he tags in Shadoe with that knee this banged up, Gordo.

GM: We may be about to find out though as Derek gets closer to Shadoe's outstretched arm, looking to make that tag and... no! Joe Flint is up... and Joe Flint is dragging Derek Rage back now...

[But as Flint tries to lug the big man across the ring, Derek Rage flips over onto his back, drawing his legs in towards his chest...

...and SHOVES Flint off, sending him into the air, flying backwards and crashing into the Soldiers' corner with great impact!]

GM: Good grief! Some serious power in those legs and...

[Derek Rage crawls up off the mat, trying to shake his head clear as Charlie Stephens slaps his partner's shoulder...]

GM: Tag by Stephens! In he comes, coming on strong and-

[But the charging Stephens gets hoisted into the air, spun around, and DRIVEN down into the canvas with a thunderous powerslam!]

GM: POWERSLAM! POWERSLAM!

[Rage settles back into another cover, hooking the leg.]

GM: ONNNNNNNNNNNNNNE! TWOOOOOOOOOOOOOO! THREEEEEEEEEEEE-

“OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!”

GM: KICKOUT! KICKOUT! STEPHENS SLIPS THE SHOULDER CLEAR!

[Rage pushes up to his knees, angrily clapping his hands together in frustration.]

GM: A close call there for the Prophets - a half count away - maybe less - from moving on to the Quarterfinals!

[The seven footer gets to his feet, stumbling slightly as he does, falling back towards his corner..]

...where Shadoe Rage slaps him on the shoulder!]

GM: Was that a tag?!

BW: It certainly appears to be... and I'm not sure how Derek Rage feels about that, Gordo. He had Stephens down and... wait a second!

[The crowd starts buzzing as Shadoe Rage, bum knee and all, hobbles down the apron to the neutral corner and starts climbing... slowly... up the turnbuckles.]

GM: Rage is climbing! Stephens is down and Rage is climbing!

BW: That knee is a wreck, Gordo - I've NEVER seen Shadoe Rage climb this slowly up the ropes!

[Derek Rage is glaring at his brother as he steps up on the middle rope, focused on the task at hand as Charlie Stephens starts to get back up off the canvas...]

GM: Stephens is trying to get up before Rage does - we've got a footrace here and-

[Stephens, seeing he's about to lose the race, reaches out and SHOVES Pete Miller backwards into the ropes...]

GM: WHAT THE HELL?!

[...a move that causes Shadoe Rage to lose his awkward balance and...]

“OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!”

[...and fall crotchfirst on the top turnbuckle!]

GM: Down goes Rage with a hard fall... and look at Blue Shoes! Blue Shoes is all over Stephens, chasing him across the ring!

[Stephens backs off, pleading for mercy as Miller threatens him with a disqualification repeatedly...]

GM: Do it! Do it, Blue Shoes!

BW: Is that really how the Prophets want to advance?!

GM: I don't know but the officials can't allow the Soldiers of Fortune to get away with garbage like this!

[Stephens brushes past the fuming official, heading to the corner to where Rage is still crotched, pain evident on his face...]

"FIVE MINUTES REMAIN! FIVE MINUTES!"

GM: Five minutes is the call... and remember, a time limit draw eliminates BOTH teams from the tournament!

BW: Bad for them, good for either The Band or the Lights Out Express as they'd cruise straight through to the Semifinals of the Stampede Cup!

GM: Stephens with a right hand... and another right to the jaw!

[He steps up to the middle rope, pulling Shadoe Rage into a front facelock...]

GM: Stephens hooks him, draping that arm over his neck...

[And the former military man lifts Rage into the air, bringing him crashing down HARD on the canvas with a spine-rattling superplex!]

"THUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUD!"

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

GM: SUPERPLEX CONNECTS!

BW: They're both shaken up though, Gordo! Can Stephens take advantage of it?!

GM: I'm not sure, Bucky... and time is definitely ticking!

[A weary Stephens rolls over to all fours, crawling across the canvas...

...and throws an arm over Rage's chest in another pin attempt!]

GM: COVER!

[The referee dives down to count...]

GM: ONNNNNNNNNNNNE! TWOOOOOOOOOO! THREEEEEEEEEEE-

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

[The crowd reacts to two things in that split second.

First, Shadoe Rage's shoulder SQUEAKING up off the canvas JUST before the three count falls, breaking the pin and keeping the match going...

...and second, John Law pulling himself up on the apron, a foot through the ropes ready to interfere!]

GM: RAGE KICKS OUT! RAGE KICKS OUT AGAIN! And someone get John Law off the damn apron!

BW: You volunteering?!

GM: Absolutely not... but look at Blue Shoes! Blue Shows is up in John Law's face now, ordering him out of the ring and off the apron!

[Law slowly removes his leg from between the ropes, staring into the ring as Miller continues to berate him...]

GM: John Law was ready to break up that pin if Shadoe Rage couldn't do it, Bucky.

BW: It's a good thing he didn't because that would've been a disqualification and the Prophets would have been eliminated - exactly NOT what Javier Castillo wants to see happen here tonight at the Battle of Saskatchewan!

[Law's gaze drifts slightly as the referee continues to shout at him, bringing Derek Rage over the top rope to intervene...]

GM: Derek Rage is in... dragging Stephens to his feet again...

[The crowd ROARS as Derek Rage wraps his hand around the skull of Stephens...]

GM: He's gonna do it again! He's looking for the Hammer of God again and-

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

[The crowd ERUPTS in jeers at the sight of Joe Flint SMASHING a metal flagpole between the shoulderblades of Derek Rage, causing the giant to sink to the canvas. Flint ditches the pole in a hurry as the harsh and incredibly loud reaction of the crowd is sure to get the referee's attention...]

...but Law reaches out and grabs the referee, restraining him as Flint pulls Shadoe off the mat by the hair and HURLS him through the ropes to the outside!]

GM: OH! Hard fall to the floor for Shadoe Rage and... look at this now!

[The jeers somehow get louder as Flint covers Derek Rage, reaching back to snare a massive leg...]

...and the referee twists away from John Law, tearing his shirt in the process as he dives to the mat to count!]

GM: ONNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNE! TWOOOOOOOOOOOO! THR-

[But abruptly the referee stops counting...]

...and points to Joe Flint!]

GM: What's he...?!

BW: He's not the legal man! Pete Miller says he's not the legal man!

GM: He's right! Charlie Stephens is the legal man and-

[A frustrated Flint springs to his feet, grabbing Stephens and tossing him on top of Derek Rage and orders him to count...]

GM: Stephens with the cover now and-

[...but again Miller waves his arms, pointing at Derek Rage this time!]

GM: DEREK RAGE ISN'T LEGAL EITHER!

[Flint grabs his head in exasperation, shaking his head in disbelief...]

...and then jerks around, looking for Shadoe Rage on the outside.]

GM: Flint's going after Shadoe, stepping out on the apron...

"THREE MINUTES REMAIN! THREE MINUTES!"

GM: Three minutes to go! Can they get there? Can they get it done?!

[An angry Flint drops down to the floor, pulling Shadoe Rage to his feet...

...and gets DRILLED with an overhead elbow down between the eyes!]

GM: OHH! Rage caught him!

[Hopping on one foot, Rage snatches Flint by the back of the head...

...and SMASHES him down into the timekeeper's table, sending the timekeeper down to the floor!]

GM: OH! We've got bodies down on the floor! Rebecca Ortiz trying to stay away and...

BW: IN THE RING! IN THE RING!

[With the referee distracted by the ongoing drama on the floor, John Law comes sliding back in, quickly moving over to pull Charlie Stephens off the canvas...]

GM: WHAT?! NO!

[...and LIFTS HIM IN THE AIR BY THE THROAT!]

"THUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUD!"

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

GM: LAWBREAKER CHOKESLAM!

[Law bails out quickly, barely getting clear before the referee turns around and spots a motionless Stephens on the mat!]

GM: DAMN IT! DAMN IT, BUCKY! JOHN LAW INTERFERES AGAIN AND-

BW: The referee didn't see it though! Law hit the chokeslam and- the referee didn't see it... but Shadoe Rage did!

[Shadoe is pointing an accusing finger at John Law who is backpedaling up the ramp.]

GM: And he doesn't look the slightest bit happy about it, Bucky!

[Shadoe drags himself up on the apron, still pointing at Law as Castillo screams at him from the stage.]

GM: Javier Castillo telling him to finish him and...

[Derek Rage climbs back to his feet, shaking his head and grabbing at the back of his neck where Flint hit him with the flagpole...]

GM: Shadoe Rage and Charlie Stephens are legal and-

"TWO MINUTES REMAIN! TWO MINUTES!"

[Derek Rage looks at the downed Stephens... and then over to Shadoe Rage.]

"Finish him."

[Shadoe shakes his head back and forth, biting at his lower lip as he points at Law again. The former TV Champion comes through the ropes, throwing his arms apart, shouting at his brother...]

GM: We've got a disagreement between the Prophets and-

BW: They don't have time for this!

[Derek Rage seems to say the same, pointing at Stephens and then stepping back out on the apron.]

GM: Derek Rage imploring Shadoe to finish Charlie Stephens off and-

[But Shadoe isn't budging...

...until Derek Rage reaches over the ropes, slapping him HARD on the shoulder.]

GM: That's a tag!

BW: Derek Rage is gonna do it himself!

[The seven footer swings his leg over the top rope, climbing back into the ring quickly and with purpose as a surprised Shadoe slips back through the ropes to the apron...]

GM: Derek's the legal man now, dragging Stephens off the mat once again...

[Stephens is barely able to stand as Derek wraps his massive hand around the head again, holding him aloft...]

GM: HE LIFTS!

[...and DRIVES him down with the clawhold slam one more time!]

GM: HAMMER OF GOD ALMOST PUTS STEPHENS THROUGH THE DAMN RING!

[Rage nods his head confidently as he drops into a lateral press, the referee following him down to count...]

GM: ONNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNE!

BW: GORDO!

GM: TWOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOO!

BW: GORDO!

GM: THREEEEEEEEEEEE-

[And the Canadian crowd ERUPTS in a shocked response as Shadoe Rage hurls himself off the top rope once more...

...and DRIVES the point of his elbow down into the back of his brother's neck!]

GM: WHAT THE HELL?!

[The crowd goes near silent in shock as Shadoe Rage angrily kneels on the mat, shoving his brother over onto his back...

....and drags Charlie Stephens by the arm, throwing him on top of the seven footer. The referee looks up at Shadoe Rage in shock.]

“COUNT HIM!”

[The official slaps the mat once...]

GM: You’ve gotta be kidding me!

[Twice...]

GM: That's two and...

[...and one more time!]

GM: HE GOT HIM!

“DING! DING! DING!”

[The crowd reacts with a mix of emotions, mostly directed at a seething Shadoe Rage who stares down at his brother...

...and then shifts his gaze over towards the ramp where John Law is now standing beside an absolutely fuming Javier Castillo who directs a few well-aimed words down the aisle before turning in a huff and storming off.]

GM: The fans aren’t too happy about this... and neither is El Presidente, Bucky!

BW: Javier Castillo put the Prophets together with the intent to see them win the whole thing, Gordo. And Shadoe Rage just brought that plan to a crashing halt in the middle of Mosaic Stadium.

GM: Shadoe Rage made it clear before the match that he wasn’t part of this plan... he wanted no part of Castillo and Law interfering in their matches and... well, Castillo does whatever the hell he wants per usual... and this time, it cost him!

[There’s a bit of a mixed reaction from the crowd aimed down at Shadoe Rage who ignores it all, rolling under the ropes and hobbling up the aisle away from the ring where Rebecca Ortiz has made it official.]

GM: The Soldiers of Fortune with a hard-fought victory... a victory you have to wonder if they’d have gotten if it hadn’t been for Shadoe Rage right there.

BW: Well, like we said last night when the Prophets won, the record book doesn’t say anything about how you won... it just says that you won. And the Soldiers of Fortune have won and are moving on to the Quarterfinals where either the Lights Out Express or The Band will be waiting for them.

GM: Joe Flint and Charlie Stephens celebrating their win... and the fans are certainly letting them have it. Perhaps the most unpopular team here this weekend due to their patriotism... and fans, let’s go backstage where Sweet Lou Blackwell’s checking out the big board! Lou?

[We fade up on the backstage area where Sweet Lou Blackwell is standing in front of the Stampede Cup bracket which has been updated with the first result of the night.]

SLB: Alright, Gordon... perhaps an upset to a lot of people... and definitely UPSETTING to a lot of people here in Mosaic Stadium as the Soldiers Of Fortune knock off the Prophets of Rage to advance to the Quarterfinals. But who will they be facing? Will it be the former AWA World Tag Team Champions, the Lights Out Express, or will it be my guests at this time...

[Blackwell clears his throat with a grin.]

SLB: GET ON YOUR FEET, HANG ON TO THAT SHOOTING STAR YOU'RE RIDING, AND SHIELD YOUR EYES FROM THE SUN AS I INTRODUCE TO YOU THE GREATEST ROCK AND ROLL SUPERSTARS IN ALLLLLLLLLL THE UNIVERSE... THE BANNNNNNNNNNNND!

[Blackwell takes a deep breath as Laredo Morrison lopez slowly into view, wearing a double-strapped singlet with a long leather trenchcoat over it. Some airbrushing on the back is visible as Morrison approaches, coming to a halt and looking down at an eager Blackwell.]

LM: 'Sup?

[Blackwell sighs.]

SLB: Nothing, I... well, last night you requested quite the introduction from Mark Stegglet before so I-

[Morrison waves a dismissive hand.]

LM: Sorry, Lou, but I just ain't in the mood tonight. We got trouble, ya know?

SLB: Oh? Is that why your partner's nowhere to be seen?

[Blackwell looks around.]

LM: No, no... Jimi will be here. He had a complaint about the locker room that he's taking up with his agent.

SLB: A complaint?

LM: He wanted a golden toilet.

SLB: A golden...

LM: Lou, is this really why you wanted to talk to me because I've got a lot on my mind and-

[Blackwell raises a hand.]

SLB: No, no... not at all. Um... well, why don't you tell us what's on your mind? What's got you so down?

[Morrison nods.]

LM: It's just that... well, you know... we knocked off the Hall of Famers last night.

SLB: They weren't...

[Blackwell trails off with a shake of his head.]

SLB: Okay.



LM: But tonight... we've got a problem.

SLB: Sure. There's fifteen- now fourteen - other teams trying to win this thing so I'd say you've got FOURTEEN problems!

LM: No, just one. The Express.

SLB: The Lights Out Express, you mean.

LM: Sure. But does that part really matter?

[Blackwell looks puzzled.]

SLB: What do you mean?

LM: Well, look, Lou... you been 'round this business for a long time, right?

SLB: Sure.

LM: And you've seen a lot of great teams come and a lot of great teams go, yeah?

SLB: Of course.

LM: Well, then you know as well as I do that NO ONE... and I mean NO ONE... is better at tag team wrestling than a team that has "Express" in their name.

[Blackwell pauses, his jaw dropping slightly.]

SLB: I see.

LM: Do you?

SLB: I think so.

[Morrison nods, head down as he kicks at the ground. Blackwell looks thoughtful.]

SLB: But... uh... Laredo?

LM: Yeah, Lou?

SLB: I'm... uhh... not really sure that's true.

LM: What do you mean? Of course it is! Everyone says so.

[Blackwell looks thoughtful again, stroking his chin for a few moments before...]

SLB: I really don't think-

[Morrison interrupts angrily.]

LM: Of course it's true! I mean, you've got the...

[Morrison pauses, holding up a finger.]

LM: Well... okay, but then there's the...

[Morrison pauses again.]

SLB: Exactly.

LM: No, Lou... come on now... what about the...?

[Morrison trails off, looking thoughtful himself now.]

SLB: Mm hmm.

[Morrison taps his temple a few times.]

LM: Huh.

SLB: Right.

LM: I gotta say, Lou. I'm a little surprised.

SLB: I can tell.

[Morrison raises an eyebrow but Lou gestures for him to continue.]

LM: I just can't think of anyone... but... they say...

SLB: Yup.

[Morrison suddenly smiles.]

LM: I gotta go tell Jimi. Lou, see the guy at the door, he'll get you a CD, a t-shirt, and some drink tickets!

[Morrison quickly moves out of view, leaving an excited Blackwell behind.]

SLB: Hey! Thanks!

[Lou grins... and it slowly starts to fade.]

SLB: What guy at the door?

[And we fade to another part of the backstage area where Mark Stegglet stands on the left side of the screen and to his right is none other the returning former tag team champions The Lights Out Express. Lenny Strong's mullet game is on point for such a glorious event. His brown hair is shaven down either side and the party keeps going down the back of his neck. His partner, Aaron Anderson, is still fighting that receding hairline a bit with his hair trimmed down nice and short, mirroring the length of his facial hair groomed nicely around his jawline and mouth. Most importantly though...

...their track suit game is money.

Gold track suits with black and white racing stripes, Strong sporting a matching headband while Aaron can't be bothered to wear the matching pants and instead has on gold traditional wrestling trunk with matching knee pads and boots.]

MS: Ladies and gentlemen, joining me at this time is two men who are no strangers tag team action... no strangers to the Stampede Cup... and no strangers to an AWA ring. They are Lenny Strong and Aaron Anderson. Folks, the Lights Out Express.

LS: That's it?

MS: Were you expecting something... else?

LS: Oh, I dunno. We saw those goofs play you like a child's toy fiddle earlier and you rolled out the red carpet for them and did it over and over again for the worst duo since Tim McGraw and Nelly –

AA: That seems a bit generous. Did you ever hear the mash up with Ozzy Osbourne and Miss Piggy? That seems more up their lane.

LS: Wasn't it you who called them the greatest tag team on the planet?

AA: I'd just like to point out if they're standing in the room and it's them, Clooney and O'Donnell and you put a gun to my head I must insist nobody is Batman and you've got yourself four Robins and a straight to video release.

MS: So you want a grand introduction? Is that it?

LS: Mark, we just want you to do what feels right. What the moment is whispering to you in that thick skull of yours. You know, you could mention our World Tag Title reign.

AA: Lenny, did you have a specific one in mind?

LS: I kind of liked the one that had us holding four titles in our pictures. I always felt like that was a nice proper mantle piece shot.

AA: Cody Mertz feels the same way, I saw it in the background of his Christmas photo this year.

MS: Guys.

LS: He sent you a Christmas photo? That rascal. All I got was a warm wishes from Skywalker Jones with him standing next to a cardboard cutout of Hercules Hammonds.

MS: Guys.

AA: Poor guy has never been the same since ole Ham Bone left him.

LS: Not every group is meant to last forever, Aaron.

AA: Or Gang!

[The two of them share an over the top chuckle with one another.]

MS: GUYS!

LS: Don't GUYS us, Mark! You're standing next to tag team ICONS. Double Crown Champs, Steggy. Multiple time title holders. A group that once ran a tag team gauntlet just to get INTO the Stampede Cup and then made one heck of a run before getting wrongfully-

[Strong pauses, gripping at the collar of his track suit.]

AA: You'll have to excuse him, Mark. He still gets worked up over the incident in Japan.

LS: IT'S FINE! I'M FINE.

AA: You see since we left AWA we've been busy, Mark. We didn't leave because we felt threatened or saw an easier rode to the top somewhere else. We left because there was only so many times we could beat Air Strike and SkyHerc and the other second rate teams surrounding them. The one driving force that kept us here as long as it did was getting another crack at THE Cup in all of tag-team wrestling.

But when the Cup was shelved until further notice?

The Lights Out Express were wishing the AWA well with their future endeavors and not the other way around and--

LS: And we don't care what Brian Potter or Matt Seltzer or any other keyboard cowboys tell you! They can getty on up over to our faces if they disagree.

AA: Fact is, this Cup...it has eluded us like harmonies and talent elude our first opponents back in an AWA ring in who knows how long.

LS: Two years, six months, and twenty-six days.

MS: Seriously?

LS: Do you really think I know? We've been a bit busy collecting titles all over the globe, Steggy. We've got nerds like you to throw those obscure figures at us. I bet you know.

[Stegglet holds his hands out.]

LS: You do, don't you? Don't you?!

[Anderson gracefully brushes his partner back a step.]

AA: I'd ask you to excuse him but he's fired up and we all know this division needs just that. See, when they announced the Stampede Cup was returning we placed all plans on hold. We had appearances coming up in Tokyo, Shanghai, Istanbul, even Mumbai and we cleared out them all. We knew that for this weekend there was only one place we wanted to be.

LS: It definitely wasn't Regina.

AA: Well, no. But we knew if the Stampede Cup was here then THIS is where we needed to be. For The Lights Out Express it isn't proving that we are something outside of Terry Shane's shadow because last time I checked the sun don't shine in the graves you dig yourself and then go decide to sleep in.

MS: You do know he's the current World Television...you know, forget it.

AA: We're way past that. We've won tag team Gold all over the globe like Lenny here pointed out and now standing in our path are some washed out musicians parading around like wrestlers. We've got some Nashville Star meets American Idol rejects whose claim to fame is probably being on a goof reel for guys who couldn't cut it in show business little lone the wrestling business.

MS: Morrison and Jester are the Combat Corner Wrestling Tag Team Champions, fellas.

They're hardly –

AA: The Combat Corner? Did he just mention the Combat Corner?

[Strong slaps his hand into the chest of Anderson.]

LS: They invented the Combat Corner for this guy, jack!

MS: We're well aware of your history, Aaron. First graduating student. Trained under the watchful eye of Todd Michaelson.

AA: And you know what that meant, Stegglet?

LS: Nothing.

[Aaron holds up his hand.]

AA: I mean not nothing I got a plaque and an iPod...

[Aaron pauses.]

AA: Yeah, I guess it really did mean nothing. You see when you come up to the big time you gotta start over. You gotta prove yourself again and again. Nobody cares what school or corner you graduated from in the AWA, Mark. Every guy and girl on the roster was the best in his class. Every guy and girl on the roster is fighting for the same spot. You gotta come in and bring something special. You gotta bring some heat. You gotta step into the ring and bring the fire. Lenny, show them how to bring some fire.

[Lenny cracks his knuckles, locks his fingers, stretches his palms outwards and upwards and bends to each side. He does this several times.]

AA: Just tell them already!

LS: Morrison! Jungle Jim...Strawberry Jam... oh come on just feed me his name.

AA: Jimi Jam Jester.

LS: Jester! Aaron and I have traveled together, we've conquered together, and we sure as hell have partied together in every town we've touched down on. We don't care what hopes and dreams the Corner has filled your brains with but ya may need to yank those ear plugs out of your sockets and turn the amp down low to hear what I'm about to tell ya because it's the only life lesson you're going to get around here. Listen to me, fellas.

Be happy with what ya got. You got the call... you made it to the dance... you stepped into the greatest contest for tag teams across the seven continents and you got yourself a nice little win to show for yourselves against the Robocops or whatever mechanical error that abomination was. Be proud, Jack! Hold your heads up eye. Ya did it. Ya did more than anyone thought you were gonna do but don't quit your day jobs.

Go back to playin' standing room only at Starbucks, strummin' your guitars and doing Tom Petty covers. There's no shame in making an honest living doing what ya love. But you two...you don't belong here. You don't deserve to be here. This is the STAMPEDE CUP, brother.

This is where the REAL greatest tag teams on the planet test themselves against the best in the world and when ya look up and down the ranks it's pretty damn clear that the LIGHTS OUT EXPRESS are the MODERN DAY MEASURING STICKS of this tournament.

Years from now when you look back on your lives you and you've got your kids on visitation days you can tell them about how you shared the ring with Lenny Strong and Aaron Anderson.

The greatest tag team before your time.

The greatest tag team of your time.

And the greatest tag team long after you're gone.

AA: See, now that's an introduction, Mark.

[Stegglet nods mouthing, "not bad".]

LS: When you step into the ring with us tonight it's going to be real simple...

[Strong snaps his fingers.]

LS: LIGHTS OUT.

AA: Ain't no other way around it.

[The duo exits stage right leaving Mark Stegglet behind.]

MS: Well, it's obvious that we're seeing a little bit of disdain... disrespect... and maybe even a little disgust on the part of the former AWA World Tag Team Champions as they get set to do battle with the current CCW Tag Team Champions. They seem to be taking them quite lightly, fans... and I've gotta wonder if that's a mistake. Gordon, Bucky... back to you...

[We fade back to Gordon and Bucky down at ringside.]

GM: Thanks, Mark. The Lights Out Express are here in Regina and... well, they don't seem to have changed one bit, Bucky.

BW: That's good, Gordo, because that means they're still one of the best tag teams on the planet and as much as I'm the Band's biggest fan, I think they've got their work cut out for them here in just a few moments.

GM: I believe you're right... and speaking of having their work cut out for them... someone who has their work cut out for them here tonight is the current Head of Security for Javier Castillo, John Law. We saw Mr. Law out here moments ago causing some havoc but earlier tonight, we caught up with him here in the parking lot of Mosaic Stadium as he addressed the very important issue of venue security.

BW: Very important. There are a whole lot of people that Mr. Castillo doesn't want in the building.

GM: Indeed. Fans, let's take a look at that clip from earlier tonight.

[We fade from the live shot inside Mosaic Stadium to an aerial shot high above the parking lot DRONE STYLE with a graphic that reads "EARLIER TONIGHT."]

We cut again. In the parking lot outside Mosaic Stadium, Theresa Lynch is illuminated by the setting prairie sun.]

TL: It's a beautiful evening here in Saskatchewan as the sun is going down, and I'm joined right now by our Head of Security tonight John Law...

[Lynch turns sideways, looking up at John Law who is wearing a dark charcoal grey "security uniform" similar to what we saw earlier. His mirrored sunglasses are in place as is the wired earpiece running from his ear.]

TL: Mr. Law, you requested this time because there was something you wanted to "communicate" as you said.

[Law inclines his head slightly before speaking.]

JL: Miss Lynch, I know that some of the general public had concerns about security...

[Lynch looks over her shoulder as a very large, very dark blue Armored Personnel Carrier pulls up behind her.]

JL: ...and as I'm sure you know, Regina is the home to the Royal Canadian Mounted Police Training Academy, otherwise known as "Depot."

[From the APC, half-a-dozen riot-gear security staff emerge, each with truncheons and shields. They form a line behind Law.]

JL: So as part of our partnership with the Government of Saskatchewan, Depot has arranged for us to be joined by some of their instructors. In the event that we have another... incident like we did in South Philadelphia, these men and women are trained to...

[Lynch jumps as tonight's security bang their batons against their plexiglass shields.]

JL: ..."De-escalate" any possible threat to the enjoyment of our great fans tonight.

TL: Isn't this... a bit much?

"I think it's just fine."

[Miss Sandra Hayes slowly struts in front of the line of security, a sparkly pink baseball bat over her shoulder. Her floral romper billows in the evening wind. She twirls her tar black ponytail when she stops by one particular masked security member.]

JL: Everything to your liking, Miss Hayes?

[Hayes nods but eyeballs the one particular officer.]

MSH: Yes... yes, they'll do fine but John, isn't this one a little short to be a trooper?

[Hayes grins at her own joke as Law stays stoic, not seeing humor in anything.]

JL: I've vetted all of them myself. We shouldn't have any more troubles like you did in Philadelphia.

[Lynch shakes her head, turning to address Sandra Hayes.]

TL: Sandra Hayes, you and Kerry Kendrick aren't that threatened by Eri-- one woman, are you...?

[Hayes grimaces, glaring at Theresa.]

MSH: Theresa, this isn't about any one person... it's just to make sure that the World Title match isn't undermined by anyone with a grudge.

[She smirks at Theresa.]

MSH: It's also to extract your black sheep brother from the Mooselips Party Pit so he doesn't end up consuming the entire stock before it reaches the general public!

[Lynch's jaw clenches and her face begins turning red, while Sandra Hayes smugly twirls her baseball bat.]

MSH: Kidding, of course. I know going out of the country would violate his probation. But if your little friend decides to show up with more gas station chocolates, I'm sure she'll find Regina's jails a lot cushier than the ones she's used to in Rochester.

[Hayes smirks as Law turns to address the troopers.]

JL: Green team...

...MOVE OUT!

[Hayes offers Lynch one last smirk then follows John Law and the Green Team security into Mosaic Stadium.

Lynch furrows her brow as she sees one of the troopers is lingering behind.]

TL: What do YOU want?!

[The trooper turns their back to the camera and raises their visor. Lynch's jaw drops and she beams.]

TL: NO WAY! How did...?

[The feed abruptly cuts off...

...and we fade back up to the ring where Rebecca Ortiz is standing.]

RO: The following contest is set for one fall with a thirty minute time limit and is a second round match in the 2017 Stampede Cup tournament!

Introducing first...

[The arena goes black. A loud whistle screeeeeeeeeeeeeeeeches over the airwaves.]

V/O: This is the final boarding announcement for Amtrak train 73 on the Canadian Pacific Railway, the westbound Cardinal, departing on track 18 for Regina, Saskatchewan...

...ALLLLLLLLLLLLLLLLLL ABOOOOOOOOOOARRRRRDDDD!!!

[The slow clanking of train wheels churning quickly heightens into hard grinding noises just as the equally hard hitting lead guitar riff kicks in for the "Kundalini Express" by Love and Rockets. The rapid banging of drums and synthesizers fire up next before the methodical and monotone voice of Daniel Ash is cued.]

RO: Weighing in at a combined weight of 505 pounds they are former TJPW Tag Team Champions...

Former two time TPP Global Tag Team Champions...

Annnnd former two time AWA Tag Team Champions of the Woooooorld...

LENNY STRONG!

AARON ANDERSON!

THE LIGHTS! OUT! EXPREEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEESSSSS!!!



[Smoke spits out from the entrance portal and spills out across the walkway. The silhouettes of two individuals emerge and evoke an image of them floating on clouds as they step out and are only visible from the knees up.]

Out come Strong and Anderson... Strong's light brown mullet spills between his shoulder blades and over the top of his zipped up gold track suit with black and white racing stripes. He has matching tear away track pants on and his wrists are heavily taped up. Anderson matches him step for step. Head now shaved tight, facial stubble five to six days old. Unlike his counterpart he wears short ring tights that vanish into the smoke. His track jacket is unzipped and the duo make quick work down the ramp and to the ring.]

GM: And there they are, fans. One of the most successful tag teams on the planet, back in the AWA for this weekend only as they look to capture one of the only prizes in our great sport that has thusfar eluded them - the Stampede Cup trophy.

BW: They've got a heck of a road ahead of them to get to it too. Yeah, they got the bye to tonight so they're fresh but The Band is one thing... beating the likes of the Dogs of War... the Kabukichiro Assassination Maniac Squad... or Carver and Martinez is quite another.

[The tandem enter the ring as Anderson and Strong rip off the jackets, throwing them to the floor. Strong then steps through the ropes and rips off his track pants and slings them into the crowd. His tights are the polar opposite of Anderson as they are white with gold and black racing stripes down the thigh. On the back of their trunks are double black crowns interlinked with "Jesus hands" hands cupping them underneath with angles wings shooting outwards from them.]

Their music fades as Rebecca Ortiz steps up, mic in hand...]

RO: Annnnnnnnnnd their opponents...

[We cut to the top of the aisle as an unfamiliar long-haired guy in a black "Ramones" t-shirt walks into view. He's holding a guitar case in one hand and a mic stand in the other. He sets the mic stand down, leaning down to open the guitar case, pulling an acoustic guitar into view. He straightens up, leaning over the mic.]

"Gimme a check... check one... cheeeeeeck... green eggs and ham... Sam I am... check check. Good?"

[With a nod, he steps to the side, holding the guitar out...

...and the lights in Mosaic Stadium drop to black drawing an "oooooooooh" from the sold-out crowd followed by a very loud ovation... which is odd because no one is cheering at all. In fact, we can hear some pretty loud booing too which means that ovation must be pre-recorded. A booming pre-recorded voice rings out over the PA system.]

"REGINA, CANADA..."

[More fake cheers.]

"ARE YOU READY TO ROCK?!"

[Louder fake cheers.]

"I SAID... ARE YOU READY TO ROCK?!"

[Even louder fake cheers.]

"WELL, ALRIGHT... from the Sunset Strip... the Rock and Roll Sensation that's rocking' the nation... the Kings of the Power Chord... the masters of the Whammy Bar...

First... he is THE TALENT... LAAAAAAREEEEEEDOOOOOOOOOOO MORRRISONNNNN!

AND... HIS! TAG! TEAM! PARRRRRRRTNERRRRRRRR!

He is THE JESTER of ROCK AND ROLL!

JIMMMMMMMMMIIIIIII

JAAAAAAAAMMMMM

JESSSSSSSTERRRRRRRRRR!

Together they are... THE BANNNNNNNNNNNND!

[A single spotlight lances through the stadium, splashing down on the entryway to the louder fake roar of them all. After a moment, the so-called Jester of Rock And Roll comes walking through the curtain, Laredo Morrison walking right behind him, a big grin on his face. Both men are dressed as we saw them earlier but Jimi Jam has added a multi-color feather boa, a pair of pitch black sunglasses, and a few gold chains hanging around his neck. A huge grin on his face, he ignores the jeering fans, walking straight up to the mic.]

JJJ: Alright, Canada! Who's ready to feel the rock from head to TOOOOOOOE?!

[Another fake cheer. He nods.]

JJJ: WELL, ALRIGHT!

[He reaches out a hand to the side... which lands an electric guitar in his hand. The Jester hits a few strings on the guitar...

...and then starts blasting through a series of power chords with no real structure. He just keeps strumming... and strumming... and strumming as he starts walking down the aisle towards the ring. Laredo Morrison bobs his head, eyes closed as he "rocks out" behind his front man.]

GM: Whew. This might be worse than last night.

BW: Oh, come on. It's not that Engelberk Humppahdink guy you like but-

GM: I think you should never try to say his name again.

[As he reaches the ring, Jester climbs up on the apron, turning towards the fans where he goes into a bunch of full sweeping arm power chords... and then swings the guitar up behind his head, strumming like a madman. The guitar work is getting a whole lot worse by this point and the boos are blasting him from all sides of the building...

...and then flips a switch on the guitar, sparks suddenly shooting from the end as he continues to play on...]

GM: Well, I thought maybe we could chalk up last night's entrance to being over the top because it was their AWA debut but obviously that's not the case.

BW: Hold on, hold on... I love this solo coming up...

GM: This whole thing has been a solo!

[The lights kick back on as Jimi Jam Jester hands his sparkling guitar over to Laredo who deposits it at ringside with a firm warning to the ringside attendant. Jester gives a "YEAH, ALRIGHT!" before ducking through the ropes into the ring. He grabs the top rope, banging his head back and forth a few times, sending his long blonde hair flying like crazy...

...and then does this nutty backbend, dropping almost down to the mat as Laredo strikes a pose behind him, raising a clenched fist as he looks over his own pair of sunglasses at the jeering crowd.]

GM: Finally, it looks like we can get down to action between two teams that... well, couldn't be further apart if you ask me.

BW: How so?

GM: Look, I'm no fan of the Lights Out Express personally but you cannot deny their success... nor can you deny their skill level inside that ring. Like they said, Aaron Anderson was the very first graduate of the AWA Combat Corner. They've held titles in the AWA... in Tiger Paw Pro... they are as accomplished of a team as you will find in this tournament.

BW: And?

GM: The Band is... not. Yes, they're the current CCW Champions and that's a great accomplishment but... Jimi Jam Jester is a former rock star and Laredo Morrison is delusional enough to think he worked Ring Wars 3 in Toronto back in '97!

BW: Who are you to doubt Laredo Morrison?!

[Gordon sighs as the two teams huddle up, quickly establishing who will start the match in the ring and who will exit to the apron.]

GM: Anyways... it looks like it's going to be Aaron Anderson starting things off against Laredo Morrison in this one.

[Jimi Jam claps his hands together with a "YEAAAAAH, ALRIGHT!" before stepping out to the apron, shimmying and shaking as he does. Lenny Strong exits on the other side, glowering across the ring.]

"DING! DING! DING!"

[The bell sounds as Morrison gives a double high five to his partner before spinning out of the corner, fists balled up with a suspicious gaze aimed at Aaron Anderson who is approaching in a low amateur style stance.]

GM: Aaron Anderson coming out of the corner perhaps looking for a double leg takedown or the like but Laredo Morrison was waiting for him... watching him back off now...

[The two circle for a bit before coming together.]

GM: Into the tieup... and Morrison goes downstairs with a knee...

[Clasping his hands together, Morrison lays in a double axehandle across the back... and another... and a third, hammering Anderson down into the canvas.]

GM: The 312 pound Morrison doing some damage with those heavy blows early... the man from Kickapoo, Kansas showing off his power.

[Morrison strikes a double bicep pose for no apparent reason before dropping an elbow down into the lower back of Anderson.]

GM: Quick cover here for Morrison... he gets one...

[Anderson kicks out with ease, causing Morrison to kneel on the canvas with a loud, "COME ON! THAT'S ONETWOTHREE, REF!"]

GM: Nothing close to a three count there. Not even close to a two count really.

BW: Not according to Laredo.

[Morrison hauls Anderson up to his feet, walking him over to the neutral corner where he smashes his head into the top turnbuckle. He turns him back to the corner, reaching up to strike a single bicep flex with his right arm...]

BW: He calls this the Gun Show, Gordo.

GM: Of course he does.

[A grinning Morrison throws a big clothesline, shouting "BAM!" as it connects. He winds up for a second and...]

GM: Ohhh! Anderson brings up the arms!

[Morrison, having smashed his arm into Anderson's raised arms, stumbles away clutching his bicep in pain...]

GM: And now it's Anderson on the move, swinging Morrison around... wham! Big European uppercut up under the chin!

[Morrison stumbles back towards the Lights Out Express corner as Anderson pursues, grabbing the back of the head...]

GM: A second uppercut and... and now Morrison's in the wrong part of town, fans!

[Anderson pins him back, allowing Lenny Strong to slap his shoulder to tag himself in.]

GM: Quick tag by the L-O-E...

[Strong and Anderson twist around, each dropping to a knee...]

GM: Ohh! Double back elbow to the gut...

[...and then straighten up, snapping them back again...]

GM: And a double back elbow upstairs as well!

[The blows leave Morrison leaning against the buckles as Strong runs across the ring, feigning a blow on Jimi Jam Jester that sees Jester dive off the apron with a yelp...]

...but Strong slams on the brakes with a smirk, whipping around, charging across the ring, leaping into the air...]

GM: OHHH! Leaping elbow to the jaw by Strong!

[Strong backs off, beckoning Morrison towards him. He grabs him by the back of the head...]

GM: Elbow! ELBOW! ELBOOOOOOOOW!

[The trio of elbowstrikes has Morrison reeling as Strong backs up, raising his arm...]

GM: ROLLING ELBO-

[But Morrison lunges forward, throwing a straight right hand...]

“WHAAAAAAAAAAAAACK!”

“OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!”

GM: RIGHT HAND! STRAIGHT RIGHT TO THE JAW!

[Morrison throws his 300 plus pound frame into the ropes, bouncing off...]

GM: FIERRO PRESS!

[Staying in the mount, Morrison rifles in right hands to the jaw of the downed and trapped Strong...]

GM: FISTS OF FIRE! FISTS OF FIRE!

[Morrison climbs off Strong, giving a shout and cupping his hand to his ear to hear the reaction of the crowd... which is decidedly mix as they're not fond of either team. An annoyed Morrison throws a dismissive gesture at the fans with a loud “WHO NEEDS YA?!” before he dashes to the ropes and...]

GM: TAG!

[Morrison looks puzzled at his partner who slapped his shoulder, tagging himself in.]

GM: Jimi Jam Jester with the blind tag there... and Laredo Morrison doesn't seem to know why.

[Morrison shrugs, stepping out as Jester assures him that he's got this handled.]

GM: Jester's in now... Strong up to his feet...

[The 5'10", 172 pound Jester throws a weird-looking kick to the left leg... then one to the right...]

GM: Leg kicks of sort by Jester.

BW: Of sort?! You know Jimi Jam is a six-time Karate Black Belt Hall of Famer, right?

GM: A... huh?

[Jester uncorks a bizarre-looking Mongolia chop that causes Strong to flinch... and then a spinning back chop that looks somewhat effective.]

BW: The educated feet and hands of Jimi Jam Jester here...

GM: Educated where? Clown college?

BW: The world needs good clowns too, Gordo.

[With Strong somewhat dazed, Jester drops back in an elaborate makeshift kata, swinging his arms too and fro, from side to side, closing his eyes and twisting around, spinning back towards Strong who is in mid-spin himself...]

“WHAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAACK!”

“OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!”

GM: ROLLING ELBOW! ROLLING ELBOW!

[Strong dives on top of a motionless Jester as Aaron Anderson sprints across, tackling the legs of the incoming Morrison.]

GM: HE GOT HIM!

“DING! DING! DING!”

[The crowd reacts - mostly with laughter towards the downed Jimi Jam Jester.]

BW: Well, that hardly seems fair.

[Gordon chuckles as Laredo Morrison crawls over to his still-motionless partner.]

GM: Jimi Jam Jester was... I have no idea what really.

BW: He was channeling his inner chi for maximum karate power.

GM: I... well, alright... but the fact of the matter is, he took his eye off the ball and he paid for it. Lenny Strong hit that Rolling Elbow and Jester is out like a damn light.

BW: Laredo Morrison is shocked... and can you blame him?

GM: Kind of. He knew what he was getting into when he teamed up with this goof. Last night, they looked pretty good as a team... tonight, Jester's antics got the better of him and Morrison is the one that pays the price for it. The Lights Out Express are moving on!

[Strong and Anderson celebrate their win to jeers from the crowd as we fade back to the locker room area where we find Sweet Lou standing in front of the bracket.]

SLB: The Lights Out Express are heading on to the Quarterfinals where the Soldiers of Fortune await them in what should be a very interesting clash. But speaking of interesting clashes, we have a number of anticipated matches this evening at the Battle of Saskatchewan. The Stampede Cup is answering a great many “what if?” questions in the world of professional wrestling. And my guests at this time have been at the center of many of them...

[From off-camera, MISTER and Daniel Ross enter: MISTER in his great coat and Ross in his black warm-up jacket.]

SLB: ...MISTER, Ringkrieger is a team that a lot of fans are watching, but you gentlemen seem to have drawn a pretty tough bracket. Last night, you and Daniel Ross overcame tough opponents in the War Pigs. Now you have to defeat former two-time AWA World Champion Ryan Martinez and one of the baddest men walking the face of the earth today, Hannibal Carver. I wouldn't blame either of you for having stage fright; looking at you now, I see that's not the case.

[A smirk crosses MISTER's cro-magnon-esque face.]

M: Wrestling is wrestling, Mister Blackwell. Whether it's in front of forty people or 40,000, whether it is in Berlin or Regina, a football stadium or a gymnasium: the canvas always remains the same. Do not mislabel our confidence. Mister Ross and myself know exactly who we are up against.

These men headlined SuperClash VII two years ago. This is exactly where they should be. Everyone remembers SuperClash VII, when Ryan Martinez successfully defended the AWA World Championship and sent Hannibal Carver into exile until a few weeks ago. Do you know what else happened that weekend, Mister Blackwell?

Mister Ross and myself competed against each other for the first and only time on the evening before SuperClash in a gymnasium in Houston. That was the night I decided to start Ringkrieger. Ringkrieger produces the best wrestlers in the world, and I will wager that on that weekend in 2015, Daniel Ross and myself wrestled better than the Main Event of SuperClash.

The Stampede Cup is the great equalizer. Now we have our opportunity to prove it.

[Blackwell steers the mic towards Ross.]

DR: There's a Leonard Cohen lyric that's stuck by me for many years: "I'm guided by the beauty of our weapons." My weapon is submission wrestling, and I let my opponents pain guide me.

[MISTER nods confidently.]

M: First we take European wrestling, then we take the AWA. Because we Respect the Canvas.

[MISTER pats Ross on the shoulder and they head off screen.]

SLB: Alright, there you have it, fans... Ringkrieger looking to take the AWA by storm here tonight in Mosaic Stadium. Now, let's go out to the introductions...

[We fade from backstage to the ring where Rebecca Ortiz awaits.]

RO: The following contest set for one fall with a thirty minute time limit is a Round Two match in the 2017 Stampede Cup tournament!

[She lowers the mic, waiting for a few moments before...

A dramatic orchestral string, accompanied by the scoreboard turning into a flat white rectangle...

...and a second sting, which turns the scoreboard a solid black, except for a single word in art deco font: 'RINGKRIEGER'.]

"DON GIOVANNI, A CENAR TECO. M'INVITASTI, E SON VENUTO."

[Ross and MISTER both stand upright on the entrance stage in the early evening sun, hands clasped behind their back. The massive MISTER nods to his teammate, and they both make their way down the aisle to the climatic scene of Mozart's "Don Giovanni."

Cut from Ringkrieger's entrance to a shot of a pair of fans in black "RINGKRIEGER" t-shirts. One holds up a white scarf with the phrase "RESPEKTIERE DIE LEINWAND" screened onto it.]

GM: And fans, this is a match-up that has been on many wrestling journalists "dream match" lists for months now. How do the famous knife-edge chops of Ryan

Martinez match up to those of the mighty Austrian MISTER? You have to think that this could provide the answer to that question.

[MISTER and Ross both round the ring and step onto the apron. They both wipe their feet on the edge of the canvas before they step through the ropes in military-like unison.]

RO: Introducing first, weighing in at a combined weight of 525 pounds... Daniel Ross... MISTER... they are RINGKRIEGER!

[Ross and MISTER both clasp their hands behind the back, and stand in the middle of the ring, chests out.]

GM: Daniel Ross, fighting out of Hesperia, California... MISTER out of Innsbruck, Austria, both 24 hours removed from a slugfest with the War Pigs. Most teams would be limping into the next round, but not Ringkrieger!

BW: If Carver and Martinez think they had a couple of soup cans lined up for them, they're in for a shock, daddy.

GM: Ringkrieger are renowned for a vigorous training schedule, treating every match like a major one. And likewise if they think that Ryan Martinez and Hannibal Carver are pushovers, they'll be surprised too... and right now, let's go back to Sweet Lou who is with the team affectionately known online as RyCarver!

[We cut back to backstage, where "Sweet" Lou Blackwell is standing between two AWA Superstars. On Blackwell's right is two time AWA World Heavyweight Champion, Ryan Martinez, and on his left is the Boston Brawler himself, Hannibal Carver.]

SLB: You can call them the Odd Couple, you can call them the Dream Team, but these two men are some of the most decorated, popular and accomplished wrestlers in the AWA's history. But tonight, gentlemen, I dare say you've got your work cut out for you. Because on your plate is the very accomplished team of MISTER and Daniel Ross. I'm talking about the team of Ringkrieger.

Mr. Martinez, I've got to imagine that weighing heavily on you is that while Ringkrieger have spent the past several months honing themselves into a well-oiled machine, you and your partner are famous for... well, let's just say not seeing eye to eye.

[Carver smirks as Martinez nods his head.]

RM: You're right about a lot of things, Lou. You're right that MISTER and Ross have proven how well they work together. While Carver and I...

[The Californian and the Bostonian exchange glances.]

RM: Aren't always on the same page.

But there's two things to say to that Lou. First, no one has ever considered that Ringkrieger has spent their time learning how to be a tag team fighting other tag teams. How often have they had to adapt to two different people wrestling two different styles? Ringkrieger is going to be used to a tag team that wrestles in a certain way, that does things at a particular time, in a predictable style.

And you can always rely on Hannibal Carver to be unpredictable.

[Carver leans in, interrupting.]



HC: That's one way of saying it. "Crazier than an outhouse rat" is another way I've heard.

[Blackwell chuckles.]

SLB: So you're saying that combustible element between you and your partner might give you a wild card's advantage?

RM: That's exactly what I'm saying.

And I want to make something very clear as well. I've had my differences with Hannibal Carver. But I also know, from experience, that he's a good man to have at your back. I know who Hannibal Carver is, and I know that our differences aren't as important as the things we have in common.

And I promise you, there's no one, no one at all, that you'd rather have backing you when you're in a fight.

I've got all the confidence in the world in Hannibal Carver. I know what he brings to the ring, and I know that we're going all the way.

SLB: Mr. Carver, you have anything equally complimentary to say to your partner?

HC: Is this guy standing next to me my best friend in the world? Do I have a ton of stories ready in my back pocket of the great times we've had riding up and down the roads tossing them back and throwing empties at cop cars?

[Martinez shakes his head incredulously.]

HC: Hell no I can't! He and I have had plenty of problems with each other, usually ending up in me bashing his head in with forearms and him dropping my on my damn head.

[Carver nods at Blackwell.]

HC: But that's the thing, Lou. Once the dust settles... the more beatings you deal out to each other, the more you get to respect each other for what they can do in that ring. And I know one thing for a fact.

[Carver nods at Martinez.]

HC: When his back is against the wall, he can get the job done against damn near anyone in the world.

SLB: Well, let's look at who you're facing. On the hand, you've got Der Ogor as Innsbruck, the beast of a man known as MISTER. You're talking about a big, tough, scary individual. What goes through your mind, knowing you have to face a man like that, Mr. Carver?

HC: Well, do yeh think I might know something about that? Being tough? Looking at the person across the ring and seeing the fear in their eyes?

[Carver fixes Blackwell with a stare. A tense moment passes as Blackwell gulps audibly.]

HC: Because yeh bet yer ass I do. I didn't have it too easy when I got into this sport. Yeh couldn't toss a brick and hit five wrestling schools like yeh can now. I had no only one choice. Only one chance.

I had to make every man, woman and child fear me. Make them know that if they saw my name on the dotted line opposite of theirs, it was bad news. Maybe they'd get get beating of their lives.

[Carver nods, a twinkle in his eye.]

HC: Maybe they wouldn't be walking out of the arena on their own two feet. So I've seen what this big lug can do. And he looks impressive as hell. I'm sure they've talked with each other and planned for us.

[Carver nods.]

HC: Everyone's got a plan. Then they get punched in the mouth.

SLB: And on the other hand, you've got Daniel Ross. A man who love nothing more than to hear tendons pop and ligaments tear. At some point, Daniel Ross is going to get his hands on you, and what are you going to do, Mr. Martinez?

RM: Well, let me ask you this Lou.

Is Daniel Ross more dangerous on the mat than Supreme Wright? Does Daniel Ross know more ways to torture a human body than Supreme Wright?

I doubt it.

What am I going to do? Well, I know I can't out wrestle Daniel Ross. I'm not going to try. I'm going to do what I always do.

Fight to my last breath and beyond.

It's scary, thinking about what Daniel Ross could do to me. But he won't be the first or the last sadistic man I have to contend with in the ring.

I heard what was said earlier. That Ringkrieger wants to bring honor back to wrestling. But I know what counts for honor among those two men. They think honor is crippling and maiming an opponent. They think honor is ending careers.

It'll be my honor to show them what happens when they're in with men like me and men like Hannibal Carver.

SLB: Both of you definitely sound ready.

Looking ahead just slightly... if you two defeat Ringkrieger, and if the Kabuchiko Assassination Maniac Squad is able to defeat the Dogs of War, then the next round will see you, Mr. Martinez, facing off against your younger brother. Any thoughts?

RM: Well Lou, I don't want to get ahead of myself. Ringkrieger isn't an easy challenge. And the Dogs of War aren't either. But if it happens, well... I heard something said awhile back by Brian James.

Sometimes, brothers fight.

SLB: One more speculative question. Mr. Carver, have you considered what you'll do with your share of the million dollars, should you win?

HC: Well, damn, Lou. That's a lot of money. I guess I could close out every bar in the Great White North. I made my bones in this sport up here, so I know all the bars to hit... plenty of the ones that don't show up on yer damn computer phone.

[Martinez sighs.]

HC: Hell, I could even afford all those places that Williams goes to. Where they put fruit in the beers like we lost the war with England.

[Carver shakes his head.]

HC: Yeh, I could buy myself one hell of a time. But instead of making sure I have a good time?

I think we could pool that money together to make sure Korugun... and especially that little weasel sitting in his office have a real BAD time.

[Carver nods at Martinez, who grins from ear to ear at this idea.]

SLB: Well, that is certainly a frightening prospect if you're Javier Castillo and Company. I'll wish you good luck, gentlemen.

RM: I appreciate that Lou, but we don't need luck. We've got talent, and we've got purpose, and we've got a mission. And when you give those things to Hannibal Carver and I... well, there's only victory ahead.

Count on it!

[We fade from backstage back out to the ring where Rebecca Ortiz was waiting for the promo to finish on the video wall.]

RO: Annnnnnnnnnd their opponents...

[The large video wall explodes in a splash of color, the kaleidoscope of hues slowly fading into a red, white and blue AWA logo. The logo begins to wave, the way a flag would in the air. A moment later, sinister sounding string music plays, the sound conjuring thoughts of gunfire. The colors of the now besieged AWA logo begin the run down, bleeding towards the bottom of the screen, slowly replaced by the Korugun logo.

The AWA's running colors slowly coalesce at the bottom of the screen, turning into the form of two kneeling figures, each figure with his head bent down, one knee touching the ground.

As the heavy guitar riff of Gojira's "Silvera" kicks in, the video wall is obscured by an eruption of fireworks at the entranceway.]

# Quit moaning about fate and change  
Stand up on your feet and rise  
With every fall you get the pain, you learn the lesson  
Start now, open your eyes#

[As the smoke clears, the two kneeling figures on the video screen rise, and as they stand tall, their figures crashing through the Korugun logo, shattering it to pieces.]

# Time to open your eyes  
When you clear your mind you see it all  
You're receiving the gold of a better life  
When you change yourself, you change the world#

[The Korugun logo is replaced by two icons – the first consists of two concentric circles, the first gold, the inner circle black. There are eight spokes inside the circle, like a wheel, also black outlined in gold. In the center of the circle, with the same black outlined in gold color scheme are the letters "HC".

Next to this is the logo of a golden shield, with a pair of swords crossed over the shield, the letters "RM" done in stylized red colored gothic lettering beneath.]

RO: Introducing first.. from South Boston, Mass... weighing in at 260 pounds...

[A spotlight shines down over the entranceway, and from behind the curtain, a man steps forward into the light. Six foot three and wild eyed, the fans rise to their feet to greet the Boston Brawler]

RO: HAAAAAAAAANNNNNNNNNIBAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAL  
AAAAAAAAAAAAARRRRRRRRRRRRRRRVERRRRRRRRRRRRRRRRRR!

[Over his face, Carver wears a goalie's mask, with an unnerving red smile, in the style of the Joker, painted over the mouth. Carver wears a black hooded zip-up sweatshirt and black tights with a barbed wire design design around the waist. His black boots read "CARVER"... and are emblazoned with brass knuckles.]

RO: And his partner.... from Los Angeles, California... weighing in tonight at 255 pounds...

[Another spotlight shines to the right of Carver, and the two time former AWA world Heavyweight Champion steps forward.]

RO: RYYYYYYYYYYYYYYYYYYYYYAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAN  
MAAAAAAAAAARRRRRRRRRRRTIIIIIIIIIIINEEEEEZZZZZZZZZZZZZ!

[As the spotlight shines on Martinez, we see him in familiar gear. Martinez wears a long, white and red, sleeveless ring jacket, one that extends all the way to his ankles. The midsection of the ring jacket is cut out, though there is no longer a title belt around his waist. Martinez is clean shaven, his dark hair cut short and slicked back. White gloves that extend from wrist to fingertips cover his hands, and Martinez raises his hands in the air, fingers splayed open, and hands locked together, to show the sword and shield logo on the inside of his gloves.

Both men look to each other and nod, and as they march to the ring, a familiar chant breaks out. With one side of the Mosiac Stadium breaking into half the chant, and the other side providing the accompaniment.

And for the first time, the dueling chant is meant to show unity, not division.]

"LET'S GO RYAN!"

"HAN-NI-BAL!"

"LET'S GO RYAN!"

"HAN-NI-BAL!"

"LET'S GO RYAN!"

"HAN-NI-BAL!"

[Over and over, until both men enter the ring and wait for the war to begin.]

GM: The electricity in the air is so thick for this one, you could cut it with a knife, Bucky.

BW: That sounds both physically impossible and destroying the laws of science but okay, Gordo.

GM: The unlikely duo of Hannibal Carver and Ryan Martinez are looking to make an impact this weekend in this tournament... looking to perhaps spoil Javier Castillo's weekend.

BW: With the Prophets dropping their first match here tonight, I'd say Castillo's weekend is well on its way to being spoiled... but yeah, seeing these two walk out of Canada with a million dollars would definitely set him off.

GM: We're about ready to get started in this one. It appears as though it'll be Ryan Martinez starting things off for his team and Daniel Ross taking first crack at him for Ringkrieger.

[MISTER's hulking form steps out to the apron, standing tall as he watches his partner interlock his fingers, twisting his wrists around to loosen up.]

GM: Daniel Ross just staring across at Martinez who is looking around, soaking up the reaction of this 40,000 strong crowd.

[The former World Champion is doing exactly that, looking out at the large crowd still trading chants...]

"LET'S GO RYAN!"

"HAN-NI-BAL!"

"LET'S GO RYAN!"

"HAN-NI-BAL!"

"LET'S GO RYAN!"

"HAN-NI-BAL!"

[Martinez shakes his head at the reaction as the bell sounds.]

GM: There's the bell and we're underway here in yet another second round match in the 2017 Stampede Cup tournament. The Soldiers of Fortune and the Lights Out Express have advanced to the Quarterfinals and now we've got this showdown to see who will join them.

[The White Knight turns back to Daniel Ross, still smiling at the reaction...

...when Ross LUNGES forward, smashing his skull into Martinez' mouth, knocking him down to the mat to a shocked reaction from the sold out stadium crowd!]

GM: OHH! HEADBUTT!

[Ross drops to his knees, wrapping up Martinez' leg as the referee dives to count.]

GM: Quick cover gets one! Gets two! Gets thre- WHOOOOA!

[The crowd again reacts, this time to the incredibly close near fall that Daniel Ross picked up within seconds of the opening bell...

...and as Ross straightens up, kneeling on the canvas, Ryan Martinez promptly rolls under the ropes to the floor, burying his face down on the apron as he reaches up to his mouth.]

GM: Ryan Martinez got caught offguard by that headbutt and he almost took the fall right then and there, Bucky.

BW: That's right. For all of Martinez' talk backstage about understanding their opponents here tonight, the White Knight was messing around and he almost got caught.

[Martinez plants his hands on the apron, extending his arms to reveal a nasty amount of blood leaking from his mouth which causes a ripple of concern to wash over the sold out crowd. Daniel Ross smiles at the scene as Martinez wipes at his mouth before spitting a wad of blood on the ringside mats.]

GM: Ugh. Martinez got busted open - his mouth busted open by that headbutt...

[Martinez reaches up to his mouth again, seemingly checking his teeth.]

GM: And it looks like the former World Champion is checking to make sure he didn't lose any teeth there...

BW: If he did, they'd better check Ross' head.

[The White Knight works his jaw around a few times, glowering up at Daniel Ross who sits on the middle rope, inviting the former World Champion back inside the ring. With a shake of his head, Martinez waves Ross back who obliges as the White Knight pulls himself up on the apron.]

GM: Martinez back up on the apron, climbing back inside the ring now and you'd have to imagine he'll be a little better prepared for what Daniel Ross is capable of at this point.

BW: You know, MISTER gets a lot of the hype surrounding Ringkrieger and rightfully so... but I think Daniel Ross is every bit as dangerous as MISTER is... and maybe even moreso. So, hopefully that wakes some people up to just how good Ross is.

[Martinez angrily strides across the ring, bumping up against Ross who is more than willing to go at any time. The crowd cheers this showdown as Martinez and Ross can be seen barking angry words at one another.]

GM: We've got ourselves a face-off now... in true Canadian fashion.

[A few more moments of jawing at one another follow before Martinez breaks it off, stepping back and...]

"SLAAAAAAAAAAAAAP!"

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

GM: Hard open-handed shot right across the face!

"SLAAAAAAAAAAAAAP!"

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

GM: And one from the left hand as well!

[Ross falls back from the blows, grabbing at his cheek...

...and then straightens up, a grin on his face.]

GM: What the...?

[Martinez snatches him by the back of the head, throwing a big forearm shot to the jaw...

...and gets another smile... this time joined with a nod.]

GM: This guy is twisted!

[The White Knight winds up, throwing two more forearm shots...

...and this time, gets the smile along with a beckon for more!]

BW: I think he likes it, Gordo!

[Grabbing the back of the head again, Martinez rocks and fires...]

"WHAAAAAAAAAAAAAACK!"

"OHAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAA!"

"WHAAAAAAAAAAAAAACK!"

"OHAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAA!"

"WHAAAAAAAAAAAAAACK!"

"OHAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAA!"

"WHAAAAAAAAAAAAAACK!"

"OHAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAA!"

"WHAAAAAAAAAAAAAACK!"

"OHAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAA!"

"WHAAAAAAAAAAAAAACK!"

"OHAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAA!"

[Martinez steps back again as Ross stumbles backwards, bumping up against the ropes...

...and then glares across at Martinez.]

"THAT ALL YOU GOT?!"

[The crowd ROARS as Martinez rushes Ross again, snatching another half clinch...]

"WHAAAAAAAAAAAAAACK!"

"OHAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAA!"

"WHAAAAAAAAAAAAAACK!"

"OHAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAA!"

"WHAAAAAAAAAAAAAACK!"

"OHAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAA!"

[The three solid forearm shots land before Martinez breaks it off, shifting his feet...]

GM: CHOP!

[But as Martinez throws his signature strike, he finds himself in the unusual position of Daniel Ross reaching out with both arms and CATCHING the thrown blow. Ross' iron grip is wrapped around the wrist and the forearm as a shocked Martinez struggles, trying to rip his arm free...]

GM: He caught the chop?!

BW: I don't know if I've ever seen that before and-

GM: FUJIWARA!

[The crowd ERUPTS as Ross deftly turns his grip on the arm into the Fujiwara Armbar, dragging Martinez down to the canvas!]

GM: He's got him down! Martinez is fighting it!

BW: We've seen this out of Ross before, Gordo. If he gets it fully locked in, it's over!

[Martinez continues to struggle against it as Ross plants his feet on the mat, arching back...]

GM: He's got it! He's got it on!

[The former World Champion cries out, quickly raising his hand for a tapout...]

BW: He's got him! He's gonna quit!

[But Martinez hangs on, keeping his hand aloft as Ross wrenches back on the limb...

...and an incoming Hannibal Carver STOMPS down between the eyes to break the hold...]

GM: Carver in and-

BW: Ross won't let go!

[Carver stomps again... and again... and again...]

GM: Carver can't get him to break the hold and-

[Shaking his head, the Boston Brawler reaches down and digs his fingers into the eyes, raking hard... which finally forces Daniel Ross to break the hold as Carver turns and exits, leaving the scene.]

GM: Well, that's one way to break a hold.

BW: It might've been the only way, Gordo. Ross was getting stomped into the mat and he didn't give a damn as long as he had that arm in his hands.

[And again, Martinez rolls out to the floor, shaking out his arm as he wipes blood from his mouth again.]

GM: We're just barely getting started in this thing and Ryan Martinez is in shock by my estimation, Bucky.

BW: Everyone was talking about the showdown between Martinez and MISTER and when that happens, the White Knight is gonna be a one-armed man spitting blood! How about that?

[Martinez winces as he grabs at his arm, looking up at Daniel Ross who again beckons him back inside the ring. Hannibal Carver walks down the apron, throwing a glance down at his partner. They trade a few words as Martinez reaches up to grab the ropes with his left arm, pulling himself back up on the apron. He and Carver huddle up briefly before the White Knight climbs back into the ring.]

GM: Martinez back in and... look at this now, Hannibal Carver wants a tag.



[Martinez glares at Ross... and then with a nod, he slaps the offered hand.]

GM: And there it is.

BW: You get the feeling that Martinez wanted to go a few more rounds with Daniel Ross there, Gordo, but in the interest of teamwork, he's going to tag out to Carver.

GM: And now we'll see what the Boston Brawler can do against the High Desert Destroyer.

[Ross nods his head approvingly as Carver steps in. Carver spits on both hands, rubbing them together and then clenching his fists, striking a makeshift boxing pose.]

GM: Well, it looks like - to the surprise of no one - Hannibal Carver has come to Regina to fight.

BW: This savage hasn't boxed in his life, Gordo.

GM: Perhaps not but we know that Carver can brawl with the best of them and that label certainly seems to apply to Daniel Ross here tonight.

[Carver is circling Ross, bobbing and weaving, snapping the jab out as he taunts the Ringkrieger member...

...who suddenly lowers his head, charging towards Carver with a roar.]

GM: Ross shooting in, no- quick go-behind and-

"WHAAAAAAP!"

"WHAAAAAAP!"

"WHAAAAAAP!"

[Three quick and heavy forearms to the back of the head and neck land just before Ross reaches out to hook a rear waistlock...]

GM: Waistlock!

[...only to have Carver snap his elbow back, landing flush on the temple with a blow that breaks the hold, sending Ross falling back into the neutral corner.]

GM: Back into the corner goes Ross... Carver on the move...

[With Ross in the corner, Carver winds up...]

"WHAAAAAAP!"

"WHAAAAAAP!"

"WHAAAAAAP!"

[Three hard knife edge chops find the mark, causing Ross to lean over a bit, clutching his chest...

...which is when Carver switches to clubbing forearms to the head and neck...]

"WHAAAAAAP!"

"WHAAAAAAP!"

"WHAAAAAAP!"

"WHAAAAAAP!"

"WHAAAAAAP!"

"WHAAAAAAP!"

GM: We've got a Boston Beatdown, driving Ross down to the mat...

[Grabbing the top rope, Carver stomps down on Ross over and over, forcing him all the way flat on the canvas...

...and then spins away with a shout, pounding his chest in a wild rage!]

GM: Oh yeah! And these fans are just as fired up as Hannibal Carver is!

[Carver spins back towards a rising Ross, smashing a heavy forearm into the jaw, knocking him back into the neutral corner...]

GM: Carver with the whip, sends Ross crashing into the buckles!

[The Boston Brawler lowers his head, charging across the ring, and pops up with a lunging clothesline that takes Ross right off his feet and down to the canvas.]

GM: Hard clothesline by Carver!

[Leaning down, he slaps his hands on the canvas, giving a shout as he smashes his right elbow into his left palm...]

GM: Carver's calling for the rolling elbow - perhaps that Mind Eraser!

[Carver crouches low, nodding his head as he waits for Daniel Ross to get back to this feet...

...but Ross simply rolls under the ropes to the outside, rubbing at his collarbone as the Canadian crowd jeers the exit.]

GM: And this time, it's Daniel Ross looking for a chance to regroup. Both of these teams seem to have had their gameplans disrupted by the other squad so far as they look to advance in this prestigious tournament with either the Dogs of War or the Kabukicho Assassination Maniac Squad waiting in the Quarterfinals.

[Ross grimaces, still working on his collarbone when Hannibal Carver has seen enough, stepping through the ropes and then hopping down to the floor several feet away from Ross. The crowd surges to their feet as Carver approaches Ross, spinning him by the shoulder...]

GM: OH! Forearm shot by Ross! I think he was waiting for him and-

[The crowd roars as Carver throws one of his own.]

GM: And the Boston Brawler fighting back on the outside.

[Ross throws another forearm... and Carver answers in kind.]

GM: These two are trading brutal forearm shots out on the floor and-

[Carver snatches Ross by the back of the head, unleashing a trio of quick forearms to the jaw...

...but Ross slaps the hand away, grabbing the back of Carver's head...]

GM: European uppercut! OH! OHHHH!

[Three hard uppercuts leave Carver reeling a few feet away from Ross.]

GM: Ross has got Carver rocked with that-

[Ross suddenly grabs Carver by the shoulder and arm...]

“OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!”

[...and FLINGS him backwards so that the small of his back slams into the edge of the ring apron!]

GM: Good grief! Spinefirst to the hardest part of the ring... and Carver didn't see that one coming.

BW: I don't think anyone did. Daniel Ross showing that you're never safe in there with him. He's always thinking on his feet, coming up with new and innovative ways to hurt you.

GM: Speaking of innovative... what in the world is this now?

[With Carver's back shooting pain up his spine, Ross spins him around, sliding Carver's upper body under the bottom rope, his feet still on the floor.]

GM: He's got Carver half in and half out now and...

[Ross leans through the ropes, grabbing Carver by the arms...]

GM: Wrist control by Ross here... OH MY!

[The crowd echoes that sentiment as Ross pulls back on both arms, using the ropes as a fulcrum in a modified surfboard.]

GM: Look at that!

BW: Totally illegal but completely effective!

[Carver's face is etched in pain as Ross ignores the referee's escalating count.]

GM: He's got a five count to break this as he... that's four now!

[And JUST before the five count, Ross lets go, causing Carver to flop facefirst down onto the canvas, still hanging half out of the ring. Nodding at the official who orders Ross back into the ring, the High Desert Destroyer climbs up on the apron, looking down on Carver...]

GM: Ross back on the apron, heading back inside now...

BW: Not yet!

[Ross suddenly leaps slightly off the mat, dropping all of his 223 pounds down in a kneedrop on the small of the back!]

“OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!”

GM: RIGHT DOWN ON THE SPINE OF HANNIBAL CARVER!

[Ross sneers at the official before shoving Carver under the ropes where the Boston Brawler immediately rolls to a hip, cradling his lower back.]

GM: And it looks like Hannibal Carver is in a tremendous amount of pain at this relatively early stage of the matchup.

BW: It sure does... and if I know Daniel Ross, he's going to be looking to capitalize that.

GM: Ross has been in the ring for the entirety of this match so far... not exactly what we've come to expect from Ringkrieger who've really established themselves as a top flight tag team here - and internationally - in a pretty short time period.

[Ross stalks Carver as the Boston Brawler tries to crawl away from him...]

GM: Carver up on his hands and knees, trying to get away from- ohh! Clubbing double axehandle down across the spine...

[Ross, having fallen to his knees to deliver it, stays there to land a second blow... and a third...]

GM: Just pounding away on Carver now, trying to take his core away from him.

[Climbing to his feet, Ross looks down on Carver again...]

...and drops another knee down into the small of the back, this time staying kneeling on it.]

GM: A second kneedrop, leaving all his weight down on the back at this point and- oh, come on!

[The crowd jeers as Ross sadistically grinds his kneecap back and forth on the spine of Carver for a few moments, sending pain-wrecked shouts into the air from the former SuperClash Main Eventer.]

GM: Pain shooting up and down the spine of Hannibal Carver here and... and finally, Ross breaks it up.

[Grabbing the wrist, Ross hauls Carver off the mat to his feet, keeping the grip and whipping Carver the few feet into the Ringkrieger corner.]

GM: Carver's in the wrong part of town now as Ross makes the tag, bringing Der Oger aus Innsbruck into the ring for the first time at almost the ten minute mark of this tag team battle.

[The six foot five, 305 pound MISTER comes through the ropes swiftly, pushing Carver's face back with the palm of his hand, stretching his neck back and exposing his chest...]

"WHAAAAAAAAAAAAAP!"

"WHAAAAAAAAAAAAAP!"

"WHAAAAAAAAAAAAAP!"

"WHAAAAAAAAAAAAAP!"

[Four heavy forearm blows to the chest leaves Carver hanging onto the ropes but MISTER rips him away from them, spinning him around to face the corner...]

"WHAAAAAAAAAAAAAP!"

"WHAAAAAAAAAAAAAP!"

"WHAAAAAAAAAAAAAP!"

"WHAAAAAAAAAAAAAP!"

GM: Goodness! Forearm shanks, right into the kidneys of Carver...

[But MISTER isn't done, hoisting Carver into the air, taking two big steps back out of the corner...]

...and DUMPS him with the back suplex!]

GM: Ohhh! Carver SLAMS down hard... and MISTER with the lateral press. He gets one... he gets two... but that's all! Out at two!

[Martinez claps his hands together in the corner, shouting "COME ON, CARVER!" to his partner as MISTER slowly climbs to his feet, throwing a disparaging glance at the White Knight.]

GM: Martinez trying to cheer his partner on as MISTER leans down, pulling Carver off the mat...

[He gives a signal to Ross who nods, slipping his leg between the ropes and raising his knee...

...and MISTER hurls Carver backwards into the knee before slapping Ross' hand.]

GM: Quick tag there by Ringkrieger... and I'm not sure I agree with that strategy, Bucky.

BW: You're right, Gordo. Ross started off the match and was in there for nearly ten minutes before he got out... it seems way too early to tag him back in already.

[Ross steps in as MISTER steps out, grabbing Carver by the shoulders, holding him in front of the High Desert Destroyer...]

GM: OHH! Knee to the lower back... and another... repeated kneestrikes to the back and-

[The barrage of blows sends Carver down to his knees, breaking him down onto the canvas where Ross grabs the arms again, pulling them back as he plants his foot between the shoulderblades...]

GM: Standing surfboard applied by Daniel Ross, cranking on those arms while really pressing down with his foot.

BW: And a move like this - a hold like this really targets the arms, the shoulders, and of course, the back.

[The referee checks to see if Carver wants to submit but the Boston Brawler refuses, shaking his head.]

GM: Carver says no, he wants to keep going...

BW: Any man or woman can submit at any time, Gordo, but I gotta think it'll take a lot to get a submission out of Hannibal Carver.

GM: Absolutely. One of the toughest men walking on the planet for sure.

[Ross cranks the arms again, causing Carver to cry out in pain as Ross barks "ASK HIM AGAIN!" to the official who obliges.]

GM: Carver again refusing to quit as Daniel Ross tries to find new ways to torture him with this submission hold...

[Ross is hanging onto the wrists as Carver defiantly shakes his head... and then somehow manages to get one foot underneath him.]

GM: And look at this now... look at Carver! Refusing to stay down! Refusing to give in!

[Ross shakes his head, trying to crank the arms again as Carver slides the other foot down onto the mat as well...]

GM: Carver's fighting it!

BW: Yeah, but can he get out of it?!

[With a roar of effort, Carver pushes up to his feet to a big reaction from the Canadian crowd!]

GM: He made it! He's on his feet and-

[Carver spins to the side, twisting around...

...and ends up holding onto a standing surfboard of his own to a huge cheer!]

GM: And Carver reverses it! He's got his own submission hold on now!

BW: That's the closest that Carver's come to scientific wrestling since he hit a guy with a test tube in a match once.

[Carver looks impressed with himself as he grinds his boot back and forth on Ross' back, cranking on the arms as he drives Ross down to his knees, a grimace on the face of the Ringkrieger member as he shouts "NO! NO, NO, NO!" to being asked if he submits.]

GM: And now it's Ross trying to hang on against this surfboard attempt and-

[Ross leans forward, screaming as he bends against his own torqued arms...

...and sinks his teeth into the middle rope! The referee calls out, "that's a break! Break it!" to Carver who reluctantly lets go...]

GM: Carver releases the hold and-

"OHHHHHHHH!"

[The crowd reacts as Carver BOOTS Ross in the back of the head, smashing his mouth into the rope he was biting!]

GM: Good grief!

[Ross immediately grabs his mouth, rolling out of the ring to the floor as the referee warns Carver for the attack. Carver smirks at the referee.]

"That one was for him!"

[He points to Martinez who shakes his head, raising his arms to cover a hidden smile.]

GM: Aww.

BW: Oh, it's so sweet, I could puke.

[Carver steps through the ropes to the apron, standing over Daniel Ross...]

GM: Carver following out after him and-

[...and Ross suddenly lunges forward, grabbing the ankle of Carver, yanking hard!]

"THUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUD!"

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

[The pull of the leg causes Carver to upend and SLAM down on his back on the ring apron!]

GM: Carver goes down HARD off that trip up... and right down on the back that Ringkrieger was attacking a little earlier!

[Ross promptly rolls back in, sneering at Carver who is writhing in pain on the apron. The High Desert Destroyer drags Carver under the ropes back inside the ring before pulling him up to his feet...]

GM: Snapmares him over and...

"WHAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAACK!"

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

GM: SOCCER KICK TO THE SPINE! OH MY!

[Carver winces in pain as Ross walks around him, flexing his fingers as he looks to inflict more punishment. A shout from the corner draws his attention and Ross gives a nod, pulling Carver back off the mat and tossing him bodily back into the buckles.]

GM: Hannibal Carver back into the Ringkrieger corner... and there's another tag, bringing MISTER back in...

[MISTER takes a little walk around the ring, letting Carver lean against the buckles for a few moments as Daniel Ross steps out, giving his partner room to maneuver as he strides back in, rearing back...]

"WHAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAACK!"

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

GM: OVERHEAD CHOP, MY GOD!

[The heavy-handed blow causes Carver to melt down to his knees, a huge red welt on his chest as the crowd buzzes over the hard hitting assault.]

BW: That one caved MY chest in, Gordo!

GM: You could literally feel the shockwaves from that one, fans!

[MISTER steps aside, watching as Carver slumps to all fours, crawling across the ring towards his corner where Ryan Martinez is waiting, arm outstretched towards his partner...]

GM: And Hannibal Carver's got a long way to go to get that tag, Bucky.

BW: He does. Look, Gordo... take a paintbrush... draw a diagonal line down the center of the ring. If you're an elite level tag team, you spend more time on your side of that line than your opponent's... and Ringkrieger is an elite level tag team.

[And just as Carver draws near that imaginary diagonal line, MISTER steps forward, leaps into the air...]

“OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!”

[...and lands buttfirst on the spine of Carver, flattening him out as the crowd groans.]

GM: Another attack to the back - 305 pounds of hulking Austrian goes down on the back right there and Ryan Martinez could feel that one for his partner, shaking his head as he shouts encouragement to him.

[MISTER stands over the downed Carver, staring across at the AWA's White Knight who again stretches his arm out helplessly to his partner who is halfway across the ring...]

GM: Carver's gotta be feeling the effects of that drop down on the back... and now MISTER sits down on him and- camel clutch! Camel clutch locked in on the part of MISTER!

[MISTER cranks back, his hands clasped under the chin as Carver cries out in pain.]

GM: Another submission hold locked in by Ringkrieger, focusing on the neck and back of Hannibal Carver here... trying to wrench a submission out of the Boston Brawler.

[MISTER gives a yank, glaring at the official who returns with the news that Carver doesn't plan on quitting just yet.]

GM: Carver trying to hang on... Carver trying to fight it!

[Carver claws at the canvas, planting his palms under him...]

GM: Look at this now... Carver trying to push up, trying to get that 305 pound monkey off his back!

[Carver clenches his jaw, trying to fight through the pain as MISTER cranks back again...]

GM: Carver trying to get out and MISTER trying to get it locked in deeper..

[The Boston Brawler slips a knee underneath himself, trying to remove some of the pressure on his back...]

GM: Carver fighting this hold... up on both knees now... on all fours and-

[With the crowd cheering, MISTER lets go of the hold, leaps up, and drops all his weight down on the back again!]

“OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!”

[MISTER sneers at the jeering crowd, standing at attention with his arms behind his back.]

“FIFTEEN MINUTES! FIFTEEN MINUTES! FIFTEEN MINUTES GONE BY!”

[MISTER steps over the downed Carver..

...and throws a kick at Ryan Martinez' offered hand. The crowd jeers as Martinez yanks his hand back...]

GM: MISTER trying to-



[The crowd ROARS as Martinez comes through the ropes, looking to attack...

...but the official cuts him off, forcing him back through the ropes to the apron.]

GM: Ryan Martinez, showing off that hot temper we see from time to time...

[A smirking MISTER pulls Carver off the mat by the arm, lifting him up under his arm...]

GM: Look at the power of MISTER here... just carrying Carver under his arm across the ring...

BW: There's a tag to Ross.

[MISTER steps from the corner, turning to face it as he DRIVES Carver down across a bent knee!]

GM: Backbreaker... and where is Ross going?

[Ross hops to the midbuckle, taking aim...

...and leaps off, bringing a knee down across the collarbone, spinning Carver off MISTER's knee and down to the canvas!]

GM: Ohhh! He tried to take his head off... and that's a cover, fans!

[The referee dives down to count.]

GM: ONNNNNNNNNNE! TWOOOOOOOOOOOO! THR-

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

GM: AND CARVER GETS THE SHOULDER UP AT TWO! VERY CLOSE NEAR FALL THERE!

[The crowd is still buzzing as Daniel Ross climbs to his feet, throwing a quick glance at the official but says nothing as MISTER barks something in his direction.]

GM: MISTER directing traffic from the outside it appears...

[Ross pulls Carver off the canvas, shoving him back into the neutral corner.]

GM: Ross puts Carver in the corner again... looking to do some damage perhaps...

[Grabbing the back of Carver's head, Ross lowers his shoulder, and swings his arm up...]

GM: UPPERCUT!

[Ross hangs on, throwing European uppercut after uppercut...]

"WHAAAAAAAAAAAAACK!"

"WHAAAAAAAAAAAAACK!"

"WHAAAAAAAAAAAAACK!"

"WHAAAAAAAAAAAAACK!"

"WHAAAAAAAAAAAAACK!"

"WHAAAAAAAAAAAAACK!"

[The blows keep snapping Carver's head back, his arms draped over the top rope in an attempt to stay on his feet as Ross straightens up, switching to open-handed slaps across the face...]

"WHAAAAAAAAAAAAACK!"

"WHAAAAAAAAAAAAACK!"

"WHAAAAAAAAAAAAACK!"

"WHAAAAAAAAAAAAACK!"

"WHAAAAAAAAAAAAACK!"

[Ross gets ordered back by the official, creating some space as we see Carver's eyes go wide with rage. Ross doesn't see it though as he steps back in...]

GM: Ross is beating the tar out of Carver in the corner and...

[Carver winds and throws...]

"WHAAAAAAAAAAAAACK!"

[...and lands with a brutal elbow strike to the jaw!]

"WHAAAAAAAAAAAAACK!"

"WHAAAAAAAAAAAAACK!"

"WHAAAAAAAAAAAAACK!"

[Three more send Ross staggering away, Carver pumping his arm in excitement.]

"WHAAAAAAAAAAAAACK!"

"WHAAAAAAAAAAAAACK!"

[With Ross staggered, Carver drops back to the ropes, bouncing back to attack...]

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

[...and Ross THROWS HIMSELF into a devastating lariat that flattens Carver!]

GM: LARIAT! LARIAT! ROSS DROPS HIM FLAT!

[Ross leans across in another lateral press, reaching back to hook a leg.]

GM: ONNNNNNNNNNNNE! TWOOOOOOOOOOOO! THREEEEEEEEE-

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

GM: KICKOUT! JUST IN TIME!

[Ross gets up, anger on his face as he grabs Carver by the ears, pulling him right up to his feet, holding him aloft with his left hand...]

GM: Ross pulls him up, steadying him and-

[Ross drops back, throwing a standing lariat!]

GM: ANOTHER LARI- DUCKED!

[Carver manages to narrowly avoid the swung arm that sends Ross sailing past. The Boston Brawler quickly hooks a full nelson on him, lifting him skyward...]

...and sitting out, jolting the spine of Ross!]

GM: DORECESTER DROP! ROSS GETS STUNG FROM TAILBONE TO THE TOP OF HIS HEAD!

[But the drop down on the tailbone shakes Carver as well. The Boston Brawler flops over onto his hip, both men down on the canvas as the crowd starts to roar, clapping loudly in rhythm, cheering on their favorite...]

GM: Carver's on his stomach, dragging himself across the ring! Dragging himself towards his partner...

[Martinez insistently sticks out his hand, waving Carver closer.. and closer.. and closer. The crowd is at a fever pitch as Martinez stretches out as far as his arm will allow annnnnnnnd...]

GM: TAG!

[The crowd ERUPTS in cheers as the former World Champion comes through the ropes, rushing across towards a rising Daniel Ross...]

"WHAAAAAAAAAAAAACK!"

GM: BIG CHOP BY MARTINEZ!

"WHAAAAAAAAAAAAACK!"

"WHAAAAAAAAAAAAACK!"

[The third blow stuns Ross who backpedals a step...]

"WHAAAAAAAAAAAAACK!"

GM: OHHH! SPINNING BACK CHOP!

[Martinez whips back around the other way...]

"WHAAAAAAAAAAAAACK!"

GM: AND UPSIDE THE HEAD WITH A SLAP!

[Ross goes to sink to his knees but Martinez catches him, whipping him across into the neutral corner...]

GM: Ross hits the corner hard and...

[Martinez ducks low, hoisting Ross up and over...]

GM: BIIIIIIIIIG BACK BODY DROP!

[Ross slams down on the canvas hard, arching his back in pain after hitting the canvas. Martinez gives a big shout, looking out with a nod at the roaring crowd as he circles towards the rising High Desert Destroyer...]

GM: Boot downstairs and...

[Martinez slaps on a front facelock, slinging Ross' arm over his neck as the crowd EXPLODES!]

GM: HE'S CALLING FOR THE BRAINBUSTER!

[But before he can get Ross up into the air, the Ringkrieger member breaks free of the grasp, lowering his shoulder and DRIVES Martinez back into the Ringkrieger corner where...]

GM: TAG!

[The crowd ERUPTS as MISTER steps through the ropes, turning to face the cornered Martinez for the long-awaited showdown...]

GM: AND HERE! WE! GO!

[MISTER nods to the crowd...

...and then points to a waiting Martinez who waves him forward as Ross exits.]

GM: Martinez wants this showdown! MISTER wants this showdown! The whole world wants this showdown!

[MISTER steps forward, twisting around to throw his signature blow...

...but Martinez reaches out, swinging MISTER back into the corner...]

GM: Wait a second!

[The crowd EXPLODES as Martinez launches into his first blow...]

"MAR [CHOP!] – TI [CHOP!] – NEZ [CHOP!]"

"MAR [CHOP!] – TI [CHOP!] – NEZ [CHOP!]"

"MAR [CHOP!] – TI [CHOP!] – NEZ [CHOP!]"

"MAR [CHOP!] – TI [CHOP!] – NEZ [CHOP!]"

"MAR [CHOP!] – TI [CHOP!] – NEZ [CHOP!]"

GM: MACHINE GUN CHOPS!

[Martinez pauses, taking a breath, as the fans chant for more. Ever a man of the people, young Ryan obliges. This time, the barrage of chops is slower, as is the fans' chant.]

"MAR [CHOP!] – TI [CHOP!] – NEZ [CHOP!]"

"MAR [CHOP!] – TI [CHOP!] – NEZ [CHOP!]"

"MAR [CHOP!] – TI [CHOP!] – NEZ [CHOP!]"

"MAR [CHOP!] – TI [CHOP!] – NEZ [CHOP!]"

"MAR [CHOP!] – TI [CHOP!] – NEZ [CHOP!]"

[A winded Martinez steps back, a grin on his face as MISTER reels in the corner, red welts littering his chest...]

GM: Those knife edge chops have got MISTER reeling and-

[...and then steps out, swinging Martinez back into the corner!]

BW: Maybe not!

[MISTER winds up...]

"WHAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAACK!"

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

[...and lands a knife edge chop with enough impact to lift the former World Champion off the mat before dumping him down on the canvas!]

GM: OH MY GOD! WHAT A SHOT!

[MISTER doesn't hesitate... not taking a moment to bask in the glory of the showdown... before he yanks Martinez to his feet, pulling him towards the middle of the ropes, whipping him across...]

GM: Big whip shoots him in...

[MISTER sets his feet, winding up for another big chop...]

GM: CHOP! DUCKED BY MARTINEZ!

[The former World Champion hits the far ropes, rebounding back...

...and leaps into the air, taking MISTER down with a flying clothesline, dragging the 305 pounder down to the canvas!]

BW: Where the heck did THAT come from?!

GM: Ryan Martinez digging down deep, looking for a way to send he and Carver to the second round!

[And now it's Martinez moving quickly, not giving MISTER time to recover as he pulls him up by the arm, whipping him to the neutral corner...]

GM: MISTER to the buckles...

[Martinez quickly backs to his own, pointing across with both hands as the crowd ROARS in anticipation...]

GM: In comes the White Knight... YAAAAAAKUUUUUUZAAAAAA!

[The running big boot SNAPS MISTER's head back, sending him stumbling out towards Martinez who kicks him in the gut, snatching a front facelock...]

"TEN MINUTES TO GO! TEN MINUTES REMAIN!"

GM: The ten minute call... and now Martinez is looking for the Brainbuster again!

BW: Can he get him up?!

[The crowd is buzzing, waiting to see it happen as Martinez steadies himself...

...but just before the lift, MISTER spins out...]

GM: Reve- OHHHH!

[The crowd groans as MISTER SLAMS his skull into Martinez']

GM: HEADBUTT!

[Martinez stumbles back as MISTER winds up...]

"SLAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAP!"

GM: BIG SLAP!

[Martinez gets spun around into a boot to the gut before he gets yanked into a standing headscissors...]

GM: MISTER'S GOT HIM HOOKED! LOOKING FOR THAT POWERBOMB!

[But as MISTER lifts him up, Martinez flips over the top, looking for a sunset flip...]

GM: SUNSET FLIP! CAN HE GET HIM DOWN?!

[...but MISTER holds his ground, defiantly crossing his arms before leaping up...]

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

GM: SITTING SPLASH! HE CRUSHES MARTINEZ UNDERNEATH!

[MISTER stays seated on the chest, arms folded...]

GM: ONNNNNNNNE! TWOOOOOOOOOO! TH- KICKOUT! KICKOUT BY THE FORMER WORLD CHAMPION!

[MISTER gets back to his feet, leaning down to pull the dazed White Knight up...]

GM: MISTER yanks him in...

[The crowd buzzes as MISTER leans down, wrapping his arms around Martinez' torso again...]

GM: He's going for the powerbomb again!

BW: If he hits it, it's over, daddy!

GM: MISTER LIFTS!

[The 305 pound Austrian flips Martinez over...]

"THUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUD!"

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

GM: POWERBOMB! POWERBOMB!

[MISTER folds Martinez' legs over, stacking him up for a pin.]

GM: ONNNNNNNNNNNNE! TWOOOOOOOOOOOO! THREEEEEEEE-

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

GM: A DIVING SAVE! CARVER OUT OF NOWHERE JUST SAVED THIS MATCH FOR HIS TEAM!

BW: Where the heck did he come from?!

[The crowd is roaring as MISTER gets to his feet, grabbing Carver before he can escape, tossing him back into the closest set of turnbuckles...]

GM: MISTER's going after Carver!

BW: But Carver's not the legal man!

GM: MISTER doesn't care! He wants payback for Carver breaking up the pin!

[MISTER stomps towards the corner, winding up...]

"WHAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAACK!"

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

GM: HUUUUUUUGE CHOP ON CARVER!

[The referee shouts at MISTER, trying to get him to put Carver out of the ring as he grabs the Boston Brawler by the wrist...]

GM: Irish whip to the Ringkrieger corner..

[MISTER lowers his shoulder, charging in hard towards Carver..

...who pulls himself clear in time!]

GM: OHHH! MISTER HITS THE OPEN BUCKLES!

[Carver backs off, leaning down to slap the canvas as MISTER stumbles backwards...

...and Carver goes into a spin, throwing a rolling elbow to the back of MISTER's head!]

GM: MIND ERASER!

[The blow sends MISTER flying forwards, flopping through the ropes and out onto the floor...]

GM: MISTER GOES OUT TO THE FLOOR AND-

BW: BUT ROSS TAGGED IN!

[Daniel Ross comes quickly through the ropes, grabbing a surprised Carver from behind and HURLS him through the ropes to the outside!]

GM: Ross clears out Carver now as well!

[Ross shouts over the ropes at Carver, twisting around to grab the rising Martinez off the mat...]

"WHAAAAAAAAACK!"

GM: UPPERCUT!

"WHAAAAAAAAACK!"

"WHAAAAAAAAACK!"

"WHAAAAAAAAACK!"

"WHAAAAAAAAACK!"

"WHAAAAAAAAACK!"

"WHAAAAAAAAACK!"

[The blows snap Martinez' head back repeatedly before Ross grabs the arm...]

GM: Irish whi- no, reversed!

[The reversal sends Ross across the ring, crashing into the buckles, stumbling back out...]

GM: MARTINEZ!

[...and the White Knight comes tearing across the ring, leaping into the air, extending his leg...]

“OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!”

GM: EXCALIBUR! EXCALIBUR!

[The flying Yakuza wipes out Ross, leaving him prone on the mat as Martinez dives across!]

GM: ONNNNNNNNNNE! TWOOOOOOOOOO! THREEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEE!

“DING! DING! DING!”

GM: HE GOT HIM!

[Martinez rolls off Ross, shoving his arm triumphantly into the air as the Canadian crowd roars!]

GM: Martinez and Carver are moving on to the second round!

[Carver drags himself off the floor, grinning at the proclamation by Rebecca Ortiz.]

GM: Another hard-fought battle in this tournament as Ringkrieger took these two to their physical limits and beyond but in the end, it's that flying Yakuza - the Excalibur - from Ryan Martinez that scores his team the victory.]

[Carver rolls back into the ring, sharing a victory handshake with the former two-time World Champion...]

GM: And for now - at least - it appears the question on whether or not these two would be able to co-exist as a unit has been answered. Fans, let's go backstage to some footage captured by our ACCESS 365 cameras!

[The “ACCESS 365” logo flashes across the screen.]

“And you think NOW is the best time to settle something like this?”

[In Castillo's mobile office within Mosaic Stadium, the evening sun pours through the window. Castillo paces, nervous about something. Across the room, Veronica Westerly sits, arms folded, impassively.]

JC: Now? When we have no leverage?

VW: You can't avoid it, Javier. You can rip the bandage off now and have it done with or peel it off and stay in agony all night. He has the belt. And he's capable of anything. I think you're very lucky you have someone like me who knows how to talk to him. Someone who goes way back.

[Castillo grimaces.]

JC: And you do not think that it would be beneficial to ask my opinion on being forced to negotiate with him out of the blue.



VW: Oh, I don't know. I remember you saying...

[She smirks maliciously and she folds her hands politely on her knees.]

VW: ...I am not paid to think.

[Her gaze cuts through him and Castillo shakes with impotent rage. He tries a different approach.]

JC: Listen... sweetheart...

[Westerly angrily interrupts.]

VW: Don't you DARE call me "Sweetheart!"

"I think you'll find Javier was referring to me..."

[Castillo wheels around and sees that Jackson Hunter has been standing two feet beside him.]

JH: ...his flashy jewelry is a bit of a giveaway; isn't it, darling?

[Before Castillo can react, Hunter plants a teasing kiss on Castillo's forehead.]

JC: How did you get in here?! I have that door locked!

[Hunter holds up a keycard.]

JH: I could tell you that I'm a shapeshifter or a non corporeal entity, but neither explanation is as scary as me telling you that I have connections to the leaseholders and the provincial government. You're so fond of chess, Javier...

[Hunter reaches for a nearby chessboard. Castillo swats his hand away.]

JH: ...that you forget when we're playing poker. So before you go All In on that nifty full house of yours, you've gotta ask yourself something...

[Hunter paces over to beside Veronica Westerly, and Blake Colton appears behind her as well.]

JH: ...Does that Jack, Queen, and Ace on the board mean your opponent has a straight flush?

[Westerly turns to Hunter.]

VW: Oh, come off it, you stick insect. I only brought you here to finalize some paperwork you're putting off. Not end up tangled in another of your diabolical schemes.

[Hunter looks stricken by the accusation.]

JH: Rhoni! As if I would ever—

[Westerly angrily interrupts.]

VW: You know, my father may not be in the greatest of health, but I know he still has a few things he would like to settle with you too.

[Hunter smirks.]

JH: And that's why I have a barbed wire fence around the Broken Arrow Ranch and I know how to run fast. And he'll have to get in line.

[It's Castillo's turn to interrupt.]

JC: If you please! To business.

[Hunter sits across from Castillo.]

JC: Now then. I would like... express... my...

[The word sticks in his throat as the very act of uttering seems to sicken Castillo.]

JC: ...appreciation... for giving us this event at this wonderful facility. I'm sure you've seen the gate receipts by now. Coming here to Saskatchewan has been very lucrative to the AWA. But there is one crucial part missing to this transaction.

JH: [innocently] Oh? What would that be?

[Castillo slides a folder across his desk.]

JC: The final sign-off of a Mooselips representative.

I am aware that you have been without an AWA contract, Jackson, and that you are free to pursue other options at the end of the month. Which is why Veronica has drafted this for you.

[He slides another folder across the desk, which Hunter looks over.]

JC: Guaranteed money and a schedule that I think will be to your satisfaction.

[Hunter scans the document.]

JH: And how do I know that you won't strip me of the National Title and sic your goon squad on me as soon as the ink is dry?

[Westerly rises from her seat, her gaze fixed on Castillo who was likely thinking to do exactly that.]

VW: Because you and Blake here took care of our little Zharkov problem. Because he was dangerous to Korugun's goals. That's why I modified the Steal the Spotlight contract stipulation for you. I felt the National belt suited you, and I think it's been too long since it's had a real champion. And as I'm sure you can see in the fine print that you've already analyzed and looked for loopholes in: neither Javier or myself have any power to interfere.

I've used the Eye of Tyr and I've seen just about every artifact Korugun has collected.

And you... can be far, far worse than any of them.

[Castillo raises a finger.]

JC: Any of them that you know about, Miss Westerly.

[Westerly flinches at the idea that she's being kept in the dark on some things before she leans in close to Hunter and says breathily...]

VW: Sign the damn contracts, you wonderful, twisted malefactor.

JH: Well, when you put it that way...

[Hunter picks up a pen and signs his and the event's contract.]

JH: Well then. Blake, we've got some Tag Team Champions we've got to get ready to beat. Rhoni. Javier.

JC: You know, Jackson, it's funny you mention poker. Because I call your bluff.

JH: My bluff?

JC: I don't know that you ever intended to join our rivals. You used them. You have a habit of using everyone. And you have a habit of planting a dagger between their shoulder blades when they are no longer useful to you.

JH: Yeah, look who's talking.

[Castillo shrugs with a grin.]

JC: A fair accusation. But you are so concerned about your legacy and how you are viewed that you betrayed your own Axis. But you hitched your legacy to Juan Vasquez. You can't stand that someone like Juan Vasquez has occupied the space in wrestling history that you feel belongs to you; you even tried to pull the same stunt with the National Title that he did with the World Championship last year.

Well then, Mrs. Westerly has seen fit to draw up a contract that effectively makes you Juan Vasquez. And it is only in the AWA where that can be possible. Not, as you so eloquently put it, wallowing in the ashes of dead promotions and old glories.

[Hunter locks eyes with Castillo for a few uncomfortable moments.]

JH: Now that I've signed these...

[He shoves the folders across Castillo's desk.]

JH: ...I guess you'll never know if I was bluffing or not.

[Hunter and Colton exit.]

JC: May you always run fast enough... old friend.

[Castillo slaps a hand down on the paperwork as we abruptly get a flash of the ACCESS 365 logo...

...and then fade up on a dark room somewhere in the bowels of Mosaic Stadium. There's light... barely. Just enough to cast some wicked looking shadows every which way. If you're afraid of the dark, it's like something out of a bad dream. But in this dream, these shadows talk.]

"When the Dogs of War came together..."

[There's a pause as the voice comes closer, revealing Pedro Perez. The Puerto Rican is dressed in a black t-shirt with the sleeves cut out revealing some nasty scars on his upper arms.]

PP: Check that. When someone... should I say his name, boys?

[There's a murmured agreement all around.]

PP: Hell yes, I should say his name. See, when you run with the boss, you got nothing to fear... and we run with Korugun so no one can touch us.

When Percy Childes came down like an angel on wings to drag us out of the gutter, we made ourselves a promise... an oath.

[Perez balls up his right fist, pressing it to his heart.]

PP: We would NEVER go back.

[Nodding from Isaiah Carpenter and Wade Walker standing behind Perez.]

PP: The way we do business is simple.

[He holds up a finger.]

PP: Someone hires us.

[He holds up a second.]

PP: We do the job and we do it well.

[And a third.]

PP: And we get paid.

[He shrugs.]

PP: Simple. Now, the jobs we get hired for are usually pretty... specific.

[Carpenter cracks a huge grin, leaning in.]

IC: And usually involve a trip to the hospital for someone... maybe a broken windshield or two.

[Perez nods.]

PP: Titles never meant a damn thing to us...

[Perez holds up the SWLL Trios Title.]

PP: Not even these souvenirs we picked up on our last trip to Mexico.

No money in sending us after titles... no money sending us after some sense of... glory...

[He says it with disgust, spitting the word out.]

PP: ...like your golden boys chase. Guys like Martinez. Like Lynch.

But this weekend... this weekend's different. Because for us... this isn't about glory...

[Wade Walker chimes in with a deep, "Hell no."]

PP: This isn't about the shiny little Cup that IC back there would melt down for a chain to wear around his neck.

[Carpenter tugs at a linked chain around his neck with a nod.]

PP: But the money? That's another story.

Because when we say we're not going back to the gutter, it's because we remember what that life was like. Tell 'em, IC.

[Carpenter speaks up.]

IC: I'm NOT going back to Connecticut... not back to living with my parents. My parents are good people. My parents worked hard... every day all day... dirt under their nails... sore muscles... paycheck to paycheck... not able to save a dime. Not able to send me to college. All that work just to survive.

[He shakes his head.]

IC: And then there's the big man.

[He jerks a thumb at Wade Walker who speaks up.]

WW: The people know my story. The college football star. The NFL career a lock.

[He claps his hands together.]

WW: Gone. In a heartbeat.

I don't have the feel good story. I don't want to buy my parents a house.

[He smirks.]

WW: I want it all for myself.

[Pedro Perez claps the big man on the back.]

PP: And he deserves it too.

Then there's me. The wide-eyed kid from Puerto Rico who wanted to be a big wrestling hero. I wanted the kids to line up for autographs and the girls to line up for...

[Perez grins.]

PP: But it was Puerto Rico. They didn't want the...

[He frames up his face with his hands, stroking his cheek.]

PP: ...fresh, young babyface.

In Puerto Rico locker rooms, they've got a saying... "red equals green."

[He scoffs.]

PP: The more you bleed, the more the people love you.

And so I bled. And the people didn't give a damn.

[Perez pauses for a moment, seething, running his hand across a nasty scar on his forehead.]

PP: But then Percy Childes arrived... Our hero. Our savior.

[A deep "amen" from Wade Walker.]

PP: And while he may not be here anymore, I feel like he'd be proud of what we're trying to do tonight. What we're trying to do this weekend.

One night. A million dollars.

[Perez nods, smiling.]

PP: But there are people in our way.

[Perez slips back as Wade Walker steps in.]

WW: Cain Jackson.

[The three men pause, looking around at each other with a shrug.]

WW: I got nothin' but respect for Cain Jackson.

[Nods from the others.]

WW: The man did his crime and did his time standing up. He came out and he found a way to live his life with dignity... with pride. He's a man's man and I got nothin' but respect for that.

[Carpenter leans in.]

IC: In another life, he might've been standing here with us.

[Perez nods.]

PP: But in this life, we gotta take him out. Sorry, big man. It's gotta be that way sometimes.

And then...

[Perez chuckles.]

PP: Alex Martin.

[Carpenter grabs him by the shoulder, a look of shock on his face.]

IC: That's not his name anymore, man.

[Perez nods.]

PP: That's right. He's AJ Martinez now, right?

[Perez speaks his name with derision.]

PP: AJ Martinez.

[He chuckles again.]

PP: Like a fresh coat of paint slapped on him. Like a change of name form and grabbing a nickname from the 90s is gonna cover up who he really is.

A spoiled brat punk pretty boy.

[Carpenter "ooooohs" as Walker chuckles deeply.]

PP: Yeah, he's a big guy.

[Carpenter interrupts.]

IC: But we've put down big guys before - ain't that right?

[Walker nods.]

WW: Ask your old man about it, AJ.

[Carpenter grins.]

PP: We're not afraid of your name. We're not afraid of your resume.

We're just not afraid of you.

`Cause we're not going back.

[Perez nods.]

PP: Never going back.

And we're going to do whatever it takes to make sure of it.

[Perez steps back, slapping a hand down on each of his partners' shoulders as we fade to black...

...and then up on the backstage area, where "Sweet" Lou Blackwell is standing by with the two members of the Kabukicho Assassination Maniac Squad, "The Beast" Cain Jackson and "Hot Stuff" AJ Martinez. Jackson looks cool and composed, wearing shades and has a stoic expression on his face. Martinez, on the other hand, is agitated, moving back and forth behind Jackson and Blackwell, pacing furiously and muttering angrily.]

SLB: They came, they saw, and so far, they've conquered! But one of you doesn't seem happy at all. AJ Martinez, what is going on with you?

[The Latinx Khal Drogo himself, comes to a halt, turning towards Blackwell. And then, seeing the camera and realizing he's on it, Martinez pauses, flashing a smile and posing, before his foul mood reasserts itself.]

AJM: What is going on with me? What's going on with you, Blackwell? WHAT'S GOING ON WITH THE WHOLE WORLD?!

[Blackwell opens his mouth, but before he can say anything.]

AJM: Don't bother, Blackwell, because I'm gonna tell you right now!

What's going on with me is that the world just saw Cain and I pound those two Benedict Cumberbatch wannabes into the dirt and then what happens?

All anyone wants to talk about are The Dogs of War!

Everyone wants to talk about us like we're underdogs. Like we're lambs being led to the slaughter. Like we don't stand a chance! Everyone seems to think that this match is some kind of foregone conclusion! And I'm sick of it!

The Handsome Hybrid, AJ Martinez is not to be overlooked! The Dreadlocked Juggernaut, Cain Jackson is not to be overlooked! We didn't pack up, go to the

airport, and spend thirty hours up in the sky traveling halfway around the world just so people would talk about someone else!

[Martinez looks like he's ready to hit something. Sensing trouble, Lou to quickly turn his attention to Jackson.]

SLB: Oh boy. Well Cain Jackson, I've got to say that you seem to be taking this better than your partner.

[Jackson calmly removes his sunglasses and tucks them into his blazer pocket.]

CJ: Mr. Blackwell, I save my anger for the ring and I unleash my fury where it's best served: Upon my opponents.

SLB: And yet, as the team's strategist, you've got to know you're at something of a disadvantage. There are three members of The Dogs of War – Isiah Carpenter, Pedro Perez and Wade Walker... and you still don't know which of those two you'll be facing. I have to imagine that each pairing presents its own challenge. So how do you prepare for so many possibilities?

CJ: You really see that as a disadvantage?

[Jackson chuckles softly.]

CJ: Look at us, Blackwell. What do you see? I'll TELL you what you see. What's standing before you is THE most physically dominant tag team in the entire world. Name another team that has our size. Our strength. Our sheer ability to bring the PAIN.

You can't.

SLB: Well, I mean... there is umm...

CJ: Violence Unlimited?

[Lou nods.]

AJM: They're big and they're bad. But we're bigger and we're badder! Plus they've already lost!

SLB: Well, there's also The Prophets of Rage. The team that defeated them in the first round.

[Jackson rubs his chin thoughtfully.]

CJ: Right. Derek Rage is the only person in the building that can stand up straight and look AJ right in the eyes.

AJM: But his big brother Shadoe is a tiny man that'll be swinging at my kneecaps!

CJ: Hey. I'd be careful, I heard your old man's on his third pair of new knees. It might be a hereditary condition

AJM: Yeah, along with the good looks, inhuman strength, championship pedigree, and the ability to be the biggest badass in any room I walk into.

[Martinez coolly runs his hands through his hair.]

AJM: I ain't worried.



[Jackson smirks at Martinez' response.]

CJ: And that brings us to The Dogs of War. As a three man unit, they're as good as it gets. But that's the thing, isn't it? The ONLY way they'd stand a chance against us is if all three of them came at us.

AJM: And even then, I still don't like their chances!

SLB: You're awfully confident, AJ Martinez.

AJM: There's nothing awful about it! Let me tell you two things, Blackwell. The last time everyone wanted to talk about how unstoppable the big, bad Dogs of War were, their undefeated streak came to a screeching halt at the hands of The James Gang. And you better believe that anything the James Gang can do, WE can do better.

SLB: Do I detect some sibling rivalry?

[AJ narrows his eyes at Lou.]

AJM: Don't even go there, Blackwell.

Anyway, the second thing is this. Tonight is the last night anyone ever tries to put us in the corner. Tonight is the last night people treat Jackson and Martinez like an afterthought. Because tonight is the night we put these puppies to sleep!

SLB: That's some strong talk from your partner, Mr. Jackson. Are you feeling equally confident?

[Jackson suddenly bellows loudly, startling Blackwell.]

CJ: CRY "HAVOC!" AND LET LOOSE THE DOGS OF WAR!

Because the fact is, these dogs aren't ready for this wolf pack. The so-called greatest THREE man unit in the world isn't ready for the war this army of TWO is about to bring down upon them.

AJM: We are the crème de la crème, standing at the top of the world... The Kabukicho Assassination Maniac Squad, and you know what they say – when you tangle with us, you got two choices...

Bow down...

[Jackson puts his hand up, quieting Martinez.]

CJ: I'm ending the interview this time. Last time, you couldn't even get your own catchphrase right.

[Jackson stares into the camera.]

CJ: You either bow down...

...OR YOU GET KNOCKED OUT!

[Jackson's large frame engulfs the camera as he steps forward.]

SLB: Alright, fans... two of the toughest teams in the game about to step in the ring for another second round match here tonight in Mosaic Stadium and I've been dying to see this one! Rebecca, take it away!

[We fade from backstage back out to the ring where Rebecca is standing.]

RO: The following contest is set for one fall with a thirty minute time limit and is a second round match in the 2017 Stampede Cup tournament!

[The lights in Mosaic Stadium drop to black for a few moments...

A swirling set of spotlights start to circle the stadium which is now hit with a deep midnight blue lighting. The sounds of snarling and snapping dogs are heard for several moments before the deep booming intro to KISS' "War Machine" kicks in over the PA system to a mixed reaction.]

RO: Introducing first... representing the Korugun Corporation... they are PEDRO PEREZ, ISAIAH CARPENTER, and WADE WALKER...

THE DOOOOOOOOGS OF WARRRRRRRRRRRRRRRR!

[On cue, the spotlights lock together on a certain point high into the stands of Mosaic Stadium, illuminating the trio known as the Dogs of War. The Dogs - all three of them - appear to be ready for action, making their way through the roaring crowd in midnight blue gear that appears to be better suited for controlling a riot than for professional wrestling.

Pedro Perez, the wildman of the group, with his eyes darting everywhere, a manic smile on his face as he points here and there to his comrades in arms.

Isaiah Carpenter, the slick, smooth daredevil, comes behind him, looking like something off the cover of a magazine more than a guy willing to risk it all every time he steps inside the ring.

And bringing up the rear - the muscle. Wade Walker appears to be carved out of stone, every bit the image you'd have a first round draft pick NFL linebacker. The kind of guy you'd expect to be battling for yards on any given Sunday rather than fighting for the Stampede Cup in Regina, Canada. But life finds a way and as Walker walks alongside his brothers, this trio looks ready for action.]

GM: The Dogs of War are on their way to the ring, making their way through 40,000 strong here at the Battle of Saskatchewan... and you've gotta look at them as one of the odds-on favorites to win this whole thing, Bucky.

BW: The Dogs of War are the most dominant trio to ever step foot in the AWA... and apparently in Mexico too since we know they recently became the SWLL Trios Champions.

GM: A title they may defend coming up in a couple of months if they hang onto the gold until then. But they're hoping that by the time they get to Mexico, they've got another piece of hardware - the Stampede Cup.

BW: But more importantly than the Cup itself, they're hoping to be a million dollars richer.

GM: Absolutely. But there is uncertainty as this trio comes down the aisle, Bucky... because we still don't know which two will compete.

BW: That's right. And if they win, we don't know if the same two will keep fighting all the way through. Remember, Gordo... with the Prophets out thanks to Shadoe Rage's hot temper, the Dogs of War are the only Korugun representatives left in this tournament. So, the odds may be... uhh...

GM: You're saying Castillo may cheat to help them win?

BW: No! I'd never imply such a thing!

GM: I'm sure. Well, we're moments away from finding which two of the three will be in action tonight at least as the Dogs have arrived in the ring and await the arrival of their very dangerous opposition.

[The music fades, the lights restoring to full blast as we - along with everyone else - wait to see what comes next.

But it's not what we see next that gets the crowd going. It's what we hear.]

"WHAT IS BEST IN LIFE?"

"TO CRUSH YOUR ENEMIES, TO SEE THEM DRIVEN BEFORE YOU, AND TO HEAR THE LAMENTATIONS OF THEIR WOMEN."

[A metal cover of "Anvil of Crom" then begins to play as we hear the loud revving of an engine. Just then, we see a vehicle with a custom chassis: a body made of two 1959 Cadillac Coupe de Villes sitting on top of each other, driven on huge tractor tires, driving into the stadium. Reminiscent of Immortan Joe's "Gigahorse" from Mad Max: Fury Road, the vehicle drives into the stadium, eliciting a massive roar from the crowd!]

GM: Do these two know how to make an entrance or what? Look at this vehicle!

BW: It looks like the sponsors spared no expense on the production budget, Gordo!

GM: Imagine what they'll be driving in if they made it to the finals!

BW: Driving? They'll probably be FLYING in if they make it that far!

[Driving behind the wheel once again is Cain Jackson. Hanging out in the back with two metal bikini-clad babes carrying Mifune-Gun flags is a smiling AJ Martinez. As the vehicle comes to a stop, The Latinx Khal Drago takes hold of one of the assault weapons on The Gigahorse and proceeds to fire it, letting loose a huge stream of fire from a flamethrower into the air!]

"WOOOOOOOOSSSSSHHHHH!!!"

"OOOOOHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!!!"

[The camera zooms in on Martinez cackling wildly as he mans the flamethrower. He then hops down from the Gigahorse and onto the floor, where he walks right up the camera and yells, "BURNED!!!" before laughing once again and joining Jackson, who is now standing in front of the mechanical monstrosity they drove in on.]

GM: But if you forget about the entrance-

BW: Forget about the entrance?! Are you kidding me?!

GM: I said IF... if you forget about the entrance for a moment, you have to realize that this very dangerous duo are more than just an entrance. They are one of the top tag teams in Japan and they've shown no sign of stage fright this weekend being on the biggest stage in professional wrestling.

BW: Hey, these two would like nothing more than to win this tournament, deposit that big ol' check, and head back to Japan knowing that they're the best in the world and no one will be able to take that away from them.

GM: That's happened before, Bucky. We've seen a team from Japan come in and win this entire tournament... much to the heartbreak of the entire AWA Tag Team Division. And with these two, the chances of that happening again are very, very real.

[Jackson and Martinez stare straight ahead towards the ring and then share a fist bump, before turning to the crowd and raising their arms into the air as Saskatchewan crowd showers the duo with a mixed reaction.]

GM: Martinez and Jackson almost to the ring now, ready for act-

[And without warning, Isaiah Carpenter goes streaking across the ring, leaping to the second rope, stepping to the top...

...and then SPRINGS OFF with a somersault dive onto both members of the Kabukicho Assassination Maniac Squad!]

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

GM: CARPENTER TAKES THEM BOTH OUT! OH MY!

[Carpenter comes off the thin mats leading from the ramp to the ring with a pump of his fist. Wade Walker nods approvingly from inside the ring as Pedro Perez slides out to the floor.]

GM: And it looks like with that sneak attack, it'll be Carpenter and big Wade Walker participating in this one.

BW: But it also looks like Pedro Perez is going to stay out here at ringside.

GM: It certainly does... and that gives an advantage to the Dogs of War to be sure.

[Carpenter grabs AJ Martinez by the wrist, somehow dragging the much-larger opponent to his feet where he moves him back towards the ring, shoving him under the bottom rope inside the squared circle as Walker gestures towards the official.]

GM: And now it looks like it'll be Wade Walker starting this match against AJ Martinez.

[The bell sounds as Walker lowers himself into a crouch.]

"DING! DING! DING!"

GM: We're underway but if Wade Walker has his way, maybe not for long!

BW: He's getting into position for the Spear just a couple of seconds into this match!

GM: The Dogs of War are on a mission and are NOT wasting any time here tonight in Mosaic Stadium!

[Walker beckons with his hand, waving for AJ Martinez to get to his feet...]

GM: Martinez getting up but he doesn't have a clue what's waiting for him!

[And as the Son of Martinez reaches a standing position, he staggers in a circle towards a rampaging Wade Walker who sprints across the ring, ready to lower the boom on the near seven footer...]

GM: SPEAAAAA- OHHH!

[But the 325 pound Los Angeles native throws a spin move that makes him look like he can play front court for the Lakers, sending the self-propelled Walker crashing chestfirst into the turnbuckles!]

GM: Martinez avoids the spear and-

[The 6'11 Martinez smacks his hands together on either side of Walker's head, shouting "SWEET CHRISTMAS!" as he does!]

GM: Ohh! He rings the bell of Wade Walker and-

[Martinez grabs Walker by the shoulder, swinging him around and shoving him back into the buckles. The big man squares up, letting the punches fly...]

"YAAA! YAAAA!"

[A right-left to the side of the head.]

"YAA! YAA! YAAA!"

[A trio of hooking right hands to the temple that cause Walker to bring his arms up to defend himself.]

"YAA! YAA! YAAA! YAAAAAA!"

[Another series of vicious blows, causing Walker to sink to a knee before the referee steps in, forcing Martinez to back off, leaving Walker to recoup in the corner as the arrogant Hot Stuff struts out to mid-ring, turning to deliver a double bicep pose to the jeering crowd...]

GM: Boy, this kid sure is full of himself, Bucky.

BW: When you're 6'11, 325 pounds, good-looking, and have the legacy that he's got, can you blame-

[...but as Martinez turns back to Walker, the biggest member of the Dogs of War comes charging out of the corner at NFL linebacker level speed...]

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

GM: SPEAR! SPEAR! SPEAAAAAAARRRRRR!

[Walker pumps both arms in triumph as he drops down, reaching back for a leg...]

GM: ONNNNNNNNNNNNNNE! TWOOOOOOOOOOOOOO! THREEEEEEEEE-

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

GM: AND CAIN JACKSON WITH THE DIVING SAVE!! OH MY!

[The crowd is buzzing for that nearfall as Cain Jackson stays down on the mat, pounding down on Walker's back repeatedly. The crowd begins to buzz louder, this time at the sight of Isaiah Carpenter scrambling up on the apron, grabbing the top rope with both hands...]

GM: Carpenter's on the apron - he's got Jackson in his sights!

[And as the former Team Supreme member takes to his feet, Carpenter takes to the sky, leaping into the air, springing off the top rope, and PASTING Jackson with a flying knee to the skull that sends him spinning away in a staggering circle...]

GM: OHHH!

[Carpenter hits the ground running, bouncing off the far side, rebounding back towards the off-balance Jackson...]

GM: DISCUS LARI- DUCKED BY CARPENTER!

[Jackson's even more off-balance now as he nearly falls from throwing himself at Carpenter who rebounds off the ropes again...]

GM: Carpenter coming back strong...

[Jackson ducks down, looking for a backdrop but Carpenter leapfrogs over, coming to a halt behind the six foot eight Jackson who straightens up...

...and gets grabbed around the chin, yanked down onto his back with a split-legged slam!]

GM: OHH! He DRIVES the back of Jackson's head into the canvas!

[Cain Jackson quickly rolls out to the floor, grabbing at the back of his head as he staggers over near the ringside railing...]

GM: Jackson's out, Carpenter's up and... here we go again!

[Carpenter runs to the near ropes, bouncing off once... then to the ropes behind him...]

GM: Carpenter building up a head of steam and...

[The Dog of War HURLS himself between the ropes in a tope aimed at driving Jackson back into the railing...

...but Jackson reaches up, snatching Carpenter out of the sky around the outstretched arms, hooking around the head and neck...]

"CLAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAANG!"

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

GM: AND JACKSON HURLS HIM INTO THE STEEEEEEEEEEL!

[Jackson comes off the ringside mats all fired up, shouting down at Carpenter and earning himself a brief timeout from the man at the seven second button.]

GM: Strong language on the part of Cain Jackson, fans... we apologize for that... but he's definitely got some fire in his belly after dispatching of Carpenter like that.

[Back inside the ring, Wade Walker has gotten AJ Martinez up on his feet, throwing some stiff uppercuts that back Martinez across the ring, putting him up against a set of turnbuckles...]

GM: Back into the corner they go...

BW: Is that the neutral corner? I can't even tell since all four have been going at it since the outset.

GM: The referee's been completely unable to establish any kind of control so far.

[Walker is hammering away on Martinez in the corner when Cain Jackson comes back in. The referee cuts him off, trying to get involved...

...when Wade Walker charges across, leaping high into the air...]

GM: SUPERMAN PUNCH!

[The flying blow catches Jackson on the jaw, sending him flying back into the turnbuckles...]

GM: We've got a member of KAMS in opposing corners and- whoa! Look out!

[The protesting official gets nudged aside by Wade Walker with enough force to knock him off his feet.]

GM: Wade Walker risking a disqualification right there as he knocks down the referee...

[Walker grabs Jackson by the arm, firing the 280 pounder across the ring, sending him crashing into his own partner...]

GM: Ohhh! Big crash in the buckles!

[Walker steps back to the buckles, giving a mighty pump of his right arm before he charges across the ring...]

GM: Clothesli- no, Jackson moves and Martinez takes all of it!

[But Jackson quickly fires in a lariat of his own, smashing it into the back of Walker's head, sending him stumbling back in towards AJ Martinez who shakes off the effect of the clothesline to lift Walker up for a belly-to-back suplex right by the corner as Jackson backs off...]

GM: Martinez lifts Walker up... what's he going to do with him though?!

[With a loud "CATCH!," Martinez chucks the 278 pound Walker through the air towards a waiting Jackson who half-ass catches him before DRIVING him down in a sitout powerbomb in one motion!]

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

GM: HOLY-

BW: DID YOU SEE THAT?!

[Jackson stays down, shouting for a count as the official - obviously overwhelmed by the early chaos - does exactly that.]

GM: Jackson's not legal but it may not matter here as we get one! We get two! We get thr-

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

GM: AND CARPENTER WITH A DIVING SAVE OF HIS OWN RIGHT THERE!

[Pedro Perez slams a fist down on the apron, shouting encouragement to his partners as Carpenter clubs Jackson with a few forearms...

...before AJ Martinez YANKS him off the mat with two handfuls of Carpenter's long hair, pulling him right up to his feet.]

GM: Martinez lifting Carpenter up like he's nothing...

[And with that same grip on the hair, Martinez HURLS Carpenter backwards, sending him crashing into the buckles!]

GM: Ohh! Hard smash to the corner for Carpenter... and it looks like K-A-M-S may be looking for the kill here. Both men back on their feet now.

[Martinez backs to the corner across from Carpenter, waiting as Jackson grabs him by the arm, whipping the 325 pound Hot Stuff across...]

GM: OHHH! AVALANCHE IN THE CORNER!

[A smirking Martinez twists slightly to shove Carpenter out into Jackson's waiting arms, twisting into the air...]

"THUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUD!"

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

GM: SPINEBUSTER! SPINEBUSTER BY JACKSON!

[And Jackson stays down in a kneeling position as AJ Martinez hits the ropes, building up steam, stepping up on the back of his partner...]

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

[...and gets SPEARED out of the sky by Wade Walker!]

GM: GOOD GOD ALMIGHTY!

[The spear tackle sends Martinez down to the mat where he quickly rolls under the ropes to the floor, falling to his knees as he clutches his ribcage. Perez nods emphatically, shouting for Walker and Carpenter to go for the kill on Jackson.]

GM: Pedro Perez just told them to finish this! Can the Dogs of War get the win here and move on to the next round to face Hannibal Carver and Ryan Martinez?!

[Walker turns his attention back towards Cain Jackson who is on his feet and waiting for Walker, blasting him with a right hand... and another... and a third puts Walker back into the turnbuckles.]

GM: Jackson hammering away in the corner, trying to knock some of the steam out of Wade Walker here...

[Jackson grabs the arm, whipping Walker across... but the Dog of War has other ideas, reversing the whip sending the Beast crashing into the far corner...]

GM: The reversal sends Jackson back into the buckles hard...

[Walker strides back to the far corner, pumping his arm once...]

GM: Walker charging out!

[But so is Cain Jackson and as Walker leaps for a Superman punch, Cain Jackson's massive leg swings upward and his boot catches the flying Walker FLUSH under the chin!]



"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

GM: BIG BOOT! BIG BOOT!

[Jackson drops to the mat, diving atop Walker.]

GM: ONNNNNNNNNNNNE! TWOOOOOOOOOOOO! THR-

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

GM: SLIDING DROPKICK BY CARPENTER BREAKS THE PIN!

[The crowd is absolutely rocking now as Carpenter gets up, dragging Jackson up with him...]

GM: Right hand... another... and a back elbow under the chin snaps Jackson's head back!

[Carpenter goes to dash to the ropes but Jackson hooks him by the back of the tights, preventing the charge, yanking him back into a pumphandle position...]

GM: Jackson's got him, lifts, twists... and DOWWWWWN WITH A POWERSLAM!

[Jackson throws his arms apart, pressing his palms down into Carpenter's chest!]

GM: ONNNNNNNNNNNNE! TWOOOOOOOOOOOO! THR- NO! CARPENTER KICKS OUT AT TWO!

[A frustrated Jackson shoves Carpenter back down to his back, swinging a leg across to take the mount, pummeling some heavy hands down onto Carpenter and drawing some jeers from the roaring crowd!]

GM: Jackson's pounding Carpenter into the canvas here... really working him over...

[Climbing to his feet, Jackson yanks Carpenter up with him, promptly shooting him towards the ropes, getting a bit of a run himself...]

GM: BIG BOOT!

[...but Carpenter front rolls under it, coming straight up to leap to the second rope, springing back...]

GM: CAUGHT! JACKSON CAUGHT HIM! JACKSON CATCHES CARPENTER AND-

[The crowd ROARS as Jackson military presses the 253 pound Carpenter straight up overhead, turning to show him off to the crowd...]

GM: WALKER!

[...which is when Wade Walker LANDS the Superman punch he was looking for just moments ago, cracking Jackson in the jaw and sending him down to the mat with Carpenter splashing down on top of him!]

GM: THAT MIGHT BE IT!

[The referee dives to count, slapping the mat once... twice... annnnnnnnd...]

GM: JACKSON KICKS OUT!

[The crowd is buzzing as a fired-up Wade Walker pulls his own partner off the mat, wrapping his arms around his torso...]

GM: What's he...?!

[He lifts Carpenter up into atomic drop position...

...and then DROPS him down with a double legdrop on a prone Jackson!]

"OHHHHHHHHH!"

[...and then lifts him right back up, twisting around, and flings him up and over the back suplex position into a moonsault!]

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

GM: GOOD GRIEF!

[Carpenter snatches a leg as the ref goes down to count.]

GM: ONNNNNNNNNE! TWOOOOOOOOOO! THR- WHAT THE-?!

BW: MARTINEZ!

[The crowd jeers as AJ Martinez YANKS Carpenter off of Jackson, pulling him straight out to the floor...

...and right into a full nelson that he uses to lift Carpenter into the air and THROW him down on the barely-padded grass!]

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

GM: FULL NELSON SLAM ON THE OUTSIDE!

[Martinez has a few choice words for Carpenter that earn him the wrath of the man with the SILENT button.]

GM: Again, we apologize for the language of-

"DON'T YOU APOLOGIZE FOR ME, YOU SENILE PIECE OF-"

[There's that SILENT button again, lasting for several seconds as AJ Martinez berates Gordon Myers...

...and the audio comes back up as Martinez slides into the ring, being greeted with a few boots to the ribs by Wade Walker!]

GM: Again... I must apologize. The AWA and all AWA programming are intended for a family audience and... well, AJ Martinez is certainly the black sheep of that particular family so it makes sense.

[Walker's barrage of forearms and fists sends Martinez backpedaling into the neutral corner...]

GM: Walker taking it to Martinez in the corner, hammering away at him...

[The referee steps closer, shouting at Walker to back off...]

GM: The referee is warning Wade Walker here, telling him to get clear and give Martinez a chance to get out of the corner...

BW: But Walker's not listening, Gordo. He's lost it!

[Walker continues to punch away at Martinez, driving him down to a knee in the corner as the referee steps closer, again shouting...]

GM: Wade Walker may be risking disqualification here for his team, fans! He may be-

[Walker abruptly stops, raising his hands as he looks down at Martinez...]

GM: Whew. A close call there if you're a fan of-

[...who suddenly THROWS himself into a spear tackle of his own, a short range but impactful blow that sends Walker flying backwards...]

...RIGHT into the referee!]

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

GM: Whoa! Down goes the official thanks to AJ Martinez... this official, a new official here this weekend because of the large amount of matches... he just got dropped by AJ Martinez and Wade Walker and...

[Seeing the referee down, Pedro Perez quickly pulls himself up on the apron, ready to get involved...]

...but a HUGE right hand from Cain Jackson sends Perez back down to the floor!]

GM: OHH! WHAT A SHOT BY JACKSON!

[Jackson fires off a few words aimed at Pedro Perez before turning back to the downed Walker and Martinez. Jackson helps his partner to his feet, gesturing to Walker who is still on the mat...]

GM: Martinez is a little dazed, it seems, but he's following Jackson's direction, pulling Walker up to his feet...

[He shoves Walker towards Jackson who lifts him up for a waistlock suplex as Martinez steps in, grabbing him by the throat...]

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

GM: A SUPLEX MIXED WITH A CHOKESLAM BY K-A-M-S and that might be all!

[Martinez stays on him, hand around his throat as...]

...absolutely nothing happens.]

BW: The referee's down, Gordo! K-A-M-S was looking for the win there but the referee got knocked flat by Hot Stuff and Walker!

GM: You're absolutely right. Martinez looking around the ring now, searching for a referee but-

[Spotting the only zebra in sight, Martinez angrily gets to his feet, walking across where he nudges the official with the toe of his boot a few times, trying to revive him. Jackson comes over to him, shaking some sense into him as he points at the downed Walker.]

GM: Cain Jackson's trying to keep his partner back on track and-

[The crowd ROARS as the two big man turn back towards Walker and find themselves FLOORED with a springboard split-legged dropkick out of Isaiah Carpenter!]

GM: WHAT A DROPKICK FROM CARPENTER!

[Carpenter hits the mat and promptly rolls to the outside at a shout from Pedro Perez where the two start digging under the apron...

...and slide a table into view to a HUGE ROAR!]

BW: This may not be Philadelphia, daddy, but we've got tables!

GM: And with the referee laid out, I guess this is somewhat legal for the moment!

[Perez and Carpenter get the table into position...

...and then reach under the ropes, pulling AJ Martinez under them to the outside. A flurry of fists follow, battering Martinez all the way down onto the table.]

GM: They've got the near seven footer on the table... and look at this now! Look at this!

[Carpenter holds Martinez down as Perez promptly climbs the steel steps...

...and with a wild look in his eyes, he starts climbing the ropes from the outside. The crowd is getting louder with every step as Perez steps to the second rope... then puts a foot up top...]

GM: PEDRO PEREZ IS GOING UP! HE'S GONNA PUT MARTINEZ THROUGH THIS TABLE! HE'S GONNA-

[But before Perez steps to the top, AJ Martinez lets loose a huge grunt of exertion and SHOVES Carpenter off of him...]

"CLAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAANG!"

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

[...sending the Dog of War flying backwards into the ringside railing...]

GM: MARTINEZ PUTS HIM INTO THE STEEL!

[And with Carpenter disposed of for the moment, Martinez gets off the table, rushing towards the ring where Perez is trying to get down off the ropes in a hurry...]

GM: MARTINEZ HOOKS HIM!

[The crowd is buzzing as the near seven footer wraps his mighty paw around Perez' throat...]

GM: HE'S GOT HIM! HE'S GOT HIM UP TOP!

[Perez bats at the arm, trying to get free but a wild-eyed Martinez will NOT be denied as he pulls Perez towards him...

...and LIFTS him into the air, throwing him off the buckles and down HARD to the barely-padded grass!]

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

GM: CHOKESLAM TO THE FLOOR FROM THE SECOND ROPE!! OHHHH MYYYYY  
GOOOOOD!

[Perez is laid out in a heap as the Mosaic Stadium crowd is sent into a frenzy!]

GM: Perez is down! Carpenter's down! Walker is... where did Walker go?!

[And as AJ Martinez, as full of piss and vinegar... and ego... never forget the ego, as he's ever been hops down off the buckles, turning to taunt the crowd...]

...Wade Walker comes TEARING down the length of the apron, ducking low into a launch...]

"CLAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAANG!"

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

GM: SPEAR! SPEAR! SPEAAAAAAAAAR INTO THE POOOOOOOOST!

[Martinez' spine SLAMS violently into the ringpost under Walker's intense leaping spear tackle...]

...but as he doesn't fall, Walker yanks him back down the apron towards the middle of it...]

GM: What in the ...?!

[And if you thought the Canadian crowd was loud before, you should hear them as Walker pulls Martinez into a standing headscissors...]

GM: OH MY GOD! OH MY GOD!

BW: They're right above this table, Gordo!

GM: Walker's gonna try to powerbomb a near seven footer through a damn table!

BW: I don't know if he can do it, Gordo.

GM: I don't either but he's damn sure gonna try!

[Walker ducks low, wrapping his arms around the torso of Martinez, nodding his head confidently...]

GM: He's trying to get him up! Trying to lift this 325 pounder off the apron and put him through-

[But as Walker struggles and strains, Cain Jackson has other ideas, racing across the ring, swinging his mighty leg up high enough to clear the top rope...]

"CRAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAASH!"

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

[...which connects FLUSH with the face of Wade Walker, sending him flying off the apron and through the ringside table!]

GM: GOOD GOD! GOOD GOD ALMIGHTY! WALKER GOES THROUGH THE TABLE!

[Cain Jackson backs off, letting loose a massive roar...]

"WHAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAACK!"  
"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

GM: STEEL CHAIR ACROSS THE BACK BY CARPENTER!

[The blow fells Jackson, knocking him to his knees!]

GM: CARPENTER KNOCKS HIM DOWN!

BW: Is this a no disqualification match now?!

GM: No, it's not but the referee is just now starting to stir and-

[Carpenter backs to the ropes, leaning back with the chair to strike again...

...when AJ Martinez' seven foot frame rises into the camera's view like something out of a monster movie!]

GM: OH MY GOD! OH MY GOD!

[Martinez grabs the chair, plucking it out of Carpenter's hands with ease and flinging it aside...

...and reaches over the ropes, snatching Carpenter's arm and pulling him into ripcord position...]

GM: Martinez hooks him from the outside! What in the world is he-?!

[Jackson suddenly rushes to the ropes, running alongside parallel to where Martinez and Carpenter are standing...

...and DRIVES a big boot into the cheek of Carpenter, sending him flying out of the ripcord...]

GM: BIG BOOT!

BW: AJ HANGS ON AND...

[...and YANKS Carpenter back into a lariat that flips Carpenter inside out, nearly dropping him on his head!]

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

BW: KILL SHOT! KILL SHOT!

[Jackson grabs the limp form of Carpenter off the mat, dragging him away from the ropes, diving across as a barely-conscious referee slides into position...]

GM: ONNNNNNNNNNNE! TWOOOOOOOOOOOO! THREEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEE!

"DING! DING! DING!

GM: Wow! The Dogs of War go down in defeat in one HELL of a fight, Bucky!

BW: Again, there are going to be a lot of people on the Internet who disagree with me here... but I gotta call this an upset.

GM: I think I've gotta agree with you... but after this win, I don't know that the Kabukicho Assassination Maniac Squad will ever score an upset again. Wow!

[Jackson and Martinez celebrate their win in the aisle, heading back up the ramp as the Canadian crowd cheers the wild battle they just witnessed.]

GM: Cain Jackson and AJ Martinez are advancing in this tournament, heading to the Quarterfinals where they will meet... oh brother, can you believe it? Hannibal Carver and Ryan Martinez!

BW: First, the Lynches... then the Rages... and now two of the Last American Badass' brats? 2017 is weird, Gordo.

GM: Indeed it is. What will happen when these two brothers do battle? We'll find out later tonight but right now, let's head backstage to Sweet Lou who is standing front of the big board! Lou?

[We crossfade backstage where we find Sweet Lou indeed standing in front of the large bracket that has been put in place on the wall.]

SLB: Thanks, Gordon. The first half of Round Two is in the books so let's take a look and see where things stand...

[The updated graphic appears on the screen.]



SLB: There you go, fans. Half of the Quarterfinals are in place with the current Number One contenders to the AWA World Tag Team Titles, the Soldiers of Fortune taking on the former AWA World Tag Team Champions - the Lights Out Express. In the other half of that bracket, we've got the match Gordon and Bucky were just discussing - Jackson and Martinez vs Carver and Martinez... and no, I'm not having an "incident" - it will be brother versus brother in the Quarterfinals here tonight.

[The graphic fades, leaving Lou behind.]

SLB: But before we can get to that, we've still got four big second round matches to go. And in just a few moments, we're going to head down to the ring for one my personally most anticipated matches of the weekend when the popular duo of the Shooting Stars take on the Gold Standard. That one should be-

[A loud voice calls out from off-camera.]

"WHERE ARE THEY, BLACKWELL?!"

[Lou looks confused for a moment, his gaze rapidly moving off-camera.]

SLB: I don't... Mr. Castillo?

[A red-faced Javier Castillo stomps into view, trailed closely by John Law.]

JC: Where are they?!

SLB: Where are... who? Who are you talking about?

[Castillo angrily grabs Blackwell by the lapels.]

JC: Don't mess with me, Blackwell! Not now!

SLB: Get your hands off me!

[Blackwell manages to wriggle free, trying to dust himself off.]

SLB: I don't have a clue what - or WHO - you're talking about.

[A fuming Castillo shakes his head.]

JC: Those mangy... rabid... the Dogs of War! Where are the Dogs of War?!

[Blackwell's jaw drops.]

SLB: You're looking for... they're not back from the ring yet. They should be heading through Chimpanz-

[Castillo jerks away, tossing a "COME ON!" at John Law over his shoulder as he storms out of view.]

SLB: Javier Castillo, the AWA President, on the hunt for the Dogs of War and... well...

[Blackwell shrugs.]

SLB: I think we should find out why. Jeff, you got a long enough cable on that camera? Let's get going!

[Blackwell and his cameraman turn to follow after Castillo and Law who have torn down a hallway, loud voices coming from the distance...

...and as the camera turns a corner, we catch up to El Presidente who looks absolutely fuming mad as the Dogs of War - battered and beaten but not broken - come through the curtain into the backstage area.]

JC: YOU!



[Isaiah Carpenter is the first to respond, looking up at the voice.]

IC: Not now, Castillo.

[Castillo steps closer.]

JC: Who the hell do you think you are to tell me not now?! I'll talk to anyone I want about whatever I want whenever I want!

What the hell just happened out there?!

[Pedro Perez eases Wade Walker into a seated position on a table, resting a hand on his shoulder.]

PP: You got eyes, Castillo. You saw it. We got beat.

[Castillo's jaw drops.]

JC: You got beat?! That's it?!

[Perez shrugs.]

PP: What more do you want?

[Castillo turns on Perez, jabbing a finger at the air in front of him.]

JC: What I wanted was for Martinez and Carver to be nowhere near winning this tournament! That was your job, right? And you told the world that your philosophy is simple. You do your job well and you get paid?

[Perez nods.]

JC: From where I'm sitting, friend... you got paid and you... three... FAILED!

[Perez grimaces.]

JC: I didn't give a damn if you won. I don't care about the money. All I wanted was to make sure Martinez and Carver LOST! And now you're out of it... and the Prophets are out of it thanks to that lunatic Shadoe Rage... and... now what?! Now I've got no one left to stand in their way! Now those two might have a clear path to win this whole thing?! Who do I rely on now? The Idols? That sociopath Jackson Hunter?!

[The Dogs take their verbal beating without a word.]

JC: Well?! Don't you have anything to say for yourselves?!

[Perez steps forward, drawing close to Castillo.]

PP: We don't make excuses. We lost. We got beat. And we gotta live with that.

[Perez gets closer, causing John Law to step closer as well.]

PP: And as for you... your money... heh... Korugun's money is good. That's the only reason you get to talk to us like that.

[Perez nods his head at Castillo who is suddenly silent.]

PP: Are we clear?

[Castillo pauses... then silently nods.]

PP: Good.

[Perez turns back to Wade Walker, Carpenter coming to help him as they each support their partner with an arm across their shoulders, walking him out of view as Castillo and Law are left behind.]

We fade into a shot backstage where we see the team of Bret Grayson and Takeshi Mifune, The Gold Standard, standing by. Right next to them, we see a flatscreen tv with the images of Cain Jackson and AJ Martinez standing victorious on the screen. Grayson turns to Mifune, excited.]

BG: WOOOOO!!! Did you just see what Cain and AJ did? They just took out the Dogs of War!

[Grayson is in his American flag-themed singlet, his Olympic Gold Medal proudly hanging around his neck.]

Mifune: Of course they did, Grayson-san. Did you expect me to have weaklings in Mifune-Gun?

[Mifune is dressed in plain black wrestling trunks with plain wrestling shoes.]

BG: Heck no! They've steamrolled their competition so far and now we've got to do the same!

[Mifune sneers.]

Mifune: I have seen our opponents. Small. FRAGILE.

[Grayson shakes his head.]

BG: Don't underestimate them, Mifune. I've seen them wrestle. They can fight with the best of them. Connors can darn near cave in a man's chest with his kicks.

[This seems to pique Mifune's interest.]

Mifune: A martial artist? When I see a martial artist, two thoughts enter my head: Do I grind their knee into dust? Or do I choke them out?

BG: Settle down. Forget the nostalgia. You're not in the hexagon, cage fighting with jujitsu black belts anymore, you sadistic old man. Besides, Connors and Downpour aren't that one dimensional.

They can fly. Heck, they practically soar.

Mifune: If you clip a bird's wings, they don't fly anymore.

[Mifune makes a motion with his hands like he's snapping a twig... or a limb. Grayson rolls his eyes at his tag team partner.]

BG: They can wrestle just about any style... American, Lucha, European. You name it, they know it. And most of all, they're practically fearless. Maybe they come off a bit goofy sometimes, but they're not going to back down from anybody. Much less you or me.

[An amused smile forms on Mifune's battle worn face, surely frightening children everywhere.]

Mifune: The ignorance of youth.

[He chuckles.]

Mifune: If they do not fear us, Grayson-san...

...we will give them a reason to.

BG: I'm not here to make anyone FEAR me... I'm here to make them RESPECT me, Mifune. I'm here to make them respect US as the greatest tag team in the world.

Mifune: What do you think respect is, Grayson-san? It is accepting your admiration... your FEAR of another person's superiority.

[Grayson looks to interrupt, but just sighs instead.]

Mifune: These two. They were given a rank... a position above us for the Stampede Cup. Do you understand this insult to us, Grayson-san? The AWA does not respect us. THEY do not respect us.

[He points to the camera, indicating the viewers watching them. There's a look of disbelief on Grayson's face.]

BG: Do you ever listen to yourself? The Shooting Stars earned that seeding.

Mifune: Perhaps. But we were not given our proper respect. And if they do not "respect" our superiority... our power...

...then we must show them the absolute limits of our ability.

BG: Why does this sound a lot more deviant than it should be?

Mifune: We must bring them to their knees and force them to acknowledge our superiority!

[Grayson looks like he's staring at an ancient malevolent being filled with evil intentions... which is exactly what Mifune is.]

BG: Do you really think it's that easy, old man? Don't underestimate The Shooting Stars' will and determination. Do I think we'll win? Hell yes, I do! But when I was their age, I won an Olympic Gold medal on a broken freakin' ankle! And I wouldn't put it past them to be crazy enough to try do the same against us if it came to that.

[Mifune simply ignores everything Grayson just said.]

Mifune: Break their spirits. Break their bones.

Crack. Crack. Crack.

Crunch. Crunch. Crunch.

Shatter them completely if we must.

[The Olympic Hero rubs his right temple.]

BG: Is everything a battle to the death to you? We can win our matches without destroying someone completely. I only care about winning. Total annihilation is not the only option.

Mifune: It is the responsibility of those that possess absolute power, Grayson-san. It is OUR responsibility! You do not waste your power.

You USE it.

Are we not, as you say... the gold standard of wrestling?

[Grayson hesitates, but nods in the affirmative.]

BG: We are.

Mifune: Then we must crush them! We must break them! We must DESTROY them. Because it will only be then that they will truly respect and FEAR and accept the fact that we are...

...ichiban.

[And with that, Mifune walks off, leaving Grayson with something to think about.]

Fade out to another area of backstage where we see a the shiny silver mask of Downpour leading over a knee as he finishes tying his boot on a plastic chair. In the background is his Shooting Star partner, Lee Connors and he's a'pacing. Nervousness visibly wracks his frame as he windmills arms to warm them up, rolling his neck and taking deep sighs.]

D: You can call her after.

LC: I know.

D: She's watching.

LC: I know.

D: She kn...

LC: I KNOW... \*sigh\*... I know, bud.

[Standing straight up, the luchadore moves over to Connors, putting both hands on his friends' shoulders.]

D: Friend...

[His accent starts really coming through.]

D: ...amigo... I need you at your best tonight. I need to know you are right there with me. Right now, fully, your head clear. This is a big night, maybe our biggest match. We're against maybe the most dangerous guy around here.

[Lee nods, moving away and breaking contact. Even turned away you can see his state of mind. He turns. Deep breath.]

LC: And an Olympic Gold Medalist.

[Downpour wags a finger in agreement.]

D: Exactamundo, Lee. Me, you, no one expects much from us. But here we are. Tag team rankings. Our chance to beat two of the scariest guys on the entire AWA roster and our chance to move on in a bracket full of really good teams.

LC: And the Idols.

[If his mask wasn't full faced, you'd see Downpour smirking.]

D: And the Idols.

So clear your mind friend. Do those exercises you teach Betty and you try and teach me. Breath in, breath out, concentrate, whatever it takes. Because in a few short minutes, amigo. Oh boy.

LC: Oh boy.

[Lee takes another deep breath, long in, long out. He opens his eyes slowing, hands reach down and tighten his well earned black belt.]

LC: Downpour. I'm ready. I'm here. I am ready to go out there and fight and battle like we've never battled before. The Gold Standard don't know what they are in for. They don't know what it's like to have the entire crowd behind them. The kids who wish they could be. The boys and girls who hope they can be. For everyone who thinks they can't, tonight here at the Battle of Saskatchewan.

We will show them... they can.

[And fade back out to the ring where Rebecca is standing.]

RO: The following contest is set for one fall with a thirty minute time limit and is a second round match in the 2017 Stampede Cup tournament! Introducing first...

[A loud roar from the crowd can be heard as "Kaze ni Nare" by Ayumi Nakamura begins to play over the PA system. As it plays, images of Takeshi Mifune beating the living hell out of various people (Wrestlers, referees, fans, Japanese celebrities, mascots... anyone and everyone) interspliced with footage of Bret Grayson suplexing opponent after opponent in the ring, are shown on the tron.

The crowd then pops big time, as they see the entranceway begin to fill with thick white mist, like a smoke cloud.

The entrance way floods with golden light, as if a rocket were taking off. The light drops, replaced by red, white, and blue small spotlights playing through the now-receding mist, as a previously unseen trapdoor opens up, revealing... none other than Bret Grayson rising from beneath the stage! The Olympic gold medalist is kneeling, his body covered by the American flag.]

#Oshiete yo hito wa naze sagashi tsuzukeru no#  
#Kagirinaku setsunai ashitano#  
#Yumeeeeee woooooooooooooooooooooooooo#

RO: Coming to the ring now, they weigh in at a combined weight of 473 pounds... "THE SHADOW WOLF" TAKESHI MIFUNE... BRET GRAYSON...

THE GOOOOOOLLLDDDDDD STTTTTTAAAAANNNNNDDDDDARD!!!

[The cheers grow louder, as we see "The Shadow Wolf" Takeshi Mifune emerging from the entrance to stand behind the kneeling Grayson, looking like everyone's worst nightmare. Mifune, a thick, stocky Japanese male, is wearing simple black trunks and short black boots with white tape on his wrists. On his head is a porkpie hat and in his hands is a black towel. Flanked on both sides, we see two Japanese "young boy" wrestling trainees in black tracksuits, waving black flags on a pole, bearing the "Mifune-Gun" logo.]

GM: The Gold Standard coming off that impressive win last night over The Hive, looking to become only the second team to win two matches in this tournament.

BW: And if they pick up the win, not only are they in the Quarterfinals but they're set up to face either Hunter and Colton or the World Tag Team Champions... and the titles may not be on the line in this tournament, Gordo, but a win over the tag champs at any time and place is huge.

GM: It certainly is... and with System Shock sidelined indefinitely due to injuries, you have to imagine the competition for the next shot at the tag titles is hot and heavy right now.

[Grayson and Mifune proceed to make their way down to the ring, with Grayson sliding in first and dropping to his knees in the middle of the ring, spreading the American flag open like a pair of wings as Mifune stands on the apron, waiting for one of the young boys to hold open the ropes for him. As the young boy does...]

"OHHHH!"

[...Mifune knocks him off the apron with a vicious overhand chop to the chest and proceeds to laugh at his student's misery, before he steps through the ropes and takes his place behind Grayson, crossing his arms over his chest, at the exact moment the song hits its climax and an entire stadium of Canadians scream out in Japanese...]

"KAZE NI NARRRREEEEEE!!!"

GM: The Gold Standard remains one of the polarizing teams in wrestling. At times, Grayson and Mifune seem to be amongst the most popular competitors on the roster - they certainly have the resume to impress - but their ruthlessness and brutality in the ring can turn people off as well.

BW: I'd cheer 'em, Gordo.

GM: Why is that?

BW: Because Mifune might slap my ears off my face if I don't.

GM: A fair point.

[The music fades as Grayson and Mifune go their separate ways, Grayson tugging the ropes to stay loose as Mifune paces like a caged animal...

...and with that, cutting blue lasers "drip" from above the entrance, down the large LED maple leaf and then the giant screen with a rain like effect as a smoke machine starts jettisoning a white cloud. A crash of thunder and then an electronic-synth beat hits, rising in crescendo and drops...

...into "You're The Best" to a loud cheer from the gathered crowd. Running around comes a barefoot "Cannonball" in his familiar white gi. He snaps out a sidekick... but then sees the enormity of the crowd and can't help but look around and experience the moment.

Rising from the gathering fog, right behind him, is Downpour. His masked head is bowed and as his upwards motion tops, he snaps up an arm to the sky, The Cannonball dropping to a horse stance and with a scream Connors erupts with a "KEEE AIIII!" punch accompanying another crash of thunder. Downpour is dressed in a full shimmery dark blue body suit, cut through with silver jags. His mask is full face, silver eyes and a full "hair" of silver and black tassels coming from the back and down onto his shoulders. He has similar tassels hanging from his boot tops and

wears a paneled "skirt" that looks like water drops of varying sizes. The two pause and then make their way down to the ring, reaching out to exchange claps with fans of all ages.]

RO: And their opponents... at a combined weight of 383 pounds... the team of "Cannonball" Lee Connors

[The Canadian crowd, knowing Connors background with Calgary, erupt with a LOUD cheer!]

RO: ...and Downpour... THE SHOOOOOOTING STARRRRRRRRRS!

[The crowd continues to cheer as Connors and Downpour make their way down the aisle, Mifune glaring at the duo as Grayson starts doing high jumps, swinging his knees up as he does.]

GM: If the Gold Standard is a polarizing team, the Shooting Stars are far from it. "Cannonball" Lee Connors was born and raised here in Canada... trained in Calgary with the Coltons... these fans are solidly behind him.

[Connors rushes the ring, leaping up to swing his legs underneath the bottom rope, and keeps on spinning until he takes a knee on the canvas, looking up at the Gold Standard. Downpour slingshots over the top rope into a front roll, coming up to a knee as well to cheers from the crowd.]

GM: And this should be a very interesting encounter, fans. A definite clash of styles between these two teams, both looking to advance to the Quarterfinals.

[The music fades, the lights all coming back to normal as Connors and Downpour take to their feet, trading a high five as they circle back to their own corner, looking across at the Gold Standard.]

GM: This one is set to begin. Scott Ezra, the man in the middle for this one, giving some final words to both teams and...

"DING! DING! DING!"

[Mifune steps out as Grayson steps forward, lurching over in an amateur-style stance, moving towards Downpour who circles to his side, looking for an opening.]

GM: We're off and running in this one. One fall, thirty minute time limit...

[Grayson makes a lunge, looking to snatch both of Downpour's legs but the luchador cartwheels to the side to avoid it, shaking his head as the crowd "oooohs" the athletic display.]

GM: Nice move there to avoid the takedown.

[The Olympic gold medalist glares at the luchador as he climbs back to his feet.]

GM: Grayson back up... again on the move...

[Grayson shoots in, ducking down, snaring a rear waistlock with ease...

...but Downpour grabs the wrist before the hold can be sunk in, twisting the arm around into a wristlock, running towards the corner...]

GM: Downpour.. right up the buckles...

[The luchador leaps off the top, twisting around into an armdrag, flinging Grayson down to the canvas...]

GM: What an armdrag out of Downpour!

[Grayson comes up quick, charging in again...

...but Downpour sidesteps, pushing Grayson towards the ropes where he rebounds back...]

GM: OVERHEAD ARMDRAG!

[Grayson pops up again, charging in a second time...]

GM: Another armdrag, up and over goes Grayson!

[The Olympian bails out, rolling to the floor to regroup as the Canadian crowd cheers the flurry of offense. Downpour points to the sky, getting a running start into the far ropes...]

GM: Downpour off the far side, coming on strong!

[Grayson dives out of the way as Downpour throws himself into a handspring into the ropes, using them to spring back into a backflip, landing on a knee on the mat to cheers.]

GM: And Downpour having some fun out here!

BW: I'm not sure if-

[Grayson angrily slaps his hands down on the apron, glaring up at the luchador with a touch of color in his cheeks. Takeshi Mifune has more than a touch of color, stalking down the apron, shouting in Japanese at his partner.]

"Oh yeah?! You try it!"

[Grayson punctuates his challenge, rolling under the ropes and rapidly slapping Mifune's shoulder. The Shadow Wolf glares at his partner before stepping through the ropes.]

GM: Those two are constantly walking a tightrope between being a good unit and just beating the heck out of one another.

[Mifune walks away from the corner towards a waiting Downpour, lunging into a collar and elbow tieup.]

GM: Right to the lockup... Mifune pushing Downpour back across the ring...

[The leader of Mifune-gun backs the luchador up into the ropes, the referee promptly stepping in to call for a break...

...and Mifune obliges, swinging his arm back for an overhand chop...]

GM: Big chop!

[...but as Downpour attempts to brace himself for the blow, Mifune holds up, cracking a smile as he lightly pats Downpour on the head.]

GM: Oh ho... and now it's Mifune trying to embarrass Downpour like the luchador did to the Olympic gold medalist.



[Mifune turns towards his corner, looking over at Grayson who mockingly applauds.]

GM: And I'm not sure if Grayson was impressed with that or not but...

[As Downpour steps off the ropes, the two men tie up again, getting a little further away from the ropes. Mifune grabs the wrist, twisting around into an armwringer...]

GM: Mifune wrenching on that arm now... he knows so many ways to hurt someone...

[Downpour slaps at his shoulder a couple of times...

...and then front rolls over, coming up to flip back the other way, and then a third quick move allows him to twist Mifune's arm, putting him down on the mat where Downpour quickly drops a leg across the arm!]

GM: Ohhh! And Downpour is quick to use those lucha libre skills to turn things around on Mifune.

[Grabbing the wrist again, Downpour twists the arm around, dragging Mifune to his feet and back to the Shooting Stars' corner where he slaps the outstretched hand of Lee Connors to a big Canadian cheer!]

GM: And in comes the Canadian, "Cannonball" Lee Connors to a big reaction...

[From the outside, Connors climbs the ropes, leaping off with an overhead chop down across Mifune's twisted bicep!]

GM: Nice doubleteam there by the Shooting Stars, putting their focus on the arm of Takeshi Mifune early on in this one.

[Mifune stumbles away as Connors pursues, grabbing the arm, twisting it once, and then wrapping it around into a hammerlock...]

GM: Connors right into the hammerlock now...

[With the arm trapped, Connors goes low with a spinning back legsweep, tripping up Mifune and causing him to fall backwards onto his own hammerlocked arm!]

GM: Ohhh! Mifune goes right down onto his own arm and-

[Connors comes right back up while Mifune's arm is still trapped under him, snapping off a front somersault...]

GM: SOMERSAULT BACKSPLASH RIGHT DOWN ON MIFUNE!

BW: And right down on Mifune's arm too since it was still stuck under him, sandwiching the arm between Mifune and the mat!

[Mifune jerks his arm free, grimacing and spitting some angry words in Japanese towards Connors who grabs the wrist, twisting it around again...]

GM: And right back to the wristlock we go, Connors bringing Mifune up to his feet again... and another quick tag.

[Downpour slingshots over the top rope, landing on the mat alongside his partner. He grabs Mifune's other arm, joining his partner in a double armtwist...]

GM: Double armtwist... and back the other way...

[With the arms sufficiently cranked, the Shooting Stars connect with a double knife edge chop that knocks Mifune down to the mat in a seated position...

...and a hard double soccer kick to the chest sends him down to the mat! The crowd cheers as Connors exits and Downpour attempts the first pin attempt of the match.]

GM: We've got one! We've got- just the one count there for Downpour!

[Downpour grabs the arm, twisting it around into a straddling rear armbar, cranking on the limb as Mifune cries out, staring across the ring at a smirking Bret Grayson.]

GM: And if I didn't know any better, Bucky, I'd say Bret Grayson is pleased with this development.

BW: He might be, Gordo. Mifune was giving him a hard time about getting shown up by Downpour so seeing the Shadow Wolf being worked over by the Shooting Stars might be music to Grayson's eyes right about now.

GM: Music to his eyes? You certainly have a way with words, Buckthorn.

[Mifune manages to get his feet underneath himself, bringing himself to a standing position as Downpour switches to a standing armbar, trapping the arm under his armpit...]

GM: Downpour hanging onto the arm, continuing to apply the pressure as Mifune tries to walk him back, forcing him into the wrong part of town...

[The Shadow Wolf forces the 5'11, 206 pound luchador back into the Gold Standard's corner, holding him there for a moment as the referee calls for a break...

...and when Downpour lets go of the arm, Mifune uses the off-arm to drive a vicious elbowstrike into the jaw before slapping Bret Grayson's hand.]

GM: It's the Gold Standard with the tag this time.

[Grayson comes in quick, lowering his shoulder as he slams it into the gut of Downpour once, twice, three times...]

GM: And now it's Grayson laying in some hard shots in the corner...

[Straightening up, the Olympic gold medalist laces a right hand across the jaw, knocking Downpour down to a knee. The referee warns for the closed fist as Grayson backs off, hands raised...

...and Takeshi Mifune leans over the ropes, looping his fingers into the eyeholes of Downpour's mask, pulling him back into the buckles where he promptly wraps his arm around the throat, choking Downpour as the referee admonishes Grayson.]

GM: Mifune's going at him behind the ref's back and-

[Grayson suddenly rushes the corner as Mifune lets go...

...and Downpour kicks his legs up, forcing Grayson to run into the raised feet!]

GM: Ohhh! Facefirst to the boot!

[Downpour snaps off a back elbow to the jaw of Mifune, knocking him off the apron to cheers...]

GM: Downpour battles free... hops up to the middle rope...

[But as Grayson makes a lunge at him, Downpour leaps over him, doing a front roll across the canvas, coming to his feet near his own corner as Grayson charges back the other way at him...]

GM: Downpour to the second rope again...

[And blindly, the luchador springs off the ropes, twisting into a crossbody that floors the charging Grayson to cheers from the Canadian crowd!]

GM: Oh my! Down goes Grayson... but Downpour doesn't even try for the cover there, rolling right off... to the ropes he goes...

[Grayson scrambles up as Downpour rushes past him, throwing himself up and catching the ropes as he swings his legs through and back around in a feint kick...]

GM: Whoa!

[The Olympian charges as Downpour lowers the shoulder, elevating him up and over... but Grayson lands on the apron, snatching the masked man by the hood, running him down the length of the apron...]

GM: To the corner!

[But Grayson's attempt to smash Downpour's head into the top turnbuckle is halted by a raised boot by Downpour on the buckles...]

GM: Blocked by Downpour... ohh! Hard elbow under the chin sends Grayson staggering back...

[Downpour promptly leaps to the middle rope, springing back with a dropkick on the chin that sends Grayson falling down to the floor again!]

GM: And listen to these fans here in Mosaic Stadium getting behind the Shooting Stars!

[The luchador makes his way to the corner, slapping the offered hand of Lee Connors...]

GM: There's the tag... Connors on the apron... taking aim...

[And as Grayson regains his feet, Connors shuffles his down the apron, snapping off a thrust kick to the jaw...]

"WHAAAAAAAAAAAAAACK!"

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

[...a blow that staggers Grayson as Connors turns away from him, facing the inside of the ring...]

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

GM: STANDING MOONSAULT OFF THE APRON TO THE FLOOR!

[A grinning Connors regains his feet, looking out on the 40,000+ Canadian crowd with a loud "YEAH! LET'S DO THIS!" before pulling the dazed Grayson off the ringside mats, chucking him back inside the ring...]

GM: Connors puts Grayson back in... the Shooting Stars looking good early on in this one...

[With Grayson down on the mat, Connors climbs onto the apron and keeps on climbing...]

GM: Wait a second!

BW: He's going up top?! Already?!

GM: Lee Connors perhaps looking for a quick win tonight in Mosaic Stadium... all the way to the top now...

[Connors leaps into the air, flipping backwards while sailing forward...]

GM: SHOOTING STAR PRESS!

[...but Bret Grayson rolls out of the way to avoid the potential match-ending move...

...which doesn't stop Lee Connors who overrotates, landing on his feet...]

GM: WHOA!

[...and then snaps off a standing Shooting Star Press almost immediately, crashing down onto Grayson and tightly wrapping up the legs!]

GM: GOOD GRIEF! WHAT A MOVE BY LEE CONNORS! HE'S GOT ONE! HE'S GOT TWO! HE'S GOT!-

[The crowd groans as the Olympic gold medalist kicks out at two and change.]

GM: Near fall there for the Shooting Stars - and they are rolling right now, fans!

[Connors claps his hands together in frustration at the near fall, turning back towards Grayson who is attempting to crawl to his corner and a waiting Takeshi Mifune.]

GM: Connors cuts off Grayson before he can get to the corner, pulling him back to the Shooting Stars' half of the ring now... and another tag.

BW: The Shooting Stars are looking good so far. Quick tags, cutting the ring in half, keeping the fresh man in...

[Connors pulls Grayson to his feet, throwing a rounding kick to the midsection that knocks him back into the Stars' corner. Downpour steps in alongside him, both men measuring the Olympian...]

GM: Ohh! Double round kick to the body in the buckles!

[Connors steps out as Downpour stays behind, using a snapmare to take Grayson over into a seated position...

...and leaps high, snapping off a dropkick to the back of the head!]

GM: Dropkick on target - and Downpour with another cover... and another two count there for the Shooting Stars!

[The man from Puerto Vallarta climbs to his feet, watching as Bret Grayson again tries to crawl across the ring to his corner but instead wobbles over towards the

ropes, hanging onto them to stay on his feet as Downpour measures him from a distance...]

GM: Downpour's got Grayson in his sights... here we go!

[The luchador charges, leaping up onto the shoulders for a rana takedown...

...but as he attempts the move, Grayson refuses to budge and Downpour flips off the shoulders, landing on his feet roughly...]

GM: Oh! Mifune grabbed the tights! Mifune blocked that move and-

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

[The crowd groans as Grayson FLATTENS Downpour with a huge running, lunging clothesline that takes Grayson down to his knees from his own effort.]

GM: What a huge clothesline! Downpour nearly got his head taken right off his shoulders!

[Grayson pushes up off the mat, throwing a glance to the corner where Mifune nods, raising his leg up through the ropes.]

GM: Grayson bringing Downpour to his feet... and rams him right into Mifune's knee! There's another tag for the Gold Standard.

[Mifune comes in through the ropes, squaring up as Grayson pushes Downpour back into their corner. The Shadow Wolf throws a trio of hard elbow strikes, stunning the masked man before he switches to kicks to the body.]

GM: Mifune's all over Downpour in the corner, Connors screaming for the referee to break it up!

[The official obliges and Mifune backs off, a sadistic smile on his face as the referee shouts at him.]

GM: Mifune on the way back in...

[Downpour throws a desperation overhead chop, trying to stun Mifune but the Shadow Wolf shakes it off...

...and then SMASHES an overhead chop of his own across the chest!]

"WHAAAAAAAAAAAAAP!"

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

[Mifune sneers, looking out at the crowd.]

"WHAAAAAAAAAAAAAP!"

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

"WHAAAAAAAAAAAAAP!"

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

"WHAAAAAAAAAAAAAP!"

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

"WHAAAAAAAAAAAAAP!"

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

[Downpour loops his arms over the top rope, trying to stay on his feet as Mifune looks out at the crowd, mockingly clapping his hands together.]

"MI-FU-NE!" "MI-FU-NE!"

[The crowd jeers as Mifune laughs at them, winding up again...]

"WHAAAAAAAAAAAAAP!"

"WHAAAAAAAAAAAAAP!"

"WHAAAAAAAAAAAAAP!"

"WHAAAAAAAAAAAAAP!"

"WHAAAAAAAAAAAAAP!"

"WHAAAAAAAAAAAAAP!"

"WHAAAAAAAAAAAAAP!"

"WHAAAAAAAAAAAAAP!"

[With the referee shouting and the fans jeering, Mifune raises his arms innocently again, backing off and allowing Downpour to slide down to a seated position in the corner.]

GM: Takeshi Mifune with some machine gun chops ala Ryan Martinez of his own.

BW: Heck, he probably taught those to Martinez, Gordo.

GM: It's certainly a possibility. Ryan Martinez has made it no secret that he trained under Mifune in the Tiger Paw Dojo when he was a young boy in this sport... and it was some of the most miserable time of his life.

BW: We've seen how Mifune treats his partners... the ring attendants... the referees... imagine how he treats some punk kid training under him?

GM: I'd rather not.

[Mifune steps back in again, pressing his boot up against the masked face of Downpour, raking his boot across it...]

GM: Bootscrapes in the corner... they may not have the same effect that they would if Downpour wasn't wearing that mask but-

BW: I'm sure it doesn't tickle even if he's slightly protected.

[Mifune rakes the boot across again and again... and then plants his boot on the throat, laughing sadistically as the referee counts and Downpour flails his legs, gasping for air.]

GM: The referee's count to three... now four... now fi- no! Broken JUST before five... and that would've been a disqualification and a trip to the Quarterfinals for the Shooting Stars...

BW: Well, if anyone knows how long they can hurt someone without getting rung up for it... it'd be Mifune, Gordo.

[Mifune takes a little walk around the ring, looking over to the corner where Lee Connors is slapping the top turnbuckle, cheering on his partner.]

GM: Lee Connors calling for Downpour to get over there... get the tag...

[The Shadow Wolf turns back towards the masked man who has managed to get to all fours. He points to him... then to the crowd... and starts stomping his foot...]

"LET'S GO, MASK MAN!"

[Mifune does a little clap clap clapclapclap that causes the crowd to jeer...

...and then DIVES to his knees, jamming his knee into the ribs of Downpour!]

GM: Ohh! Hard kneestrike to the ribs... Mifune staying down him...

[Pinning Downpour's torso to the mat, Mifune SLAMS his knee into the ribs a second time... and a third time...

...and then spins to sit on the small of the back, locking his fingers under the chin of the luchador.]

GM: A modified camel clutch applied here... keeping Downpour flattened out though so it's more of a seated reverse chinlock, pulling back on the chin, cranking the neck...

[Grayson paces the apron a little, impatient as he watches the weardown hold applied.]

GM: Bret Grayson looks like he'd love nothing more to climb right back in there and toss Downpour around a little with some of those signature suplexes he's so well-known for.

[Mifune pulls back a little harder, watching as the referee checks to see if there will be a submission... and upon the signal that there won't be, Mifune digs his fingers into the eyehole of Downpour's mask, pulling back on it, ripping and stretching the material...]

GM: He's ripping the mask!

BW: Oh, that's a no-no in lucha libre culture, Gordo.

GM: It certainly is... and now Mifune's getting a warning for that as well.

BW: What for? We're not in Mexico!

GM: We will be in just over a month's time and if Mifune tries this kind of thing down there, there's liable to be a riot!

BW: Something else Martinez learned from him.

[Mifune climbs to his feet, stomping the small of Downpour's back before slapping the offered hand of his partner.]

GM: Another tag brings Bret Grayson in...

[Grayson slides into the ring, reaching down to snare a waistlock on the downed luchador...]

GM: Look at this now!

[...and powers him right up, over, and DOWN with a bridging German Suplex!]

GM: Thunderous suplex shakes the ring, shakes the spine... and that's a pin attempt that gets one! Gets two! But that's all!

[Grayson climbs to his feet, stomping the ribs of Downpour a few times before pointing a threatening finger at Lee Connors who has one leg through the ropes, threatening to come in to help his partner...]

GM: The referee cutting off Cannonball. I know he wants to help his partner but in a situation like this, trying to come in there does the opposite.

BW: That's right. It distracts the referee and allows for...

[Mifune steps through the ropes, clapping his hands over his head before leaping up and dropping a knee down into Downpour's ribcage!]

BW: ...this!

[Grayson steps out as Mifune stays down on the luchador, ignoring the referee's questions about a tag as he grinds his kneecap back and forth on the exposed ribcage.]

GM: Mifune and Grayson seem to have painted a bullseye on the ribs of Downpour now... Lee Connors again begging his partner to get over there and make a tag.

[Mifune hauls Downpour to his feet, throwing a knife edge chop to the ribs that sends him falling back into the ropes.]

GM: Up again the ropes... Mifune's got him trapped there...

[Grabbing the top rope to keep Downpour in place, Mifune swings his knee up into the ribcage over and over, landing about a half dozen kneelifts before he steps back, allowing Downpour to sink down to his knees, collapsing forward into referee's position...]

GM: Mifune's offense is always so simple yet effective. He's got Downpour in a bad, bad way right now and Lee Connors is beside himself waiting to get into the ring to see if he can do something about this.

[The Shadow Wolf walks around the downed luchador, measuring his man...]

"WHAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAACK!"

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

[...and BURIES a soccer-style kick into the ribs, flipping Downpour onto his back with a grunt of pain.]

GM: Good grief! That's a good way to break some ribs right there.

BW: You don't think he knows that? And with Downpour's aerial offense being his go-to arsenal, Mifune knows it's hard to flip and fly if you can't breathe... and right about now, Downpour is discovering it's becoming very difficult to get a good breath without a lot of pain.

[Mifune reaches down, dragging Downpour to his feet...

...where Downpour slaps the hand away, throwing a knife edge chop to cheers!]

GM: Downpour trying to fight back!

[The luchador lands an overhead chop as well... then jumps into a Mongolian chop...

...all of which do absolutely nothing to Mifune who delivers a push kick to the chest, sending Downpour through the ropes and out to the floor!]



"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

[With a sneer, Mifune runs a hand over his chest where Downpour struck him. He shakes his head before dropping to his back, rolling under the ropes to the floor.]

GM: And now Mifune's going to the outside... this can't be good news for Downpour!

[Mifune pulls the masked man up...]

"CLAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAANG!"

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

GM: Irish whip into the ringside railing! Oh my!

[Downpour crumples against the steel, clutching his ribs that smashed into the barricade as Mifune approaches, looking to do even more damage...]

GM: Mifune's gonna send him back the other way...

[The second whip sends Downpour towards the ring...

...where the luchador leaps up, diving over the bottom rope into the ring where he starts crawling for his life!]

GM: Downpour making the move! Downpour trying to get to his partner!

[The crowd cheers as Downpour clears several feet quickly, Connors thrusting his hand out towards his partner...]

GM: Mifune got caught off-guard by that... rolls back in himself...

[The Shadow Wolf gets to his feet, rushing across the ring towards the corner where Lee Connors is standing...

...and Connors grabs the top rope, sensing an attack as he leaps up, swinging his feet into the oncoming Mifune's head!]

GM: Ohh! He caught him coming in!

[The blow sends Mifune staggering back as Downpour keeps crawling towards the corner, pushing up to his knees and...]

GM: TA- NO!

[Mifune throws himself at the legs, wrapping up Downpour's left leg, trying to hyperextend the knee!]

GM: KNEEBAR! KNEEBAR!

[Downpour claws at the canvas, screaming in pain as Connors stretches over the ropes, trying to reach his partner...]

GM: Mifune with the kneebar out of nowhere, trying to prevent the tag...

[With Downpour momentarily immobilized, Mifune rolls out of the kneebar, keeping his grip on the leg to drag Downpour back to the middle of the ring where he tucks his foot behind the kneecap, lifting Downpour's leg high...

...and STOMPING his kneecap into the canvas!]

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

[Downpour rolls onto his back, clutching his knee in pain as Mifune smirks down at him.]

"FIFTEEN MINUTES! FIFTEEN MINUTES! FIFTEEN MINUTES GONE BY!"

GM: We've reached the halfway point in the time limit for this one as Mifune grabs the leg, looking to do some more damage to the knee...

[Holding the foot, Mifune lashes out with a kick to the knee... and another... and a third before letting go, watches as Downpour rolls back and forth clutching his leg on the canvas.]

GM: Mifune's got Downpour in a lot of trouble now - trouble with the ribs at first and now trouble with the knee as well.

[He watches as Downpour uses the ropes to pull himself to his feet, edging alongside him...

...and delivers a vicious kick to the back of the knee, sweeping the leg out as Downpour lands hard on the back of his head!]

GM: Good grief!

[Grabbing the top rope, Mifune stomps and stomps and stomps at the knee until Downpour rolls under the ropes to the floor...]

GM: Mifune's not done though, he's going out after- no, he's not! The referee forcing him back and-

[With Mifune and the official engaged, Grayson drops off the apron, takes aim on the standing Downpour...

...and DIVES into a clip, driving his shoulder into the back of the knee!]

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

[The crowd is loudly jeering now as Downpour wails in pain on the floor. Lee Connors shouts to the official who turns around, a puzzled expression on his face as Grayson climbs back up on the apron...]

GM: Grayson taking a shot at that knee behind the official's back... and Mifune looks pleased, Bucky.

BW: Hey, it's no secret that he wants more out of Grayson than he gets at times. Maybe the Olympic gold medalist is finally coming around.

[Mifune brushes past the official, ignoring his protests as he steps out on the apron, dropping down on the floor...]

GM: Back out on the floor, Mifune pulling Downpour to his feet...

[Holding the mask, he SLAMS his masked face down onto the timekeeper's table, sending Rebecca Ortiz and the timekeeper scrambling away.]

GM: Down onto the table facefirst he goes... look out here...

[Shoving him back onto the table, Mifune grabs Downpour's leg, lifting it high and SLAMS the back of the knee down onto the edge of the table...]

GM: Oh, come on!

BW: Mifune's dissecting him out there!

[...and again...]

GM: That's twice that Downpour has had his knee driven down into the edge of the table and-

[...and again.]

GM: Ahhhh!

[Mifune sneers up at the protesting official as he shoves Downpour off the table, under the ropes, and back inside the ring.]

GM: The Shadow Wolf puts the masked man back in... rolling in after him again...

[Mifune climbs to a knee, allowing Downpour to waste valuable energy crawling towards his own corner. The masked man gets within a few feet before Mifune approaches, grabbing him by the ankle again...]

GM: Mifune cuts off that tag again, grabbing hold of the ankle...

[But Downpour promptly rolls to his back, using his free leg to kick Mifune off and down to the canvas!]

GM: Downpour kicks free! This is his chance!

[Downpour rolls back to all fours, the crowd quickly worked into a frenzy as they see a tag coming. He reaches up, stretching out...

...which is when Bret Grayson comes charging through the ropes into the ring.]

GM: Grayson's in! The Olympian is in!

[But before he can get involved, the referee spots him, cutting off the effort to intervene!]

GM: No! The referee cuts him off! The referee-

[The crowd ROARS as Downpour makes one more lunge!]

GM: TAG!

[Connors slingshots over the top rope, pumping his fists as he rushes towards the rising Mifune...]

GM: Connors is in! And he's been waiting for this one, fans!

[As Mifune gets up, Connors greets him with a series of quick rights and lefts, bouncing them off the chest and midsection, doubling him up before a front kick straightens Mifune up...]

GM: Irish whip... ROUNDHOUSE!

[The crowd ROARS at a high roundhouse finding the mark on the rebounding Mifune, taking him right off his feet!]

GM: OHHH! WHAT A KICK!

[Connors engages in a quick kata, turning back towards Mifune...

...and gets grabbed by the referee, physically restrained from going any further!]

GM: What the-?!

BW: The referee didn't see the tag! He's waving it off!

[The crowd jeers loudly as Connors pleads with the official to no success, being forced back as Grayson comes rushing back in, grabbing Downpour by the legs, dragging him back towards the Gold Standard's corner...]

GM: You've gotta be kidding me! Not only did the tag get waved off but Downpour just got dragged back into the wrong part of town.

[Coming to his feet, Mifune stumbles to his corner...]

GM: And the referee saw THAT tag, I suppose. Grayson back in...

[Pulling Downpour off the mat, Grayson wraps his powerful arms around him, popping his hips to fling him up, over, and down with a released belly-to-belly throw!]

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

GM: What a suplex by Grayson! Lee Connors is shouting at the official... shouting at Grayson as well... but all that emotion won't help him right now, fans. Lee Connors made the tag but the referee didn't see it and that completely upends his chance to get his team back into this.

[Grayson turns to Mifune, wrapping up the legs in a surfboard setup...]

"This one's for you, oldtimer!"

[...and leaps up, stomping both kneecaps into the canvas!]

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

GM: And Bret Grayson taking a page out of his own partner's playbook with that double stomp on the knees... and that's got Downpour REALLY hurting now as we're now about eighteen minutes into this tremendous battle between two up and coming tag teams here in the AWA.

BW: And if one of these teams can go on to win this tournament, you can remove that "up and coming" status permanently, daddy.

GM: Absolutely.

[Grayson smirks at Mifune who nods approvingly.]

GM: Mifune seems to have liked that, Bucky.

BW: Well, it hurt... a lot probably... so... yeah.

GM: They don't call him the best color man on the planet for nothing, folks.

[Grayson pulls Downpour to his knees, grabbing the mask as he leans closer.]

“YOU THINK YOU CAN HANG WITH US?! YOU THINK YOU CAN HANG WITH AN OLYMPIC GOLD MEDALIST?!”

[Grayson paintbrushes Downpour back and forth a few times, earning more jeers before he pulls him the rest of the way to his feet, grabbing the arm...]

GM: Whip to the neutral corner... Grayson coming on strong!

[The Olympian charges the corner...

...where Downpour kicks his legs up, snaring them around Grayson's head on the way in, and pushes off the buckles, swinging him around into a rana!]

GM: OH MY!

[The crowd ROARS for the counter as Downpour ends up back on all fours, facing his corner again as Lee Connors pounds his fist into the buckle, screaming for his partner to make the tag...]

GM: We've got ourselves a footrace now! Can Downpour get there and make the tag?!

[The luchador is again crawling across the ring, stretching and straining to get his hand on his partner's...]

GM: Lee Connors is waiting for the tag!

BW: He's been waiting for the tag a long time now, Gordo.

GM: This may be their best shot! Downpour's got a clear line... Downpour's got... ohhh!

[The crowd groans as Grayson rolls over, stretching out his arms and grabs the foot of Downpour, preventing him from being just out of reach again...]

GM: Grayson cuts him off! Grayson cuts him off and-

[The crowd noise gets louder as Grayson works his way to his feet, twisting the foot in his hands...]

GM: LIBERTY LOCK! HE LOCKS IN THE ANKLELOCK!

[But Downpour quickly flips over onto his back, drawing his legs towards his chest, and with one good leg, manages to kick Grayson off and down to the mat!]

GM: NO! DOWNPOUR SLIPS OUT!

[The masked man rolls over again, pushing up to his knees as Grayson scrambles off the mat and...]

GM: TAG!

[The Canadian crowd ERUPTS for the tag coming to the Canadian who slingshots over the top rope, catching an incoming Grayson with a stiff kick to the chest, sending him back down to the mat, flipping ass over teakettle across the ring.]

GM: Connors kicks him on the way in...

[The 177 pounder hits the ground running, sprinting across the ring, leaping into the air...

...and DRIVES both knees into a surprised Takeshi Mifune, sending him flying off the apron to the floor!]

GM: OHHH! DOUBLE KNEES SENDS MIFUNE TO THE FLOOR!

“TEN MINUTES REMAIN! TEN MINUTES!”

[Connors whips back around, watching as Grayson comes up to his feet, lunging at the Canadian Karate Kid with a clothesline...

...but Grayson drops backwards, deftly avoiding the clothesline to an “oooooooooh” from the sold-out partisan crowd!]

GM: WHAT THE...?!

[Connors kips right back up to his feet, leaping into the air, and snapping his foot back in a backflip kick...]

GM: OHHHH! RIGHT BETWEEN THE EYES!

[The flipping kick knocks Grayson to the canvas as Connors looks around, checking to see if anyone is coming for him...]

GM: Connors pulls Grayson off the mat... Irish whip...

[Connors ducks under another wild clothesline attempt, watching as Grayson rebounds back towards him. The Winnipeg native drops to a knee, throwing a backhand into the midsection as he lets loose a guttural roar, holding the position as Grayson stumbles backwards, doubling up...]

GM: JCVD! The backfist down to the gut and...

[Connors throws himself back into the ropes, bouncing off, leaping high...]

GM: AXE KICK! RIGHT TO THE BACK OF THE HEAD!

[Connors flips Grayson over, diving across.]

GM: ONNNNNNNNNNE! TWOOOOOOOOOO! THR-

[But Grayson’s shoulder pops up off the mat, breaking the pin!]

GM: Ohhh! Grayson slips out in time!

[Connors slaps his hands together, climbing to his feet as he again throws a look around...]

GM: Connors keeping his head on a swivel, not wanting to get caught from behind by Mifune...

BW: Smart kid... dumb kid but smart.

[Connors again pulls Grayson off the mat, throwing a pair of knife edge chops to the chest, sending him stumbling back into the neutral corner...]

GM: Grayson falls back to the corner...

[Connors pumps a fist, pointing to the roaring crowd as he sprints across the ring, leaping up into monkey flip position...]

GM: Out of the- no, countered!

[Grayson lifts him up, twisting around to deposit Connors on the top turnbuckle!]

GM: Oh! He puts Connors up top... big right hand... another!

[Grayson suddenly breaks away, getting a running start back in...

....but Connors leaps off his perch, tucking his knees and riding Grayson down to the canvas!]

GM: METEORA! METEORA! HOOKS THE LEGS!

[The referee dives to the canvas!]

GM: ONNNNNNNNNNE! TWOOOOOOOOOOOO! THREEEEEEEE-

“OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!”

GM: SHOULDER UP! SHOULDER JUST BARELY UP!

BW: This crowd is losing their damn minds, Gordo!

GM: They're cheering this young man from Canada on, trying to root him to victory... trying to inspire him to win this thing and move on to the Quarterfinals! Just over eight minutes left in the time limit... can he get it done?!

[Connors looks to his corner where Downpour is standing but is visibly trying to keep weight off one of his legs...

...and turns back towards a rising Grayson, taking aim...]

GM: Connors squares up...

[The Karate Kid leans down, slapping the mat with both hands...]

GM: Here we go!

[Connors leaps up, snapping a right foot into the ribs of Grayson...]

GM: Leaping kick to the body!

[And right back up with a left to the other side...]

GM: Make it two!

[With the Canadian crowd roaring, Connors keeps on jumping, alternating kicks to each side of the ribcage, driving Grayson all the way back to the corner...]

GM: Connors has got Grayson on the run!

[...where he leaps to the middle rope, springing up and snapping his foot off the back of Grayson's head!]

“OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!”

[Grabbing Grayson by the arm, Connors shoots him across to the opposite corner. He holds up his right palm for all to see, grinning broadly as he breaks into a sprint...]

GM: PALM STRI-

[...but Grayson comes several feet out of the corner, catching the incoming Connors around the torso...]

GM: BELLY TO...

[...and HURLS the Canadian Karate Kid into the buckles!]

GM: OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!

[Grayson comes up off the mat, gesturing wildly, trashtalking the downed Connors as Mifune pulls himself up on the apron, insistently sticking out a hand...]

GM: Grayson laid out Connors... and there's the tag to Mifune.

[Mifune steps in, pulling Connors to his feet...]

"SLAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAP!"

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

GM: Mifune just SLAPPED Connors across the face!

[The blow staggers the Canadian Karate Kid, causing him to dip down to a knee as Mifune stands over him menacingly...]

"SLAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAP!"

"SLAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAP!"

[One from each hand connects this time, leaving red welts across the cheeks of Connors who sways under the impact, falling to the side where he plants a hand on the canvas to keep from falling...

...and then lifts his head again, staring up at Mifune to a huge cheer!]

GM: Look at this! Connors looking right at him, daring him to-

"SLAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAP!"

"SLAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAP!"

"SLAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAP!"

"SLAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAP!"

[Two from each side this time snaps Connors' head to and fro, knocking him down on all fours, an arm slipping out from under him as his face presses against the canvas...]

BW: Stay down, kid.

GM: Mifune unleashing those hellacious slaps - those brutal open-handed blows across the face! But Lee Connors is taking them all so far and... look at this, Bucky. The kid's getting up again!

[Connors pushes up to his knees again, staring up at Mifune with determined eyes.]

"SLAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAP!"

"SLAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAP!"



"SLAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAP!"  
"SLAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAP!"  
"SLAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAP!"  
"SLAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAP!"

[The barrage of blows snaps his head back, dumping him down on the canvas in a heap. The referee steps in, holding an arm in front of Mifune who stares down at Connors, gesturing at him...]

GM: He might've knocked him cold there, Bucky!

BW: You may be right. The referee's checking to see if Connors is conscious... if he can defend himself. That's the standard, right? You've gotta be able to defend yourself.

GM: Right now, Lee Connors is laid out on the mat... Mifune standing over him like the sadistic animal that he is...

[The referee again pushes Mifune back. This time, the Shadow Wolf throws a dismissive gesture at Connors, walking arrogantly away to shout in Japanese at a pair of young teens in the front row waving a sign that reads "CONNORS' CUP!"]

GM: Mifune with some words for-

BW: Gordo, look at the kid.

GM: My stars... can you believe that?

[The fans in Mosaic Stadium are absolutely ROARING once more as Lee Connors doesn't just sit up... doesn't just get to his knees...

...but Lee Connors stands - barely, a wobble working at his balance - and stares across defiantly at Takeshi Mifune before extending his arms...]

GM: Oh my goodness.

[The crowd buzzes in shock as Connors beckons Mifune towards him. Mifune's eyes flash with surprise... then amusement... then annoyance as he nods, stalking towards Connors...

...who suddenly whips around in a spinning back roundhouse, his foot snapping off the cheekbone of the Shadow Wolf!]

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

[The kick catches Mifune by surprise, leaving him wobbling himself as Connors whips around a second time, ducking down as he SNAPS his right elbow back into the cheek of the Shadow Wolf!]

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

[Mifune falls back this time, staggering near the ropes...]

GM: Connors has got him reeling! He's got Mifune staggered!

BW: I can't believe it, Gordo! Where the heck is this kid getting this from?!

GM: This is pure heart! Pure guts! These fans are cheering him on - his home country supporting him and-

"WHAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAACK!"  
"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

[The Canadian Karate Kid snaps off a short thrust kick to the chest, sending Mifune spilling through the ropes and out to the floor!]

GM: OH MY! TO THE FLOOR GOES MIFUNE AND-

[Connors lets loose a triumphant roar as he dashes to the far ropes, rebounding back at high velocity...]

GM: Connors on the move and-

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

[...and HURLS himself between the top and middle ropes with a tope con hilo, wiping out the Shadow Wolf on the floor of Mosaic Stadium to a DEAFENING ROAR!]

"FIVE MINUTES REMAIN! FIVE MINUTES!"

GM: Five minutes left in the time limit of this one! Can the Shooting Stars pull off the win?! They've got momentum on their side here as Connors is-

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

[The crowd reacts as Bret Grayson charges down the apron, throwing himself into a somersault that knocks Connors flat on the outside!]

GM: AND GRAYSON TAKES OUT CONNORS!

BW: What a match, Gordo! What a battle between these two teams trying to get to the Quarterfinals! They're going through all this and I don't know if they'll even have anything left for the Quarters, daddy!

[The Canadian crowd is still rocking over the pair of dives as all eyes land on the only competitor still standing - Downpour - as he starts to hobble on his bad leg down the length of the apron towards the corner...]

GM: Now where is Downpour going?!

BW: You didn't think he'd be left out of all the fun, did you?

GM: On that bum wheel, yes!

[But the luchador is hobbling - almost hopping - down the ring apron towards the corner, grabbing the top rope with both hands as he tries to drag his body up the turnbuckles...]

GM: And I have no idea how he's doing it after the beating that leg has taken but Downpour is climbing - climbing to the top turnbuckle!

BW: He's practically dragging his body weight up the buckles, Gordo. He can barely put any weight at all on that knee.

GM: Downpour to the second rope now... trying to pull himself up one more rung to the top...

[The crowd is on their feet, roaring for the masked man as he gets the foot of his good leg on the top turnbuckle, watching the floor as Grayson, Mifune, and Connors all come to their feet...]

...and then he steps to the top, steadying himself for a moment...]

GM: DOWNPOUR TO THE TOP!

[...and LEAPS from his perch, twisting his body into a corkscrew plancha off the top!]

GM: TWISTING DIVE AND-

“OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!”

GM: AND DOWNPOUR PICKS UP THE SPAAAAAAARE!

[The crowd is ROARING once more, on their feet screaming and shouting, hooting and hollering as they overwhelmingly cheer on the Shooting Stars.]

BW: We’ve got bodies all over the floor out here! It looks like the old post-show parties at the Rusty Spur!

GM: Would you stop?! Downpour wiped out everyone with that incredible dive but you have to wonder if that was the finishing touches on that bad knee! Can he get up from that? Can he keep going?

BW: And if they advance, can he even wrestle at all?!

[But from the pile of bodies, it is not Downpour who emerges first but his Canadian partner, Lee Connors, who battles to his feet to another huge ear-aching roar!]

GM: Connors is up! Connors is up! We’ve got just over three minutes to go - can he find a way to finish off the Gold Standard?!

[Connors pulls Mifune, the other legal man, off the ringside mats, and shoves him back under the ropes into the ring.]

GM: Connors put Mifune back in, wisely keeping his focus on the legal man. Connors pulls himself up on the apron...

[“Cannonball” gestures to the crowd, getting another huge reaction as he walks down the apron to the corner, slapping the top turnbuckle a few times to fire himself up...]

GM: And it looks like Lee Connors is going for it all right here! Step by step he climbs... to the bottom rope... to the second rope...

[With the Canadian crowd roaring, Connors steps to the top rope, balancing himself steadily... looking down at the prone Mifune...]

GM: Connors is up top! Connors is poised! What’s he going to do?!

[Connors suddenly leaps into the air, flipping forward... fast.]

GM: ATOMIC CANNONBALL!

[He plummets through the 630 senton, coming down fast towards the Shadow Wolf who stays exactly where he is...

...but swings his legs up at the last moment, catching Connors on his knees!]

“OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!”

GM: KNEES! RIGHT ONTO THE KNEES!

[The Mosaic Stadium crowd groans as Connors cries out, arching his back...

...and Mifune spins on his back, sitting up behind Connors...]

GM: JAPANESE STRANGLEHOLD!

[The Canadian crowd grows even more concerned as Mifune cranks back on his version of the rear naked choke!]

GM: Mifune's got it locked in and... oh!

[Mifune swings his legs around, applying a loose bodyscissors as well!]

GM: He's got the body locked, got his hooks in as they say over in the GFC!

BW: Connors ain't getting out of this!

[Mifune leans back, screaming loudly as he wrenches the back and neck of Connors...]

GM: There may be no escape for Lee Connors here! His partner is down... they've both been through the wringer in about 27 minutes of action and-

[The referee leans in, taking a close look as Connors' pumping arms start to slow...]

GM: Connors is fading, fans! Lee Connors, having given so much in this battle in front of his home country's fans, is starting to fade and...

[As his arms slump, the referee lifts one, watches it drop, and then swings around to signal for the bell...]

"DING! DING! DING!"

BW: That's it! He choked him out and the referee has stopped it!

[The crowd deflates, lowering into a rumble as Mifune gleefully cranks the hold for a couple more seconds before letting go, sitting up on the mat with a sadistic smile.]

GM: Connors never quit. He never gave up but... wow. What a battle.

BW: And we've STILL got bodies everywhere.

GM: The Gold Standard picks up the victory, moving on to the Quarterfinals where they'll face either the World Tag Team Champions, Next Gen, or the Canadian duo of Jackson Hunter and Blake Colton.

BW: Can you imagine a Mifune/Hunter showdown? Two miserable old bast-

GM: Easy there. We didn't bring another set of announcers and I find you comfortable... like an old broken in shoe.

BW: Hey!

GM: A fantastic win for the Gold Standard, one that's likely to really move them up the rankings towards the World Tag Team Titles... but you can't take anything away from the Shooting Stars, Bucky.

BW: Absolutely not. It was a hell of a showing for them too. But the Gold Standard was just a little bit better tonight... and they're the ones with the hashmark in the win column.

GM: Fans, let's go backstage to Sweet Lou Blackwell standing by with the woman who hopes to be the next in line to challenge for the Women's World Title... of course, I'm talking about the Spitfire herself, Julie Somers! Lou?

[We cut to backstage where we find Sweet Lou Blackwell standing next to "The Spitfire" Julie Somers. She is dressed in a sleeveless red top and a pair of black pants, and she has her long, brown hair pulled behind her back in a ponytail.]

SLB: Thanks, Gordon. We have already seen a lot go down the first night of the Battle of Saskatchewan as well as here tonight where there's plenty more in store, but I imagine my guest has particular interest in at least a couple of matches. Julie Somers, your brother Howie and his partner Daniel Harper will face Jackson Hunter and Blake Colton in the second round of the Stampede Cup. I imagine you'll be cheering on your brother and his best friend.

[Somers nods.]

JS: Absolutely, Sweet Lou. It's amazing to see how far Howie and Daniel have come as a tag team. I can still remember when I first came here as their manager, and while I know they wanted to prove that they had what it took to be the tag team champions, I could never have imagined it would happen in just a little more than two years since they came to the AWA. Now they have a chance to win one of the highest honors that any tag team could achieve, the Stampede Cup. I'm looking forward to that match tonight and I'm confident that Next Gen is going to get the job done.

SLB: It's interesting that you brought up how Next Gen became champions in a little more than two years. After all, when the AWA finally established a Women's Division, you established yourself as one of the top contenders in a matter of months. More recently, you've set your sights on the AWA Women's Championship, held by Kurayami. I imagine you had some interest in the Women's Title match held on Night One, am I correct?

[Julie nods again at Blackwell.]

JS: You are correct, Sweet Lou. I first want to say how proud I am of Skylar Swift, who took Kurayami to the limit, kept fighting, kept finding a way to stay in the match despite the odds. I'm sad she didn't get the win, because there is no doubt in my mind that Skylar would make a worthy champion. And not to take anything away from Skylar's effort, but I have to remind everyone that I should have been in that match to determine the next challenger to Kurayami. It still irks me that I was left out for no reason other than I'm supposedly too small to challenge the champion.

[She then gets a slight smile on her face.]

JS: Of course, when I had to settle for a tag team match against her, I found a way to get the job done, didn't I?

SLB: I think we all remember what happened at Eternally Extreme, and given what went down in the Women's Title match last night, I think Kurayami remembers Eternally Extreme all too well.

JS: [shaking her head] Yeah, it sure looked like Kurayami was trying to send me a message, wasn't she? Trying to go one up on me because she thinks she has the better moonsault, huh? Well, if she's still smarting over the fact that I had my best

friend in this business as my partner, and if she's still smarting over the fact that even bringing one of the most dangerous women from Japan wasn't enough for her to get the job done, and if she's still smarting over the fact that I have a pinfall win over her, then maybe she should stop bragging to everybody about how she can do anything I can do, only better, and get into the ring with me.

[She points directly at the camera, an intense look in her eyes.]

JS: You heard me, Kurayami. If you're so upset about what went down at Eternally Extreme, then why don't you show everyone that you can save face, get the match signed and put the belt on the line against me! Don't let Javier Castillo make excuses about how there are better challengers out there, or let Veronica Westerly talk about how it's too dangerous for a woman of my size. If you say what happened at Eternally Extreme was a fluke, then get in the ring with me and prove it! Because I'm standing right here, more than ready, more than willing, to get into that ring to face you, one on one, with the biggest prize in the AWA Women's Division on the line!

[She places her hands on her hips.]

JS: But you better remember this, Kurayami -- you'll be facing the woman who has been told, time and time again, that the odds were against her, but always finds a way to beat the odds and prove she can be the best. Of course, that's me, the Spitfire! And believe me, I will promise you, Kurayami, that once you do sign that match with me, that Howie won't be the only Somers family members who is wearing championship gold.

SLB: A very confident woman standing right beside me -- that match, once it's signed, ought to be a humdinger!

JS: [staring at Blackwell] Humdinger -- do people even use that word anymore?

SLB: Well, it just... was the first thing that came to my mind. Anyway, we're about to head down to the ring for that second round battle between Next Gen and the Canadian duo of Blake Colton and Jackson Hunter... but before we do, let's go over to Mark Stegglet who is standing by with that very popular duo here this weekend in Regina. Mark?

[We fade to another part of the backstage area.]

MS: Thanks, Sweet Lou! Alright fans, the next round is one with huge implications for the AWA title rankings, as the newly crowned AWA World Tag Team Champions, Next Gen, take on my guests at this time, Blake Colton, and the usurper of the AWA National Championship, Jackson Hun-

[Hunter storms in from off-screen, the National Title belt cradled close to his chest. He hisses at Stegglet.]

JH: You. Are. Not. Who we requested to conduct this interview. Give me this!

[The volatile Velociraptor rips the microphone from Stegglet's hand.]

JH: The first time I laid eyes on you, son, I said you looked like your head belonged stuck in some junior high school toilet and not much has changed in those two years. Where is Patterson?

[Stegglet slinks off-screen.]

JH: The "Death Star" specifically asked for Colt Patterson to be here!

"I got him."

[Blake Colton directs Colt Patterson on screen, one paw on his shoulder, the other grasping the back of Colt's muscle t-shirt.]

JH: Colt! You don't have to be shy! Don't worry, Blake likes you. He just wants to clear the air with you.

[Colton releases his grip, but immediately claps a massive palm onto Patterson's shoulder.]

BC: Colt, do you remember the last thing you said to me, bahd?

[Patterson sneers in Colton's direction.]

CP: I believe I said "where the hell are you taking me, kid?"

[Colton shakes his head.]

BC: Nah nah nah nah. Last month, back in Detroit. I sure as heck remember it. Why don't you just confirm it for me?

[Patterson throws a glance at Jackson Hunter.]

CP: Jackson, you're a reasonable guy, I think. Can you-?

[Colton interrupts.]

BC: "The Pistons have won just about as many games as you have matches and they're still in the league too." Totally unprovoked, just came out of nowhere and decided to talk down to me.

Now, a couple weeks ago, you saw how me and Mr. Hunter here handled our grudges against Maxim Zharkov and Riley Hunter. Maybe I gotta settle my grudge against you.

[Colton steps closer, eyeballing the former three-time EMWC World Champion who looks a little uneasy at this development.]

CP: Jax, call him off.

[Hunter smirks, chuckling with absolutely no humor behind it.]

JH: You know, Colt, the name "Patterson" doesn't mean much up here in Western Canada. I mean sure, Old Blackjack turned up here from time to time, but he was just another face in the crowd for the Colton family to vanquish, just like Burt Wallace or Hamilton Graham or even Supreme Wright's old man.

[Patterson glares at Hunter.]

CP: I said, "call him off!"

[Hunter sneers.]

JH: In Canada, we say, "please."

[Patterson looks ready to boil over... but calms himself before speaking.]

CP: Of course. PLEASE... call him off, Jackson.

[With another chuckle, Hunter speaks to his young partner.]

JH: Be nice, Blake. He's got a family.

[Blake Colton releases his grip on Patterson. Satisfied he's made his point, the "Death Star" emits his odd, giggling snicker.]

JH: You know as well as I do, Colt, that there is no motivation like a grudge. The Coltons tried to blackball me from wrestling. And now, here I am on the verge of headlining in front of a crowd that they could never draw right here in their backyard with the crown prince of the Colton dynasty.

BC: [bitterly] Now that Kansys is back in the penitentiary.

JH: We don't talk about Kansys, remember?

BC: Yeah, speaking of grudges, you remember how just five years ago, everyone was abuzz about how Kansys Colton was the next big thing, bahd? How he'd revolutionize the industry. That kid grew up with all the breaks, and he screwed it up. So they stuck me with Curtis Kestrel as a big, fat, boat anchor, bahd. Tryin' to keep me humble.

[Colton shakes his head.]

BC: I don't gotta be humble. I took Maxim Zharkov out of wrestling. The "Death Star" does not gotta be humble.

Howie, Danny... you remember all those times in the last year when you and I would run into each other on the road? You said you couldn't wait to match yourselves up to me, bahds. Guess I don't have to wait for you to make time in your busy schedule any more. Especially now that I get to beat the World Tag Team Champions and hoist the Stampede Cup in one night.

[Hunter nods.]

JH: Here in Western Canada, you'll find that the names of "Harper" and "Somers" don't mean much up here either, and that those shrieking teenage girls wanting your autograph and a selfie with you disappeared somewhere around customs. There is nothing for you on this side of the 49th Parallel, except hard times, hurt feelings, and a swift dose of reality upside your skulls.

You may have walked away with those tag team titles by defeating my cousin who may as well have been genetically my half-brother... and his partner, the snobbish, zealous, preening coward. But us? We're a different story.

[Hunter slaps his partner on the shoulder as Colton speaks again.]

BC: Daniel, Jax has ten times the experience you do. That is no inflation: he has been in this sport since 1992. He's made his bones with the Mindflyer since you and I were in diapers. Difference is: he's on my side, bahds.

[Colton slaps Hunter on the shoulder this time.]

JH: Howie, you look like one of those guys who could rip what we used to call "phone books" in half. What happens when that superior strength is surpassed. Don't make the tragic mistake of bringing an anti-tank missile to a Death Star fight. And to top it all off? You two have never faced a situation where you weren't the crowd favorites. Did you see how rattled Kingsley and Sawyer were last night? You'll be facing us...



BC: ..and 40,000 of our closest BAHDS!

JH: And you think I'll have no motivation, now that I'm sitting on this big, fat new contract? You think I'm content to rest on my laurels?

Just watch me.

BC: Talk to ya again before the Finals, bahd.

[Colton gives Patterson a slightly-too-hard playful swat before following Jackson Hunter off-camera. Patterson grimaces, standing next to Mark Stegglet.]

MS: You okay?

[Patterson nods before storming out of view.]

MS: Well then... there's no shortage of ego here in Regina, fans... because Blake Colton and Jackson Hunter have it all. Let's go over to Lou who is with the team who will face Hunter and Colton in mere moments - the AWA World Tag Team Champions - Next Gen!

[We cut again to another part of the backstage area, zooming in tight on the part of the bracket that shows the Next Gen versus Jackson Hunter and Blake Colton showdown.]

SLB: Thanks, Mark. The second night - the second round - of the 2017 Stampede Cup is well underway.

[The camera pulls back to reveal Lou standing before the updated bracket on the wall.]

SLB: The action continues in the Stampede Cup, and in just a few minutes, we're going to see the apparent hometown favorites, Jackson Hunter and Blake Colton...

[He pauses, as if he can't believe what he just said.]

SLB: Yes, truth is sometimes stranger than fiction... but what's also true is that Hunter and Colton will be facing my guests at this time, they are the AWA World Tag Team Champions, Daniel Harper and Howie Somers... Next Gen, come on in here!

[That's the cue for the members of Next Gen to walk onto the set. Somers, who is dressed in a navy blue vest and wears a white singlet with the letters "NG" on the front in the center, in navy blue block lettering, plus navy blue tights, white kneepads and wrestling boots, and has an AWA World Tag Team Title belt strapped around his waist, takes a position to Blackwell's left. Harper, who wears the same vest and wrestling attire as Somers, and has the other World Tag Team belt around his waist, takes a position to Blackwell's right.]

SLB: First of all, gentlemen, it looks like a new look for the two of you -- possibly a new attitude, may I ask?

DH: Sweet Lou, let's just say that we thought it was time for a change in the look, but as far as our attitude goes, it's always been the same, and that's for my partner and I to prove, night after night, that we are going to leave our mark as the best tag team in the AWA and do those who came before us in that wrestling ring proud, by holding up the legacy that our families established.

SLB: Speaking of family, Howie Somers, I already spoke a little while ago with your sister Julie, who is here to support the two of you in your quest for the Stampede Cup, and made it clear she wants a shot at the AWA Women's Champion, Kurayami.

[Somers nods.]

HS: Sweet Lou, it's no secret how close Julie and I are, and how much we support one another in our pursuits in the wrestling ring. I appreciate her being here, and I have all the confidence in the world in my sister getting that title belt once she gets her shot, just like I and my partner and friend here have all the confidence in the world that we are going to walk out with the Stampede Cup when all is said and done tonight.

[Blackwell grins.]

SLB: And that brings us to your first match in the Stampede Cup -- you'll be facing Blake Colton and Jackson Hunter, the latter who revealed himself to the world after the two of you beat Derrick Williams and Riley Hunter in the steel cage to retain the World Tag Team belts at Liberty or Death. In fact, that night, Jackson Hunter left his mark on the AWA in more ways than some might have imagined.

[Harper takes a deep breath.]

DH: That's one way to put it, Sweet Lou. The thing is, it shouldn't just be Julie celebrating a pinfall win over Kurayami at Eternally Extreme. It shouldn't just be Howie and I celebrating a successful title defense at Liberty or Death. It should also be our good friend Jordan Ohara, celebrating his National Title win that night, celebrating an achievement he pursued for months, celebrating how he did his mother proud.

And then you, Jackson Hunter, came along and squashed that moment!

[Harper has an intense look on his face now.]

DH: Now, I get you being upset when System Shock blamed you for the one loss the Axis took at SuperClash and then laying you out. But then, for you to put your own flesh and blood in the hospital, then turn around and ruin a wonderful moment for Ohara, and then come out last night at Battle of Saskatchewan and tell everybody how you are the new authority in the AWA and that you can just walk out of here with that Stampede Cup whenever you want.

[He shakes his head.]

DH: I don't think so! Howie and I didn't give every ounce of blood in our veins, every bit of our heart and soul, to become the World Tag Team champions, just to watch you and Colton mock every team in the AWA and think that you're going to walk right over everyone! We gave everything we had not only because we wanted to prove we are the best team in the AWA, but because we want to leave a lasting legacy that everyone respected, and that we did our families proud!

And the last thing Howie and I are going to do is let some wild card and the partner he picked up along the way ruin another wonderful moment -- a moment we do plan to make reality, and that's winning the Stampede Cup! But believe me, as much as I can't wait for the day that Ohara gets you in the ring, Jackson Hunter, and wipes that smile off your face, I'm sure Ohara won't mind if Howie and I slap the taste out of your mouth first!

[Harper turns away for a moment and lets loose a deep breath.]

SLB: Howie, it seems like your friend here is none too pleased about the antics of Jackson Hunter as of late. But I will remind you that the odds may not necessarily be in your favor -- for one thing, Hunter and Blake Colton are considered heroes in Canada. I can imagine you aren't used to being the ones who don't have the support of the crowd behind you.

[Somers shakes his head.]

HS: Sweet Lou, I get it. Everywhere you go, there's always going to be a hometown crowd that wants to cheer on its own. I can't get mad at the crowd about who they want to back on a given night. But if the crowd isn't going to come right out and give us the support, then there's only one thing Daniel and I can do.

We have to go out there and earn that support.

Just like we've had to go out and earn the support of every AWA fan who backs us now. We may be nice guys -- at least outside of the ring -- but that didn't mean the support automatically came with that. We had to earn it, and we did that by going out every night, working our rear ends off, proving to everyone that we were worthy of that support. The more we did that, the more that support came.

[Somers addresses the camera.]

HS: Now, I understand that Canadian wrestling fans take a lot of pride in their own. I'm no fan of Jackson Hunter or Blake Colton, but I understand why people up here would be fans, given the legacy their families have built up here.

But I know this, Sweet Lou -- Jackson and Blake aren't the only ones who Canadian wrestling fans support. There's a whole legacy that was built up here, just as the AWA has built up a legacy, and our families built up a legacy as well.

Daniel and I respect that legacy, so we're not going to tear it down. In fact, we're going to show all these fans how we respect that legacy -- and while we certainly will do it by getting into that ring and earning that respect from the fans on hand, we have a little something else that will demonstrate that.

[Blackwell raises his eyebrows and is about to ask something, but Somers holds up his hand.]

HS: But that will be revealed in due time, Sweet Lou. Right now, Daniel and I need to focus on the objective at hand, and that's continuing to build our legacy by winning the Stampede Cup, and we first have to take down Hunter and Colton. That means only one thing...

[He motions to Harper.]

HS: You know what our sister always told us, right?

[Harper nods and gestures off camera.]

DH: To the ring!

[Next Gen walks off the set.]

SLB: I'm not sure what Howie meant by something else that will help, but I guess we'll find out soon enough. Now, let's go down to the ring and Rebecca Ortiz!

[We fade to a panning shot of the sold out stadium as the bell sounds and the voice of Rebecca Ortiz is heard.]

RO: The following contest is set for one fall with a thirty minute time limit and is a second round match in the 2017 Stampede Cup tournament!

[Big cheer!]

RO: Ladies and gentlemen, please welcome... the 620 CKRM Rider Cheer Team!

[On the entrance platform, twenty young women emerge from the entrance to "Thunder" by Imagine Dragons. They are all dressed in lycra miniskirts and crop tops, all in the home team's colors of emerald green and white. They break off into sets on five.]

BW: And I think I think I already have my match of the night picked out, Gordo.

GM: Oh, stop it, Buckthorn.

[The cheerleaders break off into a pretty standard tumbling routine on the stage.]

BW: Really? The auburn-haired one on the left is giving you the eye.

GM: I'll have you know that my loving wife is at home watching... and I have to wonder what purpose all this pageantry serves.

BW: It's a victory lap! It's like Jackson Hunter said: there's no feeling in the world like being able to shovel dirt on your enemies' graves. Just remind them with a victory lap or three.

GM: But maneuvering the entire AWA in hosting the Stampede Cup on your home turf just to settle a few ancient grudges... is that not a touch tacky?

BW: If you've got it, flaunt it, daddy.

GM: Remind me not to go to you on the subject of tackiness.

BW: Hey!

[The cheer team ends its' routine with a flourish as they line the ramp down to the ring, ten on either side. "Thunder" transitions quickly into Neil Young and Crazy Horse's "Hey Hey, My My (Into the Black)" echoes through Mosaic Stadium. At the end of every measure of "Hey Hey, My My," the cheerleaders clap their hands to the final three notes, and chant.]

"BLAKE - COL-TON! BLAKE - COL-TON!"

[The crowd roars as a massive, bearded barrel chested man coolly appears at the ring entryway. His ring gear is also in a striking green and white. Blake Colton roars back at the Saskatchewan crowd.]

"RIDER COUNTRY IS COLTON COUNTRY, BAHDS!"

[Colton pounds his chest, then points to the entryway behind him as a lean looking figure in a throwback Saskatchewan Roughriders jersey appears, the AWA National Championship belt cradled in his arms across his chest.]

GM: Now this is just pandering. These two cheated Curt Sawyer and Alexander Kingsley last light here in Mosaic Stadium to one of the loudest ovations of the night.

[Colton looks very much like the Sasquatch he has been compared to, with his mop of unkempt dirty blonde hair emerging from the top of his "Rising Sun" bandana

and his bushy, untrimmed beard. His massive, powerlifter arms and barrel chest are barely contained by the denim jacket he wears, the sleeves already torn away. Colton almost giddily soaks in the Saskatchewan fans' appreciation, and grins behind his mirrored aviator shades as he slowly makes his way down the ramp beside his father's arch-rival.]

"BLAKE - COL-TON! BLAKE - COL-TON!"

[Colton briefly chants along with the score of cheerleaders he is flanked by.]

GM: Well fans, it's very seldom we have two AWA champions in the same match, but this ought to be one to watch with the AWA World Tag Team Champions, Next Gen, facing the AWA National Champion Jackson Hunter; you have to think what a feather in the cap it would be for Howie Somers or Daniel Harper to score a fall over the National Champion. And let's not discount the "Death Star" himself, the 350-pound phenom Blake Colton. And while Harper and Somers have been a team for longer, Blake Colton grew up watching his own father in some wild battles with his current mentor.

BW: Lots of dynamics in play, Gordo. What do you think Next Gen does once they no longer have the fans behind them, too?

[Ortiz continues.]

RO: Introducing first, at a combined weight of 560 pounds... They are Mooselips Brewing's official entry in the Stampede Cup! First, from Calgary, Alberta... he is the "DEATH STAR..."

[Colton pauses on his way up the ring steps to spread his arms wide, mouthing "armed and operational.".]

RO: ...BLAKE... COLLLLLL-TOOOOON.

[As he ascends the ring steps, Jackson Hunter turns his back to the ring to face the crowd. He takes a moment to drink in his surroundings, no longer suppressing his sinister smile.]

RO: And from the Broken Arrow Ranch in Last Mountain, Saskatchewan...

...JAAAAAAACKSONNNNNN...

...HUNNNNNNTERRRRR!!!

[Hunter flings his arms into the air at a 45 degree angle, gesturing a Nixonian "peace sign" on either hand. From behind the scoreboard...

...Nothing happens where there were fireworks the previous night. Colton chuckles with a confused, "what?"

So Hunter lowers his arms to his side again, clearly annoyed that the pyro technician has missed their cue, and flings his arms into the air at a 45 degree angle, gesturing a Nixonian "peace sign" on either hand.

Nothing again. Colton rolls into the ring shaking his head with a smirk on his face.]

"The heck do ya pay these people for, bahd?"

[Hunter is having none of it. He glares his glariest death glare, grinds his teeth, and angrily throws his arms into the air at a 45 degree angle, gesturing a Nixonian "peace sign" on either hand. And the scoreboard lights up...

...with the "ACCESS 365" logo flashing across it.]

GM: What's this about?

[Cut to what is obviously pre-taped footage of Jackson Hunter and Blake Colton from not long before the match in the hallways of Mosaic Stadium.]

BC: Feel like such a jackass wearin' this gear, bahd.

JH: Think of it as insurance for when we hoist the Stampede Cup.

BC: But I HATE the frickin' Riders. Worst fans in the league. Buncha entitled hicks. Every time there's a Roughrider game in Calgary, the city's collective IQ drops by fifteen points with all the Saskatchewan people visiting.

JH: You just gotta wear the colors, Death Star. It's just colors. Besides, once you and I make it to the finals... it'll probably be the only time someone wearing green and white hoists a trophy in this rickety stadium.

BC: Yeah, millions of taxpayer dollars, and the best they can come up with for this "state-of-the-art facility" is a giant toilet bowl?

JH: Hey, let's not disparage the taxpayers: they're the ones footin' the bill for this-- oh wait!

[Hunter and Colton each put on cheesy, fake smiles as the Roughrider Cheer team jog past them, a few joyful "hiiii, Blake!"s as they pass. Colton and Hunter make sure they've all rounded the corner before...]

BC: Woof.

JH: Be nice. They all have families.

BC: Are there any attractive people in this city, or is it true that all the successful people moved away?

JH: Well... you sure didn't meet me here. C'mon. We're up. A few more hours and we can stop pretending we enjoy it here.

[Cut back to live action as the "ACCESS 365" logo flashes across the scoreboard again.]

BW: Hoo boy.

[Jackson Hunter is still frozen in his entrance taunt on the ring step, arms still extended, the Nixonian peace sign still flashing. A blank, nonplussed expression is plastered across his face.

Blake Colton leans against the turnbuckle, his forehead propped up by his palm, feeling twenty cheerleaders and 40,000 of their friends staring right through him.]

BC: "Well... what do you want me to say, bahds?"

[Jackson Hunter decides to slowly climb the ring steps, sheepishly removing his Roughrider jersey with a snide...]

JH: "Thanks, SWEETHEART."

[And the boos start to come. Oh, do they come. They come and they come... like beams of sunshine on a summer day, pouring down upon the two Canadians who have played this stinkin' city like a harp from hell. Hunter grimaces at his partner who shrugs.]

GM: Well, I think we all knew it was too good to be true, Bucky. These two would eventually show their true colors to this Canadian crowd... and when that happened, even THESE fans couldn't continue to cheer for them.

BW: They should respect Hunter and Colton for speaking the truth!

GM: Oh, give me a break.

[As the boos rain down from all areas of Mosaic Stadium, a smirking Rebecca Ortiz continues.]

RO: Annnnnnd their opponents...

[First there's silence, then you hear a little chanting.]

"Do-do-do-do do-do-do-do  
Do-do-do-do do-do-do-do"

BW: Oh, come on, why must they torture me like this?

GM: Bucky, that's enough of that.

[And then, it kicks into the unmistakable chorus of "Centuries" by Fall Out Boy.]

#Some legends are told#  
#Some turn to dust or to gold#  
#But you will remember me#  
#Remember me for centuries#

BW: Gordo, I can't stand this song, and now these two kids insist on coming out to it?

GM: Who are we to argue with their choice of music when they've proved themselves in the ring?

BW: All they've proved is they know how to get on my bad side!

[Up on the video screen, two words flash up.

"NEXT GEN"]

#And just one mistake#  
#Is all it will take#  
#We'll go down in history#  
#Remember me for centuries#

RO: Introducing, from Boston, Massachusetts, and El Paso, Texas, at a combined weight of 495 pounds, ... they are the AWA World Tag Team Champions...

HOWIE SOMERS... DANIEL HARPER... THEY ARE... NEXT! GEN!

[The members of Next Gen emerge from the entranceway. Howie Somers and Daniel Harper are each dressed in a navy blue vest with the words "NEXT GEN" printed across the back in white, block lettering. They wear the same wrestling attire: a white singlet with the letters "NG" on the front, in the center, in navy blue,

block lettering, navy blue tights, white knee pads and wrestling boots. Somers and Harper each have one of the AWA World tag team championship belts strapped around their waists.]

GM: A new entrance and a new look for Next Gen, who are looking to add the Stampede Cup to their list of accomplishments.

BW: They've already accomplished something by annoying me with that new entrance.

GM: All right, Bucky, you've made your point there.

[Somers and Harper each stand at the entranceway for a moment, then they raise their arms into the air. The fans don't respond favorably, though -- no boos, but certainly not the warm embrace they've been favored with recently despite. Somers and Harper notice this, but don't react to it.]

BW: I see I'm not the only one who doesn't like this entrance of theirs.

GM: Well, until a few moments ago, we were certain the Canadian fanbase here is backing Hunter and Colton, whose families have long established reputations here in Saskatchewan... but now? Maybe not... but Howie Somers says they understand that.

[After a moment, Somers and Harper turn to each other and exchange a high five. The duo then makes its way down the aisle. Usually, they would extend their arms to slap hands with fans who are leaning over the railing. Instead, they keep their focus on the ring ahead.]

BW: The only thing these two are going to understand is that this is the territory that Hunter and Colton built, and despite that blatant violation of their privacy we just saw, they don't intend to let the hometown fans down.

GM: It's a valid point, but it doesn't seem like it's bothering Next Gen. They appear to be all business right now.

[Upon reaching the ring, Somers and Harper climb onto the apron and duck between the ropes. Somers walks to the corner and leans against the turnbuckles, focus in his eyes, while Harper walks to the opposite corner on the same side, climbs to the second rope and raises his arms. After a moment, Somers walks toward Harper and slaps him on the back. Harper then leaps down from the corner and turns to Somers, the two exchanging another high five, then remove their vests and hand them over to an attendant.]

BW: I'm smelling an upset here tonight, Gordo.

GM: You would have to think that a win for Hunter and Colton would thrust them right to the top of the tag team rankings, Bucky, and... hold on, what's this?

[Ortiz has exited the ring, but Somers gestures to her. After a moment, she hands the mic over to him.]

BW: Now what does he want? You already had your interview time!

GM: I'm not sure what this is all about, but let's hear what he has to say.

[Somers walks toward the center of the ring and takes a moment to survey the crowd.]



HS: Like I said earlier, I get it. All of you fans take a lot of pride in your own and the legacy that all the people here built.

Such as these two over here... even if they don't seem to have a lot of pride in all of you...

[He gestures to Hunter and Colton, who each dismissively wave him off.]

HS: But the one thing Daniel and I learned is that they aren't the only ones to build that legacy. In fact, we met someone the other day, and he had a lot to do with building that legacy.

The legacy... of the greatest wrestling family that Canada has ever known.

[He lowers the mic, then he and Harper turn toward the entranceway.

And that's when "Little Bones" by The Tragically Hip plays.

And \_that\_ draws a different reaction from the crowd -- one of surprise.

Because coming out of the entranceway is none other than Jeremiah "The Sheriff" Colton, the father of Blake Colton.]

GM: OH MY! Jeremiah Colton is here! And is he really here on behalf of Next Gen?

BW: You've got to be kidding me, Gordo! Do you remember we thought the roof would come off the Saddledome last year when he showed up?!

[Jeremiah Colton, who is dressed in a white button-down shirt and black jeans, steps through the entranceway. His trademark grey stetson with a silver star sits atop his with equally silvery long hair, framing his weathered face. His thumbs are in the belt loops of his jeans, projecting cool.]

Somers and Harper have exited the ring and meet Jeremiah at the end of the aisle, where they all exchange handshakes.]

GM: I cannot believe that Next Gen brought the patriarch of the Colton family for tonight's match!

BW: You can't believe it? Take a look at Jackson and Blake!

[Hunter is quite livid, screaming "NO! NO! NO! NO!" at the referee, who just shrugs. Meanwhile, Blake Colton simply mouths, "Dad?" as if he can't believe he'd be in the building tonight.]

BW: They can't allow this to happen, can they, Gordo?

GM: I don't see why not, as long as Jeremiah doesn't get involved.

BW: Somebody should get down there and tell him to leave!

GM: You're going to do that in front of his hometown crowd?

BW: No, that's John Law's job!

[The members of Next Gen return to the ring, while Jeremiah simply takes a place near the ringside table and folds his arms.]

GM: Well, John Law isn't coming out here, so I imagine this has already been cleared with Javier Castillo.

BW: You don't think this has to do with Jackson Hunter, do you?

GM: Who knows, but we do know that Castillo is no fan of Jackson, so anything is possible.

[An obviously distracted Colton stares in shock at his father as Jackson Hunter moves to his side, speaking a million words a minute to try and get through to him.]

GM: Jackson Hunter has been the master of strategy in the past, Bucky... but I think Somers and Harper may have just outdid him because Blake Colton is obviously off his game right about now.

[Hunter can be heard with a loud "HEY! KID! LOOK AT ME!" which finally gets Colton looking in his direction. The Death Star nods at whatever Hunter is saying, settling back in his corner as Hunter ducks out to the apron.]

GM: And it looks like Blake Colton's got no time to wrap his head around his legendary father being at ringside because he's going to start this one off against... Howie Somers. Alright! It's going to be muscle on muscle starting this one off.

[Referee Andy Dawson speaks to both teams briefly before waving for the bell to make it official.]

"DING! DING! DING!"

[Somers immediately comes from the corner, swinging his arms across his chest as he sidesteps his way around the ring, circling towards Colton who is slowly moving from his own corner, throwing another glance at his father at ringside who looks in sternly.]

GM: This one is underway with the winner moving to the Quarterfinals where the Gold Standard awaits.

[Colton eventually seems to snap out of it a bit, shaking his head as he lunges at Somers for a tieup.]

GM: Collar and elbow in the center of the ring... two big ol' bulls jockeying for position, Bucky.

BW: Ordinarily, I'd agree with you, Gordo... but Somers is 265 pounds and Colton checks in at 340 pounds so he's got a lot of weight on him. Somers is usually the biggest man in the match but not tonight, daddy.

[Colton promptly tugs Somers into a side headlock, cranking on it as he locks eyes with his father who is standing silently outside the ring...]

GM: Blake Colton with a powerful headlock there... wearing down on Somers...

[Somers wraps his arms around the body, looking for a way out as he backs to the ropes, shoving Colton across the ring...]

GM: Somers shoots him off, 340 pounds coming back his way... and boom! Down goes Somers on the tackle!

[Colton lets loose a roar, flexing his arms in front of him as Somers rolls to a knee, staring up at him.]

BW: Somers didn't stand a chance, Gordo. That was a whole lot of beef running right over him.

[Somers climbs to his feet, eyeballing Colton who cracks a smirk, waving a hand at him...]

GM: Colton's calling for Somers to try it this time.

[With a nod, Somers runs past Colton to the ropes, bouncing back off as Colton turns and locks in...]

...and with a big clash of bodies in the middle of the ring, neither man budes an inch!]

GM: Another big crash in the middle of the ring but Blake Colton holds his ground. Somers got a running start but it wasn't enough to put Colton down or even budge him at all!

BW: And if there's any scouts in the stand for the football team that plays here, they're getting ready to make this kid an offer, Gordo.

[Colton nods his head as Somers walks around a little, planning his next move.]

GM: And back to the tieup they go... and this time, it's Somers who grabs the side headlock...

[Somers wrenches on the head and neck as Colton looks for a way out. Daniel Harper shouts some encouragement to his partner from the corner as Colton backs to the ropes, firing Somers away...]

GM: Colton sends Somers to the ropes... coming back...

[Colton throws himself down to the mat, trying to trip up Somers who hurdles over him, hitting the ropes again as Colton gets up to his feet...]

GM: OHH! AND SOMERS TAKES HIM DOWN!

[The big running tackle knocks Colton off his feet this time, sending him rolling immediately out to the floor to regroup...]

GM: Blake Colton bails out in a hurry and-

[The young Canadian turns around and nearly falls right over as he sees his father standing there with a disapproving look on his face...]

BW: Here's daddy!

[Colton angrily turns away from his father, pulling himself back up on the apron, grabbing the top rope...]

...which is when Somers grabs it as well, giving a yank and flipping Colton over the top and down onto the canvas to cheers!]

GM: Colton comes in the hard way... and the champs make their first tag of the match!

[Daniel Harper comes in quick, rushing at Somers who lifts him right up into the air and SLAMS him down in a senton on Colton!]

GM: Ohhh! Nice doubleteam move by the champions - and Harper makes the first cover of the match!

[A two count follows before Colton powers out from under Harper.]

GM: Colton kicks out but Harper's right on top of him... diving elbow down to the back of the head... and one more as well!

[Jackson Hunter shouts across the ring at his young partner as Harper hauls Colton to his feet, shoving him back into the Next Gen corner.]

GM: Harper puts him back into the corner... ohhh! Big European uppercut right up under the chin!

[A second one lands as well, causing Colton to hook his arms on the top rope to stay standing.]

GM: And a quick tag brings Somers back in...

[Somers walks out to mid-ring as Harper grabs him by the arm, whipping him into the corner and right into a big tackle to the midsection!]

GM: Ohhh! Somers comes in crashing to the body of Colton, knocking the wind right out of him as the tag champs with a pair of great doubleteams early on in this one.

[Somers pulls Colton out of the corner towards the middle of the ring where he scoops up the 340 pounder and slams him down on the mat.]

GM: Scoop and a slam by Somers, shaking the ring with all of Colton's 340 pounds...

[Somers turns at a shout from Jackson Hunter.]

GM: And the ever-pesky Jackson Hunter out there trying to get his attention... trying to buy his partner some recovery time perhaps...

[Somers trades some words with the veteran - a move that gets Jeremiah Colton's attention as the Sheriff starts to ease his way down the apron... which in turn gets Hunter to move to the other side of the ringpost as he watches his longtime rival walk his way.]

GM: Jeremiah Colton and Jackson Hunter keeping a watchful eye on one another - their rivalry goes back a long, long time and is quite personal... I can only imagine how Jeremiah must feel seeing his young son team with Hunter.

[Hunter looks nervous and agitated at the Sheriff as Somers turns his attention back to Colton, leaning down to pull him to his feet...

...and Colton promptly sticks a thumb in the eye of Somers!]

GM: Oh, come on! Cheapshot by Colton and these Canadian fans are letting him hear it...

[The 340 pounder grabs the 265 pound Somers under the armpits, lifting him into the air and throwing him back into the corner with a thud!]

GM: Wow! A whole lot of power on display right there... and Jackson Hunter's calling for the tag right now. He wants no part of being outside of the ring with the Sheriff on patrol.

[Colton slaps the hand, bringing Jackson Hunter in. The duo square up, laying in boots to the body of the cornered Somers until the referee's count hits four and change. Colton backs off with a loud "I'M OUT, BAHD!" before he steps to the apron.]

GM: Jackson Hunter the legal man now with Howie Somers...

[Hunter quickly and angrily pulls Somers into a side headlock, pistoning his fist between the eyes of Somers to even more jeers from the crowd.]

GM: Hunter going to work on him, pounding away and-

[Breaking again at four, Hunter pulls Somers to the ropes, pressing his face down on the top rope and raking his face all the way down the length of the ropes to the neutral corner...]

GM: More illegal activities on the part of Jackson Hunter.

BW: Eh, it's Canada. Isn't everything legal here?

GM: No, not at all.

[Pushing Somers back to the neutral corner, Hunter blatantly wraps his hands around the throat, choking him violently as the crowd jeers again and the referee starts counting... again.]

GM: Hunter choking him without hiding it at all - the referee counting and... again, Hunter breaks at four!

[Grabbing the arm of Somers, Hunter goes to whip him across the ring...]

GM: Irish whi- reversed!

[The reversal sends Hunter crashing into the buckles where he stumbles back out as Somers ducks low...

...and shoots him high, flipping through the air before SLAMMING down on the canvas with a sky high backdrop!]

GM: BIIIIIIIG BACK BODYDROP BY SOMERS! STRAIGHT DOWN ON THE SPINE!

[Hunter grimaces, rolling to his hip as he grabs at his lower back.]

GM: Somers sent him so high right there, he coulda tagged in at the International Space Station!

[Hunter rolls out to the floor, grabbing at his lower back, stumbling in a circle...

...and then to the amusement of the crowd, Hunter stumbles right into Jeremiah Colton, taking a big fall back down on the ringside mats as the audio goes silent for a moment.]

GM: The Patron Saint of the Seven Second Delay strikes again. A well-earned nickname given to Jackson Hunter by our old friend Al Pickard.

[Hunter scoots away from Jeremiah Colton who looks on with a smirk, watching as his longtime rival backs down in a hurry.]

GM: Hunter pulls himself up on the apron, glaring down at the Sheriff and- look out here!

[Approaching the ropes, Somers snatches a front facelock, using a suplex to bring Hunter up and over, dropping him down in a spine-rattling suplex!]

GM: Up he goes and down he goes right on the back!

[Hunter sits up, crying out as Somers climbs back to his feet behind him.]

GM: And this match is NOT going the way that Hunter and Colton were hoping for. First the Access 365 bit... then the arrival of Jeremiah Colton... and now Next Gen in control so far.

[Somers pursues Hunter as he tries to crawl away and create some distance. The tag champ drags him up by the back of the tights, driving a short forearm into the small of the back.]

GM: Another hard shot to the lower back by Somers...

[The Boston native hooks a front facelock, pulling Hunter back to the corner where he slaps the offered hand...]

GM: And the champs make the exchange again. Harper in... up on the middle rope...

[Daniel Harper leaps off the middle rope, bringing a double axehandle down across the lower back of Hunter, putting him back down on the canvas again.]

GM: Down goes Hunter once more... and Jeremiah Colton's gotta be pleased with what he's seeing so far in this one.

[Harper flips Hunter over, driving his elbow down into the throat before applying a cover.]

GM: Harper gets one! He gets two!

[But Hunter slips the shoulder, breaking free.]

GM: Two count only once more. You know, I mentioned Jeremiah Colton being happy about what he's seeing, Bucky... but there's a whole lot more than that. Jackson Hunter's got quite the enemies list these days. Maxim Zharkov, of course... his own flesh and blood, Riley Hunter... Derrick Williams... even Javier Castillo seems less than pleased with Hunter's actions lately.

BW: They're old friends. They'll work it out.

GM: That remains to be seen... and now we've got Harper pulling Hunter to his feet...

[A big European uppercut finds the mark, knocking Hunter back into the ropes. Blake Colton stands a few feet away, shouting to his partner to tag him back in. But a well-placed chop from Daniel Harper ends any thoughts of that tag happening.]

GM: Harper drills him with that knife edge blow... and now looking for a whip here...

[An attempt at a whip goes awry as Hunter manages to reverse it, sending Harper into the ropes instead...]

GM: Reversal by the Velociraptor, Harper off the far side...

[Hunter drops down - almost collapsing it seems - causing Harper to hurdle over him...]

GM: Up and over goes Harper, to the far-

“OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!”

[The crowd groans as Blake Colton steps up on the second rope, pushing down the top rope, causing Harper to go tumbling over the ropes to the floor.]

GM: HARD FALL TO THE FLOOR!

[Blake Colton sneers at the jeering crowd... and then quickly switches to a more contrite expression, begging off as the referee fires accusations in his direction.]

GM: Daniel Harper got lowbridged by Blake Colton and he goes all the way down to the floor!

[Hunter pushes up to his feet, shaking off the effects of the attack on his back so far. He wobbles across the ring, slapping the offered hand of his young partner.]

GM: There's the tag to Blake Colton... and right down to the floor he goes...

[Colton yanks the 230 pounder to his feet, wrapping his powerful arms around the torso...]

“OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!”

GM: And Colton DRIVES Harper's lower back into the edge of the apron!

[Bouncing off the apron, Colton lifts Harper up off the ringside mat...

...and THROWS him down so that his back slams into the apron again!]

“OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!”

GM: Two hard shots to the back!

[Colton shoves the hurting Harper under the ropes into the ring. The Death Star slides under the ropes after him, climbing to his feet...

...and promptly gets a running start before dropping a 340 pound elbowdrop into the lower back!]

GM: Elbowdrop finds the target... and now it's Colton looking for the cover!

[A two count follows before Harper kicks out.]

GM: Out at two...

[Colton throws a glance at his father who continues to walk slowly around the ring, trying to keep all shenanigans at bay. Hunter shouts at his young partner to “STAY ON HIM!” and gets a nod from the Death Star in response.]

GM: Colton drags Harper off the mat...

[He turns, staring directly into his father's eyes...]

GM: GORILLA PRESS!

[Colton holds Harper at full extension for all to see, showing off his powerful upper body as he stares down at his father on the floor...]

GM: Colton making sure the Sheriff sees this show of strength...

BW: The whole world sees it, daddy!

[...but he stalls too long as Harper wriggles and wiggles, slipping out and landing on his feet behind him!]

GM: HARPER SLIPS OUT!

[He wraps his arms around Colton's waist, rushing towards the ropes...]

GM: Harper looking to roll him up!

[...but Colton wraps his arms around the ropes as he hits them, holding firm as Harper rolls back...]

GM: Colton hangs on!

[The Canadian strongman turns, rushing forward as Harper rolls back to his feet...

...and DRILLS him with a running clothesline that gets an "ohhhhhh!" from the sold-out Canadian crowd!]

GM: COLTON TAKES HIM OUT WITH THE CLOTHESLINE! OH MY!

[Hunter gleefully applauds from the corner, waving his arms...]

GM: Jackson Hunter directing traffic from the corner, telling Colton to drag Harper back to their side of the ring and he does exactly that, Bucky.

BW: Hunter's the general in there. He's got the gameplan and he needs his Weapon of Massive Destruction to carry it out.

[Colton pulls Harper off the mat again, throwing him back into his corner.]

GM: Harper hits the corner hard, shaking him from toenails to tonsils...

[Colton smashes a forearm down into the sternum - once... twice... three times before the referee orders him to back off...

...which allows Jackson Hunter to loop the tag rope around Harper's throat, choking him with it!]

GM: That's a choke, ref! Turn around!

[But the official is engaged with Blake Colton as Harper struggles for breath right behind him...]

GM: Daniel Harper's having the air ripped from his lungs by Jackson Hunter, that no good-

BW: Representative of the corporate host of the Battle of Saskatchewan!



[Gordon grumbles as Hunter finally lets go, causing a coughing and gasping Harper to sink to his knees in the corner. Colton is quickly in though, pulling him right back up to his feet, measuring him as he squares up...]

“WHAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAACK!”

“OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!”

[Harper sinks down to the mat again, falling to all fours after being struck with two massive bearpaw overhead chops to the chest.]

GM: Good grief!

[Colton stands over the down-on-all-fours Harper, sneering at the jeering crowd.]

GM: The fans have gone from being solidly - overwhelmingly really - behind Hunter and Colton last night to being very much behind Next Gen here tonight... and they're letting Colton have it for that chop.

[A disgruntled Colton yanks Harper off the mat, shoving him back into the corner, angrily drawing back his right hand...]

GM: Big right- blocked by Harper!

[Harper blocks the incoming fist and responds with one of his own!]

GM: Harper returns fire!

[Colton throws a second blow but Harper blocks it and delivers one of his own again!]

GM: Another right hand! Harper trying to fight his way out of the corner!

[A third haymaker is blocked and countered, leaving Colton in a daze as Harper grabs him by the wrist, turning to aim a whip at the corner...]

GM: Irish... oh my!

[Colton simply shakes his head, holding his ground as Harper tugs and yanks at the wrist...]

GM: He's just too strong and-

[Colton YANKS Harper back towards him with one hand, lifting him up under his arm, doing a full 360 spin with him there, and then DROPS him down in a side slam to cheers from his corner where Jackson Hunter is looking on, pleased with what he's seeing.]

GM: We're a little over ten minutes into this battle and after that side slam, that might be all she wrote!

[Colton leans back, cradling a leg as the referee counts... and Harper's shoulder pops up off the mat at two.]

GM: Two count! Two count only for Blake Colton... and Jackson Hunter's berating the official right now, swearing up and down that was a three count.

BW: He could be right. Isn't there some kind of conversion rate in Canada?

GM: For a pin count? Give me a break, Bucky!

[Back on his feet, Colton reaches out and tags his partner back in.]

GM: Jackson Hunter back in on the tag, stomping at the lower back... over and over again...

[Hunter drags Harper off the mat, snatching a front facelock, and SNAPS him over with a suplex!]

GM: Very nice execution on the snap suplex by Hunter... and he floats over into another cover...

[Another two count follows as Harper slips his shoulder up, earning cheers from both Howie Somers and Jeremiah Colton. Hunter glares at the Sheriff on the outside.]

"YOU KEEP YOUR-"

[And the audio cuts out for several seconds.]

"-OLD MAN, BEFORE I COME OUT THERE AND-"

[And again, the audio thankfully spares us the details.

Hunter sneers as he drags Harper off the mat by the hair as the audio comes back in.]

GM: -solutely ridiculous and someone's going to have to hit this guy with a fine or something! This is a family show for crying out loud!

[All fired up at Jeremiah Colton, Hunter yanks Harper into a double underhook, lifting the 230 pounder up into the air, twisting him over, and DROPS him down across a bent knee!]

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

GM: BACKBREAKER BY HUNTER! And he shoves him off, diving across! He's got one! He's got two! He's got- again, Harper's out at two!

[Hunter grimaces, glaring at the official and holding up three fingers.]

GM: Hunter again complaining about the count...

[The National Champion climbs to his feet, hands on his hips as he continues to argue with the official...]

GM: Hunter still badmouthing our referee... really unhappy about that count right there...

[But Hunter makes the cardinal mistake of turning his back on his opponent as Harper reaches up from off the canvas, dragging Hunter down in a schoolboy rollup!]

GM: Cradle out of nowhere gets one! Gets two! Gets-

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

GM: Near fall right there! Harper almost stole this one and-

[As the two men try to scramble up off the mat after the schoolboy, Hunter kicks Harper in the gut, cutting off any offense he might be looking for.]

GM: Hunter goes downstairs, grabbing that arm now...

[But as the National Champion attempts an Irish whip, Harper manages to reverse it, sending the Velociraptor sailing across the ring towards the neutral corner...]

GM: Harper reverses, Hunter to the corn-

[...and as Hunter approaches, he demonstrates some of the athleticism that once made him one of the most sought-after Junior Heavyweights in the world, leaning into the whip and flipping up over the corner, landing on his feet out on the apron where he promptly breaks into a sprint down the length of the ropes, leaping up and driving his feet into Howie Somers' kneecap!]

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

[The dropkick to the knee causes Somers to fall off the apron, smashing his chin on the way down to the floor...]

GM: Hard fall there for Somers off the reversal by Hunter...

[The National Champion comes back through the ropes, moving swiftly towards Harper who is on his feet and looking to his corner...]

GM: Big right han- ducked and... BACKSLIDE BY HARPER! DRAGS HIM DOWN FOR ONNNNNNNNE! TWOOOOOOO! THREEEEEEE- NO! KICKOUT! HUNTER KICKS OUT IN TIME!

[The crowd is buzzing off the near fall as Harper again gets off the mat, struggling to his feet as he looks towards the corner where Howie Somers has yet to make it back onto the apron...]

GM: Harper looking for that tag but Somers isn't there yet, still recovering from that blow to the knee courtesy of Jackson Hunter!

[Hunter scrambles up off the mat also, making a dive at Harper who just barely turns to spot him in time, twisting away from him to deliver a two-handed shove to the back, sending Hunter to the corner where...]

GM: BOOM! BIG RIGHT HAND FROM HOWIE SOMERS!

[Hunter stumbles backwards as Harper hooks him from behind, grimacing through the pain shooting through his back as he lifts Hunter into the air...]

...and dumps him with a belly-to-back suplex!]

GM: Ohhh! Right down on the back of the head and neck goes Jackson Hunter... and that took a lot of Daniel Harper as well, Bucky.

BW: After all the abuse his back has been through, absolutely it did. They're both down now and this may be a race to see who can get up to their feet first.

[The crowd seems to sense the same, growing louder in volume as they try to urge Daniel Harper to make the long-awaited tag.]

GM: Harper rolling over, down on all fours now... he's facing the wrong way though. Howie Somers shouting to him, trying to guide him to him...

[Shouts of "LISTEN TO MY VOICE!" are clear as day as Somers beckons his partner towards him. Blake Colton is silent but has his hand insistently stuck out as well, waiting to see if his partner can recover before Daniel Harper.]

GM: Both men down. Both men hurting. And both men needing to make the tag as we creep ever closer to the halfway point in the time limit for this one.

[With the crowd and his partner urging him on, Harper manages to get turned the right direction and starts crawling the half distance of the ring towards his corner where Somers is waiting impatiently...]

GM: Howie Somers wants to get in there and do some damage... a lot of people wonder why the World Tag Team Champions would even get themselves involved in a tournament like this when they already hold the gold, Bucky... but for these two it's pride.

BW: It's absolutely pride. When you're the World Tag Team Champions, people look at you as the best team in the world but the Stampede Cup is your chance to prove it in one weekend... and a million dollar check at the end of the weekend ain't a bad motivator too.

GM: Absolutely not... and as Daniel Harper creeps closer to his corner, we see Jackson Hunter on his hands and knees as well, trying to get to his own corner.

BW: Hunter's a little bit closer already... Blake Colton waiting for that tag as well...

[The National Champion beats Harper to the punch, reaching up...]

GM: Tag! In comes Blake Colton... Harper's gonna have to hurry!

[Harper gets a little closer, reaching up his arm as the crowd buzzes with anticipation...]

...and then lets loose a collective groan as Blake Colton clears the ring in a dash, leaping up to drop 340 pounds down with his butt aimed at Harper's lower back!]

GM: Ohhh! And that'll stop Daniel Harper right in his tracks, fans!

[Colton stays seated on the back, crossing his arms and striking a pose to jeers from the Mosaic Stadium crowd.]

"FIFTEEN MINUTES! FIFTEEN MINUTES! FIFTEEN MINUTES GONE BY!"

[Colton nods confidently as he rises to his feet, eyeballing Howie Somers who sticks out his hand again towards his partner... only to have Colton throw a kick at it. Somers jerks his hand back as the crowd jeers Colton, Somers shouting a few threats in at the Death Star.]

GM: Tempers are running hot in this one, fans, as Colton drags Harper away from his corner... and now right up to his feet...

[With a dazed and hurting Harper in his grasp, Colton shoves him back into the ropes, causing him to bounce back towards the big man...]

...who snatches his powerful arms around the torso, lifting Harper up with ease in a rib-crushing bearhug!]

BW: Oh ho... look at this now!

GM: That's going to do some damage if he keeps it on very long. Daniel Harper needs to get out of this as soon as possible before those massive arms of Blake Colton get the job done.

[Harper cries out from the big squeeze as Colton flexes his powerful arms.]

GM: The referee is right there, making sure that Harper doesn't want to give it up.

BW: He should think about it, Gordo. The million dollars and the Cup are big prizes, for sure... but Harper should be thinking about the World Tag Team Titles and the one thing worse than losing in this tournament is suffering an injury that puts that title reign in jeopardy.

GM: A fair point as Colton continues to squeeze. We've talked about it before but a bearhug has a simple strategy. When your victim inhales to try and get a breath, you tighten your grip to try and make it even harder for them to expand their chest.

BW: And if you notice, that's exactly what Blake Colton is doing. He may be estranged from his family these days but it's obvious someone taught him well at that Colton house.

[Harper puts his hand under the chin, pushing back to wrench the neck of Colton...]

GM: Harper trying to force his way out, pushing on the- oh! And just like that, Colton cranks up the pressure and ends that escape attempt.

[The powerful Canadian lifts Harper further off the mat, ragdolling him back and forth a few times as Howie Somers grimaces in the corner, looking on with concern for his partner's well-being.]

GM: Colton just so strong... so powerful.

[Harper balls up his fist, raising it up as the crowd cheers...]

GM: He might be looking to punch his way out, fans!

[...but slowly the hand unclenches, falling down to hang limply at his side.]

BW: He's out! Ring the bell!

GM: The referee's in there taking a look - could Daniel Harper be out cold?

[The official grabs Harper by the wrist, lifting his arm up into the air... and letting it drop.]

GM: That's one... the referee signaling he's going to do this three times, Bucky.

BW: Unlike the chokeout in our last match, this bearhug doesn't have Harper in immediate danger of lasting damage so the referee has opted for the three count...

[The official lifts the arm a second time as Colton shouts "IT'S OVER!" to jeers from the crowd... and the arm drops again.]

GM: That's twice. Daniel Harper trying to find a way to hang on... to keep his team in this match and in this tournament!

[The referee raises the arm once more... holding it high...]

GM: If it drops again, this one's over, fans.

[...and lets it go...]

GM: NO! IT'S UP!

[The crowd cheers as Harper keeps his arm held high!]

GM: Harper's arm is up and he's still in this thing...

[Harper clenches his fist again, his arm shaking with intensity before he SLAMS his fist into the side of the head...]

GM: Right hand by Harper, trying to punch his way out...

[Harper lands a second right hand... and a third as Colton's grip starts to weaken.]

GM: It's working! He's doing it! Harper fighting his way free!

[A fourth right hand lands, the grip almost broken now...

...which is when Colton charges back to the neutral corner, smashing Harper against the buckles as he releases the hold!]

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

GM: COLTON PUTS HIM INTO THE BUCKLES! After all of that, Daniel Harper fights his way out of the bearhug but Blake Colton lowers the boom on him anyways!

[Colton backs off, flexing his arms as he walks to mid-ring, watching as Harper leans back against the turnbuckles, trying to stay on his feet...]

GM: Harper's trying to stay up... and here comes Colton again!

[Colton charges in, set to drive 340 pounds into Daniel Harper with an avalanche...

...but Harper leans even further back, swinging his legs up and catching the incoming Colton under the chin with a pair of boots!]

GM: OHHH! HE CAUGHT HIM ON THE WAY IN!

[With Colton stunned, Harper steadies himself, charging in...]

GM: And a dropkick by Harper - the boots up on the chin a second time!

[Colton is stunned, stumbling towards Harper who is down on all fours...

...and who crawls right between the legs of Colton as the big man staggers in his direction!]

GM: Harper goes through... on his way across... crawling to the corner and-

[The crowd ROARS as Harper lunges and slaps his waiting partner's hand!]

GM: TAG! IN COMES HOWIE SOMERS!

[The larger half of the World Tag Team Champions comes through the ropes, full of fire as he barrels across the ring to where Jackson Hunter has entered illegally...]

GM: CLOTHESLINE TAKES HUNTER DOWN!

[Somers jerks around, watching Blake Colton coming towards him.]

GM: Somers... ducks Colton's clothesline... to the ropes...

[The crowd cheers as Somers runs Colton down with another clothesline!]

GM: And one for Blake Colton as well!

[Somers turns back towards the rising Jackson Hunter, scooping him up...]

GM: Scoop and a slam for Hunter!

[...and then back towards the rising Colton...]

GM: 340 pounds goes up... and goes DOWN with a big slam on Colton as well!

[The crowd is roaring at the sight of both Colton and Hunter laid out as Jeremiah Colton nods approvingly from the floor...]

GM: Howie Somers is fired up - he's got both of his opponents down...

BW: Not for long.

GM: Somers pulling Hunter up off the mat and... GORILLA PRESS!

[A huge bellow goes up from the Mosaic Stadium crowd as Somers presses the 220 pound Hunter straight up overhead...]

...and DROPS him straight down onto Blake Colton in a splash!]

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

[Hunter immediately rolls off his partner, under the ropes, and drops off the apron to the floor as Somers dives across the prone Colton!]

GM: Somers gets one! He's got two! He's got- no! Colton kicks out at two!

[Somers climbs to his feet, grimacing at the near fall as Jackson Hunter snakes an arm back under the ropes, grabbing his partner by the ankle and dragging him out to safety.]

GM: Hunter pulls out Colton - the fans aren't too happy about that but-

[Somers spots the dastardly duo on the outside, leaning through the ropes as he grabs both by the hair...]

GM: OHHHH! A MEETING OF THE MINDS OUT ON THE FLOOR!

[Hunter staggers away, faceplanting on the outside as Somers drags Colton back through the ropes to the inside...]

GM: Somers is trying to stay on the legal man who is Blake Colton at this point... pulling him back in... back to his feet now...

[Somers grabs the arm, going for an Irish whip...]

GM: Big whip, no- reversed by Colton!

[The whip sends Somers to the ropes, rebounding back towards Colton who throws a heavy standing clothesline that Somers ducks under, hitting the ropes again...]

GM: Swing and a miss... Somers off the far side...

[...and a leaping Howie Somers sends his 265 pound frame crashing into Blake Colton, knocking him flat with a flying shoulderblock!]

GM: SOMERS WIPES OUT COLTON! OH MY!

[Somers is all sorts of fired up now, letting loose a roar as he gets to his feet, pumping both arms excitedly a few times...

...and then pivots to SLAM a right hand into the skull of Jackson Hunter who is back up on the apron causing a ruckus!]

GM: OH YEAH! SOMERS DROPS HUNTER WITH THE BIG RIGHT HAND!

[Somers hears a shout from the corner, giving a reluctant nod to his enthusiastic partner...]

GM: It looks like Somers is going to make the tag here...

BW: Already? Harper's been out for what? A minute? Maybe two?

GM: Something like that but the young man's filled with heart and thinks he can help his partner so... the tag is made... both members of the World Tag Team Champions in now, setting up something here...

[Harper and Somers set the 340 pounder up... and take him over with a ring-shaking double suplex to a big cheer from the Canadian crowd!]

GM: DOUBLE SUPLEX BY THE CHAMPIONS! SOMERS OUT, HARPER DOWN!

[The referee dives down as well.]

GM: ONNNNNNNNNNE! TWOOOOOOOOOOO! TH-

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

[And again, Colton's shoulder pops up off the mat, breaking the pin attempt by the World Tag Team Champions.]

GM: Daniel Harper the legal man now... dragging Blake Colton up off the mat...

"TEN MINUTES REMAIN! TEN MINUTES!"

GM: You hear the call there by the timekeeper - ten minutes remaining in the match and- oh! Hard European uppercut by Harper puts Colton back into the neutral corner... and another... and another... and another...

[The crowd is roaring for the onslaught of uppercuts before the referee steps in, forcing Harper to back off which he does...

...but then quickly moves back in, ignoring the referee as he hops up on the midbuckle, raising his fist to the sky...]

"ONE!"

"TWO!"

"THREE!"

"FOUR!"

"FIVE!"



"SIX!"  
"SEVEN!"  
"EIGHT!"  
"NINE!"  
"TEN!"

[The tenth blow lands, the crowd roaring for Daniel Harper who suddenly leaps off, twisting around, and catches an incoming Jackson Hunter with a crossbody!]

GM: CROSS BODY OFF THE MIDDLE ROPE!

[Harper rolls off of Hunter, grabbing at his lower back as the National Champion again bails out, rolling to the floor.]

GM: Hunter getting the heck out of there again, leaving Daniel Harper inside the ring with Blake Colton...

[Dragging Colton out of the corner, Harper wraps him up and snaps him back with a side Russian legsweep!]

GM: Ohh! He takes him down the hard way!

[With Colton prone on the canvas, Harper hops up to the middle rope, standing tall and looking out on the cheering Canadian crowd...

...and then leaps off, driving the point of his elbow down into the throat of Blake Colton!]

GM: ELBOW ON THE MONEY! A COVER!

[Harper dives across, grabbing one of Colton's huge legs.]

GM: ONNNNNNNNNNE! TWOOOOOOOOOO! THR-

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!?"

GM: And again, a kickout! Again, Blake Colton just BARELY avoids defeat and elimination for he and Jackson Hunter!

BW: Who is back on the apron now... back in his corner...

GM: You just can't seem to get rid of him... he's like a cockroach in there...

[Harper drags Colton off the mat again, grabbing him by the arm...]

GM: Big whip on Colton...

[And as Colton hits the ropes, Hunter slides down and slaps him on the shoulder...]

GM: Was that a tag?

[Harper catches the rebounding Colton with a right hand to the gut, twisting to hit the ropes parallel to Colton...]

GM: Harper to the ropes, bouncing back and...

[...and Jackson Hunter, who slid in while Harper was going to the ropes, leaps into the air, pumping his knee...]

"WHAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAACK!"

“OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!”

GM: INSTANT KARMA! INSTANT KARMA OUT OF NOWHERE!

[Harper sinks like a stone, Hunter celebrating prematurely before diving on top of the young man...]

GM: HUNTER WITH A COVER!

[The referee dives to count.]

GM: ONNNNNNNNNNNE! TWOOOOOOOOOO! THREEEEEEEEE-

“OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!”

GM: SHOULDER UP! MY GOD, JUST BARELY GETS THE SHOULDER UP IN TIME!

[Hunter rolls off of Harper, stomping and kicking his feet on the canvas like he’s throwing the mother of all tantrums.]

GM: Hunter can’t believe it! He thought he had him beat right there, fans.

BW: He ain’t the only one, Gordo.

[Getting to his feet, causing an audio blackout as he reads the referee the riot act, Hunter leans down, grabbing Harper by the legs...]

GM: We’ve seen this before, fans! Jackson Hunter’s looking for the Mindflyer, that submission hold of his and...

[Holding the legs up, Hunter starts to step through...

...but Harper kicks hard, shoving the off-balance Hunter a few feet backwards!]

GM: No! Harper kicks himself free!

[Harper tries to scramble up, hoping to reach his feet before Hunter can attempt the Mindflyer for a second time...

...but as he does, Hunter rushes at him, leaping up into the air again...]

GM: INSTANT KARM- NO!

[Harper sidesteps, causing Hunter to sail past him. The tag champ grabs the off-balance Hunter around the waist, rushing the ropes...]

GM: Rolling reverse cradle!

[...and rolls Hunter back into a pinning predicament, sitting down on the legs!]

GM: ONNNNNNNNNNNE! TWOOOOOOOOOO! THR- HUNTER KICKS HIM OFF!

[And as Harper gets kicked across the ring, he gets scooped up in the massive arms of Blake Colton who is in illegally...]

GM: Colton’s not the legal man! What’s he doing in-

[But before Gordon can finish the question, Hunter soars through the air again, jamming his knee into the back of the trapped Harper...]

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

[...which leans directly to a ferocious standing spinebuster from Colton that causes Harper to BOUNCE off the canvas!]

"THUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUD!"

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

GM: MY STARS! THAT MIGHT DO IT!

[But before we can find out, Howie Somers comes back into the ring, trading wild fists with Blake Colton to a big cheer!]

GM: We've got a hockey fight on our hands in Mosaic Stadium... ohh! Out through the ropes to the floor goes Somers and Colton and they're STILL fighting on the outside!

[The referee throws a look at the brawl on the floor as Jackson Hunter quickly grabs the legs of Daniel Harper, lifting them up again...]

GM: And Hunter's paying no attention to the fight on the floor - he's looking for the Mindflyer again!

BW: After all the punishment that Harper's back took in this match, the Mindflyer might make short work of him, daddy!

GM: Wait a second! Wait a second!

[As Hunter goes to step through the legs, he pauses abruptly at the sight of an old foe on the apron...]

GM: Jeremiah Colton's on the apron! The Sheriff's seen enough of the chicanery of Jackson Hunter!

[Hunter glares at his longtime rival, shouting at him...]

GM: Hunter's wasting valuable time here, shouting at the Sheriff and...

[Hunter finally shakes it off, stepping through the legs, turning it over...]

GM: He's got it on! He's got it locked in! He's got-

"CLAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAANG!"

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

GM: OHHH! SOMERS AND COLTON GO CRASHING INTO THE BARRICADE AT RINGSIDE!

[Hunter leans back in the submission hold, eyes locked on Jeremiah Colton as Harper cries out in pain...]

GM: Hunter's going to make the Sheriff watch! He's got the hold applied, Harper screaming in pain...

BW: What the hell is the referee doing?!

GM: The referee is checking on Colton and Somers who just crashed into the railing!

[Hunter is again shouting at the Sheriff, taunting him as he leans back, wrenching the legs and back of Daniel Harper who is struggling to stay in the match...

...when suddenly the crowd EXPLODES in a roar!]

GM: WHAT THE-?!

[The camera pulls back to reveal Derrick Williams sliding headfirst under the bottom rope out of the referee's view. Williams comes up, moving swiftly as he leaps into the air, snatching an unsuspecting Hunter in a three-quarter nelson...

...and DRIVES his skull into the canvas!]

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

GM: FUTURE SHOCK! FUTURE SHOCK ON HUNTER!

[Williams promptly grabs Daniel Harper by the arm, flipping him over on top of the prone Hunter as a grinning Jeremiah Colton hops down off the apron...]

GM: WILLIAMS STRIKES OUT OF NOWHERE! HARPER'S ON TOP!

[The referee whips around, spotting the cover but not seeing the Future who has bailed from the ring and started backing down the aisle... and dives down to the canvas!]

BW: Wait! What?! NO!

GM: ONNNNNNNNNNNNE! TWOOOOOOOOOOOOO! THREEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEE!

"DING! DING! DING!"

GM: NEXT GEN WINS!

[The camera cuts to the aisle where a grinning Derrick Williams is standing.]

GM: Daniel Harper gets the pin on Jackson Hunter...

BW: Thanks to a Future Shock from Derrick Williams!

GM: Well, yes. It's not like Harper asked for the assist but at this point, all that matters is the W. Next Gen is moving on to the Quarterfinals where they'll be taking on the Gold Standard!

BW: And I hope Mifune twists and torments these two for this blatant miscarriage of justice, Gordo! Jackson Hunter had this match won for his team.

GM: Whether he did or not, we'll never know... but we do know is that Hunter and Colton are out and that Harper and Somers are still in and moving on! And right now, we're going backstage to where Mark Stegglet is standing by! Mark?

[We fade to the backstage area where Mark Stegglet is standing alone.]

MS: Thanks, Gordon... another hard-fought second round battle sends the World Tag Team Champions on to the Quarterfinals after a shocking appearance by Derrick Williams... and coming up in just moments should be yet another hard-fought battle as we see the makeshift duo of Sid Osborne and Raphael Rhodes teaming up to take on my guests at this time... Chaz and Chet... the American Idols!

[The camera pulls back a bit to reveal the twin Wallace brothers moving in on either side of Stegglet. They're both dressed in deep purple full-length tights with black boots sporting gold fringe. Their torsos are bare but they are rocking matching vests with "DMP. YIA. AI." across the backs. Matching golden headbands round out the ensemble.... along with smarmy smiles.]

MS: Gentlemen, you've got a big match ahead of you here... potentially a big night as well... so I've gotta wonder what in the world you were thinking earlier tonight.

[Chaz arches an eyebrow.]

Chaz: What the hell are you talking about, Stegglet?

MS: Seriously? You guys came out to the ring during the Power Hour... during your sister's match... and tried to hock your merchandise!

[Chaz looks over at Chet who nods.]

Chet: We did do that.

Chaz: Huh. So we did. Well, what's the problem, Stegglet?

[Stegglet sighs.]

MS: The problem is - why weren't you two focused on getting ready for the match with your opponents tonight?

[Chaz smirks.]

Chaz: There's no need to GET ready... when you were BORN ready.

[Chet grins, leaning in.]

Chet: And make no mistake, Stegglet... the American Idols were BORN ready. From the fruitful loins of our old man, Battlin' Burt, we emerged the superstars that we are... the well-lubed tag team that we are...

[Chaz grimaces.]

Chaz: Phrasing.

[Chet continues like he doesn't even hear him.]

Chet: So, yeah... we could've sat back here and "prepared for the match" like a couple of goofs. We could've watched tape of Raphael Rhodes being a bitter old man, roughing up the ham and eggheads like they owe him money. Or maybe we could have done a deep dive into the life and times of Sid Osborne by watching his VH1 "Behind The Music" story. But we don't need to do any of that, Stegglet because... read the back, playa.

[Chet turns, showing the letters on the back we saw before.]

MS: DMP.

Chaz: Dead Man's Party. The greatest stable to ever hit Japan... Mexico... America... Canada... the world! We were an integral part of that group that laid waste to every Fujimoto, Taguchi, and Kinoshita that the suits in Japan could dig up with their strategically sliced thumbs.

[Chet jerks a thumb at his back again.]

MS: YIA.

Chaz: Youth In Asia! Mutli-time Tiger Paw Pro tag team champions. If there was a hunk of gold to be had anywhere in the Land of the Rising Sun, you better believe that Chet and I picked it up, strapped it on, and took it out for a night in Roppongi.

[Chet jerks a thumb again.]

MS: AI.

Chaz: And now, the American Idols. Now, I'll be the first to admit that things haven't been going the way we had planned when we got here. We had issues with the Shane Brothers... we had issues with the Shooting Stars... we had issues with fans getting a little too handsy...

Chet: Not sure I'd call that an issue.

Chaz: But at the end of the day, we're still the kids of Battlin' Burt... we're still the charter members of the DMP... we're still the team that rocked 'em all from Osaka to Tokyo and all bullet train stops in between...

Chet: Even that one inside Mt. Fuji where those robot guys were from.

Chaz: Even that one! Are you understanding me, Mark Stegglet?

[Stegglet nods.]

MS: I think I-

Chaz: I DON'T THINK YA DO! We don't need no education! We don't need no thought control! We don't need no preparation!

And we damn sure don't need some powerlifting Herbalife pedaling fitness model telling us how to do what we do better than anyone else.

[Chaz stage whispers.]

Chaz: I'm talking about Rhodes' wife.

MS: Yes, I gathered.

Chaz: 2017 is looking up for us, Steggster. And not just because of the Cup... not just because we're the one and only hosts of Idol Chatter these days... but because of this guy right here...

[The camera pulls back a little further to reveal Michael Aarons.]

MS: Michael Aarons? You're not even scheduled to compete this weekend. What are you doing here?!

[Aarons smirks.]

MS: Did you really think I'd leave my boys flying solo, Stegglet? That's not how the Experience operates. I'm here to watch their backs... to make sure no one spoils this night for them. I'm here to make sure that Grumpy Rhodes, Sad Sack Sid, and the... lovely... Miss Kaiser... stick to the rulebook.

[Stegglet's jaw drops.]

MS: The rulebook? You gentlemen have a lot of nerve-

MA: Thank you.

Chaz: We DO have a lot of nerve, Stegglet... and that ain't all we got a lot of if you catch my drift.

MS: Gentlemen! This is a family show.

Chaz: I was talking about talent, you dirty little Mark... but now that you mention it. Hey Mike?

[Aarons arches an eyebrow.]

Chaz: Do you think Miss Dana's ever been... experienced?

[Aarons smirks.]

MA: I do not, young Chaz. Because if she had, she wouldn't walk right like she has a giant stick up her-

[Stegglet interrupts.]

MS: That's enough of that. Gentlemen, you've got a match to wrestle and I've got a date with a bar of soap because I feel absolutely filthy after being here with the three of you.

Chet: Just imagine how Miss Dana will feel after being with the three of us.

[Aarons drops his jaw in exaggerated fashion.]

Chet: I'm talking about being out in the ring! Sheesh! You're as bad as Stegglet.

[The trio walks out of view, Aarons and Chaz shaking their heads as we fade to another part of backstage and footage marked "RECORDED EARLIER" where "Sweet" Lou Blackwell stands by with Dana Kaiser. Standing behind the two are Raphael Rhodes, who has his back to the camera and the hood of his sweatshirt over his head, and Sid Osborne, who is looking away from Rhodes.]

SLB: Dana Kaiser, your man Raphael Rhodes and his partner, Sid Osborne...

[Kaiser raises a hand to interject.]

DK: I apologize, Mr. Blackwell, for the interruption... but I must remind you that for the weekend, these gentlemen are both under my managerial guidance. Please address them properly.

[Blackwell nods.]

SLB: Very well, your men, Raphael Rhodes and Sid Osborne came together in this tournament to take Guerreros del Mundo out of the equation, and last night, not only were they successful, but they looked quite impressive. Now, I'm sure your next goal in the Stampede Cup...

[Kaiser smiles at Blackwell, picking up on what he's inferring.]

DK: ... would be to win the whole thing, yes.

SLB: But you'd have to admit, Ms. Kaiser, it's a tough path they face, as they'll need to win as many as four matches in one night to get that big prize, and they start with a quite a test as they do battle with the American Idols in the second round.

[Kaiser tilts her head, a look of confusion spreading across her face.]

DK: Mr. Blackwell, I must admit, I'm surprised. Have the last couple of months of what these two men have done meant nothing? Four matches in one night? Consider their credentials... the two Iron Men of the Rumble, over an hour spent each in that torture test of a match, battling 28 other wrestlers of all shapes and sizes, even taking time to pummel each other. I've pointed out Raph's claim to being the most well-conditioned athlete in the AWA...

[Kaiser motions to Osborne.]

DK: But Sid's conditioning is quite impressive as well, especially for someone with no formal conditioning coach.

SLB: While that may be true, you'd have to grant that the American Idols would definitely have the advantage in terms of teamwork.

DK: Oh, Mr. Blackwell, I won't deny that against any team in the field, the prognosticators will proclaim Raph and Sid to be the underdogs. You see, on paper, any expert will proclaim that Raphael Rhodes and Sid Osborne might get it together for one match, and that match was last night. Much like if they beat the American Idols in mere moments, those same experts will claim that Raph and Sid are coasting on a wave of momentum.

[Kaiser rubs her hands together.]

DK: But what experts fail to realize, Mr. Blackwell, is that there's a difference between how things match up on paper, and what happens when you actually fight the battle. When it comes time to get in the ring, any preconceived notions of your skill level are stripped away, and you actually have to get the job done. Now, I'll let you in on a secret...

[Kaiser leans in to Blackwell, as Rhodes turns around to face the camera.]

DK: The American Idols are a fantastic team. Well-traveled, tough, athletic, fast, with great teamwork. They're unquestionably the favorites... on paper. But they have a fatal flaw, and they exposed it to the world not even a couple of hours ago. Did you see it, Mr. Blackwell?

[Rhodes raises his hand, saying "I did" just audibly enough to be picked up by the microphone, as Osborne's shoulders raise and lower as he seethes.]

SLB: Could it have to do with their appearance on the Power Hour earlier?

[Rhodes whispers something into Kaiser's ear, prompting a grin from Kaiser.]

DK: Indeed. You're familiar with the concept of bulletin board material, right?

[Blackwell chuckles.]

SLB: I think I see where you're heading.

DK: Well, while who Raph says is the best member of the Wallace family was getting her reps in inside the ring... the American Idols were more concerned with shilling their merch.



[Rhodes shouts "lookin' right past us!", as Osborne starts to punch his palm.]

DK: While Trish Wallace was minding her own business, those two brats felt instead of getting ready for their only guaranteed bout of the night, against two of the most dangerous men on the roster... they felt they'd try to squeeze in some shirt sales. And as you can tell, Mr. Blackwell... it didn't settle quite right with Raph or Sid.

[Kaiser points to Osborne, still punching his palm.]

DK: You want to overlook Sid Osborne, Idols? Don't plan on getting new headshots for your 8x10s any time soon, because he'll bust your pretty faces up. It'll be so bad that no amount of retouching in Photoshop will be able to help. Maybe you think you're used to people looking at you and screaming... but it'll be for different reasons once he's done with you.

[Kaiser motions back to Rhodes with her thumb, a grin creeping across his face.]

DK: You want to overlook Raphael Rhodes? He'll make sure you get plenty of time at your merch booth to sell your shirts, because he'll tear your knees to shreds. You'll get plenty of practice swiping credit cards in a Square reader, because you won't be earning your money in a wrestling ring for a few months after tonight.

[Kaiser looks directly at the camera.]

DK: And let this be a lesson to the other teams we may face down the line... think we're a time bomb waiting to explode, and overlook us at your own peril. We'll cash that big check while you wonder how this mongrel team chewed you up and spat you out.

[Kaiser slaps Rhodes on the shoulder, and motions to Osborne.]

DK: Let's go prove the world wrong, boys.

[And the three leave Blackwell behind.]

SLB: Dana Kaiser really has her men ready for this next match that will determine one of the final two teams moving on to the Quarterfinals! Rebecca Ortiz, my friend, the floor is yours!

[We crossfade out to the middle of Mosaic Stadium where Rebecca Ortiz is at the ready.]

RO: The following second round Stampede Cup showdown is scheduled for one fall with a thirty minute time limit. Introducing first...

[The sounds of Pennywise's "Revolution" rip to life over the PA system.]

RO: From Las Vegas, Nevada... weighing in at 260 pounds...

He is the SIN CITY SAVIORRRRRRR...

SIIIIIIIIIIIID OSBORRRRRRRRRNNNNNE!

[Sid Osborne appears through the entrance tunnel in his customary black hoodie with "SHUT ME UP" written on the front in what appears to be duct tape. Over the sweatshirt, he wears a faded blue denim jacket with the sleeves torn off, metal pyramid spikes covering both shoulders. He turns around with his arms outstretched,, showing that yet more spikes are on the back, spelling out the phrase "VERY METAL".]

GM: Sid Osborne out first, sporting somewhat of a different look than when we last saw him.

BW: But once again without his tag team partner!

[Osborne makes his way towards the ring, stopping halfway to take off his vest. He clenches it in his fist so that the garment becomes a dangerous weapon with metal spikes protruding. He executes three quick strikes in the air towards the camera, tossing the vest under the ring.]

GM: Osborne looks focused and ready for a fight to me, Bucky.

BW: Yeah, I hope he let his partner know that. Are these two on the same page?

GM: They sure looked that way earlier, Dana Kaiser seems to have coalesced those two talents in short order.

BW: Hmmph. We shall see.

[Osborne rolls into the ring under the bottom rope, unzipping his hooded sweatshirt and tossing it to the ringside area. He sits down in the center of the ring cross-legged, smirking as he taps his wrist as if there were a watch strapped to it.]

BW: Well, there's half the team, Gordo... where's the other half? Where's Rhodes?

GM: This was a bit of an issue in the first round, where Sid Osborne delayed his own entrance and made Raphael Rhodes wait. Do you think these two would be trying to antagonize each other moments before they team?

BW: Seemed to work for them in the first round... I'm not sure how, but it worked.

[Suddenly, ominous music starts to play... the final 45 seconds of "E5150" by Black Sabbath. The crowd begins to murmur as a guitar riff picks up, then the voice of Ronnie James Dio roars through Mosaic Stadium... ]

# OHHHHHHHH COME ON! #

[And to the sounds of "The Mob Rules" by Black Sabbath bursts Raphael Rhodes through the entrance, followed closely by his trainer, Dana Kaiser.]

RO: And his partner... he is accompanied by his trainer and advisor, Dana Kaiser... weighing in tonight at 217 pounds, he currently resides in Minneapolis, Minnesota... this is...

RAPHAELLLLLLLLLL RHOOOOOOOOODESSSSSSSSS!

[Rhodes' eyes are locked towards the ring, as he prefers to march his way down the long ramp, followed closely by Kaiser. Rhodes is dressed in unfamiliar gear once again, this time wearing a purple hoodie, purple shorts that cut off mid-thigh, along with purple kneepads and boots with lime green trim and laces. When we have a camera switch, we can see that printed across the seat of his shorts is a stylized Union Jack in lime green and white. Kaiser is wearing a lime green hoodie and jeans, and carrying with her a purple towel and a bottle of water.]

GM: I've certainly seen Raphael Rhodes look focused in the past, Bucky, but... this is intense even for him.

BW: I spoke to Dana last night, and she said that their camp felt good about how things went last night against Guerreros del Mundo... bet you can't really tell that by looking at him, huh?

GM: You definitely can't. Another music switch as well, any idea what is behind that?

BW: As you know, Raph is a former mixed martial arts fighter, most of his fights were in Japan. He used this music and attire like this when he fought in MMA. The Japanese media dubbed him the "Dream Killer".

GM: That sounds fearsome.

BW: Yeah, Gordo, it wasn't really a compliment. Raph always seemed to fall short of getting a title shot, so if you fought Raph, if you beat him, a title shot tended to be next... but if you lost, Raph ended your chances for a good long while. A gatekeeper, so to speak. And Raph, well... you know how personally he takes these things.

[Rhodes stops at the ring steps, unzipping his hoodie and leaving it with the ringside attendant. Kaiser takes out Rhodes' mouthguard case, producing a purple mouthguard, and rinses it off with the bottle of water before Rhodes pops it into his mouth. Rhodes and Kaiser make eye contact, with Kaiser smiling and Rhodes giving a slight wink. Rhodes then climbs up the steps, slapping each one as he steps up, before getting onto the apron and leaping over the top rope.]

GM: So he's going back to this entrance, and this attire and music... for motivation?

BW: Seems that way. Dana told me last night that Raph's grown a lot while he was away from the AWA, he wants to show how much he's changed. He's also looking forward to ridding himself of some demons, the demons that say he can't win the big one...

GM: ...or play well with others.

BW: You got it.

[Rhodes walks over to Osborne, giving him a slight nod of the head and offers a fist bump as the music fades. Osborne accepts, and the two focus their stare at the entrance, awaiting their opponents. Kaiser can be seen just behind them on the floor, shouting encouragement to both.]

GM: Ready or not, it's time for Raphael Rhodes and Sid Osborne to see if they can keep this train steamin' on here in Regina as they're moments away from their second round matchup here in the Stampede Cup tournament.

[Ortiz raises the mic.]

RO: Annnnnnnnnnd their opponents...

[The sounds of Calvin Harris' "This Is What You Came For" rings out over the PA system as the house lights start to flash in rhythm to the music creating a dance party atmosphere.]

RO: From the Shibuya area of Tokyo, Japan... at a total combined weight of 342 pounds... Chaz and Chet Wallace...

THE AMERRRRRRRICAN IIIIIIDOLLLLLS!

[The Wallaces spring through the curtain in the same gear we saw them in moments ago, trading a leaping high five before heading down the aisle towards the ring. They taunt the occasional fan with a crotch chop or insulting comment as they head to the ring.]

GM: And here comes perhaps the most obnoxious duo on the roster.

BW: Wow. There's nowhere to go if we start out going 85 down the highway, Gordo.

GM: I can't help it. They're brash, they're arrogant, they're disrespectful... just look at the garbage they were just talking about Dana Kaiser.

BW: Mind games, daddy... and judging by the look on Raphael Rhodes' face, I'd say they worked.

[Cut to the ring where Raphael Rhodes is shooting mind bullets down at the Wallaces.]

GM: They may have worked but what's the point? Would you really want THAT guy mad at you?

[The Wallaces get about halfway down the aisle, turning to do a double point back up the aisle...

...and the music switches to "My Type" by Saint Motel as Michael Aarons comes skipping out from the back to a fairly big negative reaction. He is wearing long red tights with patterned pink and purple shapes scattered throughout. He also has on a black leather vest sans shirt.]

GM: And here comes the third member of the so-called Experience, Michael Aarons, who is apparently going to be in the corner of the Wallaces here tonight for this second round battle... and beyond perhaps if they pick up the victory.

[Aarons stares out at the crowd, he puts a finger on his right ear and leans to the right; then he places a finger on his left ear and leans to the left. Laughing, he starts gyrating and dancing to the music clapping his hands as the crowd boos. He trades high fives with his allies and the trio walks down the aisle together towards the ring...

...which is when - at a word from Raphael Rhodes - Sid Osborne sprints across the ring, diving between the top and middle ropes, and wipes out a shocked Michael Aarons with a suicide dive!]

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

BW: WHAT THE-?!

GM: OSBORNE TAKES OUT AARONS! I HAVE NO IDEA WHY BUT-

[With the Wallaces trying to tend to their ally, Raphael Rhodes drops to the mat, rolling out to the floor. He snatches Chaz by the hair first... and absolutely PASTES him with a European uppercut that lifts him off his feet, dumping him down on the floor!]

GM: Good grief!

[Chet sees Rhodes coming and starts backpedaling away, begging off as the former Catch Thug pursues him...]

GM: And I'd say Raphael Rhodes heard EXACTLY what these three had to say about his wife!

[Chet continues to back off, shaking his head at a pursuing Rhodes.]

GM: Chet Wallace may talk a big game, Bucky, but he looks to want no part of Raphael Rhodes!

BW: Can you blame him? Rhodes looks mad enough to chew glass!

[Chet quickly rolls under the ropes into the ring, watching as Rhodes starts to pull himself up on the apron to pursue.]

GM: Rhodes chases him in...

[Chet breaks away to the ropes, bouncing back...

...and lands a low dropkick, knocking Rhodes back off the apron to the floor!]

GM: Ohh! Nice dropkick by Chet and...

"DING! DING! DING!"

GM: Well, that's a little surprising. The referee just called for the bell... this one is underway... and it's unusual to start a match when one of the teams isn't even in the ring yet.

BW: Maybe one guy in was as close as referee Pete "Blue Shoes" Miller thought as he'd get to a fair start.

[Grabbing the top rope, Chet steps up on the bottom rope, kicking his legs up in the air and swinging back through the ropes for a wrecking ball dropkick...

...but Rhodes sidesteps it, sending Chet sailing through the ropes past him, landing awkwardly on his feet where Rhodes grabs him by the back of the tights and the hair, rushing forward...]

"CLAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAANG!"

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

[...and HURLS Chet into the air, sending him flipping in a somersault where his back SLAMS into the steel railing!]

GM: HOLY-

BW: Maybe talking about the man's wife wasn't the best idea.

GM: Maybe not.

[Rhodes stomps right across the ringside area, dragging Chet Wallace up by the hair and tossing him back inside the ring.]

GM: Chet's back in... Rhodes in hot pursuit once more...

[With both men back in the ring, Chaz takes his spot on the apron as Sid Osborne does the same. Michael Aarons, seething with annoyance, hobbles along the apron, staring daggers at the Sin City Savior as Rhodes pulls Chet to his feet, pushing him back against the ropes...]

"WHAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAP!"

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

GM: Big clubbing forearm across the chest...

BW: You could cave a man's chest in with that, Gordo.

GM: That might've been what Raphael Rhodes had in mind right there.

[Rhodes plants his palm on the chin of Wallace, shoving his head back hard, exposing the chest again...]

"WHAAAAAAAAAAAAAAP!"

"OHMMMMMMMMMMMMMMMM!"

[A second clubbing forearm sees Chet sink to his knees as Rhodes grabs the hair, pulling him up with a shake of his head...]

GM: Chet Wallace isn't getting out of this beating that easily.

[Grabbing the arm, Rhodes shoots Chet across the ropes, stepping out to the middle of the ring...]

GM: Clothesline, ducked by Chet!

[Chet hits the ropes again, bouncing back out towards Rhodes whose right hand darts out towards Chet's face...]

...and Chet suddenly goes flying into the air, twisting around and falling to the canvas, screeching in pain as he grabs at his face.]

GM: What in the...?!

[The camera cuts to a closeup of Chet Wallace rolling back and forth in pain, grabbing at his mouth. A smirking Rhodes wipes his fingers on his tights as he looks down approvingly.]

GM: Was that a fish hook takedown?!

BW: Oh god. I'm gonna be sick.

[With Chet still rolling around on the canvas, Rhodes steps closer, using the toe of his boot to roll Chet onto his back, leaping up and dropping a knee down into the chest.]

GM: Leaping kneedrop on the mark - quick cover for Rhodes gets one... gets two... but that's all. And as much as he seems to be enjoying punishing Chet Wallace, I'm a little surprised he went for the cover there, Bucky.

BW: I'm not. He may want to hurt the kid but he wants the win even more. He and Osborne know the legacy of the Stampede Cup... they know what's at stake and they know a win here locks them into the Quarterfinals with a clear path to advance against the winner of the Senior Citizen Clash.

GM: Bucky!

[Rhodes snatches Chet by the hair again, dragging him off the mat towards the corner where he rams him into the turnbuckles before slapping his waiting partner's hand.]

GM: There's the tag and in comes the Sin City Savior to some big cheers from the Canadian crowd...

[Osborne measures up Chet Wallace before winding up...]

"WHAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAACK!"  
"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

GM: Knife edge chop right across the chest! And they are absolutely brutalizing Battlin' Burt's kids right about now.

BW: And if I know Burt, he's lovin' it. He always loved a good fight... even if he was getting his tail kicked in it.

GM: Which wasn't often.

BW: It sure wasn't.

[Pulling Chet out of the corner towards the middle of the ropes, Osborne buries a pair of knees in the gut before grabbing the arm...]

GM: And now it's Sid with the whip across the ring...

[Sid squares up, doubling over...]

GM: Backdrop on the-

[...but Chet twists around, leaning back to his the doubled-over Osborne as a platform to backflip right over him!]

GM: Oh my! What a counter there!

[Chet immediately leaps back up, uncorking his legs for his signature dropkick...

...but Osborne slaps the legs away, causing Chet to crash down on the canvas.]

GM: Swing and a miss on the dropkick...

[Osborne breaks to the ropes, rebounding back into a baseball slide...]

GM: OHHH! SLIDING CLOTHESLINE CONNECTS!

[A shout of "COVER! COVER!" from Dana Kaiser prompts the Sin City Savior to do exactly that, rolling into a lateral press and hooking a leg.]

GM: Osborne gets one! Gets two! Gets- no! Out at two! Osborne and Rhodes defeated Guerreros del Mundo last night to get to the second round... and as mentioned, if they are successful in this one, they land in the Quarterfinals to take on either Kentucky's Pride or Dynasty.

BW: Brought to you by Fixodent.

GM: Bucky!

[Osborne pulls Chet off the mat, shoving him back into his corner again and slapping Rhodes' offered hand.]

GM: Rhodes tagging back in now... without hesitation I might add.

[Rhodes promptly smashes his right forearm across the cheekbone... then a left hooking forearm to the other side. He uses a clubbing blow to the bridge of the nose to knock Wallace to a knee.]

GM: Rhodes just absolutely brutalizing him in the corner.. pulls him up, snapmares him over..

[The crowd groans as Rhodes CREAMS Wallace with a crossface one way... then the other... and then one more from the right side, knocking Wallace prone as Chaz cringes out on the apron.]

GM: Chaz looking on in sympathy...

BW: Or just really relieved it's not him in there.

[Gordon chuckles as Rhodes stomps the face of Wallace, again sending him rolling around in pain.]

GM: Chet Wallace really needs to get out of there...

[Chaz looks in on his brother, sticking his arm out... barely.]

BW: Chaz is giving him the ol' short-arm there. He's not eager to get in there with Raphael Rhodes either.

[Chet rolls to all fours, crawling towards the corner where Chaz somehow makes his arm even shorter...

...and Raphael Rhodes - with a shake of his head - sinks his fingers into the nostrils of Chet Wallace, yanking his head back as he pulls Chet onto his knees!]

GM: AHHH!

[With Chet pulled back, Rhodes SLAMS the point of his elbow down across the bridge of the nose, causing Chet to pitch forward onto his hands and knees again. Rhodes sneers at Chaz Wallace, gesturing for him to tag his brother...]

GM: Wow. Raphael Rhodes is OFFERING Chaz Wallace the tag.

[Chaz looks anxiously as he nervously extends his arm towards his waiting brother, Rhodes nodding approvingly as he steps away from Chet...]

GM: This is a little surpris-

[...when Rhodes suddenly grabs Chaz by the arm, twisting it around in an armwringer, and then YANKS the arm down over the top rope, snapping it down and sending Chaz falling to the floor!]

GM: OH!

[The crowd cheers as Rhodes dusts off his hands, looking out at Chaz who is on the floor clutching his shoulder. Rhodes hauls Chet off the mat again, shoving him into the American Idols' corner...]

GM: Rhodes puts him in the corner..

"WHAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAACK!"  
"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

"WHAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAACK!"  
"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

"WHAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAACK!"  
"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

GM: Three hard chops by Rhodes... Chet Wallace is reeling in the corner..



[Rhodes grabs an arm, whipping Chet across the ring to the opposite corner...

...where he throws himself into a dropkick, knocking Osborne off the apron to the floor!]

BW: Oh, turnabout is fair game, Gordo! Rhodes sent Chaz to the floor and Chet does the same to the Sin City Savior!

[Wallace struggles to get up as Rhodes dashes across the ring towards him...]

GM: Clothesline by Rhodes... Wallace front rolls and makes him miss!

[Rhodes slams chestfirst into the corner as Chet pops up behind him, swinging him around for a big knife edge chop...]

BW: Uhhh.

[Rhodes barely registers the chop as a puzzled Wallace winds up again...]

GM: Make it two!

[Rhodes shakes his head as Chet backpedals, shaking his head as he backs towards the ropes...]

GM: Rhodes charges again and-

[Chet drops down, snaring the foot and ankle, taking Rhodes down with a drop toehold that leaves his head dangling over the middle rope...]

GM: Drop toehold hangs him out to dry...

[Chet grabs the top rope, slingshotting over the top to land on the apron as Chaz pulls himself up on the apron on the other side of Rhodes...]

"WHAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAACK!"

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

GM: DOUBLE SUPERKICK! BOTH SIDES OF THE HEAD!

[The Wallaces point to one another, backing down the apron until their backs touch adjacent ringposts...

...and then charge in together, leaping into the air...]

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

GM: SANDWICH DOUBLE DROPKICK!

[Rhodes slumps back through the ropes into the ring as Chaz and Chet trade a high five out on the apron, striking a pose to the jeers of the crowd...]

GM: Chet's still the legal man - but what an effective doubleteam that was!

[Chet grabs the top rope, slingshotting over the top into a corkscrewing splash!]

GM: Another impressive move by Chet Wallace... he gets one... he gets two... no! That's all!

[Chet pops up, glaring at ol' Blue Shoes before marching to his corner and making his first tag of the match.]

GM: Tag! And in comes Chaz for the first time.

[Chet swings an arm at Chaz who hits the ropes, rebounding off towards Chet who lifts him in a hiptoss, throwing him down onto the prone Rhodes!]

GM: Another expert doubleteam by the Idols!

BW: And this is the difference between a team like Sid and Raph and the Idols, Gordo. Osborne and Rhodes are two excellent singles wrestlers - the Idols are an elite level tag team! There's a reason that no makeshift thrown together team has ever won this tournament, Gordo. Violence Unlimited, Dufresne and Freeman, even the Lynches! Those were tag teams to the corner.

GM: Chet steps out and Chaz takes over for the American Idols as Michael Aarons looks on approvingly...

[Chaz pulls Rhodes up to his feet, snapping off a quick one-two left-right jab to the jaw...

...and then leaps past him, dragging him down with a reverse neckbreaker!]

GM: Ohh! Leaping neckbreaker by Chaz! And now the Idols making a cover.. and gaining a two count of their own.

[Chaz slaps his hands together with a "onetwothree, ref!" Blue Shoes holds up two fingers as Chaz looks across the ring where a seething Sid Osborne is up on the apron. Chaz fakes a grumpy look on his face, throwing his hands up in a "metal" pose as he fake headbangs around the ring to jeers.]

GM: Chaz Wallace wasting valuable time there mocking Sid Osborne.

BW: And this is the biggest flaw in the Idols' game, Gordo. They spend too much time trying to get under the skin of their opponents and don't focus enough on the match.

GM: An excellent analysis, Buckthorn.

[Osborne glares at a smirking Chaz as he pulls Rhodes up off the mat...

...and Rhodes slaps the grasping hand away, grabbing Chaz by the hair...]

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

GM: EUROPEAN UPPERCUT!

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

GM: MAKE IT TWO!

[The impact of the second uppercut spins Wallace around but Rhodes stomps him before he can complete the circle. The former Catch Thug smirks as he grabs Wallace by the chin...]

GM: What in the...?!

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

[...and DRILLS him in the back of the neck with a third European uppercut, snapping his head forward and dumping him facefirst on the canvas.]

GM: Good grief!

BW: Talk about your whiplash.

[Rhodes leans down, dragging Chaz up, tossing him into the corner before walking in and slapping the offered hand from the Sin City Savior.]

GM: Another tag brings Sid Osborne back in... and these two seem to be meshing quite well so far, Bucky.

[Osborne squares up on the cornered Chaz...]

“WHAAAAAAAAACK!”

[An overhead chop lands on the chest...]

“WHAAAAAAAAACK!”

[...into a knife edge chop in the same location...]

“WHAAAAAAAAACK!”

[...and a forearm strike to the jaw!]

“WHAAAAAAAAACK!”

[Overhead chop.]

“WHAAAAAAAAACK!”

[Knife edge chop.]

“WHAAAAAAAAACK!”

[Elbowstrike. The referee steps in, calling for a break as Osborne grabs a side headlock, charging out of the corner and DRIVING Chaz facefirst into the canvas!]

GM: Running bulldog - right in the middle!

[Osborne flips Chaz over, gaining a two count before the Wallace twin kicks out.]

GM: Two count again there...

[Osborne comes right back up, rushing to the ropes...

...where Chet slips a knee into the back!]

GM: Ohh! Come on!

[Osborne stumbles away from the ropes as Chaz regains his feet, burying a thrust kick into the midsection to double him up.]

GM: Chaz to the ropes, rebounding back...

[But before he can connect with whatever he has planned, Osborne straightens up...]

"WHAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAACK!"  
"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

[...and scores with a big knife edge chop on the running Chaz Wallace, knocking him clear off his feet!]

GM: WHAT A SHOT!

[Chaz rolls back and forth on the mat, clutching his chest as Osborne soaks up the cheers from the Mosaic Stadium crowd.]

GM: Chaz rolling over towards the ropes, trying to get back to his feet...

[Osborne charges him but Chaz ducks his head, using his shoulder to toss Sid up and over where he lands safely on the apron...

...and DRILLS an incoming Chet with a back elbow up under the chin!]

GM: Chet trying to get involved on the outside...

[Chaz comes in on Osborne but Sid gives a yank of the top rope, pulling himself into a forearm shot to the jaw...]

GM: Oh! Sid caught him... now hooks him... wait a second!

BW: Are you kidding me?!

[The crowd buzzes as Osborne hooks Chaz with the apparent intent of delivering a suplex over the top rope on the floor...]

GM: Oh my stars! Is he really gonna do this?! Is he really-

[But as Osborne goes to muscle Chaz up and over, Chet runs along the apron, dropping into a basement dropkick to Osborne's right knee!]

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

[Osborne immediately puts Chaz down, leaning over to clutch his knee in pain...

...which is when Chaz grabs a front facelock of his own, shouting for Chet to help him...]

GM: Chaz can't do this on his own?!

[Chet gets under Osborne, muscling him up on his shoulder and lifting up as Chaz holds the suplex setup...

...and together they SHOVE Osborne forward, sending him bouncing facefirst off the ringside mats!]

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

GM: GOOD GOD! GOOD GOD ALMIGHTY!

[A grinning Chaz leans against the ropes with a "YEAH! YEAAAAAH! GET HIM A BODY BAG, YEAAAAAH!" as Chet goes into a series of wildly inappropriate crotchchops!]

GM: Sid Osborne just crashed and burned with the help of the Wallaces out here on the floor, Bucky.

BW: And the only good thing about it is that since we're in Mosaic Stadium, that's grass under those ringside mats tonight and not concrete! If it was concrete, Osborne might be out for the count, daddy!

GM: He still might. Osborne is out on the floor - rolled onto his back now as Chaz Wallace is ordering the referee to count him out.

BW: The Idols ain't proud, Gordo. They'll gladly take the countout, head to the back, and start getting ready to send one of their next opponents on golden pond!

GM: BUCKY!

[Chaz is frantically waving an arm, miming a count as the referee starts one of his own. Raphael Rhodes in the meantime, has circled around the ringpost to stand on the apron nearest his partner, shouting encouragement at him.]

GM: Rhodes cheering his partner on... Dana Kaiser doing the same... but right now, Sid Osborne's gotta find a way to get up and to beat that ten count. He's a tough kid, Bucky... but he took a very hard fall.

[The referee's count begins as Chaz counts along with him with frequent urgings to count faster.]

GM: Chaz Wallace wants this one over and done with, trying to get that quick ten count. We're about ten minutes into this one now - thirty minute time limit like all the second round matches as these two teams look to punch their ticket to the Quarterfinals.

[The official's count hits three as Osborne struggles to push off the floor, getting to his knees, looking up through glassy eyes at the ring where the official is standing...]

GM: The referee's count is at four... Sid Osborne trying to fight his way to his feet, hanging onto the apron now, pulling himself up...

[Osborne manages to get to his feet at the count of five, the crowd cheering his resilience as Chaz surges forward, swinging his arm over the ropes down at Osborne..]

GM: Chaz taking a swing at Osborne and- the referee stepping in, trying to get him back...

[And with the referee distracted, Michael Aarons charges in, smashing a fist into the ear of Osborne, knocking him back down on the floor.]

GM: Oh, come on! Cheap shot by Aarons!

BW: Hey, Osborne came after him first! Osborne attacked Aarons with that dive in the aisle! He's got every right to get a little bit of payback!

[Aarons smirks as the fans jeer his actions, backing away and watching as the referee turns back to the outside, looking puzzled.]

GM: Blue Shoes obviously didn't see the attack by Aarons or this one would be over...

[The referee starts the count again, crying out "ONE!" to the annoyance of Chaz Wallace who shouts "SIX! SIX!"]

GM: The count has to start anew because Chaz Wallace broke the count... but he's less than pleased about that...

[Chaz is arguing with the official loudly, drawing his attention away from the outside again...]

"WHAAAAAAAAAAAAACK!"

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

[...and Chet scores with a low thrust kick to the side of Osborne's head!]

GM: Good grief! Another attack on Osborne out on the floor!

[A furious Raphael Rhodes comes through the ropes, looking to intervene but the referee cuts him off, blocking his path as Chaz Wallace smirks at the fired-up Brit...

...and then walks across the ring, grabbing the top rope...]

GM: SLINGSHOT!

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

[...and dives down on top of Osborne, wiping him out with a plancha!]

GM: CHAZ TAKES DOWN THE SIN CITY SAVIOR!

[The Wallace twin gets up, throwing a pair of crotch chops at the downed Osborne before rolling back into the ring again, and demanding the referee start another ten count.]

GM: Blue Shoes back over by the ropes now... and here we go again...

[The count begins as Osborne is left reeling on the floor by Chaz Wallace who is strutting around the ring, keeping a wary eye on Raphael Rhodes who is absolutely seething out on the apron...]

GM: Osborne up to his knees again as the count reaches three... trying to get up again...

[Chaz glares down at Sid, shaking his head with his hands on his hips.]

GM: Chaz Wallace looks pretty frustrated in there at his inability to keep Sid Osborne down for the count...

[Chaz walks around the ring a bit, watching as Osborne gets to one knee, trying to push up off the floor at the five count...

...and then suddenly twists around, leaping into the air with a flying crotchchop...]

GM: Oh my stars.

[...aimed right at Dana Kaiser.]

GM: That can't be...

[A fuming mad Raphael Rhodes tries to come through the ropes and again, Pete Miller rushes to intervene.]

GM: Miller's blocking Rhodes again, trying to keep him from getting in there!

BW: Good luck. The British powderkeg is about to explode!

[With Chaz having successfully engineered another referee distraction, Michael Aarons races alongside the apron, throwing himself into a flying back elbow that catches Osborne under the chin, wiping him out yet again...]

GM: AGAIN! AGAIN, AARONS ACTS ILLEGALLY!

[Chet Wallace jumps down to the floor, joining his Experience ally in stomping the living hell out of the Sin City Savior on the outside.]

GM: And now we've got a two on one on the outside! These fans in Regina are letting the Experience have it and-

[Suddenly, Aarons and Chet break away, heading in opposite directions as a suspicious Blue Shoes turns back to the action, having succeeded in keeping Raphael Rhodes out of the ring... for now.]

GM: And with Osborne down on the floor, the referee starts yet another count.

BW: Hasn't he been on the floor for like five minutes now? How hard is it to count to ten, Blue Shoes?!

GM: The count keeps getting broken up by the American Idols and... here we go again...

[Again, Osborne starts to get to his feet, the crowd cheering him on...

...and an annoyed Chaz turns back towards Raphael Rhodes, throwing another crotch chop in his direction.]

GM: Another insult aimed at Raphael Rhodes who... wait a second... where's he going?!

[A pissed-off Rhodes has seen enough of a lot of things, dropping to the floor as he quickly moves around the ring towards the opposite side...]

GM: Rhodes heading out - the referee to the floor as well, trying to stop him...

[But Rhodes brushes past the referee, reaching Michael Aarons who tries to defend himself before Rhodes BLASTS him off his feet with another European uppercut!]

GM: OHH! DOWN GOES AARONS!

[The crowd is roaring as Rhodes stands over Aarons, looking down at him...

...and not looking up at Chaz Wallace who grabs the top rope, looking for another slingshot plancha!]

GM: OVER THE TOP!

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

GM: HE MISSED! HE MISSED! RHODES MOVES ASIDE IN TIME!

[The crowd gets even louder as Wallace crashes and burns on the floor, prompting the official to step in, forcing Rhodes to back off as Chet Wallace looks down in disbelief at his brother. He throws a quick look at Rhodes, Kaiser, and the referee all tied up on the other side of the ring...

...and then quickly rolls inside the ring, laying on his back as he grabs at his ribs.]

GM: What the-?!

BW: The switch! The Wallaces make the switch! Brilliant!

GM: Brilliant?! It's blatant chicanery on the part of the American Idols! Chaz is out, Chet is in... and no one knows it on the other side of the ring!

[With Rhodes and Kaiser still arguing with the official, Chet slides back out to the apron, waving a hand at a rising Michael Aarons...]

GM: Chet trying to get Aarons involved again - why not? If you're gonna cheat, you might as well be in for a penny and in for a pound, damn it!

[Aarons nods, pulling Osborne into a double arm hook, holding his limbs back as Chet backs up, measuring him...]

GM: Chet's got him in his sights... running down the apron...

[The Wallace twin leaps into the air, extending his legs...]

GM: DROPKICK!

[...but Osborne rips his arms free, diving out of the way as Chet's feet SLAM into Aarons' face, knocking him flat to big cheers!]

GM: DOWN GOES AARONS! OSBORNE GETS FREE!

[With Aarons and both Wallace twins down on the floor, Osborne dives under the bottom rope, crawling quickly across the ring as Raphael Rhodes breaks away from the official, getting on the apron and insistently sticking out his hand...]

GM: And now he's looking to make the tag! Rhodes is on the apron, Sid's on the move! Can he get there in time before-

"FIFTEEN MINUTES! FIFTEEN MINUTES! FIFTEEN MINUTES GONE BY!"

[Pulling himself back up on the apron, Chet runs, circling the ringpost, moving down the apron...]

GM: Chet's gonna fly!

[He leaps into the air, springing off the top rope in a front flip...]

GM: SOMERSAULT SPLASH!

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

GM: HE MISSED! HE MISSED! OSBORNE MOVED AND-

[Osborne straightens up, diving towards his partner...]

GM: TAG!

[The crowd ERUPTS as Raphael Rhodes comes through the ropes, rushing towards Chet who is on all fours, clutching his ribs in pain...]

GM: Rhodes pulls him in, knee to the gut, shoves him back into the neutral corner...



[Rhodes throws two more knees to the body before balling up his fists and ramming them repeatedly into either side of the ribcage...]

GM: Lefts and rights downstairs by the British bruiser!

[He quickly switches up his attack, grabbing the back of the head and SLAMMING his arm up under the chin once... twice... three times... until the referee's shout forces him to break... for the moment...]

GM: Rhodes has got him reeling... big whip coming up...

[Wallace SLAMS chestfirst into the corner, staggering backwards towards a waiting Rhodes...]

GM: Waistlock!

[Lifting Chet into the air, he brings him crashing down on the back of his head and neck!]

GM: Ohh! German Suplex by Raphael Rhodes... and he's hanging on! He's going for more!

[Rolling back to his feet and dragging Chet with him, Rhodes sets his feet a second time...]

GM: Here we go again!

[Rhodes lifts Wallace into the air, dumping him down a second time!]

GM: A second German Suplex! Rhodes is taking him for a ride... and he's still not done, Bucky!

BW: We talk about punches in bunches - this is suplexes in swarms!

[Raphael Rhodes rolls to his feet again, still holding the waistlock on the dazed Chet Wallace...]

...and he spies Chaz Wallace climbing back up on the apron, far away from his legal corner...]

GM: Chaz on the apron and-

[Rhodes delivers a two-handed shove to Chet's back, sending him crashing into Chaz, knocking him back off the apron to the floor to big cheers!]

GM: Down goes Chaz again and... waistlock!

[Rhodes pops his hips again, bringing Chet crashing down hard as Rhodes holds this time for a pin attempt, executing a picture perfect bridge.]

GM: HE'S GOT HIM DOWN! FOR ONE! FOR TWOOOOOOO! FOR TH-

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

[The crowd groans as Chet kicks hard, breaking up the pin attempt.]

GM: Two count only - a near fall right there though as Rhodes climbs to a knee, clapping his hands together in anger. He was hoping to end it right there.

[Pulling himself to his feet and dragging Chet Wallace right behind him, Rhodes snatches a front facelock and SNAPS him over with a quick suplex, floating into another pin attempt!]

GM: Again, Rhodes gets one! He gets two! He gets-

[The crowd groans as Chet kicks out again.]

GM: Raphael Rhodes trying to get that win, trying to earn that spot in the Quarterfinals against either Kentucky's Pride or Dynasty.

[Rhodes climbs to his feet, dragging Chet up to his feet...]

GM: Uppercut! Another one!

[Chet stumbles backwards, falling against the ropes as Rhodes continues to pursue...]

GM: Big whip shoots him in...

[Rhodes doubles up, looking for a backdrop...

...but Chet leaps up, going up and over for a sunset flip, trying to drag Rhodes down to the canvas!]

GM: SUNSET FLIP! RHODES TRYING TO FIGHT IT! TRYING TO STAY ON HIS FEET!

"SLAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAP!"

"OOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOO!"

[A thunderous open-handed slap to the ear of Wallace breaks up any attempt at a sunset flip, leaving Chet rolling back and forth in pain as Rhodes kneels down on his shoulders, reaching back to snatch a leg...]

GM: ONNNNNNNNNE! TWOOOOOOOOOOO! THR-

"OOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOO!"

GM: CHAZ MAKES THE SAVE!

[Landing a low dropkick to the back of the head, Chaz breaks up the pin on his twin brother..

...which brings the Sin City Savior back into the ring as well!]

GM: Uh oh! We've got trouble!

[The crowd roars as all four men start to trade blows.]

GM: It's breaking down in Regina!

[A flurry of fists from Osborne and Rhodes force Chet and Chaz back to opposite corners from one another. Each grabs an arm, whipping the Wallaces towards one another...]

GM: A big crash on the way- no... do si do and around they go!

"WHAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAACK!"

[The square dancing Wallaces each get hammered with a knife edge chop across the pectorals, taking them both down to the mat again to big cheers!]

GM: Osborne and Rhodes bringing the fight to the Wallaces, looking to advance in this tournament after a hard-fought win last night over Guerreros del Mundo with Logan Blackburn!

[Rhodes gestures to Osborne who nods, pulling Chaz up and chucking him through the ropes to the floor...]

GM: Chaz is out... I think.

BW: Can you tell them apart?

GM: Sometimes, I think I can... and sometimes, I wish someone had marked one of their arms with a Sharpie.

[Rhodes pulls Chet to his feet, marching him to the corner as the crowd begins to buzz with anticipation.]

GM: Rhodes lifts Chet up, dropping him down on the top rope...

BW: We saw this last night, Gordo! Rhodes and Osborne looking for that superplex/splash combo and looking to end this right now!

[Osborne exits the ring, heading down the apron as Rhodes steps up to the middle rope, pulling Chet towards him...]

GM: Chet's trying to fight out of it! Trying to get Rhodes off him!

[But the flurry of fists accomplishes little as Rhodes CREAMS him with a headbutt while standing on the middle rope!]

BW: That one was so hard, it even shrunk Juan Vasquez' massive head... wherever he is!

GM: That one's going to earn you a talking to.

[Rhodes loops his arm over the head and neck again, trying to get into position as Osborne starts to climb up the turnbuckles in the adjacent corner...]

GM: Osborne's starting to climb! He's headed up top and-

[Michael Aarons pulls himself up on the apron, shouting and waving his arms at Osborne who throws a glance at him...]

...and then HURLS himself off the top rope with a crossbody that takes both he and Aarons down HARD on the barely-padded floor at ringside!]

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

GM: OSBORNE WIPES OUT AARONS!

BW: But that takes the big flying splash out of the picture... the referee going out to check on them...

[But as Blue Shoes steps out of the ring, someone else steps in...

...steel chair in hand!]

GM: WHAT THE-?!

"WHAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAACK!"

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

GM: BLACKBURN! BLACKBURN WITH A CHAIR!

[The Dirty Rotten Scoundrel chucks the chair, diving out of the ring as Rhodes clings to the top rope, trying to stay standing...]

...which is Chaz Wallace's cue to slide back in, lifting Rhodes off the ropes into electric chair position...]

GM: Chaz has got him up on his shoulders! Rhodes looks out of it!

BW: He sure does!

[Chet steps up top, standing tall...]

...and then LEAPS off the top rope, his feet catching Rhodes in the chest as Chaz pushes up, sending Rhodes flipping through the air where he CRASHES down on the back of his head and neck!]

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

GM: OH MY STARS!

[Chaz rolls out as Chet dives on top, wrapping up both legs!]

GM: ONNNNNNNNNNNE! TWOOOOOOOOOO! THREEEEEEEEEEEEEEEE!

"DING! DING! DING!"

[The Wallaces quickly bail from the ring, falling into an embrace as a hobbling Sid Osborne gets back in just a bit too late.]

GM: Osborne finally made it back in... but this one's over, fans. Like it or not - and this Canadian crowd certainly falls in the latter category - the American Idols are moving on to the Quarterfinals.

BW: What a win!

GM: A big win no doubt... but a tainted one thanks to-

[The shot cuts to a sneering Logan Blackburn in the aisle, looking up at the ring where Osborne and Kaiser are tending to Raphael Rhodes.]

GM: -yeah, that guy right there. Logan Blackburn... I didn't even see him come out here. Was he under the ring? Did he come through the crowd? I don't have the answer for that... but he came out here when the referee was tied up, used that steel chair on Raphael Rhodes when Rhodes seemed to have victory within his grasp... and the Idols take the win.

BW: The only part of that anyone cares about is the last few words - the Idols take the win, daddy! They're moving on to the Quarterfinals!

GM: The Idols celebrating on the floor alongside Michael Aarons and... well, in this case, a win is a win, I suppose. The Idols - we know by now - don't care HOW they do it as long as they get it done and they've certainly done that here tonight.

[As the Experience celebrates in the aisleway, we flash on an ACCESS 365 logo before cutting to footage in the backstage area - more specifically the office of Javier Castillo who is sitting behind his desk. As we join the footage, Castillo is already speaking to the man sitting across from him - former World Champion, Hall of Famer, and recent Korugun addition, Jeff "Madfox" Matthews.]

JC: So, as you can see, Mr. Matthews... there is a plan in place and everything is moving along according to that plan - even with some hiccups like what happened in South Philly along the way.

[Matthews grins, nodding.]

JC: You're going to play an important part in that plan... so I'm glad to have you aboard. Any requests for me?

[Matthews nods.]

JMM: Just one. Ever since Eternally Extreme, I've been hearing only one question - why?

[Castillo nods.]

JC: I'd imagine.

[Matthews grins.]

JMM: And on Saturday Night Wrestling, I'd like the time to answer that question... from the ring.

[Castillo rises from his desk, clapping his hands together.]

JC: For the latest addition to our ranks, how could I refuse? The time is yours, Mr. Matthews. Do with it as you will.

[Matthews rises from his seat as well, reaching across to shake Javier Castillo's hand when the office door suddenly swings open, causing both men to startle as they turn towards it...

...and the snarling visage of King Kong Hogan. We'd say he's in street clothes but the pair of stained jeans and white tank top that has seen much better days could just as likely be his ring gear.]

KKH: You.

[Castillo clutches his chest nervously as Hogan stalks angrily across the room...

...and comes face to face with Jeff Matthews who - to his credit - does not back down from the hulking sadist looking down on him.]

KKH: I've been looking for you, fox.

[Matthews shrugs.]

JMM: You found me.

[Hogan breaks into a grin.]

KKH: So I did. And just in time. See, later tonight, I've got this No Man's Land fight with the little pup, Supreme... and I know you've got issues with him too.

[The Hall of Famer nods.]

KKH: I'm here to give you a warning.

[He jams a finger up close enough to touch Matthews' chin as Castillo looks on nervously.]

KKH: Don't you ever... EVER... get involved in my business without my permission again... are we clear, boy?

[Matthews slaps the hand away, his eyes going cold.]

JMM: You ever stick your hand in my face like that again, you'll lose the use of that arm... permanently.

[Hogan laughs loudly.]

KKH: You got guts... I like that... I like it.

[He dips into his jeans pocket, drawing the Golden Spike into view.]

KKH: Be a shame to have to spill 'em all over the boss' floor.

[Castillo suddenly clears his throat, stepping around his desk.]

JC: Gentlemen, please. Let's show some self-control, hm?

[Hogan shrugs, slipping the spike into his pocket.]

KKH: I guess there's a first time for everything... but let's be clear... both of ya.

[Hogan turns towards Castillo.]

KKH: I took this gig... I followed your orders... 'cause the money was good and on time. Business is business and never let it be said that I ain't a businessman.

But this thing with Wright... this is personal.

[Hogan nods.]

KKH: And if you even think about getting involved in it...

[Hogan steps closer to Castillo, Castillo very blatantly shuffling his feet backwards to get away.]

KKH: Then our deal is off. And I'm comin' for you.

[Hogan sneers.]

KKH: Are we clear... boss man?

[Castillo nods.]

KKH: Good.

[Hogan holds his gaze on a fidgeting Castillo for a few moments before turning back to Matthews.]

KKH: That goes for you too, fox.

[Hogan turns, walking towards the door and shoving it open to make his exit. The room is silent for a few moments as the two men stare at the now-closed door.]

JC: Stay out of it.

[Matthews' head snaps to stare at Castillo.]

JC: We need all the allies we can get for what's coming... and we definitely don't want him on the other side. Understood?

[Matthews looks exasperated but slowly nods.]

JC: Good. Leave the building if you have to but No Man's Land cannot have any Korugun involvement... no matter what.

[Castillo stares thoughtfully at the closed door as we get another flash of the ACCESS 365 logo before ending up back to live action backstage where "Sweet" Lou Blackwell stands in front of the AWA backdrop with the updated tournament bracket hanging on it.]

SLB: Ladies and gentlemen, we are closing in on the end of the second round with just one more matchup to go. Now, it's been a handful of years since these two have graced the halls of an AWA event and it pleases me to introduce to you all two men who are forever inked in the history books of tag team wrestling. As much as I'd love to ask them a million questions about their life on the road in the ninties-

"Hey now, whose mic time is this, bud?"

["Incredible" Idol Austin and "High Society" Eugene Robinson walk into view. A little wiser, a little older, and with a lot more salt and pepper hair than the last time we saw them. Idol shows the age the most, being in his early fifties. He's not quite as slim as he once was and his short blonde hair is conspicuously white along the edges.

Robinson, having gone the other direction and thinned out more so than his counterpart and we aren't just talking about his waistline. Robinson, still sporting longer blonde hair, has his hair strewn around his forehead covering up a hairline that has definitely begun to inch backwards.]

ER: I'm gonna have to go ahead and cut you off right there, man. Where's Jason? I was told Jason Dane was coming back for a special appearance.

IA: I think he may have missed that flight.

ER: Stegglet? Is he around?

SLB: Well, he's a bit preoccupied with your-

ER: You know, it's okay.

[Robinson puts his hands up into a makeshift camera lens and pans around the room.]

ER: I think we can make this work, even with you.

[Blackwell stays silent.]

IA: Pssst, that's your cue.

SLB: Well, I was about to say what an honor it was to have the two of you here in Saskatchewan and especially after such a long absence from the ring. During your heyday, you were without a doubt one of the top teams in the sport... but I have to ask, everyone wants to know, after all this time... all these years... why now? Why here? Is it the money? Is there something left to prove? It's great to have you here but-

[Robinson interrupts.]

ER: Whoa, whoa, whoa. Slow it down there. This ain't no Hollywood meet cute unless you're about to profess your undying love for us which I totally get and it's most certainly not about the money because Idol here and I have done quite well with investments for ourselves since our days in the ring came to an end. What this is?

[Robinson gestures to Idol and back to himself.]

ER: Is about making history.

AGAIN.

[A confident nod.]

ER: It was four, five, maybe six years ago... who can keep up with timelines these days... when we stood in an arena just like this one with better catering. I mean, gravy on fries? It's madness. The Stampede Cup was on the line and the Dynasty was plastered on posters to draw in teams across the globe and all we heard was how it was an uphill battle for us old timers and this guy next to me hogged the mic for the weekend as if he had been living in a bomb shelter for a decade.

[Idol holds his hands up about to protest... then shrugs.]

IA: Yeah, he's right.

[Robinson nods.]

ER: He reminded everyone that from the moment we walked down the halls of the UWF, into the EMWC, into every dressing room we ever stepped foot into, people were always doubting us. Writing us out before we ever stepped into the ring. You know what we did?

[Robinson looks squarely towards Blackwell.]

IA: Shut them up.

[Robinson sighs.]

ER: That was a metaphoric – I was staring at him and then – you know what, never mind. What Idol said, he ain't wrong. We shut them up but more importantly, we proved them wrong. We've held gold every place we've gone and rewritten history each and every time before we left. Do you know what that did for us?

SLB: I'm sure you're going to tell us.

ER: No, no I'm not.

SLB: I, uh-

[Robinson hooks a thumb towards Austin.]



IA: I'm going to tell you. It left us STILL trying to prove our worth. What better proof than a month ago at Eternally Extreme numero dos when everyone else got all giddy when the Epitome of Cool, Frats, and the Down Boys shared a ring together. What a nostalgic moment that was. Three Hall of Fame tag teams all in one spot for the first time in years beating up the Fonz...

SLB: You mean Alphonse Green?

IA: Sure. You know what that proved?

[Pause.]

ER: Go ahead, try and answer this time.

SLB: I'd rather not.

ER: You're a quick learner. Unfortunately, life doesn't really seem to work that way does it? I'm sure you had bigger goals in your life... in this business... than to get rolled out each week like a stooge and hopefully get enough words in so people remember your name.

IA: Did he give us his name?

ER: We didn't really ask and I'm sure that pain hurts.

IA: We feel you. Do the kids still say that?

ER: I don't really think they speak directly to one another, it's all done on social media.

[Austin shrugs.]

IA: That moment in the ring with those teams was about as adorable as the Olson Twins in the 1980's.

ER: Well, if your gray nose hairs didn't remind people how old we were, that line sure did. What it proved was that time and time again Dynasty is left out of the conversation. The longest reigning EMWC World Tag Team Champions in history didn't even receive an invite to show up. I get it though, I do. While those ham and eggars thrived on comedic skits and immaturity, we were fueled by constantly proving we weren't just the best in our class.

We were the top of the class that others strived to reach.

What Idol and I did in the ring together will NEVER be duplicated. We weren't just two schmucks who got along well enough to ride on the road together and share a ring for a payday. We were the rare breed. Great apart and just as great if not better together. That's why we weren't invited, fella. Everyone knew if the Dynasty showed up at Eternally Extreme, we would have exposed those clowns for the circus sideshows that they always were and the same fans that shouted for blood and gore wanted to see hugs and butt slaps out of them.

[Austin nods.]

IA: The Dynasty wrote the book on tag team wrestling and it's time we remind people that tag teams aren't a special attraction or a sideshow. When Geno and I shared a ring together the Dynasty and tag team wrestling closed the show and since no team of this generation will step up and remind people of that fact then it's time we showed them how it's done.

SLB: So that's it? You're trying to prove to these folks that you still got it?

ER: No, my portly little friend. We aren't trying to prove that we still [miming quotes] got it.

We're going to show City Jack, Tin Can Rust, Oil Can Boyd, Can Opener Carver, and WalMart or Baby Mart or whatever people call him if those young guns can make it far enough that we ALWAYS had it...

And we never lost it.

See it ain't about proving to people that we've been wrongfully left out of the conversation of the greatest tag team to ever step into a ring.

[Austin shakes his head.]

IA: It's about proving them right for keeping us out of the ring with those other hacks and shattering all of your childhood memories if they ever stepped foot in the ring with us and letting everyone starting with City Jack and Tin Can rust know one thing...

ER: It ain't their right to share the ring with us.

IA: It's their privilege.

[And Dynasty exits, leaving Sweet Lou Blackwell behind...]

SLB: Former multi-time World Tag Team Champions, Dynasty is looking to add Stampede Cup winners to that already-impressive resume. To do it, they've got a long hill to climb... starting with their opponents who are standing by with Mark Stegglet - Kentucky's Pride! Mark?

[We fade to another part of the backstage area.]

MS: Thanks, Lou. Our final Round Two bout is coming up shortly and it should be an interesting match up of styles and experience. I'm joined here by one of the teams, coming off a victory last night against the Samoan Hit Squad, Kentucky's Pride!

[City Jack and Tin Can Rust step into view, both dressed in their gear and "Kentucky's Pride" t-shirts. Behind them stands Landon Grant, dressed in dark jeans, a KP t-shirt, and a jeans jacket. Both Jack and Rust stretch out a little, still feeling the pain from the match against the Samoan Hit Squad.]

CJ: Great to see ya again, Mr. Stegglet!

MS: City Jack, Tin Can Rust - we saw you in a tough match against the Samoans last night and you both still seem to be feeling the effects of the fight. How do you feel going against a team - a rested team at that - in Dynasty?

CJ: Ha! Always great, Mr. Stegglet!

[Jack lets out a hearty laugh and slaps Stegglet on the shoulder, wincing a bit and quickly clutching his shoulder after bringing his arm down. Jack quickly smiles to cover up the show of pain.]

CJ: No worries, my man! My heart's a-beatin', my mind's still focused on the prize, and us two have life. LIFE! We got the pin last night, got to see my boy win earlier tonight, and now we're ready. Ready to go out there, do what we do and see what comes.

[Rust nods.]

TCR: Look, any other match right now? My body would be giving out - my legs buckle when I walk, I can hear the bone grind on bone when I move every joint, and every inch of my being aches. Back to back nights, we ain't accustomed to that right now. But that ain't means nothing. Cause what we have coming now isn't any other match -

CJ: Nope!

TCR: This is a match against LEGENDS! Legends of tag team wrestling! One of the bonafide best there ever were or ever will be. And add, this is THE STAMPEDE CUP! The Cup we never won -

[Jack shakes his head and wag his finger.]

CJ: The Cup we've always wanted!

TCR: So the pain, the aches, those moments when we can't get a good breath in? We gotta push through 'em. Jack and I, I know -

[Rust puts a hand to his heart.]

TCR: God's honest truth, we'd do nearly anything and go to any length to make past this match. To make it to the next round and see what this roll can get us. That's where our minds our, Stegglet. That's where we at.

MS: Knowing you both are hurting and knowing you're going against a team that's made their name by exploiting weaknesses, are you concerned if you can win tonight?

[Rust narrows his eyes, not liking the doubting question, but Jack chuckles in response.]

CJ: Just imagine, Mr. Stegglet! Imagine if us bodies here were twenty, thirty years younger, right? Take the know-how our determination, our unyieldin' drive our of these beaten up near wrecks and put 'em into some super chargers. Heh, imagine that!

[Jack smacks his hands together and makes a rocket motion with his hand.]

CJ: BOOM! No stoppin' that, right? Course, could imagine lots of things. I imagine some other world where I'm some man o' muscle - all grit and nothin' else, right? But hey, that's imaginin'! What we're doin' here tonight? What's inside here -

[Jack slap at his heart.]

CJ: And here -

[Jack bumps his paw to Rust's heart.]

CJ: It's REAL! And win, lose, or even draw, it's damn special! We have have something here, between us, that's too damn special to let an ache, a pain, or some broken bones if it comes get in the way.

[Jack looks back at his son, a beaming smile on his face.]

CJ: You know, Mr. Stegglet, never in my years, and never at this point in my life, my career - and think of that! A career, again! MY wrestling career, back again! But

never thought we'd to be facing against a team like Dynasty. Shoot, I remember watching them twistin' people up to the top of the tag team ranks while swampin' my way from ring to ring in the backwaters. And they - they're pros. Real pro-fesh-on-als!

TCR: They're exact. To the point.

CJ: True! And us two, we ain't too tech-ni-cal, you hear? We ain't goin' in with some gameplan to make ya cry uncle in that ring. But we got our way, we got our hearts, and we got our love of this sport and... and... We fight just as we did ten, twenty years past - go in, get past the obstacles, toss these big ham hocks around -

[Jack muscles up his arms and immediately winces, grabbing his right shoulder, but tries to hide that pain with a wink to the camera.]

CJ: And do our thing, you know? We just... We just do our thing, enjoy it out there, and get what can get done.

[Jack looks back at Rust, gets a nod, and then back to Grant who also nods. Jack then looks back at Stegglet, giving him a nod before all three exit the area.]

MS: Former AWA National Tag Team Champions, Kentucky's Pride looking to see if they can push that setting sun on their career back up into the sky for one more day of summer, fans. Let's go down to the ring and Rebecca Ortiz and see what they can do!

[We fade from backstage out to the ring where our lovely ring announcer is standing.]

RO: The following contest is the final match in ROUND TWO of the 2017 Stampede Cup tournament and it is set for one fall with a thirty minute time limit.

[Ortiz pauses as the crowd cheers.]

RO: Introducing first... preparing to make their way to the ring, at a total combined weight of 459 lbs... the longest reigning EMWC World Tag Team Champions of all time...

BW: Yet conspicuously not invited to Eternally-

GM: Can't you at least save it until after the introductions?

[Ortiz continues.]

RO: I give you "Incredible Idol Austin and "High Society" Eugene Robinson...

THIS...

IS...

DYYYYYYYYYNAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAASTYYYYYYYYYYYYYYYYYYYYYYYY!!!!

["Payback" by Jan Hammer hits the airwaves as the lights in the arena begin to spiral in golden rays with a spray of pyro cascading down like mist from above the entrance portal. The music continues to build as does the moment old school fans are anticipating as the two storied and battle tested veterans emerge out for the first time in nearly six years.]

GM: These are the moments old guys like us live for, Bucky. On one side of the ring we have the longest reigning EMWC World Tag Team Champions in history. A company built on legends and Hall of Famers like the Frat Boys, Epitome of Cool, the Down Boys, among many others but it's these two men who hold that

prestigious record. On the other side you have a team the AWA built its tag division around. The pioneers of the division, the first AWA National Tag Team Champions in Kentucky's Pride. It's like two generations having a dream match up and we're just getting things going in the Stampede Cup. Pinch me, Bucky. This all feels a little – OUCH!

BW: What?

GM: I didn't actually want you to pinch me, you realize that don't you?

BW: I do but I also knew you would probably ramble for another twenty minutes if I didn't stop you.

[“Incredible” Idol Austin and “High Society” Eugene Robinson emerge side by side. The crowd is a bit torn but what they aren't is quiet as the noise is deafening as they step into view. Both men are wearing extravagant gold robes with more sequins than a Spice Girls concert. Austin has the shorter blonde hair with white along the edges. Robinson is still hanging onto the longer hair look, his hair more platinum blonde than it once was an being much leaner than the last time we saw him. Both men look like they spend most of their time lounging in the sun and before they are even three feet down the aisle they are already jawing at some of the fans along the railing.]

GM: You've got to think these two have a chip on their shoulder. They've been here before, Bucky. It was 2011 when they last competed in the Stampede Cup only to fall in the semi-finals to Violence Unlimited and I know first hand that they were quick to sign on the dotted line after Haynes and Morton had agreed to return to the Cup.

BW: I'm sure that was a little extra motivation but I don't think these two need chalkboard material to get out of bed in the morning. A couple cups of coffee, a nurse, and a walker... maybe. But definitely not competition!

[Robinson and Austin make it to the ring and instantly remove the robes and toss them towards the official who nearly stumbles backwards. They've got short gold trunks on with I.A. in black print on the lower left side of Austin's tights and E.R. on Robinson's. Both men having matching gold kneepads with black trim and black boots with gold laces. They settle back to their corner, having a conversation as Ortiz continues.]

RO: Annnnnnnnnnd their opponents...

[Johnny Cash's cover of "My Old Kentucky Home (Turbentine and Dandelion Wine)" plays, bringing a big cheer from the fans inside Mosaic Stadium.]

RO: ...at a total combined weight of 553 pounds... being accompanied down the aisle by Landon Grant...  
They are... TIN CAN RUST... CITY JACK...

KENTUCKYYYYYYYYYYY'S PRIIIIIIIIIIIIIIIIDE!

[The crowd lets out a huge roar again as Kentucky's Pride walks through and down the aisle. City Jack, wearing his usual ring gear and black/green "Kentucky's Pride" t-shirt, still has a huge smile as he looks around at all the fans. He raises both hands up and break his smile for a split second wince as he drops back his left arm a bit. Rust grits his teeth as he paces his way down the aisle.]

GM: Some say one of surprise teams to make it to the second round.

BM: These two crusted out old junkers are a surprise to even get out of bed in the morning let alone wrestle back to back matches, Gordo.

[Landon Grant, in the same KP t-shirt and black track pants, gets in both Jack and Rust's ears as they approach the ring, giving the duo some words of encouragement. Rust and Jack walk up the stairs and pause a moment as they stand on the apron. They give each other a nod and a fist bump before slowly eeeasing their way through the ropes and into the ring.]

GM: I called it one earlier, Bucky... and again, I say this is a dream match for fans of tag team wrestling. I can't wait to see how this one goes down.

[Both teams exchange some final words as referee Davis Warren signals for the bell.]

"DING! DING! DING!"

GM: The bell has sounded, we're underway... and it's going to be Tin Can Rust starting things off against Eugene Robinson. Thirty minutes on the clock and-

[Bucky starts howling with laughter.]

GM: Oh, would you stop?!

BW: Oh... oh man... I'm sorry... just the thought that these two could hang in there for thirty minutes... whew... that was better than anything these Canadians think passes for comedy.

[Rust and Robinson circle one another as the crowd cheers with anticipation, watching as Robinson swings his arms across his torso, getting loose for the battle to come.]

GM: The final second round match is about to kick to another gear... and a tieup in the middle, here we go!

[The lockup lasts a second... maybe two... before Robinson swings a knee up into the midsection on Rust.]

GM: Robinson goes downstairs right away... watch out here...

[Robinson winds up...]

"WHAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAACK!"

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

GM: Big knife edge chop across the chest of Tin Can Rust, sending him stumbling back a step...

[A second one lands as well, knocking Rust back against the ropes...]

GM: Tin Can Rust on the ropes early...

[But Robinson continues to pour it on, throwing chop after chop...]

"WHAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAACK!"

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

"WHAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAACK!"

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

"WHAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAACK!"  
"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

[Rust grimaces from the final blow before winding up for one of his own...]

"WHAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAACK!"  
"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

[...and lands an overhead chop across the chest that stuns Robinson!]

GM: Rust is fighting back!

[Robinson throws a clubbing forearm overhead and down across the ear of Rust.]

GM: We've got a fight on our hands!

[Rust lands another overhand chop to which Robinson responds with a right hand... and another..

...but Rust rallies back, throwing chops as hard and as quickly as he can...]

"WHAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAACK!"  
"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

"WHAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAACK!"  
"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

"WHAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAACK!"  
"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

[And the third blow knocks Robinson off his feet, putting him down on the canvas to cheers from the crowd!]

GM: These two veterans of the ring aren't showing us anything fancy, fans - they've come to fight and to win that spot in the Quarterfinals!

[Robinson grimaces as he gets to his feet, wandering a little too close to City Jack's part of the ring. The rotund veteran draws back his Metropillin' forearm, ready to strike at a moment's notice... a move that sends Robinson spinning back the other way, ending up near the neutral corner as Rust squares up, keeping him there.]

GM: And now Rust has got Robinson backed to the corner, moving in on him...

[But Robinson instead lunges forward, snatching another collar and elbow, and uses it to twist Rust around, pushing him into the buckles...]

GM: Robinson's got Rust in the corner now instead.

BW: Nice veteran move by Robinson.

[The Dynasty member winds up, throwing a right hand that Rust blocks with ease before throwing a right of his own, knocking Robinson right back down to the canvas again to cheers!]

GM: Down goes Robinson a second time!

[Robinson scrambles back, a little dazed as he spins in a circle...

...and walks right into a big booming forearm smash across the jaw by City Jack to a huge cheer!]

GM: Oh my!

BW: That's illegal! Ring the bell, ref!

GM: The referee giving some leeway there as Robinson stumbles back out of Kentucky's Pride's corner...

"WHAAAAAAAAAAAAACK!"

"OHLLLLLLLLLLLLLLLLLLLL!"

[...and eats yet another overhand chop from Tin Can Rust, knocking Robinson down to the mat again!]

BW: Robinson's spent more time on the mat so far than Picasso, daddy!

GM: Eugene Robinson is getting pinballed around the ring by Kentucky's Pride... and this is the kind of quick start Jack and Rust were looking for no doubt. This is their second match in two nights and they need to conserve as much energy as possible in case they advance to face the American Idols. They want a quick win if they can manage it.

[Rust stands over Robinson, beckoning him back to his feet, but Robinson simply rolls under the ropes to the floor, grimacing as he wipes at a red welt on his chest. Landon Grant stands nearby, shouting for Robinson to get back into the ring.]

GM: The son of City Jack, young Landon Grant, has been in his father's corner all weekend... and managed to pick up a win on the Power Hour before we came on the air tonight.

[Robinson sneers, pointing a threatening finger at Grant.]

"YOU SHUT YOUR MOUTH, PUNK!"

[Grant takes a step towards Robinson, balling up his fists but a shout from his father cools him off.]

BW: Temper, temper, kid.

GM: Landon Grant needs to keep his emotions in check out there. One wrong move and he could cost his dad and his trainer the chance of a lifetime.

[Grant grimaces, nodding to his father as he backs away, leaving Robinson to take a stroll on the outside, listening to the official's count but paying it no mind.]

GM: Eugene Robinson looking for an early breather here... and these fans are letting him have it for it.

[Rust approaches the ropes but the official steps in, forcing him back as Robinson circles the ringpost, drawing close to his own corner where Idol Austin kneels down, huddling up to regroup.]

GM: Dynasty having a little strategy session, trying to figure out their next move as this match is not going their way so far.

[The referee backs Rust far enough back for Robinson to pull himself up on the apron, glaring across as he steps through the ropes...

...and then watches Tin Can Rust slap the offered hand of his partner.]



GM: The tag is made and City Jack in to a big ovation from this Mosaic Stadium crowd.

[Jack steps through, swinging his right arm around, getting the crowd rocking a bit more as he grins at the reaction.]

GM: Robinson looks like he's going to stay in there... maybe hoping a fresh opponent will give him a better shot...

[Austin shouts some encouragement to Robinson who nods in response.]

GM: And here we go again...

[Out in the middle of the ring, the two men tie up with Robinson promptly grabbing the arm, twisting out into a rear hammerlock...]

...but Jack ducks right under, reversing the hold into one of his own as Robinson cries out in pain, wincing.]

GM: Jack with the reversal, cranking up on that arm...

[Instead of looking for an escape, Robinson leans back into the hold, putting his back against Jack's chest and backpedals quickly, pushing Jack back into the corner where he instinctively lets go of the hold...]

GM: City Jack in the wrong part of town.. tag by Austin...

[Idol Austin steps in as Eugene Robinson fires off a right hand to the head. Austin joins his longtime partner in landing a blow of his own... then they land a haymaker in tandem...]

GM: Dynasty trying to work over Jack in the corner... look out now!

[Jack throws a pair of looping left hands to the ribs of Robinson, straightening up to throw a right to the jaw of Austin...]

GM: Jack's trying to fight his way out of the corner!

[Right hands to Austin... left hands to Robinson... now snapping jabs on both men at the same time...]

GM: Jack's got them reeling now and-

[Grabbing a handful of thinning hair on both men, Jack CRACKS their skulls together with a double noggin knocker, sending them both down to the canvas in a heap as the crowd roars!]

GM: Oh my! Jack takes them both down with a little meeting of the minds and this crowd is absolutely loving it!

[Jack is all fired up at this flurry of offense, moving swiftly back towards his own corner, playing to the crowd. He ducks through the ropes, looping an arm around his son's neck and pulls him into a kiss on the forehead, leaving a sheepish Grant shaking his head with a smile...]

...and then spins over to Tin Can Rust, planting one on his partner's forehead as well and earning a half-hearted shove away as the crowd laughs along with Kentucky's Pride.]

GM: City Jack's having a good time in there, Bucky.

BW: I'm so glad. He should enjoy it while it lasts because I'm guessing Robinson and Austin would love to wipe that smile off his face with one of those spike piledrivers they used to deliver back in the day.

GM: I'm sure you're right about that as Dynasty regains their feet, a little sheepish at this point being overwhelmed by one man...

[Robinson vacates the ring as Austin stays in this time. The 50+ year old edges slowly from the corner towards Jack who is out in mid-ring. Jack is all smiles, looking to engage again as Austin seems very focused in his methodical approach.]

GM: A striking clash of demeanors in there for these two teams... well, for Jack anyways. Tin Can Rust is as serious as a heart attack.

BW: Probably a poor choice of words considering his age, Gordo.

GM: BUCKY!

[Austin edges forward, diving into a collar and elbow tieup at last...

...and Jack quickly spins out into an armwringer, giving the limb a yank and putting Austin down on a knee, grabbing at his twisted arm.]

GM: City Jack's got him down again, working the left arm this time of Idol Austin... who is not looking so incredible right now.

BW: Oh, you're a real riot, Gordo.

[Reaching back, Jack slaps the offered hand of Tin Can Rust who steps in, looks at the trapped Austin's arm...

...and with a shake of his head, throwing a big left hand, knocking Austin right off his feet and down to the mat!]

GM: So much for working on that arm, Bucky.

BW: Rust has never been one for a wristlock when a right hand would work.

GM: That's for sure... and Austin is quickly back up though, Rust in hot pursuit...

[Rust grabs the fleeing Austin by the arm, whipping him across the ring...]

GM: Rust shoots him in... Austin coming back...

[But as Austin nears him, Rust wraps him up in a sleeperhold!]

GM: SLEEPERHOLD! RUST LOCKS IT IN!

[Austin suddenly is pumping his arms wildly, looking for a way out as Rust tries to put his opponent into Dream Land and earn his team a trip to the Quarterfinals.]

GM: Rust has got it in deep - Austin's looking for the ropes but he can't get there! Could this be it?! The Mosaic Stadium crowd is on their feet and... look out!

[Austin plants his feet, driving backwards and smashing Rust back into Dynasty's corner...]

GM: And back into the corner again, using the same type of escape that his partner did a few moments ago...

[Robinson immediately slips his hand under the chin of Rust, pulling back as the referee shouts for him to let go...

...but Robinson ignores him, hanging on as Austin slips out of the sleeper, twisting around to lay in some heavy haymakers to the jeers of the Canadian faithful!]

GM: Idol Austin teeing off in the corner, working over Tin Can Rust... and hang on here!

[Seeing his partner being doubleteamed, Jack starts to come through the ropes but the official moves to cut him off...

...which allows Robinson to lay in some heavy right hands to the temple from the outside as Austin goes downstairs with hooking blows to the body!]

GM: And now Tin Can Rust is REALLY in trouble in the corner!

[Austin swings a knee up into the gut, doubling Rust up before he uses a snapmare to flip him out of the corner onto his back, driving a hard stomp down onto the sternum...

...and slaps the hand of Eugene Robinson.]

GM: Dynasty making the tag as well now, trying to keep the fresh man in.

BW: With the advanced age of both of these teams, Gordo, it's more important than ever to make quick tags. The stamina on all four of these guys will be limited and they'll need a lot of breathers to stay effective.

GM: Very sound analysis, Bucky, as Eugene Robinson measures his man down on the mat... and another hard stomp... make it a trio for the former World Tag Team Champions...

[Pulling Rust up off the mat, Robinson smashes his head into the top turnbuckle in the neutral corner, twisting him around to put his back into it...]

GM: Robinson's got him in the corner now... big boot to the gut... and another...

[Grabbing the top rope for support, Robinson fires off a half dozen kicks to the body before the cries of Davis Warren forces a break...]

GM: The official trying to get him out of the corner... but instead, it's Rust out of the corner, getting whipped across the ring...

[But Rust manages to reverse the whip, sending Robinson crashing into the buckles, stumbling back out...]

GM: BIIIIIIIG BACK BODY DROP ON ROBINSON!

[Robinson promptly rolls to his hip, grimacing in pain as he grabs at his lower back.]

GM: Robinson goes waaaaay up and waaaaay down hard in the center of the ring...

[Rust turns to the corner, slapping the offered hand...]

GM: City Jack's back in off the tag as well... lumbering across...

[The crowd cheers as Jack drops a big elbow down into the chest!]

GM: ELBOWDROP!

[He flips to his side, applying a lateral press that gets a two count before Robinson slips out.]

GM: Two count off the elbow... and Jack might be looking to finish him off here.

[Pulling Robinson to his feet, Jack snaps off a pair of jabs to the jaw before landing a big haymaker that sends Robinson spinning away into the neutral corner...]

GM: Jack's got him reeling... stepping to the second rope now...

[Holding his fist high in the air, Jack starts raining down punches as the crowd counts along...]

"ONE!"

"TWO!"

"THREE!"

"FOUR!"

"FIVE!"

"SIX!"

"SEVEN!"

[Idol Austin comes charging down the apron, looking to intervene...

...and gets a right hand from Jack as well, sending him sprawling off the apron to the floor to thunderous roar from the Mosaic Stadium crowd!]

GM: BIG SHOT SENDS AUSTIN TO THE FLOOR!

[Jack gives a fistpump to the roaring Canadian crowd as he hops down from the buckle, grabbing Robinson by the arm...]

GM: Jack whips him across, Robinson hits hard!

[The Dynasty member starts to stumble out of the corner when he sees City Jack rear back with his right arm...]

GM: METROPILL!

[...and slams on the brakes, falling to the mat where he promptly rolls out to the floor, waving his arms dismissively at Jack who lowers his arm in disappointment as the crowd jeers.]

GM: City Jack had him in his sights and a smart move by Eugene Robinson to get out of there before-

[The AWA faithful cheers loudly as Tin Can Rust comes around the corner, grabbing Robinson from behind, wheeling him around and tosses him back inside the ring to cheers!]

BW: Hey! He can't do that!

GM: He just did!

[Robinson scrambles off the mat, shouting at Tin Can Rust as City Jack rears back behind him...]

BW: Wait! Behind you! Robinson, behind-

[...and then turns right into the Metropill, the big forearm smashing down across his jaw, knocking him flat!]

GM: HE GOT HIM!

[Jack drops to his knees, diving across as the referee drops down to count.]

GM: ONNNNNNNNNNNE! TWOOOOOOOOOOO! THR-

“OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!”

GM: Foot on the ropes! Foot on the ropes! Robinson gets the foot on the ropes JUST in time to save the match and the tournament for Dynasty!

[Jack pushes up to his knees, burying his head in his hands as Landon Grant shouts encouragement to his father from the floor.]

GM: His son cheering Jack on, trying to keep him from getting discouraged.

[Getting up off the mat, Jack is very obviously breathing heavy as he steps to the corner, making the tag.]

GM: Tin Can Rust in off the tag, pulling Robinson back up off the mat... Robinson can barely stand on his own! That Metropill knocked him for a loop for sure!

[Rust pulls Robinson out to the middle of the ring...

...where Robinson promptly reaches up, digging his fingers into the eyes right in front of the official!]

GM: Oh, come on! Blatant eyegouge by Robinson!

[The referee shouts at the former World Tag Team Champion as he shouts to Idol Austin who is back on the apron. Austin slips his leg through the ropes, raising his knee as Robinson whips Rust towards the corner and RIGHT into Austin's raised knee.]

GM: Ohhh! Right in the gut goes the knee of "Incredible" Idol Austin... and there's the tag to him...

[Austin comes in quickly, swinging his knee up into the ribs once... twice... three times... then switches to right hands to the body to follow up, leaving Rust gasping for wind as he slumps down to his knees on the mat.]

GM: Austin going right to work on the body, breaking down Tin Can Rust over in their half of the ring...

[Austin lands a hefty double axehandle, driving Rust down to the canvas where Austin quickly slips his legs around the torso, putting on the squeeze with a bodyscissors.]

GM: Idol Austin locking on a submission hold in the middle of the ring...

BW: And when's the last time you've seen a bodyscissors, Gordo? Idol Austin is taking us old school here... and not to that extreme garbage... this old school mat wrestling at its finest.

GM: Idol Austin was always recognized as a top flight mat technician and he's putting that on display right now... and don't look now, fans, but we've passed the

ten minute mark in this one and with each minute that passes, I believe it makes the odds longer for either of these teams to get through the Quarterfinals and the American Idols.

BW: Absolutely, Gordo. The Idols went through a hard match of their own but they're younger, faster, and in much better shape. They're gonna run circles around either of these teams - a true Dropkick Party for the ages!

[Austin continues to squeeze the ribcage, slamming his forearm down a few times on the chest as well as Rust struggles to escape the punishing hold.]

GM: The legs trapping the sore ribs, trying to apply more pressure on them and to cut out the air of Tin Can Rust... who needs all the air he can get at this advanced stage of his career.

[With Landon Grant slapping the canvas to urge them on, the crowd starts chanting his name...]

"TIN! CAN! RUST!"

"TIN! CAN! RUST!"

"TIN! CAN! RUST!"

[...and slowly, Rust starts to respond, first by rolling to his hip... then by raising his right arm over his head...]

GM: Rust is trying to get out of this, trying to roll it over...

[He slides to his knees... then to his feet...]

GM: He's almost out now and-

[...and then lowers the BOOM on Austin with a well-placed right hand that immediately breaks the hold as Rust falls to his side and slaps the outstretched hand of City Jack.]

GM: And another quick tag by Kentucky's Pride brings City Jack back in!

[Jack rushes into the ring, greeting the rising Austin with a right hand... and another... and a third...]

GM: Jack teeing off on Idol Austin...

[With a big juke and jive, Jack throws a big haymaker that knocks Austin off his feet, putting him down on the canvas...]

...which is when Eugene Robinson runs back in...]

GM: Robinson from behind!

[But Jack spins back around, forearm at the ready...]

...which causes Robinson to slam on the brakes again, falling backwards towards his corner, dropping to a knee!]

GM: Hah! Look at that!

[Jack swings back towards the legal man, dragging Austin to his feet and wrapping his massive arms around him...]

GM: He's looking for the Metroboom!

[The crowd cheers in anticipation of a match-ending belly-to-belly suplex...

...but Eugene Robinson comes charging back in, throwing his shoulder into the back of Jack's knee!]

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

GM: HE CLIPPED HIM! HE CLIPPED HIM!

[Jack slumps to the mat, grabbing the back of his knee as Robinson sneers at the jeering crowd, looking quite pleased with himself despite the angry shouts of referee Davis Warren!]

GM: Jack might've had this one all wrapped up and- oh, come on!

[The jeers get louder as Robinson and Austin start stomping City Jack into the canvas, Landon Grant looking on with concern at his father.]

GM: Dynasty's stomping Jack over and over again and-

[The crowd's cheers pick up once more as Tin Can Rust comes back in, obviously winded as he throws a big right hand that knocks Robinson down... then another that sends Austin down...]

GM: Right hands for both men!

[Rust leans down, checking on his partner as the crowd continues to cheer.]

GM: Tin Can Rust coming to the aid of his long-time friend and partner and... OHHH! Robinson with a running forearm to the back of the head! Sneak attack from behind! He should be disqualified for that!

BW: I don't know about that but we've got all four in the ring, Gordo. This is getting out of control and the referee might have to throw the whole thing out!

GM: And if he does, the happiest people in the building will be the American Idols who will giftwrapped a bye straight to the Semifinals of this tournament!

[Robinson stomps Rust a few times as Austin gets back up...

...and then Robinson starts directing traffic.]

GM: What are they...?

[Austin grins, gesturing with his arms up and down, sending the Canadian crowd into a concerned buzz.]

GM: They're calling for the piledriver! They're looking for that spike piledriver they used to use back when they were the champions of the world!

[The buzz grows louder as Robinson pulls Rust off the mat, feeding him to Idol Austin as Robinson walks over towards the corner...]

GM: They're getting into position! The referee's trying to get Robinson out of there - Austin's the legal man!

BW: Good luck with that. These sharks smell blood, daddy!

[A boot to the gut doubles up Rust as Austin steps into a standing headscissors, reaching down to wrap his arms around the gut of Rust as Eugene Robinson hops up to the middle rope...]

GM: Robinson's on the middle rope... Austin's trying to get Rust up...

[But as they get into position, City Jack gets back to his feet, moving to the corner where he DRILLS Robinson with a right hand that sends him flying off the middle rope, over the top rope, and down HARD to the floor!]

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

GM: DOWN GOES EUGENE ROBINSON! WHAT A FALL!

[And with the spot clear, City Jack pushes himself up on the midbuckle, facing into the ring...]

...and as Idol Austin looks up, expecting to see his partner...]

BW: WHAT THE-?!

[...City Jack somehow manages to get his rotund form in flight, soaring the short distance over his own partner to catch Austin across the chest with a crossbody!]

GM: CROSSBODY OFF THE SECOND ROPE! CAN YOU BELIEVE IT?!

[The referee drops down, slapping the mat once... twice...]

GM: HE GOT HIM!

"DING! DING! DING!"

[The crowd ERUPTS at the sound of the bell as a weary City Jack rolls off of Idol Austin onto his back. Landon Grant dives into the ring, pulling his father into a seated position as he kneels on the canvas to embrace him.]

GM: What a win for Kentucky's Pride! What a moment for this legendary team as they knock off former World Tag Team Champions to advance to the Quarterfinals!

BW: It's a big win, no doubt, Gordo... but after almost fifteen minutes of battle, you've gotta wonder what's left in the tank for these two. We know they're barely active these days in the ring. We know it's been years since they've wrestled on back to back nights. And now they're facing the prospect of their second match of the night... their third match of the weekend! This is a great Cinderella story but I'm afraid the American Idols are waiting to break that glass slipper into a million pieces, daddy.

GM: That remains to be seen but right now, let's just enjoy this moment. The two longtime friends... longtime partners... City Jack and Tin Can Rust celebrating their win alongside Landon Grant, Jack's son and Rust's student. He's one of the big reasons they reunited for this tournament and right now, all three of them are on top of the world.

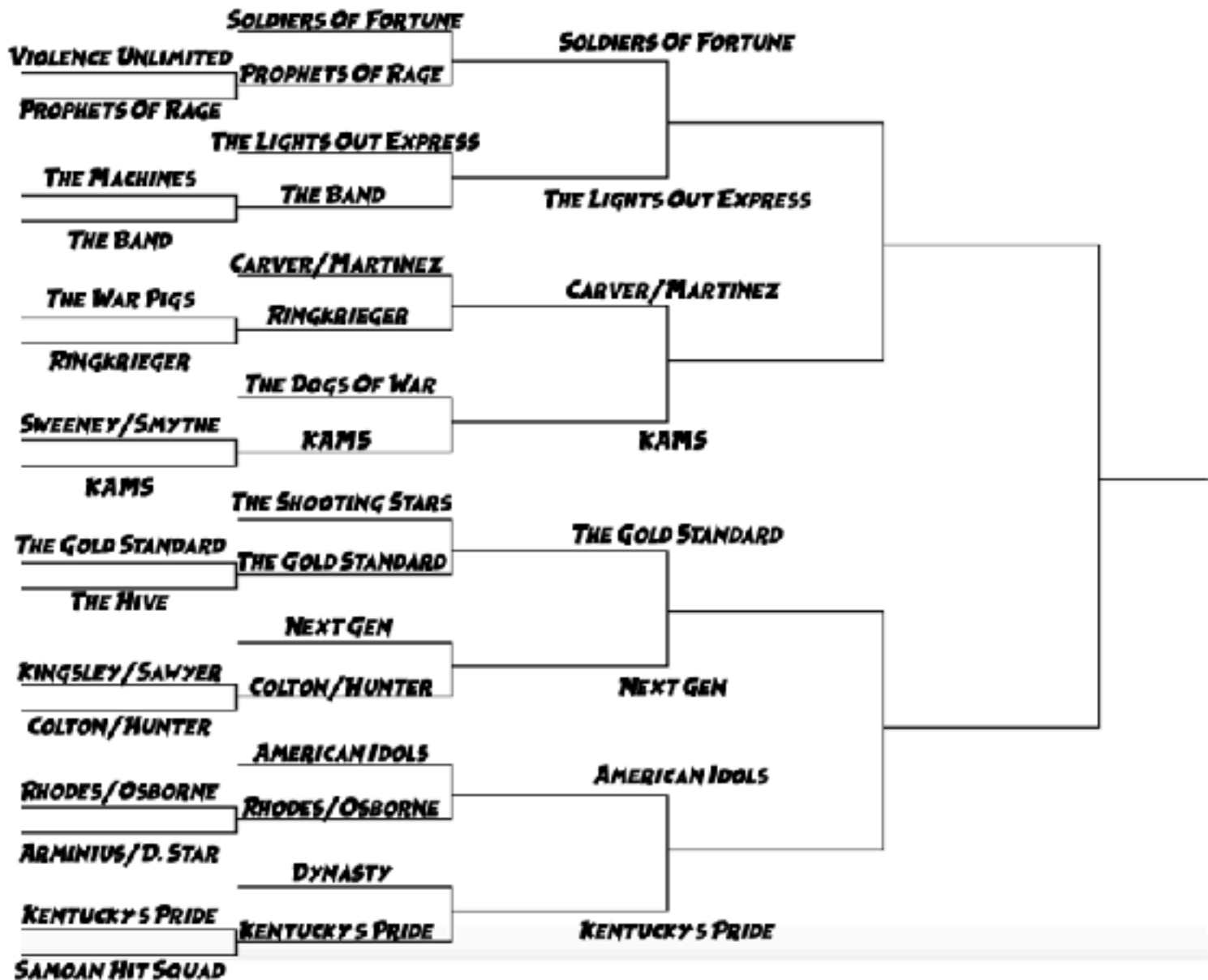
[Grant stands between his family, raising their arms in the air as the Canadian crowd pays them tribute...]

...and we fade back to the backstage area to Sweet Lou Blackwell who is standing in front of the tournament bracket - freshly updated.]



SLB: It's a special moment in the ring... an emotional moment for longtime AWA fans for sure as Kentucky's Pride, the very first AWA National Tag Team Champions, are moving on to the Quarterfinals. In fact, let's take a look at the big board and see what's left...

[Blackwell sidesteps as we get a look at the updated bracket.]



SLB: We started with twenty-four teams and we're now down to the Elite Eight. Eight tremendous teams left in there. The current World Tag Team Champions, former World Tag Team Champions, high level talent from Japan, the first National Tag Team Champions, Olympic gold medalists, and so much more. This is really shaping up to be a tremendous showdown as we see who can survive this grueling tournament and walk out of Mosaic Stadium with their claim staked as the best tag team on the planet. Now, coming up next in just a few short minutes, we'll be seeing the first of our four Quarterfinal matchups with the current Number One Contenders to the World Tag Team Titles, the Soldiers of Fortune, taking on former AWA World Tag Team Champions themselves, the Lights Out Express... but before we go to that, let's head over to my good friend, Theresa Lynch, who is standing by in the Control Center!

[We cut to a bank of television monitors, all showing AWA action from over the years. A voiceover is heard.]

"Your host for the AWA Control Center... THERESA LYNCH!"

[Fade to another bank of monitors - this one with the fancy AWA Control Center graphic as well as Theresa Lynch standing in front of it as we saw her earlier. She grins as the camera comes on.]

TL: The AWA's been absolutely red hot all summer long and even while the Battle of Saskatchewan continues to rage on, the AWA is looking ahead... and more specifically, we're looking ahead to Monday, September 4th in Mexico for Estrellas En El Cielo! The AWA will be coming to Mexico for the very first time as - alongside our friends at SouthWest Lucha Libre - we'll be presenting this big event that will come to you LIVE from Estadio BBVA in Guadalupe on Fox Sports X!

[A logo splashes in the corner of the screen to hype the co-promoted event.]

TL: In addition, don't forget that this event is simply part of the AWA's tour of Mexico. We'll be rolling into town on Friday, September 2, and we'll be hitting all of your favorite Mexico cities and venues until Friday, September 9... so make sure you check with your local ticket providers and at Ticketmaster for all the details on where the AWA will be in town in your area. But let's talk about Estrellas En El Cielo where we can officially start to put this lineup together for this historic event.

[We cut to a shot of Molly Bell alongside the event graphic.]

TL: If you joined us on the Power Hour - and why wouldn't you have - before we came on the air tonight, you saw the team of Molly Bell, Ayako Fujiwara, and Michelle Bailey take on and defeat the team of Siobhan Star, Jessica Baxter, and the troublesome La Ardilla. You also saw Molly and La Ardilla get into it after the match. Well, we can now make it official that we'll be seeing Women's Trios action in Guadalupe when the same team of Bell, Fujiwara, and Bailey will be in action against La Ardilla and two partners still to be named. Nothing says lucha libre like Trios wrestling and we're excited to have our first Trios match already locked in for Estrellas En El Cielo.

[The graphic fades and goes back to Theresa.]

TL: In addition to that, just a short while ago, this video went live on Twitter from the CEO of Guerreros del Mundo, Angelica Westerly, who we're told is on a special trip to Mexico - a business trip regarding the AWA's trip South of the border in September. Take a look...

[We fade to footage marked with Angelica Westerly's social media info. Miss Westerly is center shot in a black power suit, a large silver medallion on a matching chain hanging around her delicate neck.]

AW: I thought I could get some work done down here. I thought I could get some peace and quiet... but everyone keeps coming at me on social media wanting to know what I think about Destro Star and Arminius losing to Raphael Rhodes and Sid Osborne in the first round of the Stampede Cup tournament. They want to know if I'm upset about it.

[Westerly sneers.]

AW: Do I LOOK upset about it?! Of course I'm upset about it, you fools! I don't give a damn about Rhodes and Osborne... or Logan Blackburn's personal vendetta against them... but what I do care about is my company's bank account and a million dollars - or my cut of it at least - would've been a nice bit of compensation for a weekend of work.

[She shrugs.]

AW: But it's not to be. And before you ask, yes... Arminius and Destro Star have my blessing to help Mr. Blackburn in whatever personal issues he might have remaining in the AWA. Their association in Mexico is well-known and I won't stand in the way of it.

Besides...

[Westerly grins.]

AW: I have other business to attend to here in Mexico. Big business. In fact, in two weeks' time on Saturday Night Wrestling in Winnipeg, I'll be there in person to address it... and believe me, when I'm done, the talk of the wrestling world will be Guerreros del Mundo and what we're bringing to the table on September 9th.

[She smirks, reaching up to end the camera's feed as we cut back to Theresa.]

TL: A bold statement there by Angelica Westerly as she addresses the state of affairs for Guerreros del Mundo, fans... and just what does she have in store for Estrella En El Cielo coming up on September 9th... well, we'll find out two weeks from now in Winnipeg on Fox Sports X... and on that night, I'll be right back here in the Control Center with more news, more matches, and more wrestlers to announce as appearing on the historic tour of Mexico by the American Wrestling Alliance! And now, let's go back over to Sweet Lou who I understand has tracked down one of the teams in our first Quarterfinal match... Lou?

[We fade away from the Control Center..

...and back up backstage, near one of the exits leading outside Mosaic Stadium. Sweet Lou Blackwell is getting ready to step outside, and he doesn't seem to be appreciative of going way out of his way to do this interview.]

SLB: Thanks, Theresa... I can't believe we've had to go way out of our way for this interview. The Soldiers of Fortune have a match in a few short minutes with the Lights Out Express, and of course they had to pick the furthest exit away from all the action.

[Blackwell adjusts his tie, and swings open the exit to walk outside. He steps through the exit and promptly gets a huge puff of smoke right in his face. Sweet Lou staggers forward, coughing, as the cameraman quickly steps outside after him, making sure not to run over Blackwell and dodging most of the smoke.]

SLB: [Gagging.] That smell!

[Blackwell continues waving his free hand frantically in front of his face.]

SLB: How can you stand that?

[Joe Flint, cigar in hand, lets out a hearty laugh.]

JF: C'mon, Lou! Don't be such a stick in the mud?

[Flint grins as he looks at Blackwell.]

JF: We did what we said we were gonna do, we put boots on the ground right in the middle of Rage Country, and we won! We even said we're gonna break out the cigars! We're enjoyin' a little break, but we all know the job ain't done. Unlike a certain former president, we ain't puttin' up any "Mission Accomplished" banners, yet.

Want a cigar? We got extras.

[Blackwell shakes his head.]

SLB: No, no. I can't believe you're asking me that, I can't stand those!

[Flint snorts, putting his cigar back in his mouth as Blackwell turns towards Stephens.]

SLB: You brought me all the way out here, and I get greeted with a big puff of smoke right in my face. I have half a mind to turn and leave, but I got a job to do. I got some questions I need to ask. Gentlemen, you got through the Prophets of Rage in a very hard fought battle, even overcoming interference from John Law thanks to Shadoe Rage.

CS: Don't make any excuses for why we won. In the end, we were the ones advancin' to the Quarterfinals because the Prophets can't get over their little sibling rivalry. But, yeah, I'm gonna be feelin' John Law nearly puttin' me through the mat for awhile. You know, I've always been taught that the police are on our side, that you can trust 'em no matter what.

[Stephens snorts.]

CS: I guess some cops are bastards after all.

Let me get things straight, we ain't on the side of Korugun and Castillo, but as long as they sign the paychecks they can come and go as they please.. unless they want to get involved in Soldiers of Fortune business. If Barney Fife and the rest of Castillo's Keystone Cops wanna stick their noses in our business any further.. it ain't gonna end well. I have problems lettin' things go, ask Shadoe Rage's knee. Hell, you can ask Tra-

[Flint, knowing where this is going steps forward. He raises his hands to stop Stephens from going any further.]

JF: Ixnay on the You-Know-Who-Ey.

[Blackwell nods his head.]

SLB: Be careful, he's still persona non grata around these parts.

CS: Whatever.

[Stephens puts his cigar back in his mouth and takes a big puff. Some of the smoke gets in Blackwell's face, who coughs loudly.]

SLB: Goodness! This is the second time you've done this! C'mon, can you put that thing out?

[Stephens just takes a step back, mainly ignoring Blackwell's request.]

SLB: Are you even sure smoking those cigars is a good idea? You two have a match with the Lights Out Express in a couple of minutes, and you might be at a considerable disadvantage because of the battle you went through with the Prophets of Rage to get into the Quarterfinals. The Lights Out Express breezed right through the Band!

[Flint rolls his eyes and scoffs.]

JF: Stop bein' the Fun Police, Lou. I ain't worried that we're gonna leave some of our victory cigars unsmoked. We plan on goin' through our entire box before the night is over! We're a little worse for wear, and the Express is pretty fresh, eh? They really took care of those two long haired hippies, and the world's better for it. What do you expect me to say?

On most nights, we got no problems with the Express. We can respect their hustle.

CS: They don't suck.

[Flint nods his head.]

JF: You don't get to be AWA World Tag Team Champions if ya suck. They get their business done in the ring, no muss, no fuss. In an' out, clean as a whistle, just ask those two long haired hippie goofs they beat earlier tonight. However...

[Flint turns to the camera, narrowing his eyes.]

JF: There's a lot of money to be won tonight. On most nights, we'd probably be downin' some beers together in a backwater bar. My friend, tonight's different. The Express are standin' in a way of the Soldiers of Fortune an' their money.

[Flint cracks his neck.]

JF: Whether we like our opponents or think our opponents are a couple of pukes, no one's different to us when there's life changin' money to be won. We're equal opportunity ass kickers, and the Express is about to find that out. Even the best of trains get derailed sometimes, Sweet Lou. Once we're done sendin' the Express back from whence they came... maybe it'll be time to pay our new friends a little visit later on.

At ease.

[Blackwell pauses to think, as Flint drops what's left of his cigar. He wisely puts it out under his boot, then turns to leave. Blackwell turns to Stephens, who appears to have finishes his cigar.]

CS: Reconnaissance. Nothing more.

[Stephens puts out his cigar in the same way as Flint did. He then follows Flint off screen, as Blackwell looks down to make sure the cigars are properly put out.]

SLB: Goodness, glad they finally put those things out.

[Blackwell sighs.]

SLB: Anyway, guys, it sounds like the Soldiers of Fortune are ready for the Lights Out Express, and they appear to have made it known that they might drop in on Next Gen's match later on with The Gold Standard. Now, let's go to footage recorded a little while ago when I caught up with their opponents in this first Quarterfinal matchup.

[We fade to footage marked "PREVIOUSLY RECORDED" where we find Sweet Lou Blackwell standing along.]

SLB: Okay, AWA fans, I'm backstage here at the Battle of Saskatchewan featuring the Stampede Cup. The Stampede Cup - as we know - is the symbol of tag team excellence and the two men about to join me helped define one of the hottest eras of AWA tag team wrestling with teams like the Blonde Bombers, SkyHerc, Air

Strike, and of course the men joining me now... Aaron Anderson and Lenny Strong, The Lights Out Express!

[The camera bumps out to full frame where we see Aaron Anderson and Lenny Strong standing on either side of Blackwell nudging themselves forward so you can really only see his arm with mic in hand in-between them. Both men look like a million bucks. Well rested.]

SLB: Earlier tonight, we saw them stun The Band with a flash knockout by the King of KO's himself, Lenny Strong. They made short work of their opponents and are undoubtedly the freshest team walking into the Quarterfinals after having a bye in the first round and a quick win last-

LS: Let's not get ahead of ourselves, home slice. You think THAT'S the reason Aaron and I are the freshest team in this stinkhole? We were the freshest team struttin' under the Northern Lights the millisecond the teams were announced for the Cup. We got the matching Cadis, we've got a trophy case full of titles, we practically invented the track suit and made it a thing despite what the finger bender Supreme Wright may try to tell ya. We had time to kick our feet up last night with some cucumber water and hot towels back in the penthouse suite at the hotel and if that ain't enough?

We got moves in the ring that would make even Freddie Mercury stand up straight if he were alive.

AA: Rest in peace.

[Both men pound their chest and point to the sky.]

SLB: I really don't think that's necessary - it's been-

LS: What its been...Jack... is painachingly torturous for our ear drums to hear these American Made GI Joe wannabes march around yapping about America THIS... America THAT... We're gonna do THIS... We're gonna do THAT. Ya know what that is?

AA: Talk. All talk.

LS: And last time we checked... talk is cheaper than that suit you got on, Blackwell.

SLB: Hey! I bought this in-

AA: For months, these goons have been marching around.

LS: Literally.

SLB: And?

AA: That's it, Blackwell. That's what they've been doing. Marching around. Running their mouths. Singing songs.

LS: Out of key at that.

AA: Yet they have the audacity to claim that are the greatest team of an era that has just begun and as much as I hate to admit it, they're right.

[Blackwell looks a bit surprised.]

SLB: Well, that's quite the compliment.

AA: You see this era is defined by teams who are just now getting their training wheels taken off. Fresh out of diapers and ready for pull ups.

LS: Probably can't even wipe their own-

SLB: Careful now.

AA: No, Lou. It's them who need to be careful. They got a lucky draw, one undeserving at that. Those two schmucks haven't done a single thing worth mentioning since the moment they've arrived. They've been sitting on the sidelines playing dress up soldier boys but now they're squared up against a pair of guys who don't just play tough guys on TV.

LS: We're the real deal Holyfield and we're gonna knock them out like they're Iron Mike.

AA: They skated by a team who was strung together about as well as the Jonas Brothers and their top hits are just as forgettable.

LS: Seriously, the Jonas Brothers?

AA: That's the bar those two settled for and it's time for them to pony up and stop this little song and dance charade. The last time we checked, the A and the W stood for American Wrestling and there's nobody better than us in this business who defines that. They may turn out to be the poster boys for this next generation but that's another tale for another day.

[Strong nods.]

LS: Y'see we didn't come to Canada to talk about next week, or next year, or ten years from now, Jack. Hell we didn't even come to talk about this weekend.

We came to MAKE HISTORY.

In that ring, no team does it better than us.

We aren't bringing the Cup back to America because we deserve it.

We're bringing it back because it deserves US.

Aaron Anderson and I have been lighting folks up with our God given fists for the better part of this decade while guys like Charlie Stephens were probably writing fake letters to Make-A-Wish just to meet us.

SLB: Oh, come on now.

AA: I wouldn't put it past him.

[Blackwell sighs, somewhat biting his tongue.]

LS: The point is, Blackwell... we set the standard! We raised the bar! We claimed the Gold!

Now?

[Anderson grins.]

AA: We raise the Cup.

LS: And for those goons it's gonna be...

[Strong SMACKS his elbow into his fist.]

LS: LIGHTS. OUT.

AA: Ain't no other way around it.

[And with that, the former World Tag Team Champions exit as we fade from the pre-taped footage out to the ring where Rebecca Ortiz is standing.]

RO: The following contest set for one fall with a 45 minute time limit is the first of four QUARTERFINAL matchups in the 2017 Stampede Cup tournament!

[Big cheer from the Canadian crowd!]

RO: Introducing first...

[A loud crackling noise is heard, slowly fading into a piercing buzz, as a distorted voice is heard shouting out partial lyrics to "My Country 'Tis of Thee"]

# Land where my fathers died!  
# Land of the pilgrim's pride!  
# From every mountain side,  
# Let freedom ring!

[The 'ring' starts echoing, and it starts resembling an actual ringing sound. Suddenly, the ringing sound fades perfectly into the opening guitar riff by Ted Nugent of the Damn Yankees, as "Don't Tread on Me" by the early 90s super group Nugent played guitar for starts playing over the PA to a loud chorus of boos.]

RO: Heading to the ring.. at a total combined weight of 522 pounds...

..."CAPTAIN" JOE FLINT....

...CHARLIE STEPHENS....

...THE SOLDIERS OF FORTUNE!

[The vocals start up, and the duo known as the Soldiers of Fortune step into view, soaking up the loud boos from the crowd. Any sympathizers that may be in the crowd to the Soldiers of Fortune are easily drowned out.]

GM: Well, if you thought the Soldiers of Fortune were unpopular here in Canada before, Bucky... eliminating the home country heroes - the Prophets of Rage - have done them no favors with this sold out crowd here in Mosaic Stadium.

BW: And if you thought Flint and Stephens give two stars and stripes about what these Canadian fans think, you're sadly mistaken, Gordo.

[Flint is a big, burly fellow. His barrel-chested physique isn't a picture of rock-solid conditioning, but it is a battle-scarred picture of toughness and raw power. The Captain keeps his hair in a military high-and-tight, and his prominent jaw and nose are the primary features of a face that strongly resembles a famous American actor of long ago... which is the reason many call him "The Duke". He wears camo fatigue pants and black combat boots, his hands are taped up, and he sports a single elbow pad on his left arm. The elbow pad is black, with the Soldiers of Fortune American-Flag colored Punisher skull logo on it.]

GM: "Captain" Joe Flint there... the veteran leader of this team... looking for the biggest payday of his life, Bucky.



BW: Absolutely. You know, we talk about the million dollar prize at the end of the rainbow here this weekend... think about Joe Flint's career. Think about him working for ol' tightwad Blackjack Lynch all those years... think about him working a double shot weekend for a few hundred bucks and trans. Joe Flint's AWA contract was a godsend to he and his family financially... and the million dollars here tonight would make all of those hard, hard years fighting to get to the big time so very worth it.

[Stephens is wearing a pair of dark blue jeans, with a rip above the left knee, and a black t-shirt with the Soldiers of Fortune logo across the chest (Punisher Skull with an American Flag pattern.) He wears a pair of black boots underneath the jeans. In his right hand is a flagpole, with the American flag draped along the top.]

GM: Charlie Stephens carrying that flagpole that did so much damage to the knee of Shadoe Rage in our second round matchup... hopefully he won't get another chance to use it as a weapon here in this one.

[As the boos continue, Flint barks out "Forrrrwaaaarrrrd MARCH!", and the Soldiers of Fortune start to quickly head towards the ring. Both men disregard the negative reaction from the crowd.]

GM: The Soldiers of Fortune taking their time getting out here. That was a long, hard match them in the second round with the former World Tag Team Champions and you've gotta wonder if that'll hamper them in this one against the Lights Out Express who - as Sweet Lou said - have to be considered the freshest team remaining in the tournament after that flash knockout of Jimi Jam Jester.

BW: Absolutely. The LOE is fresh as a daisy and the Soldiers feel like they went to war. That's what makes a tournament like this so difficult. Both teams are only on their second match of the weekend... but those matches went very, very differently and they're certainly not on an even level going into this one.

[Finally, the former (don't dare call him "ex-") Marine and Army Private climb the ring steps and enter the ring. Both men sneer at the negative reaction from the crowd, and step through the ropes. "Don't Tread on Me" dies out, but the boos keep going as Flint goes to the ropes, cupping his ear and encouraging the boos. Stephens stretches against the ropes, a satisfied smirk on his face as he waits for the arrival of the opposition.]

RO: Annnnnnnnnnnnd their opponents...

[The arena goes black. A loud whistle screeeeeeeeeeeeeeeeches over the airwaves.]

V/O: Attention ticket holders...this is your conductor speaking. Will you please return to your seats? The match is about to begin and if you blink too fast, you may just miss it.

...ALLLLLLLLLLLLLLLLLL AB000000000000ARRRRRDDD!!!

[The slow clanking of train wheels churning quickly heightens into hard grinding noises just as the equally hard hitting lead guitar riff kicks in for the "Kundalini Express" by Love and Rockets. The rapid banging of drums and synthesizers fire up next before the methodical and monotone voice of Daniel Ash is cued.]

RO: Weighing in at a combined weight of 505 pounds they are former Total Japan Pro Wrestling Tag Team Champions...

Former two time Tiger Par Pro Global Tag Team Champions...

2016 Billboard Knockout Artists of the Year...

Annnnd former two time AWA Tag Team Champions of the Woooooorld...

LENNY STRONG!

AARON ANDERSON!

THE LIGHTS! OUT! EXPREEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEESSSSS!!!

[Smoke spits out from the entrance portal and spills out across the walkway. The silhouettes of two individuals emerge and evoke an image of them floating on clouds as they step out and are only visible from the knees up.]

GM: And that was quite the resume read out there by Rebecca Ortiz, Bucky, for the arrival of the Lights Out Express.

BW: No padding that resume, Gordo. Former champs in Japan. Former AWA World Tag Team Champions. These guys have done it all... except one thing has eluded them so far: the Stampede Cup.

GM: That's right and they're hoping to change that tonight in Regina. Two wins away from the Finals.

[Out come Strong and Anderson and boy, do they have a special threat for their opponents. Camo track suits but not in the "where did they go" sense. Nah, these are special. We're sorry, Dr. Gray, but these babies are nothing but shades of gold. It's definitely a lot to take in but Lenny Strong and Aaron Anderson wear them well. The suits are snug, their smiles are wide, and their struts are with purpose. Strong rocks his signature mullet and while Aaron Anderson just refuses to pick up a razor as the hair on his head and the stubble on his face is a day longer than what it was last night.]

GM: The Lights Out Express scored the quickest win of the tournament by far earlier tonight when they knocked off The Band with that rolling elbow by Lenny Strong.

BW: Poor Jimi Jam never saw it coming.

GM: He certainly didn't... and with two more matches awaiting the winner of this one, you have to expect both teams will be looking for a quick end.

BW: No doubt. This year's Stampede Cup is a war of endurance... who can do the most damage and suffer the least in as short a period of time as possible. We've seen some real wars already in this tournament, a lot of matches skating dangerously close to the time limit... but I expect as we get into the Quarterfinals here, the teams may be kicking it into another gear as they feel their gas tanks start to drain.

[The duo shoves their way through the ropes and into the ring. Both men zip the hoodies down peel off the tops. They fold their jackets nicely and hand them to the official who turns his back to them to hand them to a ringside attendant and as he turns around he gets a face full of tear-a-way pants flung into his face that nearly knocks him through the ropes. Both men sport white shorts with gold and black racing stripes down the thigh. On the back of their trunks are double black crowns interlinked with "Jesus hands" hands cupping them underneath with angel wings shooting outwards from them.]

GM: The Lights Out Express never one to shy away from the flashy... and after the big entrance on the Hummer earlier tonight, the Soldiers of Fortune are a little

more sedated in this one. No big entrance, no pomp and circumstance. It may be starting to dawn on them just how close they are to the Stampede Cup and the million dollar prize.

[Both teams huddle up, having a quick discussion as referee Davis Warren instructs the teams to get one man in and one man out.]

GM: A final strategy session on both sides... and it looks as though it'll be Aaron Anderson, the All-American, starting things off with the Duke himself, Captain Joe Flint.

"DING! DING! DING!"

GM: The bell sounds and we're off and running. One fall, forty-five minute time limit but as Bucky says, we may see these teams push the pace in the Quarterfinals to try and get this one done with in a hurry.

[Aaron Anderson swings his arms across his chest, trying to stay loose as Joe Flint and Charlie Stephens have another little chat in their corner...

...which is Anderson's cue to dash across the ring, leaping up...]

GM: Back elbow in the- no! Flint moves aside and Anderson goes crashing into the buckles!

[Flint shoves him back into the corner, winding up his right hand...]

GM: Big right downstairs... there's another... a third one as well...

[The referee immediately steps in, calling for a break, and Flint obliges, hands raised...

...which Charlie Stephens loops the tag rope around Anderson's throat, pulling it against his windpipe!]

GM: And the Soldiers going to the cheating very early in this one, Stephens choking the man out in the corner...

[Stephens lets go, walking away as Flint comes back in and the official turns back towards the action.]

GM: Big right hand, measuring him up and drilled him right between the eyes...

[Anderson stumbles out of the corner alongside the ropes as Flint pursues...]

GM: Both men on the move now... Flint catching up with him and... big whip across...

[Flint drops the head, looking for a backdrop...

...but the rebounding Anderson shifts his run slightly, slamming to a halt alongside the double-up Flint, reaching down to snare a bodywrench!]

GM: Wait a second!

[The powerful All-American lifts Flint into the air, twisting him over, and throwing him half the distance of the ring with a gutwrench suplex!]

GM: Anderson sends him flying there! What a counter!

[Both men get quickly back to their feet, Flint coming in strong with a right hand that Anderson blocks before driving a forearm uppercut up under the chin, sending Flint wobbling back to the neutral corner to cheers from the crowd.]

GM: Anderson's got him back in the corner now... turnabout is fair play, I suppose...

[A stiff forearm shot on the jaw stuns Flint as Anderson grabs him by the wrist...]

GM: Corner to corner whip... Flint reverses though!

[With Anderson hitting the corner and stumbling back out, Flint charges in, arm outstretched...]

GM: Clothesli- no, ducked by Anderson... WAISTLOCK!

[The crowd cheers again as Anderson lifts Flint into the air, throwing him down on the back of his head and neck!]

GM: A released German Suplex by Anderson sends Flint crashing down onto the mat in the middle of Mosaic Stadium!

BW: And this isn't the gameplan the Soldiers had! You do NOT want to get into the powerful arms of Aaron Anderson when he's got suplexes on the brain, daddy!

GM: Flint getting up, a little slower this time...

[Anderson swoops in, sweeping behind him to hook a second waistlock...]

GM: He's looking for another one!

[...but Flint snaps his elbow back into the side of the head, breaking the hold. He reaches back, using a snapmare to take Anderson over into a seated position before smashing an overhead elbow down between the eyes, putting Anderson down on the canvas.]

GM: And a nice counter there out of the veteran, taking down Aaron Anderson...

BW: And that's no walk in the park, Gordo. Aaron Anderson was the very first graduate out of the Combat Corner to come to the AWA. He's got the Todd Michaelson seal of approval on him and that ain't easy.

[Flint backs into the ropes, winding up his right arm a couple of times as he bounces off...]

GM: Elbow... NO! Anderson rolls out of the way!

[Anderson is quickly back up again, stepping in to grab Flint by the legs as the Canadian crowd cheers!]

GM: Anderson's looking for the Giant Swing... looking for- ohhhh! And Flint gets to the ropes!

[The Mosaic Stadium fans jeer as Flint shouts "get him off! Get him off me!" at the official who obliges. Anderson lets go, stepping back as Flint uses his grip on the ropes to pull himself closer to the ropes, practically hugging them as he waits for Anderson to get out of reach...]

GM: Anderson backing off... the referee keeping him there as Flint gets to his feet...

[Flint rubs his hand across his forehead, looking a little uncomfortable as Anderson starts to move in on him again...]

GM: Flint waving him off... what's going on here?

[Charlie Stephens, in his corner, hops up and down a few times, sticking out his hand...]

GM: Well, it looks like the Soldiers of Fortune are about to make the exchange... and there's the tag right there.

[Stephens steps through the ropes, a big grin on his face as Anderson turns his focus onto him...]

GM: Charlie Stephens in off the tag... and you talk about someone whose attitude has completely gone down the toilet since linking his fates to Joe Flint, that's this young man right here. Charlie Stephens was one of the nicest people you'd ever meet... caring, respectful... and now look at him.

BW: I notice you left out a word to describe him in the old days, Gordo.

GM: What's that?

BW: "Successful." You may not like his attitude now... but you can't argue with results as he stands here tonight half of the Number One Contenders to the World Tag Team Titles.

[The All-American takes a step towards Stephens who raises his hands, shaking his head...]

"Gimme the Knockout Kid."

[Stephens smirks over at the corner where "Lights Out" Lenny Strong is peering into the ring. Anderson shrugs, backing to his corner and reaching out a hand...]

GM: And there's the first tag of the match for the Lights Out Express, bringing Lenny Strong in. Strong, of course, was responsible for that quick knockout of Jimi Jam Jester earlier tonight and he'll be looking to do the same to Charlie Stephens in this Quarterfinal showdown.

[Strong comes through the ropes, swinging his right arm a few times, miming a throw of that big elbowstrike. Stephens eyes him warily, readying himself for any quick strike attempt...]

GM: Alright, Strong looking to tie up here and... what's this now?

[A smirking Stephens shakes his head again, sets his feet under him, and then slaps his cheek...]

"Come on, Lenny... show me what you've got."

[Strong raises an eyebrow in curiosity. Stephens sticks out his chin.]

"Come on! I'm not like that long-haired joke Jester! I don't have a glass jaw! Let's do this! Come on!"

[Strong looks over at Anderson who shrugs again.]

"Whaddya lookin' at him for?! GIVE IT TO ME! DO IT! DO IT NOW!"

[Strong reaches down, tugging at his elbowpad.]

“COME ON! COME ON! COME ON! TAKE YOUR BEST SHOT! TAKE IT!”

[Strong nods his head a few times, backing up to give himself room to move. Stephens nods, trembling with excitement as he slaps both sides of his face a few times, the crowd buzzing with anticipation...]

“YOU AIN’T KNOCKIN’ OUT NO ONE, BOY! NOT THIS SOLDIER! NO WAY!”

[Strong suddenly goes into a spin, twisting around to throw his patented knockout rolling elbow...]

...but Stephens is ready for it, ducking low, throwing himself down to the mat, snatching a schoolboy rollup!]

GM: CRADLE! CRADLE!

[The referee dives down, slapping the mat once...]

...as Stephens snatches the tights, yanking hard for leverage]

GM: HE’S GOT THE TIGHTS! STEPHENS HAS GOT THE TIGHTS!

[The ref hits the mat again as Anderson tries to come through the ropes...]

GM: ANDERSON WITH-

“OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!”

[And a charging Joe Flint tackles him into the ropes, wrapping up his legs as he falls helplessly to the mat as the referee slaps the mat again... and Aaron Anderson kicks out a heartbeat later!]

“DING! DING! DING!”

GM: ARE YOU KIDDING ME?! ARE YOU KIDDING ME?!

[Stephens quickly rolls out to the floor where he’s joined by Joe Flint. Stephens has a shocked expression on his face like he can’t believe that worked at all.]

GM: The Soldiers of Fortune have won it! They’re moving on to the Semifinals and... wow.

BW: You said it, Gordo! “Wow!” What a brilliant move by Stephens! What a top level military strategy that was! Stephens may get promoted after this one!

[Stephens grins broadly, pointing to his temple as Flint loops an arm around his shoulders, raising his other arm in triumph as Anderson kneels on the mat, a shocked look on his face as Lenny Strong buries his face in his hands inside the ring.]

GM: The Lights Out Express came back to the AWA for this weekend... for this tournament because they wanted the chance to do something that has eluded them so far - winning the Stampede Cup...

BW: No dice, daddy! Because the Soldiers outmaneuvered them and outplotted them and outgunned them! The Soldiers with the win... in... what? Just a few minutes?

GM: Something like that. We talked about needing to win this one quickly and that the teams involved in the Quarterfinals would likely be trying for the fast win... but I don't think any of us expected something like this to go down.

[Flint and Stephens backpedal down the ramp, soaking up the jeers from the Mosaic Stadium crowd as Anderson and Strong look on with disappointment.]

GM: The Soldiers are moving on... and fans, let's go backstage where I understand we're trying to track down one of the teams who were already eliminated earlier tonight. Let's take a look...

[Cut to outside Mosaic Stadium, the lights of Regina's 10th Avenue illuminating the concourse outside the facility. A pickup truck is parked very illegally on the sidewalk, but none of the event security seem to be able to do anything, because of who the truck's operators are.]

Blake Colton is throwing some suspicious looking duffel bags into the bed of the truck, while Jackson Hunter, still in his ring gear, is irascibly grumbling at a hopelessly tangled set of tie-down straps. Their summer evening gets worse as Colt Patterson approaches, full of smarm.]

CP: Hey, Champ! The show's not over yet; leaving so soon?

[Hunter looks up quickly, his head twisting wildly on a swivel.]

JH: Colt, you weren't followed here, were you?! Don't give away where I am!

[Patterson smirks, shaking his head.]

CP: Jax, it's tough to hide when pretty much everything is out in the open in Saskatchewan. But what are you two doing with all these?

[Patterson tries to get a peek at the cargo of the pickup truck, but Hunter slides into the way.]

JH: Nothing! Nothing! Just Saskatchewan Roughrider merchandise!

...I'm dropping off for my elderly mother!

...Who is sick!

She likes Roughrider merchandise!

[Patterson doesn't buy what Hunter is selling.]

CP: So all this...

[Patterson gestures at the stadium in front of him.]

CP: ...This event that you manipulated the AWA into holding... You're bailing on it just because it went south in a way you didn't anticipate?

[Colton turns, glaring at Patterson.]

BC: Yes, and never coming back to. My favorite part of any trip to Regina is leaving it, and I figure we might as well get to it.

[Hunter nods.]

JH: You saw what happened out there, Colt! That was a tragic failure of justice! It took four people to defeat us, Colt! Jeremiah Colton just can't let go of a grudge! He could never stand to see me succeed, just like he couldn't stand to see his own son succeed! And I dunno how much Harper and Somers paid Castillo to run that video and put all that CGI deep fake dialogue in there; they probably offered him a cut of the winnings for the Stampede Cup! Same with Derrick Williams, that preening, narcissistic, treacherous... preening...

[Hunter's rapidly derailing tantrum is further taken from the track by a half-empty can of Mooselips that is flung from the direction of the stadium, landing squarely on the hood of his gleaming pickup truck.]

JH: HEY! This is a King Ranch! It costs more than your mother's house that you reside in the basement of!

You see that, Colt?! D'you see that? Forty thousand and four people, all against us... and they were barely able to keep us from the Quarterfinals! By the slimmest of margins!

[Another empty beer can bounces off the sidewalk beside Patterson who looks up towards the source of it.]

CP: Awfully strange weather here in Regina...

[Hunter ignores Patterson's smarm.]

JH: But I still have this!

[Hunter pulls the National Championship belt from the front passenger seat of the truck, holding it up with a trembling hand.]

JH: I still have this and I'm holding on to it, and no one can take it from me!

CP: Well, uh...

JH: Colt...

CP: President Castillo wanted me to relay something...

JH: Colllllt, don't do this to me.

CP: ...And I don't wanna say that I'm enjoying watching you two squirm... so I won't.

JH: Colt, I'm getting into the truck and leaving now.

CP: But as part of your new contract, your first National Title defense has been lined up...

JH: What?

CP: ...Next week in Atlanta on the All-New Power Hour...

JH: WHAT?

CP: ...Against the AWA World Television Champion, Terry Shane!

JH: WHAAAAT?!?

CP: And both titles are on the line, champ!



[And Hunter predictably loses it.]

JH: That's not fair! That's not fair! I'm the National Champion! I can't defend the belt on a freaking WEEK's notice! I just wrestled two matches in as many days! I'm exhausted! Now I have to fly to Atlanta and fly back to Winnipeg! How am I supposed to get my podcast done on the crummy hotel Wi-Fi!

[Colton puts a comforting hand on his partner's shoulder.]

BC: Hey, come on, bahd. Remember our "mutual friend?" Remember when he had a Television Title shot a few weeks ago?

JH: Yeah, and Kestrel whizzed it down his leg like he always does.

BC: Think about it, bahd! I gift-wrapped him the belt and he said, "no thanks," like a loser. I could do the same for you and you could be walking around with two belts.

JH: That does sound appealing.

BC: Like you always say, Jax, "just watch me." but first...

[Another flurry of beer cans from the direction of Mosaic Stadium land on the truck.]

BC: Let's get the hell outta this province, bahd.

[Colton and Hunter both climb into the truck, and it rips off into the streets of Regina. Patterson turns to the camera as the rain of Mooselips beer cans subsides.]

CP: Some days, I love this job. Sweet Lou, back to you.

[We fade back inside the backstage area of the stadium where a grinning Sweet Lou is standing.]

SLB: Big news broken right there by Colt Patterson. It's official! The AWA's hottest summer on record keeps heating up as we head back to Hotlanta, G-A next weekend for the all-new Power Hour with its biggest Main Event yet - Champion versus Champion, Title versus Title, Terry Shane versus Jackson Hunter! I can't wait for that one! But coming up in our next Quarterfinal is a clash that I think a lot of people would also say they can't wait for... perhaps something that a lot of people have been waiting for for some time now... the match itself is the Kabukicho Assassination Maniac Squad taking on the superteam of Ryan Martinez and Hannibal Carver but the clash I've got in mind is when half siblings collide in the form of Ryan Martinez taking on Alex Mar- excuse me, AJ Martinez. My broadcast colleague, Theresa Lynch, is standing by with the hottest new import from Japan! Theresa?

[We fade to another part of the backstage area where we find Theresa Lynch standing by, looking a little bit off her game.]

TL: Hi there, folks! This is Theresa Lynch coming to you from the backstage area. I wasn't expecting to be here doing this, but I'm here by special request from...

[Suddenly, Theresa is interrupted by the appearance of two walking skyscrapers of humanity. Towering over her is the 6'8 Cain Jackson, wearing a black t-shirt with the "Mifune-Gun" logo stretched out over his muscular form. Joining him is the even taller Latinx Khal Drogo himself, "Hot Stuff" AJ Martinez. The youngest scion of House Martinez is shirtless and drenched in sweat, except for his long hair, which

has been carefully put back into its signature manbun. Theresa, her head barely coming up to their chests, looks up, staring in awe at the duo.]

TL: ...The Kabukicho Assassination Maniac Squad...

[She just sort of trails off, as Jackson nods in acknowledgment towards her.]

CJ: Theresa.

[Cain's voice seems to snap her out of her daze as she quickly regains her bearings. She knows Cain. Their relationship is... complicated. He may be one of the only people in this world her boyfriend calls a friend, but he's still the same person that tried to put her big brother Jack out of wrestling. Her expression is neutral.]

TL: Cain.

[However, the behemoth standing to her left...]

AJM: Theresa.

[... has always been an obnoxious jackass. Theresa makes a face. She's less thrilled to see the apple of Alex Martinez' eye.]

TL: ...AJ.

[The oblivious Martinez slaps his hands together, a big grin on his face.]

AJM: Well, would you look at this... what a difference a day and two \_dominant\_ wins make! Last night, I asked for extra towels and nine hundred thread count sheets at the hotel and what did I get? Nothin'!

But now, all of a sudden, we can request our very own special guest interviewer and get her!

And all that in a damn day! What do you think about that, Cain?

[Jackson stands there with a stern expression on his face and his arms crossed over his chest.]

CJ: One day? More like thirty minutes. It seems to me that the moment they realized they needed to FEAR us, was the moment they learned to RESPECT us. Funny how that works.

[He smirks.]

TL: It was indeed an impressive victory that you two-

[An excited AJ cuts Theresa off, not wanting to waste anymore time not patting himself on the back.]

AJM: You were watching, weren't you? You saw what the entire world did, didn't you, Theresa?

We went from the guys that no one knew to the tag team that every single team left needs to fear! We went from underdogs to...

[Martinez grins.]

AJM: ...Dog whippers!

And just like my partner says, we changed the complexion of this whole tournament in thirty minutes! That's all it takes for KAMS to handle our business.

[Cain rubs his beard.]

CJ: It wasn't exactly all business though. Our match with The Dogs of War was a little more personal than we let on.

[Jackson turns and stares into the camera, directly speaking to whichever Mexican billionaire needs to hear this.]

CJ: THAT was for Tony.

[There's a seriousness in his voice that wasn't there before when he says that. Even AJ has wiped the smug look off his face. The duo suddenly look a whole lot more focused and whole lot meaner.]

TL: Tony Donovan?

[Theresa quickly tries to break the tension, feeling a little more uncomfortable than she lets on. Jackson breaks his gaze from the camera and turns his attention back to the interview.]

CJ: Those of us that were in Team Supreme might not all be wearing matching tracksuits anymore, but we're still family. And you Theresa Lynch, I'm sure that you of all people, realize just how dangerous someone can get, when you mess with their family.

[Images of her father and her brothers engaged in bloody warfare inside the wrestling ring quickly flash through Theresa's head. She grips the microphone just a little tighter in her hand.]

TL: I know it all too well.

[She says it more to herself than to anyone standing around her.]

CJ: So just imagine how dangerous, the world's MOST dangerous tag team got, against the bootlickers working for the people responsible for hurting members of our "family." Imagine that anger and that rage and the hurt that we kept inside ourselves until we let it all out in the ring.

[Pounding his fist into his palm, AJ nods at Jackson's words.]

CJ: We accomplished what some of the most talented three-man units in wrestling history couldn't do. We did what Hannibal Carver himself couldn't do with AJ's old man and the quote unquote "greatest wrestler in AWA history" Juan Vasquez.

We defeated The Dogs of War.

[AJ steps in with a shake of his head.]

AJM: Don't undersell it, "amigo"... we demolished them!

Cain and I, by ourselves, shocked the whole world by putting the Dogs of War to sleep!

I said it and I meant it. Anything the James Gang could do; we can do better!

It took us about ten minutes in the ring to do what my "not so big" brother and Hannibal Carver have been trying to do for months! We defeated the so-called

unbeatable Dogs of War. We struck a blow against Korugun. And we avenged Tony Donovan and Wes Taylor.

By the way, Brian, you're welcome...

[He turns to the camera with a smirk.]

AJM: Bro.

[This time, "Hot Stuff" gives a knowing nod.]

TL: Speaking of family, your next match is a literal civil war. How do you prepare for a fight with your own brother, AJ?

[Cain interrupts her.]

CJ: Theresa, remember who you're talking to. Who knows more about Ryan Martinez than us?

TL: Well...

[A big grin forms on Martinez' face.]

AJM: Oh, I know she's dying to say it.

"Supreme Wright"!

[Theresa is momentarily shocked, before she gives AJ the dirtiest of looks, as he cackles at her discomfort.]

CJ: Shhhh. We don't want to open that can of worms just yet, AJ.

[AJ stops laughing and gets serious.]

AJM: Then let me open THIS can of worms. Ryan said...

"Sometimes brothers have to fight"?

And I ask you... "SOMETIMES???"

[He shakes his head in disbelief.]

AJM: Who do you think you're foolin', Ry? You've been fightin' me my whole damn existence!

Since day one, since I got THE name, you've been jealous of me, and you've been lookin' for an excuse to get rid of me.

And I know no one wants to hear it. No one wants to hear about what a dirtbag the "White Knight" is, but let me tell you something about your hero. You ready for this, Theresa?

[Lynch lets out a sigh and nods.]

TL: As ready as I ever will be.

AJM: You remember a few years ago, at your daddy's charity show, Theresa?

CJ: Of course she remembers. It was love at first sight.

[Now it's Cain's turn to get a dirty look from Theresa.]

AJM: That's right, it was where you met your main squeeze. Anyway...

Sometime before that, the two big heroes, The White Knight and The King of Cowboys, they come to me and Matt and they have this brilliant plan for us to infiltrate Team Supreme. You remember Alex Martin and Matt Lance, right?

[Theresa rolls her eyes at the mention of those two pseudonyms.]

TL: How could anyone forget The Elite Express?

AJM: So me and Matt, being the good little brothers that we are, being two good soldiers, we do what we're supposed to do and we do what we're told. We listen to the two big doofuses we have for brothers and we join Team Supreme. You already know what happened to Matt, but where did that get me?

I'll tell you where it got me.

The first chance he gets, right on your daddy's show, my snake of a "brother" drops me on my damn head with a brainbuster!

[AJ laughs in derision.]

AJM: That was his real "master plan" all along! He set me up. He wanted to take me out.

But here I am... and now it's my turn.

So Ry? I ain't holdin' no line. I'm drawin' it. And the second you cross it? You're going down! And you can damn sure count on that.

TL: That's... an amazing story, AJ.

AJM: Of course it was amazing. Everything I do is.

[Theresa shakes her head.]

TL: While I'm sure you two are beyond prepared for Ryan Martinez, let's not forget about his partner...

[Cain rolls his eyes.]

CJ: I wish we could.

TL: ...the always dangerous, Hannibal Carver.

CJ: As we just heard, AJ's "not so big" brother has a "not so small" ego. So it's no surprise that he would be arrogant enough to think that he can win the Stampede Cup with a man that hates his stinking guts.

AJM: Woah there, Cain. Who DOESN'T hate my brother's stinking guts?

[Jackson shrugs.]

CJ: Good point. But the fact is, Hannibal Carver is about as reliable as a paycheck signed by Theresa's father. Everyone swears he's tough as nails and the baddest man alive but what did he do when he was beaten within an inch of his life and damn near got his neck broken at SuperClash almost two years ago?

AJM: Find a sucker to give him a bigger paycheck?

CJ: He ran. He ran as far away as possible from the man that did it to him and didn't come back until he made damn sure that the man that whupped his ass was long gone.

TL: That's certainly twisting the facts.

CJ: Is it, Theresa? Hannibal Carver might be one of the toughest men to ever step into a wrestling ring, I'll give him that, but he's not someone I would say handles adversity well. He's a front runner. It's a pattern that's played out throughout his career. When the going gets tough...

AJM: ...Hannibal Carver goes home!

CJ: Exactly. So tell me, Theresa... when I'm ready to separate Ryan Martinez' jaw from his skull with a big boot, do you think Hannibal Carver will be there to take the bullet for him? Do you think Hannibal Carver will be willing to risk his neck for a man he barely even respects? I sure as hell don't.

TL: I wouldn't be so dismissive. You're still facing two future Hall of Fame caliber talents.

AJM: Are you implying we're not!?

[Cain holds up a hand, motioning for AJ to let it go.]

CJ: We're not dismissing anything, Theresa. The fact is, Theresa, Ryan Martinez and Hannibal Carver are outstanding SINGLES wrestlers. One on one, they'd be the toughest fight of anyone's career. I don't think anyone doubts that. But as a team?

AJM: They don't even compare to us!

CJ: ...They're lacking. We are The Kabukicho Assassination Maniac Squad, Theresa. The biggest, baddest, greatest tag team in the world. There's still some people out there that don't want to believe it, but we're going to make believers out of you all.

AJM: And I already know Ryan's too dumb to bow down. So I hope he's ready...

...to get knocked out!

[And with that, the two exit stage right, leaving behind an exasperated Theresa Lynch.]

TL: I should've stayed in Atlanta. Lou, back to you, my friend.

[We go elsewhere backstage, where once more, "Sweet" Lou Blackwell stands flanked by two of the AWA's favorite sons – Hannibal Carver and Ryan Martinez. Lou chuckles a bit as he takes the handoff.]

SLB: Thanks, Theresa... and my apologies for sticking you with that assignment. Nevertheless, gentleman, a battle behind you, but a war ahead of you. You made it through Ringkrieger, but now you're facing the men who calls themselves the Kabukicho Assassination Maniac Squad, or KAMS for short. And as you both know, there's a lotta beef on those bones.

[Carver smirks.]

HC: Yeh know, Lou... seems like I was just back here, standing next to yeh just like I am now. And I could swear yeh were just telling me about some big side of beef

that I should be worried about caving in my damn chest with a single chop of his hand.

Then what happened?

[Lou opens his mouth to answer before Carver cuts him off.]

HC: We stepped in that ring, we took the best they had. Then when the dust settled, it was the two of us with our hands raised and those two on the ground.

So I guess what I'm saying is... I look forward to the next tall drink of water yeh tell me to be careful of.

SLB: Mr. Martinez, I can't help but wonder if there are some mixed feelings going into this match. Half of KAMS is your half-brother, and your father's namesake. You said "brothers fight," but are you ready for that to be more than words?

[Martinez takes a deep breath, exhaling slowly. There's a look of quiet intensity on the face of the AWA's White Knight.]

RM: You know Lou, ever since the possibility of facing KAMS became a reality, I've been thinking about just that.

AJ is my brother. And you know what? After tonight, you'll still be my brother.

But tonight isn't about brothers, Junior.

[The way Martinez says "Junior" carries a great deal of weight. And in the end, there's no honor put on that name.]

RM: Tonight is about why I'm here, why Hannibal is here, and why we have to win.

Blood is blood, but I'm here for a cause. I'm here for THE cause. And I know that it'll take me and it'll take Carver to see this through. I know you, little brother. I know exactly what you've got in you.

And I know you don't have what it takes to see this through.

This is about Castillo, and Korugun. This is about taking a stand. You came here because you want the spotlight. But I know, first hand, that you don't yet have it in you to keep from melting under the bright lights.

You're not ready, AJ, and all the hairstyles and nice clothes in the world aren't going to make you ready.

[Martinez takes another breath, exhaling slowly.]

RM: There's so much I could say. I could talk about your big mouth and how you're in desperate need of a brotherly lesson in humility. I could talk about how you've always been pampered and spoiled and now is the moment when you get brought down to reality.

But those are just words.

You want to know Lou, if I'm serious? Well, I'm going to prove to how serious I am.

Because, come this match, I'm going to do something that no one could possibility misinterpret. And it won't be how I fight you AJ.

It'll be when I've got you down, and I drag you over to the corner, and I reach out, and I tag in Hannibal Carver.

And you'll know just how serious things are when I set Carver loose on you.

[Blackwell turns to Carver.]

SLB: I'm sure I know the answer to this, but I can't imagine you have good intentions where AJ Martinez is concerned.

HC: There was a time I made a promise to someone with that last name Martinez. A promise to back off. A promise to not put them in the ground so they could take care of business.

[Carver looks to Ryan, who shakes his head.]

HC: It doesn't look like this Martinez is trying to tell me anything of the sort, though. This Martinez has asked me to promise something else.

To unleash every bit of anger and violence I have against this scumbag corporation that took over this company on his little brother and his playmate. To not hold back one inch until they're another pair of victims lying on the ground. To do whatever it takes...

[Carver points at the camera, staring gravely.]

HC: ... to ruin YER day, Castillo. I'd say I hate to say that means I have to smash another of Alex Martinez's kids in the face with a billion forearms and elbows.

[Carver laughs. A laugh devoid of humor.]

HC: Except I don't hate it one damn bit.

[Blackwell tugs at his collar.]

SLB: Of course, that's only one half of KAMS. The other half is a man both of you are familiar with – Cain Jackson. A man affiliated with two others you're familiar with, Supreme Wright and Takeshi Mifune.

[Martinez nods.]

RM: Cain Jackson is a dangerous man. And like you said, he's been under the tutelage of two men who've taught me.

I know how dangerous Cain Jackson is. I've woken up more than once with his bootprints across my face.

And I respect you and what you've been through, Jackson.

But like I said, tonight isn't about who taught who. It's about winning this tournament. It's about winning the AWA back from the people trying to ruin it. I've got a cause, Jackson.

And what do you have except your own glory? Except a desire for a trophy and fat paycheck?

My heart and soul are in this. Tonight is about everything I've ever fought for. I'm here for more than just myself.

And I'll go to hell and back to prove it.



SLB: The White Knight is never one to lack conviction. And I assume you feel the same way?

HC: Martinez, here? He's usually got a cause. Not belittling it, because I get it. When yeh're the guy the company looks to, when every little kid in the crowd looks to yeh... it can't be helped. Gordon out there has said it a million times. Yeh just said it a moment ago yer damn self. He's the White Knight.

Now me?

[Carver shakes his head.]

HC: Whether Cain Jackson has a good head on his shoulders don't mean a damn thing to me. All I care about when it comes to that is real simple.

[Carver nods with a grin.]

HC: How great it'll be when I elbow that head off the big goof's shoulders. Because one thing my partner here said does go double for me.

I'm here for more than just myself. Because once again some piece of trash decided he's gonna take over this company and play their little games.

And just like last time, I will smash, trash and destroy everyone in my way to send them packing. No matter what--

[Carver pauses, smirking.]

HC: -- "kooky" name these two want to call themselves, it doesn't matter. They're in the way of burning Korugun to the ground. That makes them one thing to me.

The latest slabs on the chopping block.

SLB: Well, I wish luck to both of you, gentlemen.

RM: I appreciate that Lou, and I'll ask you for your prayers. Not for myself, and not for Carver.

For KAMS.

Because friend of a friend or not... brother or not, there will be no quarter asked, and no quarter given.

I came here to win. Hannibal Carver came here to win. And we will win...

[Martinez offers a solemn nod.]

RM: Count on it!

[We fade from the backstage area to a panning shot of the Mosaic Stadium crowd, buzzing with anticipation for what's about to come their way. After a few moments, we fade to Rebecca Ortiz standing mid-ring to start the introductions.]

RO: The following contest is set for one fall with a forty-five minute time limit and is a Quarterfinal matchup in the 2017 Stampede Cup tournament!

Introducing first...

[We hear the PA system come to life as dialogue from "Conan the Barbarian" is heard...]

"WHAT IS BEST IN LIFE?"

"TO CRUSH YOUR ENEMIES, TO SEE THEM DRIVEN BEFORE YOU, AND TO HEAR THE LAMENTATIONS OF THEIR WOMEN."

[More than a few members of the audience join in now, playing singalong with the intro as a metal cover of "Anvil of Crom" then begins to play. It is then followed by the loud revving of an engine. Just then, we see a jacked-up modified Ripsaw "Extreme Vehicle 1" with a Valiant Charger body on tank tracks, reminiscent of the "Peacemaker" vehicle from Mad Max: Fury Road, rolling into the stadium, eliciting a massive roar from the crowd!]

GM: Another impressive entrance from the Kabukicho Assassination Maniac Squad, Bucky.

BW: Who the heck is paying for all this? I got a grilled cheese sandwich for dinner last night and these two keep showing up in all these crazy cars!

[Driving behind the wheel once again is Cain Jackson. Hanging out in the back with two metal bikini-clad babes carrying Mifune-Gun flags is a smiling AJ Martinez. Martinez takes hold of the searchlight and shines it on two objects in the middle of the aisle. There, we see two cardboard cutouts of Ryan Martinez and Hannibal Carver. Jackson proceeds to rev the engine once more...]

"OHHHH!!!"

[...and runs right over the cardboard cutouts! The camera zooms in on Martinez cackling wildly, shouting "DO IT AGAIN! DO IT AGAIN!" He then hops down from the Gigahorse and onto the floor, where he walks right up the camera and yells, "We're going straight to the finals, baby! Count on it!" before laughing once again and joining Jackson, who is now standing in front of the tank they just drove in on.]

RO: Fighting out of Japan... at a total combined weight of 610 pounds...

"THE BEAST" CAIN JACKSON!

"HOT STUFF" AJ MARTINEZ!

THE KABUKICHO ASSASSINATION MANIAC SQUAAAAAAAAAAAAAD!

[Jackson and Martinez stare straight ahead towards the ring and then share a fist bump, before turning to the crowd and raising their arms into the air as Saskatchewan crowd showers the duo with an appropriately excited roar of approval for their dramatic entrance.]

RO: And now... making their way to the ring.

[The large video wall explodes in a splash of color, the kaleidoscope of hues slowly fading into a red, white and blue AWA logo. The logo begins to wave, the way a flag would in the air. A moment later, sinister sounding string music plays, the sound conjuring thoughts of gunfire. The colors of the now besieged AWA logo begin the run down, bleeding towards the bottom of the screen, slowly replaced by the Korugun logo.

The AWA's running colors slowly coalesce at the bottom of the ring, turning into the form of two kneeling figures, each figure with his head bent down, one knee touching the ground.

Both men look to each other and nod, and as they march to the ring, a familiar chant breaks out. With one side of the Mosaic Stadium breaking into half the chant, and the other side providing the accompaniment.

And once more, the dueling chant is meant to show unity, not division.]

"LET'S GO RYAN!"

"HAN-NI-BAL!"

"LET'S GO RYAN!"

"HAN-NI-BAL!"

"LET'S GO RYAN!"

"HAN-NI-BAL!"

[Over and over, until both men enter the ring and wait for the war to begin.]

GM: This crowd here in Mosaic Stadium is all fired up for this one. I'll tell you, Bucky - the electricity that's in the air for this one, you could cut it with a knife.

BW: Or maybe even a really nice fork.

GM: This should be a very good matchup between two teams who - to be honest with you - I did NOT have pencilled into my bracket. My bracket has been officially busted, Bucky.

BW: Hah! A lot of people had KAMS written out when they saw them going up against the Dogs of War but like they said, they were able to do what very few others have been able to do since the Dogs of War have arrived here in the AWA.

GM: Nevertheless, I'm looking forward to this one as the two teams have a little prematch strategy session... some final words to one another we get ready for action.

"DING! DING! DING!"

GM: The bell has sounded and we're underway in this one... and it looks like it's going to be Hannibal Carver starting things off for his team in this one against the former Team Supreme member, Cain Jackson.

BW: Talk about showdowns I never knew I needed to see until just now, Gordo.

GM: Absolutely. Bucky, of the seven teams left in this tournament, only three of them competed last night and KAMS is one of them... and I have to wonder if that'll have an effect on this matchup or their chances of winning this whole tournament.

BW: It's gotta have an effect, Gordo. They had a tough fight against the Summit to get to tonight... they had that absolute war against the Dogs of War in the second round. Plus when you add in the effects of the travel from Japan. I'd say that even as one of the elite teams in the business, they may be the underdogs in this one.

[Cain Jackson stands across the ring from Hannibal Carver, sharing a few final words with his partner as Carver and Martinez... well, aren't talking at all at this point to the shock of probably no one. Jackson nods his head, slapping his partner on the chest before he sidesteps out of the corner, circling Carver who matches the move, keeping Jackson in front of him...]

GM: These two big bulls set to collide in there.. big Cain Jackson - the Beast as they call him - standing six foot eight and tipping the scales at close to 300 pounds... and he's got a bit of size on the Boston Brawler, Hannibal Carver, who stands about six foot three and weighs around 260...

BW: What he lacks in size, he makes up for in... hmm.

GM: Spirit?

BW: Sure, we'll go with that because I like all of my teeth... even the crooked ones.

[Jackson comes to an abrupt halt mid-circle, his back to his corner as he reaches out and points to Ryan Martinez to cheers from the Canadian crowd.]

GM: How about that now?

BW: Cain Jackson wants a piece of the former World Champion, Gordo.

GM: It certainly appears that way and...

[Carver stares at Jackson for a moment, hands on his hips, and then raises a middle finger in the direction of the Mifune-gun team member to big cheers from the Mosaic Stadium crowd.]

GM: I believe we can summarize that as "Hannibal Carver respectfully refuses."

BW: Respectfully?

GM: In his own way.

[Jackson glares at Carver for a long moment, as though he's going to rush him...

...but then raises his arm, pointing at Martinez a second time.]

GM: And again, Cain Jackson is letting the world know he wants to get his hands on Ryan Martinez.

[Carver throws a dismissive gesture towards Jackson, turning his back and extending an arm towards a waiting Martinez...]

GM: Carver making the requested exch- hang on!

[Carver spins on his heel, rushing across the ring, leaping into the air to topple Jackson with a Fierro Press!]

GM: CARVER TAKES HIM DOWN! FISTS AND FIRE ARE FLYIN' IN THE GREAT WHITE NORTH!

[The hamhocked fists of Hannibal Carver slam down into the skull of Jackson, getting the crowd going in a hurry as the referee shouts for Carver to let up on his attack.]

GM: Carver's all over him...

[Breaking it off, Carver climbs to his feet, grabbing Jackson by the wrist, hauling him to his feet...]

GM: Carver shoots him in, ooh! Back elbow under the chin puts Jackson right back down on the mat!

[Carver drops back into the ropes, cursing up a storm to the dismay of the seven second censor guy before DRIVING the point of his elbow down into the throat of Jackson, causing his entire body to flail about on the canvas!]

GM: Elbow finds the mark... Carver with a cov-

[The crowd ROARS again!]

BW: That's no cover, Gordo!

[The cheers are echoing throughout Mosaic Stadium as Carver decides to pummel Jackson's head and face with a right hand instead of attempting a lateral press!]

GM: Carver's got him down and going to work on him again...

[Carver climbs off the mat, exchanging words with the referee as the Boston Brawler grabs the rising Jackson by the back of the head...

...and races across the ring before SLAMMING Jackson facefirst into the neutral corner's top turnbuckle, sending him flopping back down on the canvas!]

GM: Hannibal Carver may not be the biggest fan of his partner but for the Boston Brawler, this night is about two things... winning a million dollars and sticking it to El Presidente!

BW: We heard what Javier Castillo had to say to the Dogs of War after they got eliminated by KAMS. We know the goal of the Dogs this weekend - in Castillo's eyes - was to make it to this match and make sure that Carver and Martinez didn't get anywhere close to winning this thing but the Dogs are out, Carver and Martinez are here, and they're looking to make July the worst month in Javier Castillo's life, Gordo.

GM: It's been a rough month for El Presidente for sure.

[Carver grabs the rising Jackson by the back of the head, rushing towards the ropes, and HURLING him over the top rope where the six foot eight big man crashes down on the ringside mats!]

GM: OHHH! HE TOSSES HIM OVER THE TOP TO THE FLOOR!

BW: If this was a battle royal, Carver would have won it but it's not and...

GM: And he's not done! Carver's going out to the floor!

[Carver steps out on the apron, standing tall as he watches Jackson attempt to get up off the covered stadium grass...]

GM: Jackson struggling to get up... and Carver leaps off!

[Carver brings a big overhead elbow down between the eyes, causing Jackson to stumble backwards, falling up against the ringside railing.]

GM: Right between the eyes! He got all of that!

[The Boston Brawler pursues, grabbing Jackson by the head again. He pauses, looking over at an overzealous fan wearing a Mooselips t-shirt that looks quite soaked in beer...

...who is offering him a chair.]

GM: Uh oh.

BW: He can't use that, Gordo!

GM: I know that, you know that... even Carver knows it... the question is, does he care?

[Carver starts to reach for the chair and then stops, pointing to the ring...]

"HE'LL SEE!"

[The official nods his head, looking straight down at Carver who grins as the fan sadly lowers the chair...]

...which is when Carver rushes back towards the ring, slamming Jackson's head down onto the ring apron!]

GM: Ohh! Facefirst into the canvas... Carver shoves him back in...

[Carver climbs up on the apron, ducking through the ropes in pursuit as Jackson starts to climb across the ring...]

...but the Boston Brawler cuts him off with a shake of his head and an elbowdrop down across the back of the neck!]

GM: No tag for Cain Jackson... not yet at least.

[Dragging Jackson to his feet, Carver laces a big right hand to the jaw... and another... and a third, backing Jackson into the ropes...]

GM: Carver's got Jackson in some trouble here... big whip on the way...

[But Jackson manages to reverse the whip, sending Carver shooting across instead...]

GM: Reversed! Carver coming back... ducks the clothesline from Jackson...

[Carver hits the ropes himself, rebounding back with a clothesline of his own but Jackson raises his forearms, blocking it and shoving off which sends Carver into a spin...]

GM: Big right, ducked by Carver!

[Carver goes into a spin, throwing the rolling elbow that Jackson ducks under, running to the ropes...]

GM: Carver misses the elbow and... BIG BOOT!

[But Carver swings his arms up, blocking the kick with his forearms...]

GM: BLOCKED!

[The two men fall back a bit away from another, rushing back in with a spinning elbow and a big boot...]

...which collide in the middle!]

GM: STALEMATE!

[The crowd cheers as the two men fall apart from one another again, glaring into each other's eyes as Jackson nods approvingly, dropping back to the corner to slap his partner's hand.]

GM: And there's the tag to "Hot Stuff" AJ Martinez...

[Martinez smirks, climbing his six foot eleven frame over the ropes into the ring, patting Jackson on the shoulders.]

"Don't you worry your head one bit, Cain... I got this."

[The 325 pounder stares across the ring at Hannibal Carver who has his fists clenched and ready to go to town...]

GM: Carver and Martinez now, set to collide... a very familiar statement for me but for once, it's not RYAN Martinez that Hannibal Carver is set to do battle with - it's Ryan's half brother, AJ Martinez.

[AJ grins across the ring...

...and then much as his partner did earlier in the match, he points to the corner where the AWA's White Knight is standing.]

GM: What the...? He wants Ryan Martinez?!

[The crowd buzzes with concern over the familial clash as Ryan Martinez grimaces, shaking his head. Carver glares at AJ Martinez for a few moments.]

GM: Well, the last time someone asked Carver to make a tag, we saw what happened.

[Carver shrugs...]

"Kinda want to see this myself actually."

[...and then spins to slap Ryan Martinez on the forearm.]

GM: The tag is made... and while I wouldn't call Ryan Martinez reluctant to make the tag, he certainly doesn't look happy about it.

[The AWA's White Knight climbs through the ropes into the ring, straightening up to look across the ring at his half brother.]

GM: An uneasy look on the face of Ryan Martinez here. We all know the kind of man that Ryan Martinez is... and much like his good friend, Jack Lynch, Ryan is NOT the kind of man who would be happy to fight his own family. Ryan and AJ, of course, share the same father - the legendary Alex Martinez who I understand is watching the show this weekend on the set of his latest motion picture in Hollywood. Hope you're enjoying retirement, A-Mart!

BW: Oh please... gag me with his box office bombs.

[Ryan strides out towards the middle of the ring, looking up at the near seven footer with a curious expression on his face.]

BW: Ryan sure is the runt of the litter, huh?

GM: Bucky!

[The former World Champion puts out his arms in a "here I am" gesture towards the smirking AJ Martinez who nods.]

"This is what you want?"



[AJ looks down on his brother for a moment... then rests his hands on his hips, lowering his gaze towards the mat.]

GM: Perhaps the young man having second thoughts now.

[Ryan steps closer, placing a hand on his brother's shoulder.]

"Hey... it's okay... it's business."

[AJ looks up, nodding sadly.]

GM: Ryan assuring his brother that it's okay that they clash in this match... that they really don't have much of a choice in this situation... unlike that snake James Lynch who is actually PROVOKING a fight with his family.

[Ryan steps back, a smile on his face as he extends his hand to his brother.]

GM: The former World Champion offering a handshake... letting his young half brother know that no matter what, this isn't a blood war for them... this is business.

[AJ smiles at the AWA's White Knight, reaching out both arms.]

GM: What's the saying? "Brothers don't shake hands, brothers gotta hug."

BW: The saying?! From that great 20th century philosopher Chris Farley?!

[Ryan chuckles, giving a nod as he steps into the embrace to cheers from the crowd.]

GM: Well, the Canadian fans are pleased with this development. They've seen enough family squabbles here tonight with the Rages and the Coltons.

[As the half siblings break away, AJ lifts an arm, pointing at Carver.]

GM: And it looks like AJ Martinez has changed his mind. He wants Carver back in there.

[Ryan looks over at Carver, turning back to AJ with a shake of his head, gesturing for them to go at it...]

GM: Ryan's ready to do this. I think he knows he can't avoid it all match.

[AJ shakes his head, pleading with his half brother to make the tag.]

GM: AJ is insisting... practically begging now...

[With a sigh, Ryan nods, turning back towards the corner where a disgusted Carver sticks out his hand...]

...but before he can slap it, Ryan is jerked around by the shoulder to face his half brother..]

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

GM: BIG BOOT! BIG BOOT!

["Hot Stuff" dives across his prone half brother, hooking a leg as the shocked official drops down to count...]

GM: Blue Shoes counts one! Counts two! Counts- SHOULDER UP IN TIME!

[AJ Martinez pushes to his knees, a shocked expression on his face as he looks over at the official, holding up three fingers.]

GM: Look at AJ Martinez! He thought he had it won! He thought this little plan of his - this chicanery aimed at his half brother - had done the trick!

[A shout from Cain Jackson gets AJ Martinez back on his feet, dragging his half brother by the wrists across the ring...

...and he slaps Cain Jackson's hand.]

GM: Tag for KAMS!

[Jackson pulls Ryan Martinez off the mat, each KAMS member grabbing an arm and HURLING Martinez back into their corner with great force!]

GM: Ohhh! That'll shake the spine of the White Knight!

[The fans are all over KAMS as Jackson extends a long leg, planting his boot under the chin of the former World Champion...]

GM: And that's a choke, fans! Cain Jackson with a boot choke in the corner, snatching the wind out of Ryan Martinez' sails...

[The referee calls for the break, applying a quick count that sees Jackson break his choke at four, switching swiftly to hard back elbows - landing one... two... three in the corner, leaving Martinez reeling and the fans jeering as Hannibal Carver glares across the ring.]

GM: Ryan Martinez got suckered in by his half brother and KAMS has just taken total control of this one...

[Jackson pulls Martinez from the corner by the hair, scooping him up and slamming him down on the mat.]

GM: Scoop and a slam by Jackson... and a quick leaping legdrop!

[Staying seated with a leg across the chest, Jackson barks "COUNT!" at the official who obliges with a two count before the former World Champion kicks out.]

GM: Two count only off the legdrop... and there's another tag...

[AJ Martinez steps in, smirking at Jackson...]

"It's like this..."

[The six foot eleven Martinez leaps high into the air - higher than Cain Jackson did at least - and drops a big leg across the torso of his half brother!]

GM: Ohhh! Big leaping legdrop finds the mark... and we've got one... we've got two... we've got- no! That's all!

[AJ again has a mini-tantrum, this time counting his own quick pin on the mat and shouting "THREE! IT'S THREE!" He climbs to his feet, stomping around the ring as he keeps an eye on Hannibal Carver who is pacing the ring apron, looking ready for a fight.]

GM: Hannibal Carver looks like he wishes he'd gotten back in the ring right about now but that's no option for him at the moment as AJ Martinez drags his half brother off the mat... shoving him right back into the wrong part of town again...

[AJ winds up, smashing a pair of clubbing forearms across the sternum before landing a hooking left forearm that catches his half brother across the temple, forcing him to fall down to a seated position in the corner...]

GM: Down goes the White Knight off that forearm shot...

[The seven footer grabs the top rope, stomping down on the seated Martinez as Cain Jackson reaches out, slapping "Hot Stuff" on the shoulder, tagging himself into the match.]

GM: In comes the Beast off the tag...

[Jackson pulls Ryan Martinez off the mat, shoving him back into the buckles as he swings his knee up into the midsection a handful of times, leaving the former World Champion gasping for air...]

GM: Look at this now... lifts him up, right over the shoulder like a sack of potatoes...

[Holding him over his shoulder in a backbreaker submission position, Jackson walks around the ring, ending up just outside of Hannibal Carver's reach...

...and then charges the neutral corner, DRIVING Ryan Martinez' torso into the turnbuckles, leaving him dangling upside down in the corner!]

GM: Good grief! That'll knock the wind out of the White Knight's sails!

[Jackson backs off, sneering at the jeering Canadian crowd as Carver shouts "COME ON, MARTINEZ! GET IN THIS THING!" from his spot on the corner. The former Team Supreme member points a threatening finger in Carver's direction, causing words to be traded between those two.]

GM: Cain Jackson and Hannibal Carver with words for one another yet again... and you get the feeling this one is set to boil over at any given time.

[Grabbing the ropes, Martinez pushes up to a seated position on the turnbuckle as Jackson moves back in on him, reaching up to land a big right hand... and a second before he steps up on the middle rope...]

GM: Look out here... Jackson hooking the former World Champion... perhaps looking for a superplex here as we cross the ten minute mark in this one.

BW: A whole lot of time left in this Quarterfinal match, Gordo.

GM: Absolutely. The Quarterfinals bump up to a forty-five minute time limit...

[Jackson reaches down, looking to get the leverage to lift the White Knight into the air but Ryan grabs the top rope, refusing the lift...]

GM: Martinez trying to hang on here, trying to avoid this superplex...

[Cain Jackson makes another attempt to lift Martinez into the air but again, the former champion blocks it.]

GM: Another block by Martinez, fighting him off so far...

[Jackson lets go of his grip, rearing back and firing in a right hand... and another... and a third...]

...which is when Martinez suddenly whips his head forward, stunning Jackson with a headbutt!]

GM: OHHH! HEADBUTT ON TARGET!

[The skull-cracking blow sends Jackson falling off the buckles, crashing down on the canvas as the crowd cheers as Martinez grabs at his forehead.]

GM: The headbutt did the trick there but it also seems like it might've done some damage to Martinez as well! He's stunned, Jackson's down... but listen to Carver shouting encouragement to his partner! You gotta be impressed by the way these two long-time rivals are coming together for this tournament. We've seen plenty of infighting this weekend between partners... but not these two.

[With the fans cheering him on, Martinez stands on the middle rope, beckoning Jackson back to his feet...]

...and when the Beast gets there, the White Knight HURLS himself into the air, extending his arm to catch Jackson across the collarbone, knocking him back down to the mat!]

GM: FLYING CLOTHESLINE OFF THE MIDDLE ROPE! OH MY!

BW: And this might be Martinez' chance to make the tag, Gordo.

GM: Martinez trying to push himself up off the mat - he realizes the same thing as Carver shouts to him, trying to fire him up to get to that corner and to make the tag!

[The Mosaic Stadium crowd grows louder as Martinez forces himself to his hands and knees, inching across the ring towards a waiting Carver who has his arm outstretched as far as he can, grimacing as he stretches with all his flexibility towards his crawling partner...]

GM: Hannibal Carver hasn't been in the ring since the opening moments of this one and he wants that tag in the worst way right about now.

[Martinez closes half the distance to his corner, still a handful of feet short as he stretches out his arm as well...]

GM: He's getting closer! Martinez inching towards the corner... trying to get to a waiting Boston Brawler...

[With just a few feet left, Martinez stretches out yet again...]

...and a running diving double axehandle out of Cain Jackson cuts him off!]

GM: Ohhh! And Jackson recovers in time to cut off the attempt at the tag!

[The crowd jeers as Jackson gets back to his feet, eyeballing Carver who shakes his head, smashing his fist into the top turnbuckle a few times. The Mifune-gun member drags the downed Martinez back up to his feet, laying some words onto Carver as he grabs Martinez by the wrist...]

GM: Jackson shoots him to the corner...

[AJ Martinez sidesteps down the apron, giving his partner room to maneuver as Jackson comes lumbering across the ring towards him...]

GM: CLOTHESLINE!

[But the crowd ROARS as the White Knight pulls himself clear, causing Jackson to SLAM into the empty corner!]

GM: He missed! Martinez moved and that's a mistake! Jackson's hurting in the corner, Martinez quickly on the move now... heading across the ring again but this time he's on his feet!

BW: Tag! AJ Martinez tags himself in, coming over the ropes...

[And the charging near-seven footer runs his half brother right down with a running clothesline to the back of the head!]

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

GM: What a shot that was! And again, Ryan Martinez is prevented from making the tag to Hannibal Carver!

[The crowd's jeers get louder as AJ Martinez unleashes a barrage on his own family member, stomping and kicking the White Knight into the canvas.]

GM: "Hot Stuff" is all over him now, trying to cut off any fight at all left in the White Knight...

[AJ Martinez gleefully pulls his half brother to his knees, holding him by the arm as he stretches it out towards Carver...]

"Almost there, buddy! Almost! Just reach..."

[...and then SMASHES his arms together on the sides of the former World Champion's head, clashing his ears and putting him back down on the mat!]

"SWEET CHRISTMAS!"

[As Ryan slumps to the canvas, AJ looks to Carver, holding his fingers an inch apart.]

"Missed it by THAT much!"

[Carver starts to step through the ropes but the referee is right there to cut him off, shaking his head as AJ pulls Ryan back up off the mat...]

"Watch this one, tough guy."

[...and lifts Ryan up, using a gorilla press to shove him skyward!]

GM: Oh my! Look at the power on the seven footer! Holding his half brother way up high...

[He turns slightly, throwing Ryan down to the canvas closer to the KAMS corner with a big slam. The seven footer dives down to his knees, applying a cover.]

GM: AJ makes the cover... he gets one! He gets two! He gets- no! Ryan's out at two!

[Martinez grimaces as he sits up on the mat, shaking his head in the direction of referee Andy Dawson who holds up two fingers.]

GM: Again, AJ Martinez taking issue with the count. This kid's got an attitude on him a mile long, Bucky.

BW: It ain't attitude when you can back it up.

GM: It certainly is!

BW: Well... sure, technically... I guess.

[The seven footer climbs off the mat, pulling the White Knight up with him...]

GM: AJ Martinez staying on the attack now... not letting up on his half brother...

[Grabbing the arm again, he fires Martinez into the neutral corner, watching as he bounces back out, catching him under his arm, spinning him around, and dumping him down with a powerful side slam!]

GM: Ohhh!

[Staying down, he simply hooks a leg, leaning back into a makeshift pin attempt...

...that scores another two count before the former World Champion kicks out to escape.]

GM: Two count only yet again... and AJ Martinez might be starting to lose his temper, fans.

"FIFTEEN MINUTES! FIFTEEN MINUTES! FIFTEEN MINUTES GONE BY!"

[Back on his feet, "Hot Stuff" kicks the bottom rope in annoyance as Cain Jackson bellows at him to stay focused.]

GM: Fifteen minutes gone in the forty-five minute time limit of this Quarterfinal matchup as the veteran, Cain Jackson, trying to keep young Martinez from losing his cool in this one, Bucky.

BW: A smart move by Jackson. He knows his young partner is emotional and so he's trying to keep him steady... the same kind of thing that Supreme Wright once did for Jackson.

GM: AJ Martinez watching as Ryan tries to battle his way back to his feet again... and again, he pulls him right up...

[He lifts the White Knight over his shoulder with ease, charging across the ring at full speed...

...and DRIVES him back into the KAMS corner, shaking the ring from the impact as he slaps Cain Jackson's offered hand.]

GM: Another tag there. KAMS again looking good as a team in there... doing the things that a successful tag team needs to do. We're seeing exactly why this tag team is considered one of the best in Japan... and why they've put themselves into a position to be considered one of the best in the world after this weekend.

[With Ryan dazed in the corner, the Kabukicho Assassination Maniac Squad marches across the ring, just out of reach of a swiping Hannibal Carver...]

GM: AJ grabs his own partner by the arm... whips him in!

[A big running clothesline shakes Martinez from head to toe as Jackson steps out...

...and AJ Martinez comes running in right behind him with a matching running clothesline in the buckles!]

GM: Back to back clotheslines! And Ryan Martinez is out on his feet, fans...

BW: He's about to be out on his back!

[The former World Champion stumbles out of the corner into the waiting grip of KAMS who each grasp him by the throat...

...and then hoists him into the air, throwing him down to the canvas!]

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

GM: DOUBLE CHOKESLAM! AND COULD THIS BE THE END OF THE ROAD FOR MARTINEZ AND CARVER IN THIS TOURNAMENT?!

[AJ vacates the ring as Cain Jackson settles into a lateral press.]

GM: ONNNNNNNNNNNE! TWOOOOOOOOOOO! THR-

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

GM: SHOULDER UP! MARTINEZ GETS THE SHOULDER UP!

[A disgusted AJ Martinez slaps the buckles in annoyance in the corner, barking to his partner who pushes up to his knees, shaking his head in disbelief.]

GM: Cain Jackson can't believe that Ryan Martinez kicked out of that massive double chokeslam... and I'm having a hard time believing it myself, fans!

BW: Me too.

GM: Ryan Martinez' legendary heart and resiliency is on display here tonight in Mosaic Stadium as he's taken a pounding from one of the biggest, toughest tag teams around for about... what? Ten minutes now?

BW: Gotta be close to that, yeah.

GM: And now it's Cain Jackson getting back to his feet... it's Cain Jackson backing off, creating some space to work...

[Jackson eyeballs the downed but moving Martinez...

...and slaps his right leg firmly.]

GM: And don't look now, fans... but Cain Jackson is calling for that running big boot we've seen him use so many times over the years!

[Jackson nods his head as the crowd buzzes with concern for the former World Champion.]

GM: Cain Jackson looking to deliver that big boot to Ryan Martinez and to deliver a spot in the Semifinals against the Soldiers of Fortune to he and AJ Martinez... Martinez starting to stir on the canvas... trying to get back to his feet, totally unaware of what awaits him when he gets there...

[Using the ropes for support, the White Knight drags himself up to his feet...

...which is when Cain Jackson surges into motion, charging across the ring at top speed towards a helpless Martinez...]

GM: BIG BOOT!

[...or maybe not quite so helpless as Martinez drops down to his knees, avoiding the big running kick that sends Jackson's leg flying over the top rope, quickly entangling himself in the ropes to a big cheer!]

GM: HE MISSES! AND HE'S CAUGHT UP IN THE ROPES!

BW: And NOW Martinez has got a clear shot to make the tag!

[Down on his hands and knees, the White Knight starts crawling across the ring again as AJ Martinez races to his partner's side, trying to get him free from the ropes.]

GM: Ryan's crawling! AJ trying to get Cain loose! Carver's ready annnnnnnnd...

[AJ manages to free Jackson who spins, tripping on the ropes, falling to his hands and knees as Ryan lunges...]

GM: TAG!

[The crowd EXPLODES as the Boston Brawler comes charging into the ring, racing towards the rising Jackson, throwing his balled-up right hand as fast as his fist can fly...]

GM: Right hand! Another! Over and over, Carver's lighting up Jackson!

[Breaking away, he charges the corner, landing a back elbow on the seven footer that sends AJ off the apron and down to the floor...]

GM: Ohhh! Carver clears out AJ Martinez!

[He turns his attention back to the dazed Jackson, landing another haymaker before grabbing the wrist...]

GM: Irish whip... ohhh! Big running clothesline but Jackson down!

[Carver lets loose a roar of triumph, pounding his fists into his chest as the Canadian crowd echoes his feelings!]

GM: Carver's on fire and these fans are right there with him!

[Carver spins around, beckoning the dazed Cain Jackson back to his feet...

...where he runs him down with a second running clothesline!]

GM: Another clothesline takes him off his feet! Carver's got Jackson reeling and... is he looking for another one?

[Again, Carver backs off, waving his arms up, calling for Jackson to "get his ass up!"]

GM: Hannibal Carver imploring Cain Jackson to get to his feet using his usual colorful vocabulary...



[And as the six foot eight Jackson gets to his feet, Carver rushes at him, looking to deliver another clothesline...]

GM: Third time's a cha- no, ducked by Jackson!

[The momentum carries Carver into the ropes where he bounces back off as Jackson steadies himself, throwing a standing clothesline of his own...]

GM: Clothesli- ducked by Carver this time!

[...and as he goes by, Carver snatches a full nelson, lifting the 285 pounder into the air and sitting out, driving his tailbone into the canvas!]

GM: DORCESTER DROP! And talk about a jolt to the spinal column!

[Carver is all fired up, laying the badmouth on Jackson, earning himself a seven second audio ban as he gets to his feet...]

...and AJ Martinez rushes in behind him, grabbing him by the arm, twisting him around into an Irish whip...]

GM: AJ Martinez from the blind side...

[...and shoves Carver skyward on the rebound, popping him up into the air...]

GM: POP UP...

[...where Carver snatches the three-quarter nelson on the way down, DRIVING Martinez facefirst into the canvas!]

GM: BLACKOUT! BLACKOUT! BLACKOUT!

[The Mosaic Stadium crowd EXPLODES as Carver pops up, eyes wide as he pounds his chest, watching as AJ Martinez rolls from the ring to the safety of the floor.]

GM: CARVER LAID OUT THE SEVEN FOOTER WITH A BLACKOUT OUT OF NOWHERE!

[Carver twists around, going into a spin just as Cain Jackson regains his feet...]

“OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!”

GM: ROLLING ELBOW! HE GOT ALL OF THAT!

[Carver dives across the prone Jackson, not bothering to hook a leg, nodding along with Andy Dawson's count...]

GM: ONNNNNNNNNNNNNE! TWOOOOOOOOOOO! THR-

“OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!”

GM: And this time, it's Cain Jackson who narrowly avoids defeat!

[Carver rolls off Jackson, pounding his fists down into the mat in anger. He gets up, crouching low, waving his hands calling for Jackson to get back to his feet...]

GM: Carver's setting up for something, fans! He may be looking for that Blackout again!

BW: And on the legal man this time to boot.

GM: Carver's set... Carver's waiting...

[He has to wait a few more moments while Jackson clears the cobwebs enough to get back to his feet...]

GM: Jackson's up! Carver's behind him!

[...and as Jackson turns, Carver snatches the three-quarter nelson, ready to strike...]

GM: BLACKOU- NO! JACKSON SHOVES HIM OFF!

[The powerful Beast shoves him with enough force to send Carver falling towards the ropes as Jackson runs in after him and...]

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

GM: BIG BOOT! BIG BOOT!

[But the impact of the charging big boot sends Carver falling through the ropes to the outside. Jackson makes a lunge to try and prevent the fall to the floor but comes up short, angrily slapping his hands down on the ropes.]

GM: The big boot connects but Carver - I don't know if that was a conscious decision or not... but he makes the smart move, getting out of there so that Cain Jackson can't go for the pin.

[Jackson walks back to center ring, gesturing for the referee to start a ten count as he places his hands on his hips...]

GM: Jackson instructing the referee to start his ten count and... oh, come on!

[The jeers inside Mosaic Stadium intensify at the shot of the entrance stage where we see AWA President Javier Castillo emerging into view.]

GM: What the heck is he doing out here, Bucky?

BW: Hey, this is his tournament. You don't think he's got a vested interest in seeing how it turns out?

GM: I'm sure he does... but my bigger concern right now is that one of the two teams in this match are on his "hit list" so to speak. We know he wants Carver and Martinez nowhere near winning this thing. He's basically admitted that but now he's out here perhaps looking to get involved... although Cain Jackson doesn't look too happy to see him, Bucky.

[The camera cuts to a closeup of Jackson who glares down the aisle at Castillo.]

BW: No, he doesn't... but he's all smart enough not to look a gift horse in the mouth. If Castillo wants to giftwrap a trip to the Semifinals, I expect KAMS will be more than happy to take it.

[Jackson throws a hand in the direction of Castillo who stands all alone at the top of the ramp, not acknowledging the gesture or the glare.]

GM: Javier Castillo out here by himself... no sign of his usual gang of thugs that hang around him. We're over twenty minutes into this hard-fought battle to see who will find themselves in the Final Four of this tournament.

[A weary Carver rolls under the bottom rope, staying down on the mat as Cain Jackson turns his focus back onto him.]

GM: Big Cain Jackson back on the attack, pulling Carver to his feet... ohhh! Big right hand... a clubbing blow across the shoulderblades... knee to the gut... Jackson's all over him!

[Grabbing Carver around the neck, Jackson slings him into the neutral corner.]

GM: Carver gets thrown HARD in to the corner... Jackson moving in on him...

[Leaning over, Jackson grabs the middle rope, driving his shoulder repeatedly into the body of the Boston Brawler. The protesting count of the official gets a break at four...]

GM: Carver sucking wind in the corner as Cain Jackson attempts to knock the air out of him with those tackles... ohh! Hard uppercut, right on the chin!

[But Carver pushes off the buckles, landing a stiff forearm shot to the jaw!]

GM: OH!

[Jackson returns fire, landing a hooking right hand on the cheekbone...

...and gets another forearm shot to the jaw, knocking him back a few steps!]

GM: Carver's trying to fight out of the corner!

[Jackson steps in again, winding up but Carver blocks it, lacing a right hand across the jaw... and another... and another...]

GM: Carver's got Jackson on the run, backpedaling out to the middle... ohh! And Jackson slips the knee up into the gut, cutting off Carver's comeback in a hurry!

[With Carver again sucking wind, Jackson grabs the arm, whipping Carver into the ropes...]

GM: Irish whip... backdrop coming up and-

[The crowd reacts as Carver pulls up short, swinging a boot up into the mouth of the doubled-up Jackson, snapping his head back, sending him stumbling backwards towards the ropes as Carver goes into a spin...]

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

[...and Carver DRILLS Jackson with a rolling elbow, sending him flying backwards...

...right out through the ropes to the floor to groans from the crowd and disgust from Carver who falls to his knees, dangling between the ropes as he stretches out his arms towards the floored Jackson!]

GM: And this time, it's Carver who lands the big blow but can't take advantage of it! We saw Jackson deliver that signature big boot that knocked Carver to the floor and now the rolling elbow does the same on the other side...

BW: But unlike Jackson, Carver's going out after him!

GM: He certainly is!

[The Mosaic Stadium crowd gets louder as Carver drops to his back, rolling under the ropes to the floor as Javier Castillo watches on with interest from atop the entrance ramp.]

GM: Castillo still looking on... and Carver throwing a look at him.

BW: You think Castillo wouldn't like a little bit of payback on Carver from what he did to Korugun in South Philly?

GM: Oh, I know he would.

[Carver shouts something off-mic in Castillo's direction as he pulls Jackson off the floor by the arm...]

"CLAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAANG!"

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

[...and whips him into the steel steps, sending the staircase flying as Jackson's near 300 pound frame collides with it!]

GM: A hard crash out on the floor as Cain Jackson meets the steel steps... and it looks like Carver's not done with him, fans!

[Pulling Jackson off the floor, muttering madly as he does, Carver drags Jackson over towards the aisle, walking several steps up it so he's standing on the steel ramp...

...and with his gaze locked on Javier Castillo, Carver scoops Jackson up into his arms...]

GM: Nearly 300 pounds goes up...

"CLANNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNG!"

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

GM: ...and gets SLAMMED DOWN HARD ON THE STEEL RAMP!

[Jackson cries out, writhing in pain on the ramp as Carver locks his eyes on Castillo again, pointing a threatening finger in his direction.]

GM: Hannibal Carver putting Javier Castillo on notice, fans... warning him to stay right where he is up on top of that entrance stage...

[The Boston Brawler drags Jackson back towards the ring by the ankle, pulling him up to his feet and shoving him under the bottom rope.]

GM: Carver puts Jackson back in... now pulling himself back up on the apron...

[On his back, Jackson says something to the official, drawing his focus as Carver gets on the apron...]

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

[...and gets laid out by a running big boot down the length of the apron from a recovered AJ Martinez!]

GM: GOOD GRIEF, WHAT A SHOT!

BW: HAH! A little bit of payback for that Blackout earlier!

GM: Payback indeed!

[The towering Martinez stands over Carver on the apron, laying the badmouth on him...]

"YOU'RE A TOUGH GUY?! YOU'RE A BIG MAN?! NO ONE'S BIGGER THAN HOT STUFF, BABY! NO ONE!"

[The referee turns around, spotting Martinez taunting Carver and starts laying into him for possibly getting involved...]

GM: The referee letting AJ Martinez have it...

BW: For what? He didn't see nothin'!

[A smirking Martinez backs down the apron, leaving Carver in a heap on the floor as Ryan Martinez shouts some encouragement to his partner.]

GM: Hannibal Carver laid out on the floor after that big boot... and I don't know if he can beat a ten count after that, Bucky.

BW: If he can't, they're done! They're out! Kaputski!

GM: You sound so happy about that.

BW: I'm really hoping if El Presidente gets his way, he'll kick a little bonus down to the rest of the proletariat. I could use a few extra bucks, Gordo - this Canadian exchange rate is killing me.

GM: Give me a break... and as the referee starts his ten count on Hannibal Carver, it remains to be seen if Carver - who hasn't moved a bit yet - can beat the count back in just like you said.

[Official Andy Dawson stands close to the ropes, making sure Carver can hear him as he shouts out "TWO!" We cut up to the top of the ramp where Javier Castillo is looking on with great interest...]

GM: Castillo keeping an eye on things. I'm still a little surprised he's out here by himself, Bucky. No sign of even his personal security guard.

BW: John Law's a little busy here tonight, Gordo. A whole lot of people could be trying to get into the building here tonight and Law's personally responsible for making sure that doesn't happen.

GM: Javier Castillo certainly does have a lot of enemies.

BW: Name one pro wrestling executive who doesn't.

GM: A fair point but Castillo seems to attract them like bees to honey... and that count is up to five now. Hannibal Carver slowly starting to move on the outside... perhaps too slowly as Andy Dawson calls out six.

[The crowd is rumbling as Hannibal Carver reaches up off the padded ringside mats, grabbing hold of the ring apron to some cheers as the count hits "SEVEN!"]

GM: We're up to seven now... Carver still trying to get up... still trying to drag himself up off the floor..

"EIGHT!"

[The nervousness of the Regina crowd is palpable as Carver grabs the apron with the other hand, pulling hard as Ryan can be heard shouting "COME ON, CARVER! GET IN THERE!"]

GM: Ryan Martinez urging his partner on... up to nine now!

BW: This is it! It's over!

[But Carver makes one final, desperate lunge, tossing himself under the ropes JUST before the ten count comes down.]

GM: He made it! He made it!

[The crowd cheers as the referee waves off the count...

...but the cheers quickly turn to concern once more as Jackson pulls Carver up off the mat, grabbing him by the arm...]

GM: Jackson with the whip... Carver hits the corner!

[Stuck in the KAMS corner, Carver leans back against the buckles as Cain Jackson slaps his partner's hand...]

GM: There's the tag... in comes AJ Martinez...

[With Carver prone in the corner, the seven footer runs towards the other corner, slamming on the brakes just short of drilling his half brother...

...and with a smirk, he shouts "LOVE YA, BRO!" before he whips around, running back the other way...]

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

GM: Another big boot on Carver!

[Grabbing him by the back of the head, AJ shoves him into a stagger out of the corner as Cain Jackson runs right in behind him...]

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

GM: AND JACKSON WITH THE BIG BOOT AS WELL! GOOD GOD ALMIGHTY!

[Jackson bails out of the ring, leaving AJ to make the cover on the laid out Carver...]

GM: ONNNNNNNNNNNNNE! TWOOOOOOOOOO! THREEEEEEEEEEE-

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

GM: -AND A DIVING SAVE BY RYAN MARTINEZ! OHHHH MY!

[An irate Cain Jackson comes right back into the ring, yanking the former World Champion to his feet to drill him with a right hand... and Martinez returns fire with an open-handed slap across the face...]

GM: We've got a fight on our hands now!

[The referee shouts a protest as Jackson and Martinez exchange blows, furious fists for staggering slaps and so on...]

GM: It's breaking down... and AJ Martinez back on his feet now, joining the fray...

[AJ joins in, hammering Ryan across the back of the head with a double axehandle. The two big men take turns drilling the former World Champion with haymakers as the fans jeer and the referee protests loudly...]

GM: It's a two on one in there now with KAMS taking their best shots on Ryan Martinez and... don't look now!

[The crowd roars with delight as Hannibal Carver dives into the mix, throwing a right hand at the ear of AJ Martinez!]

GM: We've got Carver and AJ! Cain and Ryan! All four going at it in the middle of the ring now!

[A flurry of fists by Carver backs the seven footer across the ring to one corner as a shower of slaps by Ryan does the same to Cain Jackson.]

GM: They're in opposite corners now!

[Ryan throws a look at Carver who nods his approval as both men square up and go to town...]

GM: FOREARMS ON AJ! SLAPS ON JACKSON! THE CROWD IS LOVING THIS!

[With both members of KAMS reeling, each man grabs an arm...]

GM: Double whip... and they collide in the center of the ring! Oh my!

[The referee dances around the foursome, trying to stay out of harm's way as the two KAMS members stagger back towards their attackers...]

...who both grab an arm, looking to whip them back to the corner. Ryan is successful, sending Cain Jackson crashing back into the buckles but Carver's whip is blocked, countered, and reversed...]

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

[...which results in the seven footer HURLING Carver into an out-of-position Andy Dawson!]

GM: DOWN GOES THE REFEREE!

BW: Uh oh!

[We cut to the top of the aisle where Javier Castillo arches an eyebrow at this turn of events, watching on for a moment to see how badly the referee has been taken out of the match.]

GM: Referee Andy Dawson got in the wrong spot at the wrong time and AJ Martinez accidentally made him pay for it! Dawson is down... he went down hard... and this is not a good situation right now, fans!

[With Carver down on the mat after the collision, AJ Martinez moves to the corner, looking to help his partner..]

...but Ryan whips around, lighting up his half brother with a knife edge chop!]

"WHAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAP!"

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

[The crowd reacts as the stunning blow connects, sending the seven footer stumbling backwards...]

...which is when Javier Castillo starts rapidly whipping his arm around like a third base coach sending the runner to home!]

GM: Castillo's waving to the back and... oh, come on!

[The crowd groans at the sight of the masked giant known as Polemos lumbering somewhat swiftly down the aisle towards the ring...]

GM: Polemos, the God of War, is headed for the ring... and we wondered why Castillo didn't have his usual gang of thugs with him... now we know!

[The seven footer gets down the ramp, looking towards the corner where the two half-siblings are exchanging blows. He pulls himself up on the apron, standing tall...]

...which is when Cain Jackson comes barreling across the ring, swinging his long leg up...]

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

GM: BIG BOOT! JACKSON BOOTS POLEMOS RIGHT IN HIS DAMN MASKED MOUTH!

[The mighty kick sends the seven footer flying backwards off the apron, crashing down on the barely-padded grass at ringside!]

BW: Apparently Cain Jackson wants no part of Korugun interference in this one, Gordo!

GM: Apparently not!

[Jackson lays the badmouth on Polemos from inside the ring, obviously all sorts of fired up as he looks down towards an exasperated Castillo who starts whipping his arm around again...]

GM: Castillo's not done though! He wants to make sure that Carver and Martinez don't make it to the Semifinals! He's sending in reinforcements!

[The crowd jeers as the rotund form of Ebola Zaire comes wobbling into view, dressed in a blood red pair of baggy pants and matching hooked boots. The bloodthirsty African Nightmare is lustily licking his lips as he moves past Castillo towards the ring...]

GM: Ebola Zaire is next!

BW: And you can bet Zaire's looking to carve someone up right here in the middle of Canada - is it Canadian Thanksgiving yet, Gordo? I can never keep that straight.

[Zaire gets about halfway down the aisle as Jackson backs off, waving his hands towards him...]

GM: Well, Cain Jackson doesn't appear to be afraid of Zaire - you gotta respect that!

BW: Not many people can say they're not afraid of Ebola Zaire.

"THIRTY MINUTES HAVE GONE BY! FIFTEEN MINUTES REMAIN!"

GM: There's the call - fifteen minutes left in this forty-five minute time limit!



BW: Time's a tickin', daddy!

[Zaire reaches ringside, looking up at a waiting Jackson...

...but not seeing a waiting Hannibal Carver who is crouched near the ringpost, standing on the apron. The Boston Brawler surges out of his crouch, running down the length of the apron...]

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

[...and HURLS himself off the apron with a flying clothesline that drags Zaire down to the floor!]

GM: GOOD GRIEF, CARVER TAKES OUT ZAIRE!

[Down on his knees, Carver starts pummeling Zaire into the ringside mats...

...and a shout from AJ Martinez gets his partner's attention. Jackson throws one more look up the aisle at Javier Castillo before turning to go assist "Hot Stuff" with his half brother!]

GM: And KAMS just turned their focus back onto Ryan Martinez... pulling him out of the corner to the middle of the ring, trying to wrap up the win here and cash their ticket to the Semifinals to meet the Soldiers of Fortune!

[Pulling the former World Champion to the middle of the ring, they each reach out, grabbing him by the throat...]

GM: Another double chokeslam... or maybe that Welcome To The Slaughterhouse we saw last night! Whatever it is, Ryan Martinez is in some serious trouble here, fans, as he-

[The crowd cheers as Martinez lashes out, striking his own half brother across the face with an open-handed slap...]

"SLAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAP!"

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

[...and one comes from the other side, catching Cain Jackson on the ear.]

"SLAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAP!"

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

[He throws quicker this time, aiming first at one member of the Kabukicho Assassination Maniac Squad and then the other...]

"SLAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAP!"

"SLAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAP!"

[...and then throws them in bunches...]

"SLAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAP!"

"SLAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAP!"

"SLAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAP!"

"SLAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAP!"

"SLAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAP!"

"SLAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAP!"

[The repeated blows have softened the will of KAMS, forcing them to relent on their attempt at a double chokeslam, staggered right in front of them as Martinez snatches Jackson by the head and...]

"CRAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAACK!"

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

GM: HEADBUTT! HE PUT HIS ALL INTO THAT!

[Jackson stumbles backwards as Martinez whips around, blindly throwing a spinning back elbow into his half brother's jaw!]

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

[AJ stumbles back from the blow as Martinez turns back to Jackson...]

"WHAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAACK!"

GM: KNIFE EDGE CHOP!

"WHAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAACK!"

"WHAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAACK!"

"WHAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAACK!"

"WHAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAACK!"

"WHAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAACK!"

"WHAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAACK!"

"WHAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAACK!"

"WHAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAACK!"

[A non-corner version of the machine gun chops has Jackson wobbly as Martinez turns back towards his half sibling...]

"WHAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAACK!"

"WHAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAACK!"

"WHAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAACK!"

"WHAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAACK!"

"WHAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAACK!"

"WHAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAACK!"

"WHAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAACK!"

"WHAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAACK!"

"WHAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAACK!"

[And with AJ wobbly as well, Martinez goes into another spin...]

"WHAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAACK!"

[...and drops AJ with a spinning knife edge chop. He turns back towards Jackson who is heading in on him...]

"WHAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAACK!"

[...and puts him down with a knife edge chop as well!]

GM: GOOD GRIEF! AND LISTEN TO THIS CROWD!

[The crowd EXPLODES into cheers for Ryan Martinez who is standing on wobbly legs between two giant competitors that he dropped through sheer will and intensity!]

GM: RYAN MARTINEZ PUTS THEM DOWN! RYAN MARTINEZ STANDS ALONE AND-

[And Javier Castillo angrily starts whipping his arm around again...]

GM: Uh oh!

BW: El Presidente just answered the age old question, Gordo...

GM: What's that?

BW: HE let the Dogs out!

[The Dogs of War come jogging into view, Perez throwing a glare at Castillo as they head down the ramp towards the ring where Hannibal Carver has joined his partner back inside the ring, standing together mid-ring, ready for the fight to come...]

GM: The Dogs of War are heading for the ring! Carver and Martinez are ready for them!

[Isaiah Carpenter is the first one in, sliding headfirst under the bottom rope. He pops up to his feet as Martinez surges forward...]

GM: EXCALIBUR! EXCALIBUR!

[The flying Yakuza dispatches of Carpenter, knocking him over the top rope, flipping out to the floor..

...as Pedro Perez tries his hand at Hannibal Carver, lunging at the Boston Brawler's legs, tripping him up and taking him down!]

GM: We've got Perez hammering Carver into the canvas - these fans are totally irate at Korugun's attempts to ruin what - so far - has been an excellent matchup... and look out!

[Ryan Martinez turns to aid his partner..

...and nearly gets SPEARED out of his boots by Wade Walker who pops up, throwing back his muscular arms in a roar that draws jeers from the sold-out Mosaic Stadium crowd!]

GM: WALKER WITH THE SPEAR! GOOD LORD ALMIGHTY!

[Walker stands over Martinez, posing a bit...

...and then turns around into a single-handed choke from AJ Martinez!]

GM: AJ's got him! He's got Walker!

[And then the second hand comes in as well, clutching a clawing Walker by the throat!]

GM: DOUBLE CHOKE!

BW: Oh, hell no!

[With a nod to the suddenly-cheering crowd, AJ Martinez lifts the near three hundred pound Wade Walker into the air..

...and DRIVES him down with a thunderous sitout powerbomb known throughout the sport of profession wrestling as...]

GM: FIREBOMB! WADE WALKER JUST GOT... BURRRRRRRNNNNNNED!

[Cut to a shot of Javier Castillo glaring down the aisle as Pedro Perez batters Hannibal Carver through the ropes to the floor. Perez whips around, charging across the ring...]

“OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!”

[...and connects with a tope dive through the ropes onto the Boston Brawler!]

GM: WHAT A DIVE BY PEREZ! HE AND CARVER ARE DOWN ON THE OUTSIDE!

[AJ and Cain Jackson are reading Castillo the riot act from the ring as Ryan Martinez struggles to his feet...]

GM: The Dogs of War have been fought off for the moment at least and... are you kidding me?!

[The crowd grumbles as John Law comes through them, stepping over the railing and sliding into the ring...]

BW: DID SOMEONE CALL FOR THE LAW?!

[...and wraps his hand around the throat of Ryan Martine to even louder jeers from the sold-out crowd!]

GM: HE’S GOT RYAN! HE’S GOT RYAN BY THE THROAT AND-

[But the reaction of the crowd causes AJ Martinez and Cain Jackson to whip around, spotting the Korugun security chief in the ring...]

...and with a nod to each other, they step towards Law, wrapping their OWN hands around his throat to a HUUUUUUUGE ROAR!]

GM: OH MY STARS! OH MY STARS!

[Castillo’s shouted plea of “NOOOOO!” is heard but ignored as the Kabukicho Assassination Maniac Squad lifts John Law into the air...]

“THUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUD!”

“OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!”

GM: DOUBLE CHOKESLAM! DOUBLE CHOKESLAM! OH MY STARS!

[The Mosaic Stadium crowd is going ballistic at the sight of John Law being laid out as Castillo grabs at his own head up at the top of the ramp, his jaw dropped in shock at his personal security being put down!]

GM: Castillo can’t believe his own eyes! Cain Jackson and AJ Martinez just laid out John Law... just left him laying and- HEY!

[From the outside, Isaiah Carpenter grabs the ankles of Cain Jackson...]

GM: Perez from the outside! Carpenter too!

[...and with an assist from Pedro Perez, the duo trips up Jackson, dragging him out to the floor!]

GM: Jackson's pulled out - at the mercy of the Dogs of War!

[AJ Martinez throws a glance at his partner... and then turns his eyes over to his half brother who is standing as well!]

GM: We've got fighting on the floor again! Carver's back on his feet, he's getting into it out there as well!

BW: And Andy Dawson is STILL down, Gordo!

GM: He certainly is... but Ryan Martinez is up! The White Knight is up and what's he going to do now?!

[Martinez also throws a glance at his partner... and then locks eyes with his half brother.]

GM: Listen to these fans here in Regina! On their feet, screaming their lungs out... driving their voices hoarse as...

[AJ doesn't waste a moment, blasting his half brother with a right hand...]

GM: Big right!

[...but the White Knight returns fire with a signature knife edge chop!]

"WHAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAACK!"

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

[Another right hand... and another chop.]

GM: These two squaring off once more, looking to drive the final nail in the coffin of the other team! Looking to send their respective team to the Semifinals where the Soldiers of Fortune await them!

[Punches and chops fill the air, the crowd "oooohing" and "aaaaahing" for every heavy blow landed...]

GM: Martinez getting the edge!

BW: Which one?!

[It's Ryan who is getting the edge, Bucky... with his chops blistering the chest of his half brother...]

"WHAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAACK!"

"WHAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAACK!"

"WHAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAACK!"

"WHAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAACK!"

"WHAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAACK!"

[The blows have AJ staggering back towards the ropes where Ryan grabs him by the arm...]

GM: Irish whip... no, reversed!

[And as the former World Champion rebounds back, AJ ducks low, lifting him up into a fireman's carry...]

GM: AJ's got him up! He's got-

BW: WALKER!

[The crowd ROARS as Wade Walker storms the ring, rushing across at full speed towards a turning AJ Martinez...]

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

GM: SPEAR! SPEAR! SPEEEEEEEEEARRRRRR!

[The flying tackle to the core of AJ Martinez knocks the seven footer flat, sending Ryan Martinez sprawling a few feet away. Wade Walker, pissed off and looking for payback, stands over AJ Martinez, reading him the riot act as the Regina crowd jeers wildly!]

GM: Wade Walker just fired a shot into the heart of KAMS! AJ Martinez had Ryan in his clutches... who knows what he had in mind right there... and Wade Walker just spoiled it all for them!

[Walker backs off, setting his sights on a rising Ryan Martinez now as AJ Martinez rolls out of his path, clutching at his ribcage post-spear...]

GM: AJ's down! Ryan's down! There's chaos all around the ring... and Wade Walker's got another victim in mind here, fans!

[The largest member of the Dogs of War stands at the ready, practically salivating at the idea of unleashing his thunderous spear on another victim...]

GM: Ryan's got no idea he's there... Ryan's completely unaware!

[And as the White Knight gets to his feet, Walker storms across the ring, lowering his head and shoulders...]

GM: SPEEEEEEEEEAAAAAAAAA-

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

GM: EXCALIBUR! EXCALIBUR!

[The Mosaic Stadium crowd EXPLODES as the White Knight counters the spear attempt with his trademark flying Yakuza kick!]

BW: HOLY HELL!

GM: WALKER'S DOWN! WALKER'S DOWN!

[The dazed Walker rolls from the ring, flopping off the apron onto the floor as Ryan Martinez wearily gets back to his feet again and as an equally weary Andy Dawson crawls under the ropes to get back in...]

GM: We've got the referee back in... and we've got Ryan trying to get back up, trying to find a way to-

[...and the crowd ERUPTS as AJ Martinez beats him there, wrapping his paw around the throat...]

GM: AJ HOOKS HIM AGAIN!

[Nodding to the fired-up crowd, AJ reaches out his other arm, locking in the double choke...]

GM: Wait a second!

BW: Oh, sweet Jesus... he's gonna use their father's own move on his half brother! You gotta love that poetry in that one!

[AJ grins at the trapped Ryan, nodding his head gleefully...]

GM: HE LIIIIIIIFTS!

[...but at the peak of the lift, Ryan slips out of the double choke, falling to a knee in front of AJ Martinez who angrily drops back into the ropes, rebounding off...]

GM: CLOTHESLI-

[...and the White Knight surges to his feet, lifting the seven footer up into the air in a flapjack...]

GM: CARVER!

[...right into Hannibal Carver who slides in, leaps up, snatches the three-quarter nelson, and DRIVES AJ Martinez' skull into the canvas!]

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

GM: BLACKOUT! BLACKOUT!

[Carver flips over, diving on top of AJ Martinez, wrapping up a leg as a dazed Ryan Martinez holds guard and a barely-moving Andy Dawson slides into position...]

GM: ONNNNNNNNNNNNNNE! TWOOOOOOOOOOOO! THREEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEE!

"DING! DING! DING!"

GM: THEY DID IT! MY STARS, THEY DID IT!

[The Regina crowd ROARS for the hard-fought victory of Ryan Martinez and Hannibal Carver.]

GM: Martinez and Carver are headed for the Semifinals, Bucky!

BW: Yeah, they are... and look at poor Javier.

[We cut to the top of the aisle where a seething Javier Castillo is glaring down at the ring.]

GM: This month keeps getting worse and worse for El Presidente. The one thing he didn't want to see happen has just happened as Carver and Martinez overcome their latest obstacle, advancing to the Semifinals of this tournament where they'll face the current Number One Contenders to the World Tag Team Titles, the Soldiers of Fortune.

[Castillo points down the aisle at the ring...

...and then suddenly jerks his thumb across his throat.]

GM: What's that about, Bucky?

BW: I'm not sure and-

GM: HEY!

[From outside the ring, John Law grabs Hannibal Carver by the ankle, yanking it out from under him and pulling him to the floor.]

GM: Law pulls out Carver! He drags Carver out to the floor!

[Martinez takes a few steps towards the ropes, looking to intervene...]

GM: Martinez heading out... wait! Wait! Security! We've got a fan in the ring! We've got-

[But the man in the hooded jacket who just slid under the ropes proves himself swiftly to be no fan at all as the hood comes down and...]

GM: WHAT THE HELL?!

BW: MAWAGA! MAWAGA!

[The returning Tongan warrior waits as Martinez turns, startled by the rise in volume...]

GM: Martinez and-

[...and turns right into MAWAGA's powerful grip being locked on his windpipe!]

GM: TONGAN DEATH GRIP! TONGAN DEATH GRIP APPLIED! MAWAGA HAS RETURNED AT THE TIME WHEN JAVIER CASTILLO NEEDS HIM THE MOST!

[The former World Champion flails at the arm, trying to free himself from MAWAGA's iron grip!]

GM: Martinez trying to break free! But he can't get that hand off him!

BW: MAWAGA's back and Martinez is fading!

[The White Knight's arms start to slow as MAWAGA roars, driving him down to a knee...]

GM: Ryan Martinez is in trouble - serious trouble!

[A jubilant Javier Castillo looks on, nodding his approval...

...until Hannibal Carver - having spotted his partner in jeopardy after getting free from Law - slides back in... and he's not alone.]

GM: CARVER'S GOT A CHAIR AND-

"WHAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAACK!"

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

[And lowers the boom across the back of MAWAGA with the chair, a blow that echoes throughout Mosaic Stadium...

...but a blow that does NOT break MAWAGA's grip on Martinez' throat!]

GM: WHAT THE HELL?!



BW: My god.

[MAWAGA drives Martinez the rest of the way down to the canvas, his arms falling limp as a surprised Carver pulls the chair back up...

...and MAWAGA lets go of the White Knight, whipping around, swinging his leg out as he does...]

"WHAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAACK!"

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

GM: THRUST KICK! GOOD GOD!

[The thrust kick from MAWAGA catches the chair, smashing it back into Carver's face, knocking the Boston Brawler down to the canvas!]

GM: MAWAGA lays out Carver as well! And Javier Castillo is loving it!

[MAWAGA stands over the prone forms of Ryan Martinez and Hannibal Carver, crossing his arms in satisfaction as Javier Castillo gleefully applauds from up on the ramp. The fans pour down jeers on the returning MAWAGA as the referee implores MAWAGA to get out of the ring.]

BW: MAWAGA strikes - and just what does this do to their chances in the Semifinals?!

GM: I don't know... I just don't know. Fans, let's... do we have something we can go to? This is terrible. Just terrible.

[We fade from the shot of MAWAGA standing tall to the backstage area...

...where we find "Sweet" Lou Blackwell backstage, in front of a locker room door.]

SLB: A shocking turn of events out there in the ring - despite the team of Carver and Martinez earning their spot in the Semifinals. The return of MAWAGA... the brutal assault on both the Boston Brawler and the White Knight... and now I have to wonder what condition these two will be in against the Soldiers of Fortune - if they can even compete at all!

[Blackwell shakes his head.]

SLB: But right now, I'm back here looking to talk to someone who is already out of the tournament.

[Blackwell jerks a thumb over his shoulder.]

SLB: Behind that door is Raphael Rhodes, and from what you've told me about his temper, Gordon, I must admit, I'm a little nervous about how this will go considering how he and Sid Osborne were eliminated just a little while ago.

[Blackwell takes a deep breath.]

SLB: Here we go.

[Blackwell knocks on the door, and Dana Kaiser opens, a surprised look on her face.]

DK: Mr. Blackwell! I must admit, I wasn't expecting to see you for the rest of tonight.

SLB: Well, Dana, we were hoping to get a comment about how Raphael Rhodes and Sid Osborne were eliminated by the American Idols.

[Dana's face becomes sour.]

DK: Oh. I'll go get Raph. One moment.

[That moment doesn't take long, as Dana doesn't even leave the doorway. Rhodes immediately appears, a towel over his head.]

RR: They're interviewing losers now? Thought you lot didn't have time for that.

SLB: Well, considering the suspect circumstances surrounding your elimination, we figured it might be best to get your word on it. As well as Sid Osborne, if he's here.

RR: You'd have to find him at his hotel, mate. He grabbed his bag as soon as we got back here and left. But if you want words from me...

[Rhodes cracks his knuckles.]

RR: ... normally they go through Dana, but I'm feeling quite talkative. Ask away.

[Blackwell nods his head.]

SLB: Your match was plagued with interference, with Michael Aarons interfering during the bout, as well as Logan Blackburn getting involved at the end. You cannot be pleased with that, but what will you do about it?

RR: The Idols and Aarons?

[Rhodes dusts his hands.]

RR: I'll file them under "not right now". How many bloody trios can I fight right now anyway? They said some awful things about my wife, but...

[Dana leans in.]

DK: ... lewd, misogynistic comments are very gauche, and not worth our time.

[Dana leans back out.]

RR: Besides. Just like with other parties here in the AWA, I know I ain't goin' to get a fair crack at them until I rid myself of one person.

[Rhodes removes the towel from his head.]

RR: Logan Blackburn, you should have stayed in your hotel room tonight. You should have accepted that your luchadore mates got beaten last night, and you should have never gotten into my business again. I wanted to keep our past right there, in the past, but you're makin' it very bloody difficult for me to do that.

[Rhodes glares into the camera.]

RR: A chair? You want to hit me with a chair? You want to cause me to lose, to break a vow I made to a young lad that we could win this whole thing?

[Rhodes shakes his head, a smirk on his face.]

RR: The Raphael Rhodes of a decade ago would make all sorts of threats, Logan. But the Raphael Rhodes of today is going to make you a promise.

[Rhodes crosses his heart with his finger.]

RR: Keep coming after me, Logan, and I promise you blinding, unimaginable pain. You thought I humiliated you in Essen, Logan?

[Rhodes grins.]

RR: Essen was nothing. Come after me again. That will be nothing but a daydream compared to what I do to you next.

[Rhodes' eyes slowly drift towards Blackwell.]

RR: Anything else?

SLB: No... I don't think so.

RR: Sorry to waste your time with a loser.

[Rhodes walks away from the doorway. Dana pops back in.]

DK: Thanks for stopping by, Mr. Blackwell.

[Dana closes the door as we fade from Blackwell to another part of the backstage interview area, where we see The Gold Standard standing in front of a backdrop with the AWA logo on it. Bret Grayson once again has the American flag tied around his neck, draped over his shoulders like a cape. "The Shadow Wolf" Takeshi Mifune is without any such effects, simply standing there in his wrestling gear. Grayson seems pumped, rubbing his hands in glee.]

BG: This is it, Mifune! This is the big one! I hope you're ready, old man, because this will probably be our toughest match of the entire tournament!

Mifune: I am always ready for battle, Grayson-san. I would be insulting myself and my opponent if I was not prepared to give them anything less but complete annihilation.

[Grayson rolls his eyes at Mifune.]

BG: Oh brother. There you go with the "complete annihilation!" and "total destruction!" talk again. Do you really think it's going to be that simple? This is as tough as it gets. These aren't just any geeks off the street! This is Next Gen! Daniel Harper and Howie Somers! These are the AWA World freakin' Tag Team Champions, Mifune!

[The Shadow Wolf does not appear to be moved by Grayson's words.]

Mifune: Is that suppose to produce some deep emotion in me? That means nothing to me. They are like everyone else. They are prey. They are FOOD. In this world, the strong eat the weak...

... and we are the strongest of all!

BG: So now you're calling the literal tag team CHAMPIONS weak? Unbelievable.

Mifune: Matter of perspective, Grayson-san. Our opponents may be here...

[He holds his hand slightly above his head.]

Mifune: ...but does that matter if we are HERE?

[He stretches his arm as high as he possibly can.]

Mifune: Perhaps in the eyes of other weaklings, they are strong. They may be recognized as the best, but are they truly the best? They have defeated many teams, yes... but they have never faced or defeated us.

Do you fear them? Is that it? You believe they are better than us?

[Grayson's reaction is instantaneous.]

BG: No! HELL NO!

[Mifune flashes an ugly smile at Grayson.]

Mifune: Of course not. In your heart you know the truth.

We are better.

Better skill. Better technique. Better experience.

[Grayson begrudgingly nods in agreement.]

BG: You're right. They're both young. They've barely begun to scratch the surface of what they're capable of.

Mifune: Then tell me, Grayson-san... what do they possess that we do not? Why should I respect their strength?

BG: That's easy. Isn't it obvious? Better TEAMWORK. They're good friends. They actually LIKE each other.

[This produces a hearty laugh from Mifune.]

Mifune: HAHAHA! Irrelevant! We do not need to be friends to be a team. I have recognized your strength and that is enough! We share a common goal and we will do anything to achieve it.... and that is enough!

[The former Olympian shakes his head.]

BG: You just don't get it. Somers and Harpers are practically brothers. They have a bond you can't even begin to comprehend.

Mifune: So what? Do you expect me to shake your hand and hug you after every victory? Do you want me to pat you on the head and tell you that you did a good job like a pathetic dog waiting for approval? Visit you at your home and have dinner with your family?

[The look of disgust on Grayson's face is truly a sight to behold.]

BG: I don't want you anywhere near my family, you demented old man!

[Mifune grins.]

Mifune: And I do not want to be near them! I do not wish to be reminded of your weaknesses.

[Grayson's eyes practically bulge out of his skull at that one.]

BG: "My weaknesses"!?

Mifune: Your emotional attachments make you weak.

BG: Weak!? My family gives me strength! They give me something to fight for! The fact you don't care about anything but yourself is your weakness, Mifune!

Mifune: You are wrong, Grayson-san.

BG: How am I wrong? You're the most miserable person I've ever met! The only thing that ever makes you smile is making other people as miserable as you are! And to top it off, you'd sacrifice me or any other person in Mifune-Gun in a heartbeat!

[Mifune smiles as Grayson berates him.]

Mifune: And that is why we will win, Grayson-san! Harper and Somers care for each other. Their hearts are soft. They do not have the instinct to win like we do. They would stop a match... they would quit... they would walk away if it meant saving the other. I do not have the same failings in my fighting spirit.

BG: Well, it's sure comforting to know you'd just abandon me and let me get torn apart!

Mifune: If it means we win, I would! And I would expect the same from you!

BG: You're a twisted old man, Mifune, and I hate to admit it, but you're right... I really don't care what happens to you as long as we win. Because I know you're strong and you'd survive. Who knows, maybe you're making me as sick in the head as you are.

Mifune: It is the way of the world, Grayson-san. Survival of the fittest.

You say this match is important?

[Grayson nods emphatically.]

BG: The most important match we'll wrestle all weekend... besides the grand finals. We win this one and we're made men in the tag team division.

No matter what you say, Mifune, these two are still the champions. No matter how highly we think of our own abilities, they're not holding those titles by accident.

Mifune: Then I hope you're right. I hope Somers and Harper are prey worth hunting. I hope they make their defeat a worthy one. Because they may be the champions... but they are not...

...ichiban.

[And with that, Mifune walks off, leaving behind Grayson, who simply shakes his head at his tag team partner, before following him off camera. We fade away from one area backstage...

...and up to another part of backstage where we find Daniel Harper of Next Gen sitting on a bench in a locker room. He is still dressed in his wrestling attire, and resting on the bench to his right is one of the AWA World Tag Team Title belts, and to his left is his vest, folded up. Harper is bent slightly forward, arms folded and elbows resting on his knees, sweat glistening from his forehead. He appears to be deep in thought.

That's when the other half of Next Gen, Howie Somers, walks into the room. He is also dressed in his wrestling attire, wears his vest and has his World Tag Team belt strapped around his waist. Somers stares at his partner for a moment, then touches his shoulder.]

HS: You holding up all right?

[Harper doesn't look up.]

DH: Should have seen that coming.

HS: What, Instant Karma? Hey, it happens to the best of us. Besides, you showed you could recover from that.

DH: Not what I'm talking about.

HS: Oh... you mean Derrick Williams.

DH: Like I said, should have seen that coming.

[Harper shrugs.]

DH: Hey, I get it. Williams is pissed off at Jackson Hunter. I would be, too. Still, that's not the way I want things to go down.

HS: [nodding] I understand, and I don't like it, either. But dwelling it on does no good.

DH: It's not simply about Williams getting involved. It's about what we've discussed -- it's about our legacy. We want to build that legacy, make our families proud, prove to everyone that we are the best tag team in the business.

[Harper grimaces.]

DH: And I can only imagine what Mifune is thinking right now.

HS: Mifune? Yeah, he and Grayson are up next. Can't blame you for thinking about that match. They're really doing good work as a team. It's not going to be an easy task.

DH: It's more than that. You heard what Mifune said -- something about the ignorance of youth. I can only imagine he's thinking about that right now. And there's no way I'm going to stand for somebody thinking that he demands respect, just because he's been wrestling for more years than most everyone.

HS: Hey, I give Mifune my respect, and I do the same for Grayson, too. After all, Grayson came that close to winning the World tTtle. Mifune, he's one of the greatest in Japan and taught so many who rank among the greatest. If they haven't earned our respect, who hasn't?

DH: I'm not talking about whether he deserves our respect. I'm talking about what this reminds me about.

HS: What do you mean?

[At this point, Harper stands up and turns to face his partner.]

DH: Do you remember the last time we were in the Stampede Cup, and we had to face Strictly Business? All the time, they were talking about how young guys like us weren't respecting their elders and wouldn't give them their due, all because they

were being snubbed for the Hall of Fame or whatever else was the way they thought they were being slighted.

Now we have Mifune, thinking he and his partner are getting slighted because they didn't get a high seed. Sounds a lot like how Tucker and Sebastian talked. And that's one thing I'm not going to stand to hear.

And then I wonder... are we going to hear Grayson talking up his Olympic gold medal, even though it's a great accomplishment, as though that by itself makes him entitled to a high status.

And then I say to myself... how exactly are we going to respond this time around to two men who may buy into the idea they aren't getting respect, especially when they see how we won because somebody else got involved in our match?

[Somers places his hands on his hips.]

HS: Then, tell me, my friend -- how do you think we should respond?

[Harper stares at Somers for a minute, then reaches down to grab his tag team title belt, and points to it.]

DH: By reminding Mifune and Grayson that they can call themselves The Gold Standard, but the belts you and I have, that is the gold standard in the AWA tag team ranks. That, yes, we earned our way to that standard, and yes, we are going to keep earning that standard, and we'll prove it by beating the ones who call themselves the standard, make it clear that respect is to be earned at all times, escape the shadow of Derrick Williams for good, and most of all, get one step closer to the Stampede Cup.

Are you in agreement on that?

[The two stare at each other -- and, after a moment, Somers gets a slight smile and slaps his partner on the shoulder.]

HS: Good to see you answered my question about how you were holding up.

[Harper just nods, then unfolds the belt and straps it around his waist. Somers reaches down to grab Harper's vest.]

HS: Now, it's almost match time, so let's you and I get to that ring and show everyone that Next Gen is holding up just fine, still ready to build its legacy, and still out to win that Stampede Cup.

[He hands the vest to Harper, who nods again and slips it around his arms.]

HS: Anything else you want to say?

[Harper points to the doorway.]

DH: To the ring!

[Somers grins and nods, then the members of Next Gen exit the locker room as we fade from backstage out to the ring.]

RO: The following contest is set for one fall with a forty-five minute time limit and is a Quarterfinal matchup in the Stampede Cup tournament!

[Big cheer!]

RO: Introducing first...

[A loud roar from the crowd can be heard as "Kaze ni Nare" by Ayumi Nakamura begins to play over the PA system. As it plays, images of Takeshi Mifune beating the living hell out of various people (wrestlers, referees, fans, Japanese celebrities, mascots... anyone and everyone) interspliced with footage of Bret Grayson suplexing opponent after opponent in the ring, are shown on the big screen.]

The crowd then pops big time, as they see the entranceway begin to fill with thick white mist, like a smoke cloud.

The entrance way floods with golden light, as if a rocket were taking off. The light drops, replaced by red, white, and blue small spotlights playing through the now-receding mist, as a previously unseen trapdoor opens up, revealing... none other than Bret Grayson rising from beneath the stage! The Olympic gold medalist is kneeling, his body covered by the American flag.]

#Oshiete yo hito wa naze sagashi tsuzukeru no#  
#Kagirinaku setsunai ashitano#  
#Yumeeeeee woooooooooooooooooooooooooo#

RO: Coming to the ring now, they weigh in at a combined weight of 473 pounds... "THE SHADOW WOLF" TAKESHI MIFUNE... BRET GRAYSON...

THE GOOOOOOLLLDDDDDD STTTTTTAAAAANNNNNDDDDARD!!!

[The cheers grow louder, as we see "The Shadow Wolf" Takeshi Mifune emerging from the entrance to stand behind the kneeling Grayson, looking like everyone's worst nightmare. Mifune, a thick, stocky Japanese male, is wearing simple black trunks and short black boots with white tape on his wrists. On his head is a porkpie hat and in his hands is a black towel. Flanked on both sides, we see two Japanese "young boy" wrestling trainees in black tracksuits, waving black flags on a pole, bearing the "Mifune-Gun" logo.]

GM: The Gold Standard lands in this Quarterfinal matchup after a victory last night over The Hive and one earlier tonight over the Shooting Stars. Two very high flying, fast-paced teams that will be a stark contrast to what Grayson and Mifune will face in Next Gen.

BW: It's a different ballgame with Harper and Somers but still one that the Standard is more than ready to play.

[Grayson and Mifune proceed to make their way down to the ring, with Grayson sliding in first and dropping to his knees in the middle of the ring, spreading the American flag open like a pair of wings as Mifune stands on the apron, waiting for one of the young boys to hold open the ropes for him. As the young boy does...]

"OHHHH!"

[...Mifune knocks him off the apron with a vicious overhand chop to the chest and proceeds to laugh at his student's misery, before he steps through the ropes and takes his place behind Grayson, crossing his arms over his chest, at the exact moment the song hits its climax and an entire stadium of Canadians scream out in Japanese...]

"KAZE NI NARRRREEEEEE!!!"

[As the music fades, Rebecca Ortiz continues.]



RO: Annnnnnnnd their opponents...

[First there's silence, then you hear a little chanting.]

"Do-do-do-do do-do-do-do  
Do-do-do-do do-do-do-do"

[And then, it kicks into the unmistakable chorus of "Centuries" by Fall Out Boy.]

#Some legends are told#  
#Some turn to dust or to gold#  
#But you will remember me#  
#Remember me for centuries#

[Up on the video screen, two words flash up.

"NEXT GEN"]

#And just one mistake#  
#Is all it will take#  
#We'll go down in history#  
#Remember me for centuries#

RO: Introducing, from Boston, Massachusetts, and El Paso, Texas, at a combined weight of 495 pounds, ... they are the AWA World Tag Team champions...

HOWIE SOMERS... DANIEL HARPER... THEY ARE... NEXT! GEN!

[The members of Next Gen emerge from the entranceway. Howie Somers and Daniel Harper are each dressed in a navy blue vest with the words "NEXT GEN" printed across the back in white, block lettering. They wear the same wrestling attire: a white singlet with the letters "NG" on the front, in the center, in navy blue, block lettering, navy blue tights, white knee pads and wrestling boots. Somers and Harper each have one of the AWA World tag team championship belts strapped around their waists.]

GM: Next Gen pulled out the win in the second round, though as Harper alluded to earlier, it didn't come out without an assist from Derrick Williams.

BW: Williams isn't going to be so generous this time around, I can guarantee that.

GM: Truth be told, I don't think Williams ever thought of it as... hold on, what is Next Gen looking at?

[The two have turned toward the video screen, and it's the footage of what's playing as part of the entrance package.

Specifically, it's highlights of their matches against Strictly Business, interspersed with the words "NEXT GEN" flashing in between clips.]

GM: And it looks like they may have added a little motivation for themselves to their entrance.

BW: Yeah, Gordo, I remember when Next Gen crossed paths with Strictly Business about two years ago -- and it was Strictly Business who knocked them out of the Stampede Cup.

GM: Like I said, that could be motivation for Next Gen to not let it happen again.

BW: Or it could be a case of history repeating itself, only it's The Gold Standard giving them the early exit!

[Somers and Harper turn to look at one another, share a nod, then face the crowd and raise their arms in the air. This time, they get a favorable response.]

GM: Well, it's clear now that this crowd in Saskatchewan is behind the tag team champions.

BW: Only because somebody violated Hunter and Colton's right to privacy, and then that so-called Sheriff came out so Next Gen could kiss up to these people.

GM: I don't think so, Bucky. After the way Harper and Somers fought in that match, I think it's clear the fans respect the tag team champions now.

[After a moment, Somers and Harper turn to each other and exchange a high five. The duo then makes its way down the aisle. This time around, they are willing to extend their arms to slap hands with fans. However, their eyes remain focused on the ring ahead, never taking their gaze off Mifune and Grayson.]

GM: One thing is clear, though -- Next Gen is still all business.

BW: They better be. Gold Standard is leaving no doubt in my mind they are going to be a top contender in this tag team division, and they just might win it all at the Stampede Cup. Imagine if they get a win over the tag team champions here, Gordo?

[Upon reaching the ring, Somers and Harper climb onto the apron and duck between the ropes. Somers walks to the corner and leans against the turnbuckles, focus in his eyes, while Harper walks to the opposite corner on the same side, climbs to the second rope and raises his arms.]

GM: No doubt Mifune and Grayson realize that if they can get a win tonight, they'd be vaulting right to the top of the AWA tag team rankings. But as impressive as they've been, they have to beat the champions here, and the champions believe they have as much to prove as The Gold Standard does.

[After a moment, Somers walks toward Harper and slaps him on the back. Harper then leaps down from the corner and turns to Somers, the two exchanging another high five, then remove their vests and hand them over to an attendant.

They are then quick to turn around and stare at Mifune and Grayson. Somers and Harper each have an intense look in their eyes, then Harper points in the direction of the Gold Standard.]

GM: Alright, we're set to go now as the AWA World Tag Team Champions, Next Gen, take on the Gold Standard with a spot in the Semifinals on the line. Which team will join the Soldiers of Fortune and Carver and Martinez in the Final Four, Bucky?

BW: It's hard to bet against the World Tag Team Champions in any matchup, Gordo, but if any team could surprise them and take them out, it's Mifune and Grayson. One of the most fearsome athletes on the planet and an Olympic gold medalist? We've seen what both of these guys are capable of... both in Japan and here in the States and I've gotta think that if Harper and Somers aren't on top of their game here tonight, we're going to see the champions upset.

GM: And it looks like it'll be Bret Grayson starting things off against Daniel Harper here in this one.

[Harper huddles up with Howie Somers, having a final strategy session as Bret Grayson hops from one foot to the other across the ring, keeping his eyes locked on the World Tag Team Champions.]

GM: The referee checking in on both competitors, making sure we're set to go...

[And referee Davis Warren signals for the bell, starting the match.]

"DING! DING! DING!"

GM: We're off and running in this one. One fall, forty-five minute time limit with a trip to the Semifinals on the line.

[Grayson scoots from the corner, ducking low, diving to his knees as he makes a grab at Harper's legs but Harper manages to slip away, avoiding the takedown.]

GM: Grayson looking to use some of those amateur skills to his advantage but Harper's got other ideas.

[Harper shakes his head at Grayson as the Olympic gold medalist regains his feet. Grayson steps closer, closing the distance between he and Harper who suddenly lunges forward, snatching a collar and elbow tieup before Grayson can shoot in on him again.]

GM: Tieup in the middle... Harper grabs the arm, twists it around, and into a hammerlock we go...

[Grayson grimaces as Harper torques the trapped arm up, applying the pressure...

...but Grayson spins out, ducks under, and ends up locking in a rear waistlock on Harper...]

GM: Nice reversal there...

[Grayson immediately lifts Harper into the air, twisting around and throwing Harper chestfirst down on the canvas...]

GM: Waistlock takedown by the Olympian!

[With Harper down on the mat, Grayson dives on his back, spinning around on it to end up with a front facelock applied...]

GM: Grayson into the front facelock, showing off those mat wrestling skills of his...

[Harper grabs at the grasping arm, looking for a way out...]

GM: Harper trying to escape here...

[Grabbing the wrist, Harper manages to spin out of the hold, twisting the arm around which forces Grayson to roll over onto his back as Harper keeps spinning, ending up with a foot under the armpit and one on the ear as he cranks back on the arm in a rowboat style maneuver.]

GM: Oho!

BW: Haven't seen that one in a while, Gordo.

GM: Not at all. A nice counter out of Harper, cranking back on that limb.

[Harper yanks back on the wrist, stretching out the arm again as Grayson grimaces, grabbing at his trapped limb.]

GM: Harper working on that arm, looking for an early submission...

[But Grayson rolls to his hip, alleviating the pressure on his arm as he pushes up to his knee. The movement forces Harper to roll back onto his own back, still hanging onto the arm as Grayson snatches a leg with the offhand, pulling Harper into a makeshift cradle.]

GM: Shoulders down! The ref counts!

[A quick one count is followed by an equally quick kickout as Harper lets go of the hold, slipping out from under Grayson.]

GM: Just the one count there...

[Harper scrambles to his feet as Grayson rushes him, lunging low to wrap his arms around Harper's legs...

...but Harper manages to get close enough to the ropes to reach out and hook them, preventing the lift.]

GM: Harper hanging onto the ropes - the ref calls for a break now.

[Grayson obliges, getting up with a disappointed expression on his face. Mifune shouts something in Japanese from the corner, drawing a nod from Grayson who eases back out to the middle of the ring.]

GM: Another escape there for Harper and Grayson may be getting a little frustrated at this exchange.

BW: He's not used to not being able to throw people around at will.

GM: He's certainly not... Harper pushes away from the ropes now as well, sizing up his opponent - and Bucky, this is the very epitome of the term "feeling out process."

BW: No doubt about that. They're both trying to find their road to victory.

[As Harper lunges into another tieup, Grayson manages to twist him around, using his own momentum against him as he marches him back, pushing him up against the turnbuckles...]

GM: Grayson shoves him back into the Gold Standard's corner and... there's a tag.

[The Shadow Wolf steps through the ropes, burying a short forearm into the exposed midsection of Harper, doubling him up as Grayson exits the ring. Mifune pulls Harper's head back by the hair, jabbering at him in Japanese before he winds up...]

"WHAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAACK!"

GM: Ohh! Overhead chop, right down across the chest...

[Harper is left reeling from the chop, grabbing at his chest. But Mifune yanks his arms clear, winding up again...]

"WHAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAACK!"

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

GM: And a knife edge chop as well! Just like the ones we see his student, Ryan Martinez, use so often in his matches.

BW: If the Gold Standard can get to the finals, we just might see teacher and student collide there, Gordo.

GM: It's certainly a possibility. Ryan Martinez and his partner, Hannibal Carver, of course have already advanced to the Semifinals. The Gold Standard looking to join them there right now.

[Mifune grabs Harper by the hair again, walking him out of the corner towards mid-ring where he lowers Harper's head enough to DRIVE a kneelift up into the mouth, knocking Harper down to the canvas...]

GM: And down goes Harper again... and look at Mifune, just enjoying every second of this.

[Mifune grabs the left leg of Harper, violently twisting it around in a spinning toehold before lowering himself to kneel on the mat, trapping the leg under him.]

GM: Mifune has the leg wrapped up and-

[As Harper sits up to try and free himself, Mifune grabs him by the back of the head and PASTES him with a forearm shot to the jaw!]

GM: OH!

[Harper slumps back to mat as a grinning Mifune lunges out of the spinning toehold, stomping down on the sternum of Harper.]

GM: Daniel Harper learning firsthand what it's like to be at the non-existent mercy of Takeshi Mifune, the Shadow Wolf.

BW: And I wonder how Mifune is feeling after watching his boys lose to Carver and Martinez.

GM: An excellent question. He might be taking out some of those bad feelings on Daniel Harper right about now.

[Mifune drags Harper off the mat by the hair, piefacing him backwards with a shove to the corner.]

GM: Mifune's got him back in the neutral corner now... not where Daniel Harper wants to be with a guy who strikes like Mifune does.

[Mifune grabs a loose grip on the back of the head, throwing a short forearm to the jaw... and another... and a third before using a snapmare to take him over into a seated position...]

"WHAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAACK!"  
"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

GM: SOCCER KICK TO THE SPINE! OH MY!

[Harper cringes in pain as Mifune stands over him, taunting the much-younger competitor in Japanese. With a sneer, he drags him back to a standing position, lightly slapping him across the face a few times...]

GM: Takeshi Mifune just adding insult to injury here and-

"OHHHHHHHHHHH!"

GM: EUROPEAN UPPERCUT BY HARPER!

[Mifune stumbles backwards from the impact of the blow as Harper falls back to the corner again...]

GM: Mifune charging in and-

[...and runs right into a pair of raised feet from Harper who leans back against the buckles!]

GM: Harper caught him coming in!

[Mifune stumbles back again as Harper hops up to the midbuckle, giving a shout to the cheering Canadian crowd...]

GM: Harper on the second rope - unusual for him but-

[And as Mifune straightens up, Harper pops a head fake like he's going for a crossbody, causing Mifune to double up...

...which is when Harper leaps off the second rope, rolling him up in a sunset flip!]

GM: SUNSET FLIP! ONE! TWO! TH-

[But Mifune clashes his legs together on Harper's ears, breaking up the pin attempt. The duo spill apart, each trying to scramble up before the other...]

GM: Harper trying to get to his feet, Mifune's there to greet him!

[The Shadow Wolf uncorks a knife edge chop that Harper ducks under and then EXPLODES upwards with a European uppercut!]

GM: OHH! THAT ONE STUNS MIFUNE!

[A shout from the corner gets Harper's attention as he wheels around, extending his arms towards Howie Somers...

...but gets the back of his trunks hooked by Mifune!]

GM: MIFUNE CUTS HIM OFF!

[With a yank, Mifune pulls him back into a side waistlock, lifting Harper into the air for a back suplex...

...but Harper flips right over the top, landing on his feet behind him. He snatches a rear waistlock, rushing Mifune towards the buckles!]

GM: TO THE CORNER!

[As Mifune approaches, Howie Somers sidesteps, allowing Harper to smash Mifune into the corner before rolling him back into a cradle...]

GM: White Lightning rollup! ONNNNNNNNE! TWOOOOOOO! TH-

[But a powerful kickout from Mifune sends Harper rocketing towards his corner where...]

GM: TAG!

[The crowd cheers as the Next Gen powerhouse, Howie Somers, comes through the ropes. He catches the rising Mifune with a right hand... and another... and another, backing him across the ring into the ropes.]

GM: Somers lighting up Mifune with the right hands... big whip shoots him across...

[With a bellow, Somers runs him right down with a running clothesline!]

GM: Oh my! Down goes Mifun- look out!

[With Mifune down, Grayson comes charging towards Somers who catches him coming in, twisting around, and DRIVING him down with a thunderous spinning powerslam!]

GM: HE PLANTS HIM WITH THE POWERSLAM! OH MY!

[Somers climbs to his feet, pumping his powerful arms to a cheer from the Canadian crowd!]

GM: Howie Somers has got this crowd rockin' right about now!

[Somers turns his attention back towards a rising Takeshi Mifune, charging towards him as Mifune stumbles near the ropes...]

GM: Somers coming in and... OHHHHHH! ALL THE WAY OVER THE TOP AND DOWN TO THE FLOOR GOES MIFUNE!

[The fired-up Somers smashes his arms down on the top rope with a loud "YEAAAAAH! COME ON!" to the Regina crowd who shouts their support for the World Tag Team Champions.]

GM: Somers has cleared Mifune out of the ring... and look out now, he's going out after him!

BW: That might be a mistake.

GM: We're about to find out as Somers drops down out there next to Mifune who is trying to get back up off the floor.

[Somers pulls Mifune the rest of the way to his feet, clubbing a massive forearm down across the sternum, knocking Mifune back against the apron where he reels for a moment...

...and then reaches out his hand, digging his fingers into the eye of the approaching Somers!]

GM: AHHH! AHHH!

[Mifune RAKES the eye hard, leaving Somers staggering backwards, wiping at his eyes to try and clear his vision. The Shadow Wolf grabs the ropes, dragging himself up on the apron. He turns back to Somers who wobbles towards him.]

GM: Somers trying to clear his vision... but Mifune's got clear sights on him!

[The Japanese superstar runs down the apron, swinging his leg...]

GM: SOCCER KICK!

[But Somers pushes back, narrowly avoiding the big kick...

...and then grabs the plant ankle from behind, pulling hard on it which causes Mifune to CRASH facefirst down on the apron!]

“OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!”

[Somers grabs both legs now, yanking a second time...]

“OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!”

[...and then down facefirst on the floor!]

GM: WHAT A COUNTER OUT OF HOWIE SOMERS!

[Somers leans against the apron for a few moments, still wiping at his eyes as Bret Grayson has a few words for him from his corner.]

GM: Howie Somers dragging Mifune to his feet... bouncing him facefirst off the apron for good measure!

[Mifune stumbles away, ending up near the steel ringpost, hanging onto it as Bret Grayson shouts to his partner.]

GM: Grayson showing some concern for Mifune right now... and one-half of the World Tag Team Champions is doing some damage out on the floor.

[Somers steps closer to Mifune who has his back pressed to the post, shaking his head...

...and as Somers lowers his shoulder, he drives it into the midsection of Mifune, smashing him back against the post!]

GM: Somers putting those big shoulders to work, driving it into the gut of Mifune up by the post...

[After three big shoulders land, Somers turns away, giving a roar to the cheering Mosaic Stadium crowd, whipping back around...]

GM: CLOTHESLI-

“OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!”

BW: MIFUNE MOVED AND SOMERS HITS THE POST!

[Somers collapses against the post, clutching his shoulder as Mifune leans on the apron, a wicked sneer on his face...]

GM: Takeshi Mifune - never one to be counted out - managed to avoid the clothesline and that sends Howie Somers shoulderfirst into the steel ringpost!

[Mifune moves back in on Somers, grabbing both arms, planting his foot against the ringpost...

...and YANKS Somers' shoulder into the ringpost again!]

GM: A second time into the post!

[Keeping his foot on the post, Mifune keeps pulling, stretching the arms out as Somers cries out in pain...]



GM: Unusual offense on the outside - but extremely effective.

BW: Mifune's tormenting him outside the ring... his usual method of attack...

[Mifune lets go of the wrists, watching as Somers staggers alongside the apron. Daniel Harper shouts encouragement to his partner from the outside as Mifune climbs up on the apron, staring down it at the hurting Somers...

...and then runs down the apron, delivering the soccer kick that got all this started!]

"WHAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAACK!"

"OHFFFFFFFFFFFFFFFFFFFFFF!"

[The heavy running kick to the side of the head knocks Somers down to a knee out on the floor as the referee warns both competitors to get back inside the ring, continuing his count.]

GM: We've got a count up to six here... remember, the titles aren't on the line so a countout is as good as any other win to the Gold Standard in this one...

[Mifune drops off the apron, pulling Somers off his knees and shoving him under the bottom rope before rolling in after him.]

GM: Somers back in... Mifune right behind him...

[And as Somers crawls towards his corner, Mifune approaches from behind, straddling the back of Howie Somers as he yanks the arm back into an armbar.]

GM: Oh my, armbar locked in by Mifune and you can see the pain on the face of Howie Somers, Bucky.

BW: Mifune is a sadist in the ring. He lives to hurt people and he's making a good living of it right now.

[Mifune cranks back on the arm, shouting in Japanese at the referee who shrugs but asks Somers if he wants to give up.]

GM: The official checking for a submission but no dice there.

[Mifune steps out of the armbar, twisting the limb around...

...and then KICKS him right in the elbow area, causing Somers to collapse down on the mat, grabbing his arm in pain.]

GM: Good grief! That's the kind of thing that could dislocate an elbow.

BW: Or worse.

[Mifune slowly walks around the ring, keeping an eye on Howie Somers as Somers tries to scoot on his chest towards his corner...]

GM: Somers trying to get to the corner... trying to get to Daniel Harper but right now, he can't even crawl on his hands and knees. Pain's gotta be shooting through that elbow and shoulder...

[Somers pushes up to his knees, looking up at an eagerly-waiting Daniel Harper...]

GM: Somers reaches out that arm, looking to make a tag...

[But Mifune swoops in behind him, grabbing the arm, twisting it as he pulls Somers to his feet and whips him to the Gold Standard corner where Grayson steps aside as Somers smashes into the buckles.]

GM: But Mifune cuts off any attempt at making the tag there...

[Mifune steps closer to the corner, winding up...]

“WHAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAACK!”

GM: Big knife edge chop in the corner...

[Grayson sticks out his hand as Mifune slaps it.]

GM: And there's the tag to the Olympic gold medalist.

[Grayson steps through the ropes, nudging Mifune aside as he winds up...]

GM: Big right hand! Make it two! Three... four... five... Grayson just hammering away on Somers...

[Grayson pulls Somers out of the corner, wrapping his arms around the Next Gen powerhouse's torso...]

GM: Ohhhh! Overhead belly to belly by Grayson!

BW: And Gordo, this is one of the flaws I find in this team.

GM: What's that?

BW: Mifune's got the striking... he's got the submissions... and Grayson's got one submission hold and crazy athleticism. He can throw you, slam you, suplex you... but he's not likely to keep working on that arm and shoulder. So, it makes for an interesting dynamic from an offensive point of view... and a not necessarily effective one.

GM: Excellent analysis there, Bucky... and as Grayson pulls Somers up... he sends him flying back the other way with a second suplex!

[Grayson pops up to his feet, a smirk on his face as Somers rolls around on the canvas, arching his back in pain.]

GM: You've gotta be impressed with the power of Grayson to get a 265 pounder up in those overhead suplexes with ease.

[Grayson arrogantly struts around the ring a bit as Somers uses the ropes to pull himself to his feet...]

GM: Somers back up, obviously in some pain here...

[The Olympic gold medalist approaches, rocking and firing his right hand in a few more times before grabbing Somers by the arm...]

GM: Irish whip by- no, reversed!

[Somers sends Grayson into the far ropes, bouncing back towards him, doubling up for a backdrop...]

GM: Backdrop set and-

[Grayson pulls up short, dropping a double axehandle down on the back of Somers' head, sending Somers down to all fours.]

GM: Down goes Somers again! Bret Grayson and Takeshi Mifune have got Somers in a bad way as we pass the ten minute mark in this time limit.

[Grayson strikes a double bicep pose for all to see, nodding his head as he circles around behind Somers...]

...and reaches his powerful arms down, wrapping them around the midsection of the kneeling Somers...]

GM: Waistlock!

BW: Is he gonna deadlift him?!

GM: He's gonna try!

[Grayson clenches his jaw, giving a hard lift to pull Somers up off the mat, holding the 265 pounder up so that his feet dangle off the canvas...]

...but before he can deliver the suplex, Somers snaps an elbow back into the jaw!]

GM: Ohh! Elbow finds the mark!

[A second elbow forces Grayson to set him down on his feet...]

GM: Another one!

[...and a third breaks Grayson's grip, allowing Somers to break free, dashing to the ropes in front of him, rebounding back...]

GM: Somers off the ropes and-

[Somers leaps into the air, connecting with a flying shoulder tackle that sends Grayson flying backwards through the ropes, spilling out to the floor as Somers crashes down on the canvas, clutching his shoulder in pain...]

GM: FLYING TACKLE! IT SENDS GRAYSON FLYING BUT WHAT KIND OF FURTHER DAMAGE DID SOMERS DO TO THAT SHOULDER?!

BW: Not the smartest of moves there by Somers... maybe acting on pure instinct there...

GM: Somers is down on the mat... but Grayson's out on the floor!

[Mifune turns angrily, shouting at his downed partner as Somers rolls over onto his chest, still clutching his shoulder...]

GM: And now it's Howie Somers trying to get to his corner again... trying to make that tag to Daniel Harper who is waiting for him...

[The crowd gets louder as Somers inches across the ring, trying to get to his waiting partner...]

GM: Somers looking for the corner! Somers looking for the tag!

[Mifune again shouts at Grayson who is trying to get to his feet out on the floor.]

GM: Mifune bellowing at Grayson, telling him to get back in the ring and cut off that tag... well, at least I think that's what he's telling him...

[Somers is a couple of arm's lengths away from his corner when the Olympic gold medalist pulls himself back through the ropes into the ring.]

GM: Grayson's in! Charging across...

[Grayson leaps into the air, diving onto Somers' back, pinning him down to the mat underneath him. The crowd jeers as Mifune nods approvingly and Daniel Harper kicks the bottom rope in frustration.]

GM: ...and Grayson cuts off the tag!

BW: How about that, Gordo? How close was that?

[The Olympic gold medalist gets up, yanking Somers up onto all fours...]

GM: Ohhh! Crossface! And there's one from the other side!

[Another pair of crossface forearms land before Grayson switches back to the waistlock again, lifting Somers up to his feet. The Olympic gold medalist plants his feet...

...and then hoists the 265 pounder into the air, dumping him on the back of his head and neck with a bridging German Suplex!]

GM: GERMAN! WITH THE BRIDGE!

[As Grayson holds the bridge, the referee dives to the mat to count.]

GM: ONNNNNNNNNE! TWOOOOOOOOOOO!

[But Somers kicks out, breaking up the pin to cheers from the Canadian crowd.]

GM: We're closing in on the fifteen minute mark of the time limit for this one... and Grayson drags Somers up to his feet, looking to do more damage...

[A big looping right hand finds the mark, knocking Somers back towards the far ropes. He lands a second... and a third...]

GM: Grayson throwing those big looping right hands, doing some damage...

[Grayson piefaces Somers up against the ropes, talking trash as he does...]

GM: Oh, come on! There's no need for this! There's no call for this at all!

[The gold medalist breaks away, dashing to the far ropes, rebounding back towards Somers, arm extended...]

GM: CLOTHESLI-

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

[The crowd ROARS as Somers ducks his head, backdropping the charging Grayson up over the ropes and down to the thin ringside pads!]

GM: BACKDROP OVER THE TOP ROPE AND DOWN TO THE FLOOOOOOOOR!

[Somers falls back against the ropes, breathing heavily as he looks across the ring at a waiting Daniel Harper...]

GM: And again, Somers has got a chance! Again, he's got an opportunity to get across the ring and to make that tag!

[Somers pushes off the ropes, stumbling a few steps towards his corner where Harper is insistently sticking his hand out...]

GM: Harper's waiting for the tag! He's been waiting quite a while now but can Somers get there this time? Can Somers get there and make that tag?

[Mifune again is berating his partner in Japanese, shouting at him out on the floor as Grayson tries to recover from the backdrop over the top.]

GM: Somers, step by step getting closer to his partner... Mifune's shouting at Grayson... I can only imagine he's trying to inspire him in his own special way to get back inside the ring...

[Grayson is still down on the floor as Mifune stands over him, bellowing down at him as Somers again takes another step... then another...]

GM: Grayson's starting to get back up, grabbing at his lower back and...

[The crowd ROARS as Somers collapses into his corner!]

GM: TAG!

[Daniel Harper comes through the ropes, sprinting across the ring...

...and DRILLS Grayson with a baseball slide dropkick, knocking Grayson away from the apron and back towards the entrance ramp!]

GM: HARPER SCORES WITH THE BASEBALL SLIDE!

"FIFTEEN MINUTES! FIFTEEN MINUTES! FIFTEEN MINUTES GONE BY!"

GM: We've hit the fifteen minute mark in this one... but Harper's on the move, heading right out there after Grayson...

[Harper slides out to the floor, approaching the dazed Grayson...]

GM: EUROPEAN UPPERCUT!

[The big blow sends Grayson stumbling backwards as Harper keeps coming...]

GM: Another one! Grayson's stunned out there by the entrance ramp...

[But the wobbly Grayson lashes out with a boot to the midsection, doubling up Harper. The Olympian snatches a front facelock, slinging the arm over his neck...]

GM: Grayson though cuts him off and now he's looking for a suplex on the ramp! He's looking for-

[Grayson attempts to lift Harper up off the ringside mats but Harper blocks the lift.]

GM: Blocked!

[And with the crowd cheering loudly, Harper turns the tieup around, and lifts Grayson up into the air...]

"CLAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAANG!"  
"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

GM: SUPLEX ON THE STEEL RAMP! OH MY!

[Grayson cries out, grabbing at his lower back as Harper slowly sits up, nodding at the loud reaction from the Canadian crowd.]

GM: Daniel Harper turned that around and hit his own suplex on the steel... and now it's Harper who needs to start thinking about how he might be able to finish off Grayson and earn his team that trip to the Semifinals...

[Suddenly, the loud grumble of an engine is heard, followed by an ear-splitting honking of a horn.]

GM: What the...?

[All eyes (and the camera) turn towards the entrance stage where the large modified Hummer known as the Fat Man pulls into view.]

GM: Well, what's this all about now?

[The doors to the vehicle pop open as Captain Joe Flint and Charlie Stephens step into view, climbing up onto the hood of the vehicle, each with a set of binoculars hanging around their necks.]

BW: Looks like a little recon mission for the Soldiers of Fortune, daddy!

GM: A recon mission?! Give me a break!

[Harper climbs to his feet, glaring down the ramp at the Number One Contenders to the World Tag Team Titles as they settle in on the hood, Stephens lifting the binocs to his face.]

GM: Stephens and Flint, the Soldiers of Fortune, won their spot in the Semifinals a little earlier but now they're out here during this Quarterfinal and... well, I can't imagine they're here for anything but to get involved with this one.

BW: That's a big assumption to make, Gordo. It seems to me like they've picked now for a scouting trip. Who knows? They might still meet Next Gen here tonight and even if they don't, I've gotta think their day to challenge for the World Tag Team Titles is in the near future. They're entitled to do some scouting!

GM: As long as they stay where they are, I suppose. But they've already had an impact on this match as Daniel Harper is shouting at them from down the ramp.

[Harper shakes his head at the arriving Soldiers, turning back to the downed but rising Grayson...]

GM: Harper pulling Grayson back towards the ring, firing him under the bottom rope.

[Harper turns again, pointing at the Soldiers before he climbs up on the apron.]

GM: Harper on the apron and-

[Using the ropes, Grayson slingshots himself, driving his shoulder into Harper's midsection...]

GM: Ohh! Grayson caught him on the way in!

[Grayson snatches a front facelock of his own, pulling Harper back up vertical...]

GM: And now it's Grayson who looks to bring in Harper the hard way with a suplex...

[The Olympian lifts Harper into the air but at the peak of the lift, Harper spins out of it, landing behind him on the canvas...]

GM: Waistlock!

[Harper hooks the body, looking to lift him up...

...but Grayson swiftly reverses it!]

GM: Standing switch and Grayson with a waistlock of his own!

[But then Harper reverses it again, ending up behind the Olympian a second time...]

GM: No! Harper reverses in kind!

[Instead of attempting a German Suplex though, Harper charges to the ropes, looking for a rolling reverse cradle into the neutral corner...

...but Grayson hangs onto the ropes, not rolling back as Harper does.]

GM: Look at these two going at it now... Grayson with the counter and-

[Harper, back on his feet, charges the corner as Grayson turns...

...and instinctively picks him up, spins, and sets him down on the top turnbuckle.]

GM: Oh! Grayson puts him up top and... right hand! Another one!

[Harper is stunned on the buckles, hanging on to the top rope to keep from falling off them. Grayson nods to the crowd, pulling down the straps on his singlet.]

GM: And the straps come down as Grayson looks to finish off Daniel Harper perhaps!

[The Olympic gold medalist steps up on the middle rope, reaching out to wrap his arms around Harper's torso...]

GM: Grayson may be looking for that top rope belly to belly!

[But as Grayson locks up the body, Harper uses his free hand to drive his fist into the side of Grayson's jaw...]

GM: Harper's trying to fight out of it!

[The fists are flying as Harper continues to try and punch his way free, finally landing a hard enough shot to break the bodylock...

...and Harper follows it up with a headbutt that causes Grayson to slump forward, sliding back down to the canvas, leaning against the buckles and Harper!]

GM: Harper fights free and- what's this now?

[Harper spins a dazed Grayson away from him, sliding his legs over his shoulders...]

GM: VICTORY ROLL!

[Harper hangs on tight as the referee dives to count...]

GM: ONNNNNNNNNNNE! TWOOOOOOOOOO!

[...and a lunging Howie Somers ties up Mifune's legs, preventing the save.]

GM: THREEEEEEEEEEEEEEE!

"DING! DING! DING!"

GM: THE CHAMPS ARE MOVING ON!

[Harper lets go of Grayson, sliding to a knee and prepared to defend himself as needed while Rebecca Ortiz makes it official.]

RO: Here are your winners, moving on to the Semifinals... NEEEEEEEXT GENNNNN!

[The crowd ROARS as Somers joins Harper, pulling him to his feet and right into a big embrace. The duo turn to look down the aisle at the disgruntled Soldiers of Fortune who are returning the gaze.]

GM: Victory for the World Tag Team Champions... and now they're part of the Final Four alongside that team right there - the Soldiers of Fortune - and the team of Carver and Martinez.

BW: Hey, I gotta admit, I was rooting for Mifune and Grayson but that's a heck of a trio in the Semis, Gordo.

GM: It certainly is... and with one more team to go-

[An agitated Grayson gets to his feet, locking eyes with Harper who seems prepared to go again if needed...

...and Harper gives a slight nod of respect to Grayson who returns the nod in kind as Takeshi Mifune angrily exits the ring, stomping up the aisle.]

GM: Daniel Harper and Bret Grayson showing a little respect for one another there... not that Takeshi Mifune wanted any part of that.

BW: Not one bit.

GM: Nevertheless, Next Gen is moving on in this tournament... and right now, we're going backstage to-

[But before Gordon can finish his statement, we get a flash of the ACCESS 365 logo, ending up back in the office of Javier Castillo where he fidgets nervously, pacing in front of his door as Veronica Westerly sits in a chair, an iPad in her lap that she's tapping with well-manicured and polished fingernails.]

JC: Okay, okay... what else?

[Veronica looks up at her very-nervous boss.]

VW: Can you relax? Sit down or something?

[Castillo shakes his head.]



JC: Relax? How can I relax when I know those two might be coming for me? After what happened out there, I-

[Veronica interrupts.]

VW: John's out there. MAWAGA's out there. Polemos is out there too. You think anyone's coming through them?

[Castillo shakes his head slightly but keeps his eyes on the door.]

JC: Just keep... whatever... what else is on the list?

[Westerly sighs as she looks back down at the iPad.]

VW: We made the Shane/Hunter match official.

[Castillo nods.]

JC: Good. Right. And Hunter? Is he aware?

VW: He is.

JC: How did he take it?

VW: Not... well.

[Castillo allows a flicker of a smile to reach his face as he looks at the door again.]

JC: Okay... what else?

[Now it's Veronica who is looking nervous.]

VW: I took a phone call earlier.

[Castillo doesn't pick up on the tone of her voice, still pacing.]

VW: From the office. From... Mr. Hardin.

[El Presidente abruptly comes to a halt.]

JC: Mr... of course. What did he want?

VW: He wants Casey James to be at Saturday Night Wrestling in Winnipeg.

[Castillo sighs.]

JC: Of course he does. Well, we... can we arrange that?

[Veronica grimaces.]

VW: I'll make the call.

[Castillo nods.]

JC: Good, good. Anything else?

[Westerly gestures towards a rolling rack in the corner of the room where a garment bag awaits.]

VW: Your package got here.

[Castillo arches an eyebrow at her.]

JC: My what?

VW: Your package. For your special announcement?

[Castillo follows the gesture, spotting the hanging bag.]

JC: Ah, yes. Hrm... well, pack it for Winnipeg.

[Westerly rises from her seat.]

VW: You're not going to make your announcement?

[Castillo's jaw drops.]

JC: Here? Tonight? With everything that's- no, no, no. It can wait. Besides, I want everyone there for it. I want Matthews and Lynch and Rage and...

[Castillo looks puzzled.]

JC: Fawcett. Where the hell is Fawcett anyways?

[Westerly grimaces.]

VW: He had some trouble getting past the border.

JC: What kind of trouble?

[Westerly sighs.]

VW: Some... incident... from his past regarding...

[She cringes.]

VW: ...desecration of a graveyard.

[Castillo looks equally disgusted.]

JC: I... of course, of course.

[He fingers the metal key hanging from a chain on his neck.]

JC: Well, let's see if we can get them to let him in. I want him in Winnipeg too.

[Westerly nods.]

VW: As you say, Javier.

[Castillo nods with a sigh.]

JC: Now, please... tell me that's it. I gotta get out of here.

[Westerly arches her eyebrows again.]

VW: You're leaving?

[Castillo nods.]

JC: Yes. As quickly as I can. You should stay though. Keep an eye on things. Keep an eye on that Detson match especially.

[Westerly nods.]

VW: Of course.

JC: Good, good. Now... uhh... okay. I'll be in touch. I'll see you in Winnipeg.

[He approaches the door, cracking it open slightly.]

JC: Mr. Law... to the car!

[And as he exits, we get a quick ACCESS 365 logo...

...and then fade to another part of the backstage area where Sweet Lou Blackwell is standing in front of the newly-updated tournament bracket.]

SLB: One more Quarterfinal match to go here in the 2017 Stampede Cup tournament, fans... we already know three of our Final Four. The Number One Contenders - the Soldiers of Fortune. The AWA World Tag Team Champions - Next. Gen. And the superteam of Carver and Martinez. Who will join those three? We're about to find out. The sentimental favorites have got to be the very first AWA National Tag Team Champions back in the day, Kentucky's Pride, but if I was a betting man, I'd have to strongly consider the team about to join me right now. Chaz and Chet... the Wallace twins themselves... the American Idols!

[A voice calls out from off-camera.]

"SSSSSSWEEEEEEEEEEEEET LOUUUUUUUUUUUUUU!"

[The Wallaces stride into view in matching glittering silver ring vest, bare skin underneath. They're sporting matching silver headbands and full-length tights that are silver with threads of multicolor blended in for quite the shimmery rainbow effect.]

Chaz: It's a good name for you, Lou.

[Blackwell looks puzzled.]

SLB: Okay... thanks?

Chet: No, no... we mean it, Lou. You're a prince of a guy. A real winner. Your name fits you like a glove. In fact... I might even say you're...

[Chaz nods his head, imploring what comes next.]

Chet: ...too sweet.

[Chaz silently pops for his brother, pumping his fist.]

Chet: I mean it, Lou... who else would give us an intro like that? Of course the sentimental favorite are those two old geezers across the locker room. Everyone loves a Cinderella story and those two are it.

Chaz: If Cinderella was old and grey and no prince wanted to touch her with their daddy's lips to wake her up.

SLB: That's the wrong fairy tale.

Chaz: No! You know what the wrong fairy tale is? The wrong fairy tale is that City Jack and Tin Can Rust are gonna somehow, someday channel all the oxygen that's left in Canada into those wrinkled up lungs of theirs and find a way to compete with these two slick, lean, wrestling machines you see before you right now.

[Chaz gestures to himself and his brother.]

Chet: That's right. Every story has a beginning and an end and Kentucky's Pride, you're looking at your end. It's been a hell of a ride, boys. A real memory maker. They'll be talking about this weekend for you two for a long time to come. Kudos.

[Chet tips an imaginary hat.]

Chet: But we're not here for someone else's happy ending.

[Chaz raises an eyebrow.]

Chet: We're here for US. We're here for what we've got on the table right now. And that's a chance to forget the past year of garbage we've been through in that ring. No more talking about Connors and his lucha pet. No more talking about Terry Shane and his idiot brother. We're talking about the chance for the entire wrestling world to be talking about us... the Wallaces... the American Idols... YOUR 2017 Stampede Cup Champions.

[Chaz grins and elbows Lou in the ribs.]

Chaz: Got a nice ring to it, don't it?

[Lou shakes his head.]

SLB: For the two of you, I suppose it does... but for the rest of the world-

[Chaz interrupts.]

Chaz: We get it, Lou. Nobody likes us. That what you're trying to say?

[Lou shrugs.]

Chaz: We're men. We can take it. People think we're annoying...

[Chet fake gasps.]

Chaz: Brash...

[Another gasp, clutching at his chest.]

Chaz: Arrogant...

[And a big gasp sends Chet down to the floor clawing at his throat.]

Chaz: ...and those are from the nice comments on Twitter. But we don't care about any of that, Lou. What we care about is winning...

[He holds up a finger.]

Chaz: ...and looking good doing it.

[Chet kips up off the floor, grabbing Lou's mic hand,']

Chet: And we've got that second part covered.

[Chaz grins.]

Chaz: That leaves just one thing left, Lou. We've gotta be the bad guys here. We've gotta kill the dream. We've gotta be the ones to go out there, drag Jack and Rust behind the shed, and put a bullet in Old Yeller.

[Chet's jaw drops.]

Chet: Dude. Spoilers.

[Chaz ignores him.]

Chaz: It's not going to be nice. It's not going to be pretty. Hell, it might even bring a tear or two to my eye...

[Chaz holds up a hand for a stage whisper.]

Chaz: It won't.

[And then drops the hand.]

Chaz: But it will be is a reality check for the good ol' boys there. You had your moment. You had your run. You had your comeback story.

But the happy ending?

[Chet sticks his head in, arching an eyebrow.]

Chaz: That belongs to us.

[Chaz and Chet exchange a high five before exiting, stage right...

...and we fade away from Sweet Lou over to Mark Stegglet.]

MS: Joining me now are two men who came up with yet another hard fought victory in their improbable quest for the Stampede Cup, City Jack and Tin Can Rust - Kentucky's Pride!

[Camera pulls back to show Kentucky's Pride along with Landon Grant, who claps excitedly as they come into view. Tin Can Rust wears a wet towel around his neck and his legs are wrapped in ice packs. Jack looks WASHED - almost literally with the amount of sweat dripping off his hair, down his brow, and through his KP T-shirt.]

CJ: Mister Stegglet... Whoo, I tell ya...

[Jack takes in a deep breath and exhales.]

CJ: I tell ya...

[Jack shakes his head, zapped of energy, puts his meaty hand on Stegglet's shoulder to steady himself...]

CJ: I tell ya...

[Jack turns his head up the camera, winks, and grows a big smile. He gets a bolt of energy to do a quick jig, much to the chagrin of his partner Rust.]

CJ: NEVER! FELT! BETTER!

[Jack slaps Stegglet in the back, maybe a little too hard, as he laughs.]

CJ: Alright, alright, us two probably way past "E" on the gas meter, but there ain't nothin' like the feelin' of doing what we're doing here. I mean, we topped the Samoans last night, topped a legendary Dynasty earlier tonight, and now we in the Quarters!

MS: Heh, okay... well it's obvious that the win against Dynasty for the both of you was a milestone victory in this effort to win the Stampede Cup, but now you're up against a team that's younger, faster, and on the top of their game in the American Idols.

[Tin Can Rust takes offense to that line, stepping into the mic.]

TCR: And I'd say Jack and I are more experienced and more FOCUSED than those two boys.

[Jack, ever the one to not get into needless drama, tries to wave down Rust but his partner keeps going.]

TCR: No Jack, this here, this is important. We ain't deaf, okay? We hear the words, all the talk of why us "old fossils" are wasting everyone's time. That we ain't belonging here in this tournament with kids with more flash or telling jokes or some fancy jackets or some big wizbang entrance. To that all, I say shove it! That stuff ain't matter nothin'!

[Rust puts a hand on Jack's shoulder.]

TCR: Now this man here, he has more heart than any single person left in this tournament. I ain't seen anything like it, Stegglet.

[Rust shakes his head in disbelief.]

TCR: With all the trials he's had, and all he's come back from, it inspires my cold heart to give myself more than I got left in the tank. To see Jack here wrestle like he's ten years younger, to see him leap off them ropes like he did to get the win? And even just to get back in the ring, risk himself again... for his son?

[Rust looks back at Landon then at Jack.]

TCR: You know, I'm a stoic son of a bitch, but these two men here, what Jack's doin' for his boy? It gets at me...

[Jack smiles, looking a little shocked at the emotion from Rust.]

TCR: And I gotta say, some teams here, right now at the stage our careers are at... They might be content to say everything's all gravy. Just bein' in the Quarters is enough of an achievement. But it ain't... It just ain't. And look, I ain't sayin' that the American Idols aren't a good team - shoot, they're a damned amazing team. Got an awful attitude for the sport, but they do things in the ring I ain't ever seen.

[Rust shakes his head.]

TCR: But like I said before, we ain't just here for the show or for some achievement based on how old us two are. We are here to WIN!

[Jack nods and bumps a fist with Rust.]

CJ: Well said, my man! And look, Mister Stegglet, I know you askin' how can Rust and I - beaten, bruised, twisted, and spent - how can we stand a chance against

these two kids who move like cats, fly like bats, and cheat like rats but it's simple.  
We got more here -

[Jack bumps at his heart.]

CJ: And here -

[Jack taps at Rust's noggin.]

CJ: Than they do. And those two things combined with a love of what we in that ring, to us it ain't in-con-seeve-able to see us golden oldies keep this "improbable" journey going. To us, we just gotta believe.

[With that, Jack gives a wink and a smile to the camera. Jack, Rust, and Grant all give Stegglet a shake of the hand as they exit - Jack and Rust both showing a little grimace as they exit.]

MS: Can the Cinderella story continue on to the Semifinals or do the American Idols have just enough villainy in them to end this fairy tale run? We're about to find out as we head back down to the ring to Rebecca Ortiz!

[We fade from the backstage area to center ring where Ortiz is standing.]

RO: The following contest is set for one fall with a forty-five minute time limit and is the last of our Quarterfinal round matchups!

[Big cheer!]

RO: Introducing first...

[The sounds of Calvin Harris' "This Is What You Came For" rings out over the PA system as the house lights start to flash in rhythm to the music creating a dance party atmosphere.]

RO: From the Shibuya area of Tokyo, Japan... at a total combined weight of 342 pounds... Chaz and Chet Wallace...

THE AMERRRRRRRICAN IIIIIIDOLLLLLLS!

[The Wallaces spring through the curtain in the same gear we saw them in moments ago, trading a leaping high five before heading down the aisle towards the ring. They taunt the occasional fan with a crotch chop or insulting comment as they head to the ring.]

GM: The American Idols defeated Sid Osborne and Raphael Rhodes to move on to this Quarterfinal round matchup... and they've got their work cut out for them against one of the greatest tag teams in AWA history.

BW: Look, Gordo... if Jack and Rust were fresh... hell, if they were five years- nah, make it ten years younger... I'd give 'em a fighting chance. But tonight... after what they've been through this weekend... against one of the quickest, fastest, most athletic teams on the roster...

GM: No chance?

BW: That's what they've got.

[The Wallaces shake and shimmy their way down to the ring, climbing up on the apron where they do matching slingshot splits over the top, landing on their feet inside the ring as the fans jeer.]

GM: Well, there's certainly no anticipation over who the crowd will be cheering for in this one. This is all about Kentucky's Pride to these fans.

BW: And the Wallaces wouldn't have it any other way.

[As the Idols settle in for action, their music starts to fade.]

RO: Annnnnnnnnnd their opponents...

["My Old Kentucky Home (Turpentine and Dandelion Wine)" by Johnny Cash plays as the fans let out a huge cheer for the underdog AWA veterans.]

RO: ...at a total combined weight of 553 pounds... being accompanied down the aisle by Landon Grant...

They... are... TIN CAN RUST... CITY JACK...

KENTUCKYYYYYYYYY'S PRIIIIIIIIIIIIIIIIDE!

[The trio of men walk out onto the ramp, looking around at the crowd as they continue to cheer for the unlikely quarterfinal team. Both Jack and Rust are certainly looking worse for wear, showing little hitches - flexes and stretches here and there, trying to get loose for their second match of the night.]

GM: City Jack, Tin Can Rust, making it back to the Stampede Cup Quarterfinals as they continue their amazing run!

BM: How these two old, backwater slobs got to this point escapes me, but it ends here. These two will be eating dropkicks in no time.

GM: Unfortunately, you could be right, Bucky, but I'm sure Kentucky's Pride don't think that way.

[Jack and Rust step down the ramp, taking in the cheers as they make each step. Both have on new KP T-shirts over their sweat-soaked ring gear. Jack puts his arm around his son's neck, pointing at the crowd and taking in the stadium again. Rust nods at Jack and Grant and even he takes a small moment to finally take in the moment.

As they get to the ring, Jack gives Grant a hug and walks up the step with Rust. The two original AWA National Tag Team Champions both take in the crowd once more before giving each other a nod and ease their way through the ropes.]

GM: What a moment this must be for Jack and Rust who have to be treasuring every single second of this amazing experience. Making it back to the Quarterfinals... making it this deep in this stacked tournament... within arm's reach of the Stampede Cup they never were able to win in their prime.

BW: The Stampede Cup didn't exist in 1955.

GM: Bucky!

[Jack and Rust huddle up with Landon Grant who stays out on the apron as the Idols bounce around like goofballs in their corner, bouncing off ropes, jumping up and down on the apron.]

BW: The Idols even have more energy just standing in the corner, Gordo.



GM: That's not when they'll need it. They'll need it in the ring... and as it looks like it'll be Chet Wallace starting things off with City Jack, Chet's going to need all the energy he's got, Bucky.

"DING! DING! DING!"

GM: And here we go!

[Chet smirks as he dances out of the corner, doing a little jig as he approaches City Jack who strides to the middle of the ring, fists raised and at the ready...]

GM: City Jack holding his ground, ready to fight...

[Chet dances in, snapping off a jab in the air in front of Jack who just raises his arms a little more, ready to defend himself.]

GM: Quick jab by Chet... there's another one...

[Chet shadowboxes a little before dancing in, throwing another jab, bouncing it off Jack's raised arms...]

GM: The jab is blocked by City Jack... not much behind it anyways...

BW: This is Chet just toying with him, Gordo.

GM: No kidding.

[Chet moves forward again, throwing a leg kick to the side of Jack's knee. Jack grimaces, twisting away and pulling his leg back as Chet nods his head confidently.]

GM: The leg kick finds the mark though... and that's something City Jack definitely needs to avoid.

BW: That's right. The lack of stamina is a strike against them... if we add a lack of mobility on, it's over before the shouting.

[Chet dances in again, throwing a leg kick as Jack swings a jab of his own and comes up empty.]

GM: Jack tried to get a right hand of his own there but Chet's too fast for him.

BW: Told ya.

GM: I think everyone knows the Wallaces have the speed edge in this one, Bucky. That's no surprise at all.

[A grinning Chet Wallace suddenly breaks back to the ropes, bouncing off towards Jack who winds up the right hand...]

...and Chet goes low, sliding between the legs, coming up behind City Jack, and promptly leaves his feet, connecting with his feet on the chin of Jack, knocking him into a seated position on the canvas.]

GM: And there's our first dropkick of this one, putting Jack down on the mat.

[Chet pops up, pumping his arms triumphantly, running into an embrace from Chaz that the fans jeer.]

GM: And this guy's celebrating like they already won.

BW: Give `em time, daddy. Give `em time.

[Chet stands over Jack, throwing a crotch chop as a seething Jack slowly gets to his feet, looking over to Landon Grant who has some words for his father.]

GM: And before this weekend even got going, I was talking to City Jack who told me that Landon Grant, his son, had actually done a lot of their scouting and research for them. Grant watched the tapes from Japan to see the Wallaces in action there... he helped put together the scouting reports on the teams that Jack and Rust weren't as familiar with... and that may be what Jack's looking to take advantage of right here.

[Jack gets up, tugging at his tights as he looks at Chet who is dancing back and forth, ducking his head in and out like a boxer...

...and gets just a hair too close!]

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

GM: METROPILL! METROPILL!

[Jack dives on top of the floored Chet!]

GM: JACK COVERS! ONNNNNNNNE! TWOOOOOOOO! THREEEEEEEE-

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

GM: AND CHAZ WITH THE DIVING SAVE! I THINK THEY HAD THIS WON!

[Chaz pops to his feet, stomping and kicking Jack before he can get up off the canvas. The referee reprimands Chaz, ordering him out of the ring...

...but before Chaz can respond, Tin Can Rust comes charging in, knocking Chaz flat with a big clothesline!]

GM: CLOTHESLINE BY RUST!

[The veteran swings around, charging back the other way as the dazed other Wallace twin gets to his feet...]

GM: CLOTHESLINE ON CHET AS WELL!

[Rust pumps both arms, watching the Idols as they climb to their feet, hanging onto one another...]

GM: TCR ON THE MOVE ANNNNNNNND...

[The crowd EXPLODES as Rust hits a running double clothesline, taking both Wallaces over the top rope and dumping them out to the floor to a fistpump from Landon Grant!]

GM: RUST CLEARS THE RING! OH MY!

[The referee shouts at Rust to vacate the ring and he quickly obliges.]

GM: Rust leaving the ring but...

BW: This isn't what the referee had in mind, damn it!

[Rust exits to the floor, pulling Chet Wallace off the ringside mats and tossing him back into the ring.]

GM: Chet's back in... climbing back to his feet...

[Chet walks right into a quick snapping jab from City Jack... and another.. and another... and another..

...and a big overhead elbow comes down between the eyes, sending Chet flying through the air and down to the canvas!]

GM: And down goes Chet Wallace again! And this can NOT be how the Idols envisioned this one going down, Bucky!

BW: Absolutely not!

[Jack backs to the ropes, giving himself a little extra speed as he leaps up, dropping a big elbow down...

...on nothing but canvas as Chet rolls aside in time!]

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

GM: Hard fall down on the canvas for City Jack who certainly looked to have things going his way - Kentucky Pride's way - for the moment.

[Chet scrambles to his feet, backing into the ropes for momentum as he drops into a front rolling somersault, throwing himself into the air for a somersault senton across Jack's broad chest!]

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

[But Chet foregoes a pin attempt, coming up stomping and kicking the prone City Jack before he backs off, slapping his brother's hand.]

GM: And the Idols with their first tag of the match...

[Chet takes up a position near Jack as Chaz runs in, leaping up to offer his legs to his brother who lifts him in a wheelbarrow... twists around...

...and throws him down in a splash on City Jack!]

GM: Oh my! What a doubleteam by the Idols!

[Chaz snatches a leg, earning a two count before Jack powers out of it.]

GM: Two count only... and another tag by the Idols...

[Chaz grabs the incoming Chet in a back suplex position, lifting him up...

...and DROPS his brother down in a flying legdrop on the prone City Jack... and then Chet rolls clear as Chaz snaps off a somersault, driving his own leg down across Jack's chest!]

GM: OHHHH! A pair of legdrops by the Idols - Chaz is out, Chet covers!

[Another two count lands as Landon Grant slaps the canvas, shouting encouragement to his father.]

GM: Another two count there... another tag!

BW: Look at these guys, Gordo. Blinding speed. I'm getting dizzy just watching them.

[Chaz grabs Chet by the arm, whipping him to the ropes. As Chet bounces back, Chaz ducks down, lifting and pressing his own brother up into a backdrop...

...and Chet keeps on flipping, twisting around into a 450 splash onto the downed City Jack!]

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

GM: GOOD GRIEF!

[Chaz bails out as Chet hooks the beefy leg this time.]

GM: ONNNNNNNNNNE! TWOOOOOOOOO! THR-

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

GM: Near fall right there for the Idols!

[Chet gets back to his feet, quickly slapping his twin brother's hand again.]

GM: Another tag?! The Idols are in and out of this one like crazy so far in this one...

[The Idols pull City Jack off the mat, whipping him across to the neutral corner. Jack crashes back into the buckles as Chaz and Chet stand in the opposite corner...]

GM: Jack to the corner...

BW: Chet coming in hot!

[Chet Wallace sprints across the ring, throwing himself into a running dropkick, catching Jack under the chin. Chet rolls out to the floor as Chaz follows him in...]

GM: Chaz with a dropki- NO!

[Jack pulls himself clear of the second dropkick, causing Chaz' legs to hit the top rope, flipping him backwards and dumping him down on the back of his head on the canvas!]

GM: Jack gets out of the way, hanging onto the ropes... dragging himself down towards his corner...

[The weary Jack pulls and yanks on the ropes, trying to get across the ring to where Tin Can Rust is waiting for the tag...]

GM: Jack's dragging himself towards the corner annnnnd... TAG!

[Tin Can Rust steps through the ropes as the crowd cheers loudly. Chaz Wallace regains his feet, charging the veteran...]

GM: Big right hand on Chaz!

[Chet comes rolling back in, getting to his feet...]

GM: And one on Chet as well!

[Chet gets knocked down to the canvas from the big haymaker!]

GM: Rust throwing some big bombs on both members of the American Idols... Chaz back up now...

"WHAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAACK!"

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

GM: Big chop on Chaz!

[Chet scrambles up...]

"WHAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAACK!"

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

[Chet gets knocked back down to the canvas as the crowd continues to roar.]

GM: Both of the Idols are taking a pounding at the hands of Tin Can Rust...

[As both Idols regain their feet, Rust grabs each one in a hand...

...and CLASHES their skulls together!]

GM: DOUBLE NOGGIN KNOCKER!

[Rust grabs the dazed Chet, whipping him hard into one neutral corner which sends him stumbling out...]

GM: BIIIIIIIG BACK BODY DROP BY RUST!

[The veteran pumps his arms as he turns towards the staggered Chaz, whipping him to the opposite corner...]

GM: Chaz whipped to the corner as well... and a backdrop on him to boot!

[With both Wallaces down on the mat in pain, Rust gives a big shout as he walks around the ring. Landon Grant pounds the apron, shouting to his trainer.]

GM: Grant telling Rust to stay on them... Chaz is the legal man...

[Rust grabs the rising Chet by the hair, lifting him up into the air...]

GM: Scoop and...

[Rust shoves Chet a little higher into the air - not quite a press but a little above his head - and DROPS him gutfirst down on Chaz!]

GM: OHHHH!

[Chet rolls out of the way as Rust drops to his knees, applying a lateral press.]

GM: Rust with the cover! He's got one! He's got two! He's got-

[Chaz kicks out, breaking free from Rust's lateral press.]

GM: Two count only!

[Rust goes to push back to his feet, slowly getting up though.]

BW: Look at how slow he's getting up, Gordo. Rust is running on fumes and he might be losing his best chance to get he and Jack to the Semifinals.

GM: Rust is finally back to his feet...

[The veteran goes to lean down to grab Chaz... but Chet rushes back in towards him...]

GM: Chet with the right han- blocked!

[The crowd ROARS as Rust uncorks another big haymaker, sending Chet flying through the air and down to the canvas!]

GM: Good grief! What a right hand that was!

[Rust grabs Chet by the hair, dragging him to his feet...

...and rushes across the ring before HURLING Chet over the top rope, sending him crashing down HARD on the barely-padded stadium grass!]

GM: A HARD FALL TO THE FLOOR FOR CHET WALLACE!

[Rust turns back towards a dazed Chaz, pointing both fingers at him to a big reaction!]

GM: And now Kentucky's Pride has got Chaz Wallace all alone in there!

[Rust marches back in on a kneeling Chaz, dragging him up to a standing position and whipping him to the ropes...]

GM: Chaz off the far side and...

"THUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUD!"  
"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

GM: POWERSLAM!

[Rust stays on him, hooking a leg...]

GM: ONNNNNNNNE! TWOOOOOOO! TH-

[But Chaz slips a shoulder free, breaking up the pin to a disappointed reaction from the Canadian faithful...

...a reaction that turns solidly to jeers as all eyes turn towards the entrance stage.]

GM: Wait a second now... come on!

[The crowd's boos welcome the arrival of Michael Aarons who is in a pair of black dress slacks and a white dress shirt unbuttoned to reveal his bare torso underneath.]

GM: Michael Aarons is coming out here! Again!

BW: Gordo, have you ever been Experienced?

GM: I have no idea what that means but I don't like the sound of it.

[Aarons is jogging quickly down the ramp, obviously concerned for the prospects of his allies...]

GM: Aarons making his way quickly down the aisle and... oh ho!

[The crowd cheers as Landon Grant plants himself right in Michael Aarons' path, defiantly shaking his head...]

GM: How about this, Bucky?! Landon Grant taking a stand for his father and his teacher! He's not gonna let Michael Aarons get involved with this and I love it and so do these fans!

[Grant stands in front of Aarons, fists at the ready as Aarons begs off, looking for a way around Grant without a fight...]

GM: Aarons is searching for another way to the ring but he's gotta go through Landon Grant if he's gonna do it...

[Inside the ring, a grinning Rust pulls Chaz off the mat, whipping him to the corner...]

GM: Rust shoots him in... running clothesline in the corner!

[The blow lifts Chaz off the mat but he settles back down in time to get snared in a side headlock...]

GM: Out of the corner annnnnnd... DOWN WITH THE BULLDOG!

[Rust flips Chaz over, diving across his torso again...]

GM: ONNNNNNNNNNNE! TWOOOOOOOOOOO! THREEEEEEEEEE-

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

GM: CHAZ JUST \_BARELY\_ GETS OUT IN TIME!

[Rust rolls off of Chaz, breathing heavily in a seated position as the crowd rumbles at the near fall!]

GM: And look at Rust. He may need a tag here...

[The veteran VERY slowly gets to his feet, his chest heaving as he does. He throws a glance to his corner where Jack holds out a hand.]

GM: And there's the tag for Kentucky's Pride, trying to find a way to finish off Chaz Wallace before his brother can get back into this thing...

[Rust pulls Chaz off the mat, whipping him across the ring to the corner where Chaz bumps off the buckles, stumbling back out towards Jack who gets a running start and...]

GM: DROPKICK?! DROPKICK?!

BW: What. The. Hell.

GM: CITY JACK WITH A DROPKICK!

BW: And Chaz Wallace's belly button may be bruised!

[The crowd cheers, laughing for the big sloppy dropkick thrown by City Jack as Jack rolls into a cover of his own, hooking Chaz' leg...]

GM: ONNNNNNNNNNNE! TWOOOOOOOOOOO! THREEEEEEEEEE-

“OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!”

GM: AND A DIVING SAVE BY CHET WALLACE OUT OF NOWHERE! OHHHH MY!

[Jack rolls off of Chaz as Chet gets up, shouting all sorts of garbage down on Jack. The referee orders Chet out of the ring but Chet's having none of it as he drags Jack off the mat by two hands (somewhat) filled with hair...]

GM: Chet drags him up - he's in illegally... whip to the corn- reversed!

[And the reversal sends Chet crashing back into the buckles as Jack stumbles, having to steady himself before he turns back to Chaz...]

GM: Jack's got Chaz now as well... another whip!

[The second whip sends Chaz crashing chestfirst into his own brother, stumbling backwards and dead man falling onto his back. Jack pauses, watching as Chet stumbles forward...

...and flops facefirst into his brother's crotch!]

“OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!”

[Jack grimaces, wincing as he grabs at his own groin in sympathy.]

BW: Low blow! Ring the bell!

GM: That's not how that works... and you know it!

BW: This is wrong! This is all wrong!

[Jack chuckles to himself as he moves back in, dragging Chet up by the hair...]

GM: Chet's still not legal in there... although it can be hard to tell at times with these identical twins.

[Jack scoops Chet up into his beefy arms, turning around with him...

...and rushes towards the ropes, throwing him over the top with a slam!]

GM: GOOD GRIEF!

BW: That's TWICE that Kentucky's Pride has thrown a Wallace over the top rope! I KNEW we should've made that a disqualification ten years ago, damn it!

[The crowd is ROARING for the hard fall to the floor by Chet Wallace. The reaction causes Landon Grant to turn, pumping his fist with a big grin on his face...

...which is when the opportunistic Michael Aarons rushes forward, clubbing Grant in the back of the head with a forearm smash!]

GM: OHH! COME ON!

[The fans are all over Aarons as he quickly moves past the downed Grant, drawing a shout from City Jack who points at him. The referee also admonishes Aarons who doesn't even listen as he takes a spot on the Idols' side of the ring.]

GM: It's Chaz in there with City Jack - Chaz the legal man still...



[Jack pulls Chaz off the mat, pointing again to Aarons as he pinwheels his right arm around and around and around...]

GM: Jack's looking for the Metropill, trying to put an end to this and-

[Seizing his chance, Michael Aarons hops up on the apron, shouting at City Jack, drawing the veteran's gaze towards him...]

GM: Don't get distracted now, Jack! Finish this punk off!

BW: Hey! Try to be unbiased in here, Gordo. I know it's tough for you but try to live up to my example!

GM: YOUR example?!

[With the referee and Jack distracted, Chaz slaps the hand away that is holding his hair, stepping back...]

"WHAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAACK!"  
"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

GM: SUPERKICK!

[Jack stumbles, his eyelids fluttering... but he stays standing...

...and then Chet Wallace slides back in, moving a little slower from the hard fall as he forces himself to his feet...]

"WHAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAACK!"  
"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

GM: CHET HITS ONE AS WELL!

[Jack really stumbles this time, his eyes practically closed as the Wallaces watch... wait... and then shrug before...]

"WHAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAACK!"  
"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

GM: DOUBLE SUPERKICK! AND DOWN GOES CITY JACK!

[Out on the floor, Tin Can Rust YANKS Michael Aarons down off the apron, drilling him with a right hand as he hits the floor!]

GM: OHH! RUST DROPS AARONS AND-

[Sprinting across the ring, Chaz leaps into the air...]

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

GM: -AND CHAZ DROPS RUST! BASEBALL SLIDE DROPKICK ON TARGET!

[With Rust out of the picture for the moment, Chet grabs Jack by the arm, dragging him up and with his brother's help, they whip him together into the neutral corner...]

GM: Jack hits the buckles hard... Chaz is still the legal man in there...

[The American Idols stand together, both cupping their hands to their mouths...]

"DROPKICK PARRRRRTAAAAAY!"

[Chaz sprints across the ring, throwing a running dropkick that catches Jack under the chin...]

“OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!”

[Chet runs right in behind him, leaping up and extending...]

“OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!”

[The eyelids on City Jack flutter again as he slumps down, sitting down against the buckles as Chaz and Chet huddle up across the ring...]

GM: Jack’s down... City Jack may be on the verge of going out as well!

BW: And if he goes out, Kentucky’s Pride is going out... of this tournament, daddy!

GM: The Idols have him in their sights and...

[They break apart, each running down the two sets of ropes, leaping into the air high, hanging in mid-flight...]

“OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!”

[...and DRIVE FOUR FEET IN THE FACE!]

GM: DOUBLE HESITATION DROPKICK BY THE IDOLS!

[Chaz grabs the legs, dragging the limp City Jack away from the corner and the ropes...]

GM: Chaz holds the leg, flips over into a double leg cradle!

[The referee dives down to count.]

GM: ONNNNNNNNNNNNNE! TWOOOOOOOOOOOO! THR-

“OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!”

GM: HE KICKS OUT! HE KICKS OUT IN TIME!

BW: Incredible. What the heck does it take to END these two?!

GM: This might be it for Kentucky’s Pride! Their last night in this business! Their last match together as a team! They’ve gotta give it everything they’ve got left, Bucky... every single bit they’ve got left in their bodies!

[An agitated Chaz gets to his feet, barking to the official about the count as he drags Jack a little further out towards the middle of the ring. He points to the corner before leaping up, driving his feet down into Jack’s ample midsection!]

GM: Ohhh! Double stomp on the gut... to the corner now...

[Chaz leaps up into the air, landing on the middle rope and snapping off a picture perfect moonsault!]

GM: MOONSAULT OFF THE SECOND ROPE!

[With Chaz down on Jack, Chet runs across the ring, leaps over his brother, lands near the corner where he promptly leaps up to the second rope... and then no-hands springs up to the top rope...]

GM: TO THE TOP!

[...and springs off again, one-upping his brother's picture perfect moonsault with one of his own!]

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

GM: MOONSAULT CONNECTS! Chet clears out, Chaz with the cover!

[The referee dives down to count again...]

GM: ONNNNNNNNNNNNNE! TWOOOOOOOOOOOO! THREEEEEEEEEEE-

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

GM: A DIVING SAVE OUT OF TIN CAN RUST! OH MY STARS!

[An exhausted Rust stays down on the mat as a pissed-off Chaz Wallace comes back into the mix, booting Rust in the ribs before hauling him up to his feet.]

GM: Right hand by Chaz... now a chop... driving Rust back across the ring...

[On the other side, Chet does the same thing to City Jack, sending him back into the corner...]

GM: We've got the two teams in opposite corners now... double whip!

[But we also get a double reversal, sending the two Wallaces crashing into one another...]

GM: OHHH!

[Jack throws a look at his son, grinning as he runs to the ropes, bouncing back as Rust grabs a staggered Chet, whipping him towards the rebounding Jack who leaps (slightly)...]

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

GM: CARDINAL SIN! JACK AND RUST PULLING OUT LANDON GRANT'S OWN MOVE AND THAT ONE SENDS CHET THROUGH THE ROPES TO THE FLOOR!

[Grant grins, clapping for his father as Jack points to Rust, holding up his right arm...]

GM: Wait a second! Jack's calling for Rust to use the Metropill!

[Rust cracks a grin - unusual for him in mid-match - and winds up his right arm, swinging it around and around and around...]

...and CRACKS Chaz upside the jaw with it, sending Chaz sailing, twisting around...]

GM: OH MY STARS! JACK HOOKS HIM! JACK HOOKS THE BEARHUG!

[The crowd rises to their feet in anticipation of the Metroboom!]

GM: HE'S GOT HIM SET! HE'S GOT IT-

[But before he can lift Chaz for what would surely be a match-ending belly-to-belly suplex, Jack is distracted by Michael Aarons getting up on the apron again, causing a ruckus...]

GM: GET HIM DOWN FROM THERE, DAMN IT!

[Landon Grant breaks into a sprint, racing around the ring as the crowd roars for the young man's actions...

...and with a handful of slacks, he YANKS Aarons down off the apron!]

GM: OH!

[But Aarons promptly jabs his fingers into Grant's eyes, blinding the young rookie...]

GM: TO THE EYES AND-

"CLAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAANK!"  
"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

GM: -AND AARONS PUTS GRANT INTO THE STEEL STEPS! GOOD LORD!

[City Jack immediately lets go of Chaz Wallace, allowing him to slump down to the canvas as Jack's concerned gaze immediately goes toward his son.]

GM: Jack's going to check on his son! He drops Chaz Wallace and-

[Rust steps in front of his longtime friend, putting a hand on his chest.]

GM: Rust is telling Jack to stay in there... Rust says he's going to take care of it and that Jack needs to stay in the ring and finish this!

[Jack nods as Rust drops to the mat, stomping towards Michael Aarons who quickly turns tail, backing down the ramp, begging off as Rust stomps towards him...]

GM: Aarons is running for his life and if Tin Can Rust gets his hands on him, he may need all the begging he can manage, fans!

[Jack throws one more concerned look at his son, looking over the ropes at the floored Grant who shouts at his father to keep fighting. Jack nods his head...

...just as we spot Chet Wallace roll into the ring behind everyone's backs, rolling his twin brother back out as Chet takes his spot on the mat, cradled up in a fetal position.]

GM: Wait a second!

BW: They switched! Chet made the switch!

GM: Nobody saw it and-

[Jack leans down, grabbing who he believes to be a prone Chaz Wallace by the hair...

...which is when Chet Wallace springs up, hooking Jack, rolling him into a small package!]

GM: WHAT?! WHAT?!

[And with a handful of tights for extra leverage...]

BW: ONNNNNNNNNE! TWOOOOOOOOOO! THREEEEEEEEEEEE!

GM: NO!

“DING! DING! DING!”

[The crowd ROARS with disappointment as the referee holds up three fingers and Chet Wallace lets go of Jack, rolling to a seated position with a huge grin on his face!]

GM: The Idols stole it! They stole it, Bucky!

BW: Bah! A win's a win, damn it!

GM: Chet Wallace wasn't even the legal man! Chet Wallace made the illegal switch in there - the referee couldn't tell the twins apart and... I can't believe this!

[The boos are pouring down as Chet rolls to the floor, embracing his dazed brother tightly as Rebecca makes it official.]

RO: Your winners of the match... moving on to the Semifinals...

THE AMERICAN IIIIIIIIDOLLLLLLLLLLS!

[Chet Wallace throws his arms up into the air, letting go of Chaz who falls limply to the floor.]

GM: Look at Chaz! He can't even stand up, Bucky! He was supposed to be the legal man! He was supposed to be in there with City Jack and...

BW: But he wasn't! The Idols outworked them, outhustled them, and outsmarted them... which ain't THAT hard to do to ol' City Hack and Tin Can Dust!

[The Idols are backing down the aisle now, celebrating their win as Tin Can Rust and a banged-up Landon Grant join City Jack in the ring. Jack is sitting on the canvas, shaking his head back and forth in disbelief.]

GM: What a... what a gutwrenching... a heartbreaking loss this must be for Kentucky's Pride, Bucky.

BW: Oh, boo hoo.

GM: City Jack looks... well, he looks stunned. The American Idols are moving on to the Semifinals alongside the Soldiers of Fortune, Carver and Martinez, and Next Gen... but the real story here... to me... is perhaps the final match as a team for Kentucky's Pride.

[Grant slips an arm over his father's shoulders, holding him tight as he kneels on the canvas beside him. Tin Can Rust buries his head in his hands, angrily kicking at the bottom rope as he watches the Idols depart.]

GM: What a tough way for this wonderful, wonderful ride to end for this team this weekend, Bucky. Nobody expected them to make it this far but once they did, I think we all had visions of a miracle in our minds... even if we knew it wasn't likely at all.

BW: It wasn't likely for sure. It was an improbable run. A great story. But like the Idols said, they get the happy ending around here - not Jack and Rust.

GM: The Idols are moving on... that's for sure... and as Rust and Grant help City Jack to his feet, listen to this ovation from the crowd here in Mosaic Stadium.

[The roaring crowd is paying tribute to the first AWA National Tag Team Champions, cheering and clapping for them as Rust waves to the crowd. Jack does the same, nodding his head and mouthing "I'm sorry."]

GM: Jack letting these people know that he's sorry... but I'll tell you, old friend, you have nothing to be sorry about. That's for sure.

[Jack looks around at the roaring crowd, an emotional expression on his face. He nods to them, pulling his son into another embrace... and then a second one with his partner who also has a lot of emotion on his face.]

GM: A lot of feelings going in there. This one hurts for sure and...

[Jack breaks away with a nod, his expression changing dramatically in a moment. He walks to the corner of the ring, leaning back against the buckles as Landon Grant looks on through tear-filled eyes...]

GM: What's going on now?

[With great effort, the fan favorite lowers himself to his knee, reaching down to unlace his boot.]

GM: Oh... oh no.

BW: Wow.

[The crowd's reaction gets even louder as Jack unlaces his boot, yanking it off his foot. He switches to the other leg...]

GM: For the fans who aren't aware, for many years in this sport, a wrestler who wanted to signal the end of the road... his final match... would remove his boots and leave them behind... leave them in the ring and...

[Jack climbs back to his feet, holding his boots in his hand as the crowd continues to cheer. We hear an occasional "PLEASE DON'T GO!" from the Mosaic Stadium crowd as Jack walks back to the center of the ring. He looks at his partner, a grin on his face for several long moments...]

"It's been a hell of a ride, old friend."

[Rust nods his head, looking down on the canvas as Jack leans over, placing a hand on his friend's shoulder..

...and then turns to his son who is obviously holding back tears at this point.]

"This..."

[Jack gestures to the ring... then to the crowd...]

"This is yours now. You hear me?"

[Grant looks up at his father, blinking several times.]

"It belongs to you. Their love that they felt for me.. for us... it's yours."

[Grant nods.]

"Never take it for granted. Never disrespect them... the ring... the boys... and the business."

[Jack pats his son on the shoulder.]

"Just like you were taught. Right?"

[Grant looks up again, biting at his lower lip as he nods again... and falls into an embrace with his father who grins as the crowd gets louder.

The embrace comes apart after a few moments as Jack looks out at the cheering crowd. He smiles again, mouthing "thank you" several times...

...and with one final "I love you" to the crowd, he takes a long look at the boots in his hands...

...and then sets them down in the middle of the ring. He kneels again, running his hand over the canvas...

Rising to his feet, Jack lets loose a sigh, like the weight of the world has been lifted from him. And with his signature smile, he drapes an arm around his best friend and his son and says...

"Come on. Let's see if they've got any of that Mooselips left."

And with a smile from all three, they exit the ring, heading up the aisle, taking the long walk up the ramp as the fans continue to cheer...

"CI-TY JACK!"

"CI-TY JACK!"

"CI-TY JACK!"

[As they reach the top of the ramp, Jack pauses... starting to look back... but with a shake of his head, he keeps on walking, heading through the curtain and out of sight as we cut back to a shot of his boots...

...and we fade to black.

And then fade back up backstage where Sweet Lou Blackwell is standing in front of the tournament bracket board, dabbing at his eye with a handkerchief. He suddenly clears his throat, straightening up before speaking.]

SLB: Emotions are running high here in Mosaic Stadium as Kentucky's Pride falls in defeat to those dastardly American Idols... and from everything we just witnessed, it looks like we may have seen the final match in the legendary career of City Jack. And I must say, if you're a newer fan of the American Wrestling Alliance, you owe it to yourself to go back and take a look at those early days. Take a look at Kentucky's Pride becoming the very first National Tag Team Champions. Take a look at City Jack's epic war with former World Champion Calisto Dufresne. It was one of the most hated rivalries in the history of our great sport and was truly one of the things that helped put this company on the map.

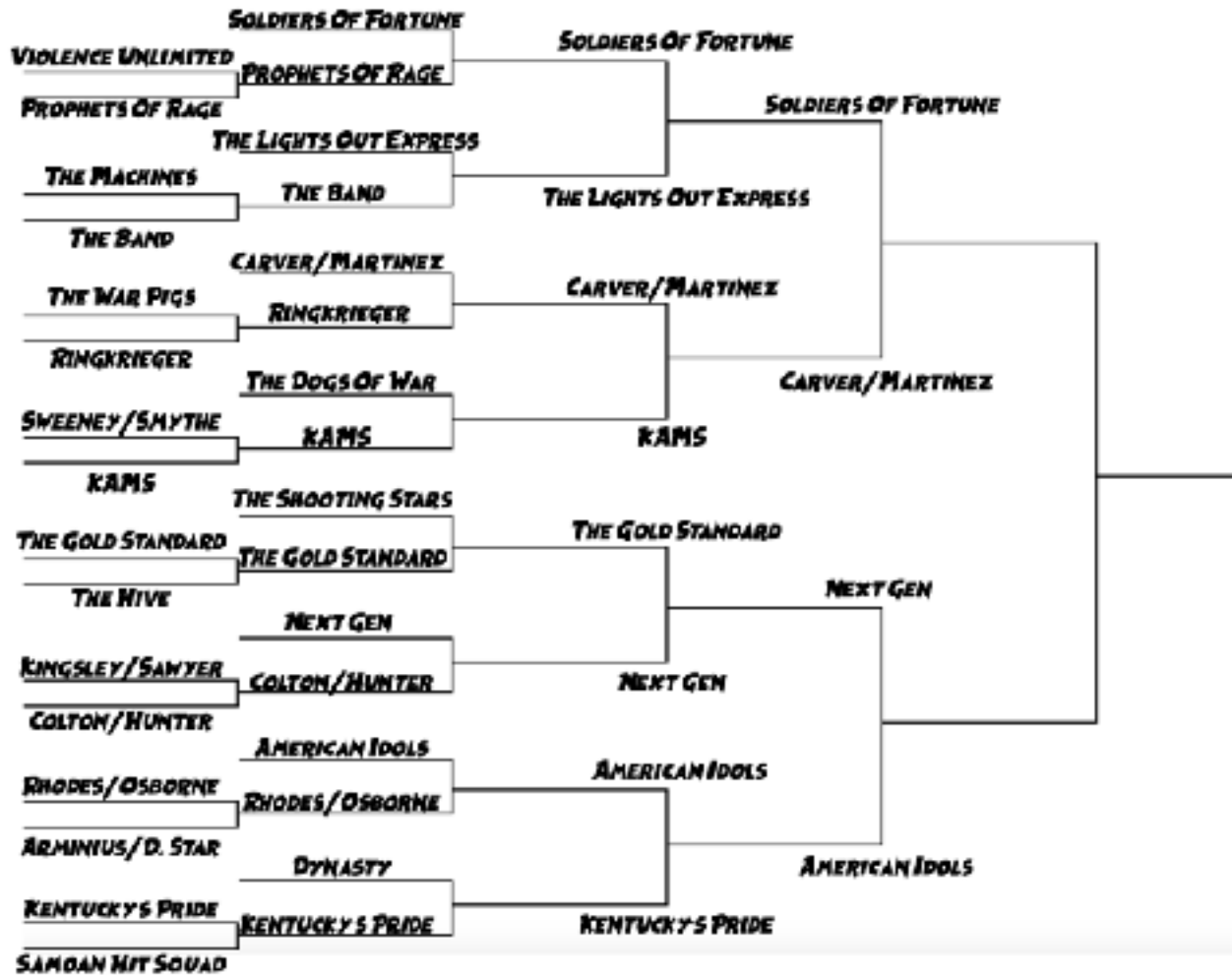
[Blackwell's voice starts to crack a bit towards the end. He clears his throat again and continues.]

SLB: City Jack, my friend... if this is the end of the road for you, on behalf of everyone in the AWA - the staff, the locker room... everyone... thank you.

[Blackwell gives a short nod, eyes closed, and then when he looks up, he's back to the Sweet Lou we'd expect in this moment.]

SLB: The Quarterfinals have come to an end - the ring is being prepared for war - but before we start talking about what's coming up next, let's take a look at our updated tournament bracket, fans!

[Blackwell turns sideways, gesturing to the wall behind him where the bracket hangs.]



SLB: We're down to our Final Four in the 2017 Stampede Cup and quite a foursome it is, if you ask me. The Number One Contenders to the AWA World Tag Team Titles, the Soldiers of Fortune, who make the Semifinals with wins over the legendary Prophets of Rage and former multi-time tag champs, the Lights Out Express. The so-called superteam of Hannibal Carver and former World Champion Ryan Martinez, having defeated an international duo of teams in Ringkrieger and the Kabukicho Assassination Maniac Squad. The current AWA World Tag Team Champions, Next Gen, having knocked off the Canadian duo of Blake Colton and Jackson Hunter as well as the Gold Standard. And lastly, former Tiger Paw Pro Global Tag Crown Champions on multiple occasions, the American Idols who defeated Raphael Rhodes and Sid Osborne and of course, Kentucky's Pride on their road to this moment. Four great teams. Two sure-to-be exciting matches. Now just two victories from the Stampede Cup, the million dollar prize, and the chance to be recognized as the greatest tag team in professional wrestling. That's what we've got coming up a little while from now.

[Blackwell turns away from the bracket, back to the camera.]

SLB: But coming up next, we've got something a little bit mysterious. A little bit of intrigue surrounding it. Over the years in the AWA, we've seen a lot of different



types of matches. We've seen ladder matches... we've seen Falls Count Anywhere matches... we've even seen a barbed wire match. But we've never seen this. It's called-

[A loud voice calls out from off-camera.]

"LOUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUU!"

[With an accompanying shriek, someone comes running into view, still carrying a sign on a stick that reads "LET DONNA MARTINELLI GRADUATE." It is, of course, Donna Martinelli herself. She's clad in a pair of bright sunburst yellow yoga pants and a matching sports bra that has a diamond-shaped cutout on the front to reveal some cleavage.]

SLB: Miss Martinelli, I'm in the middle of-

[Donna interrupts without hesitation.]

DM: Did you hear the big news, Lou?!

[She shakes her head.]

DM: No, no... "big" isn't a big enough word. This is HUGE news! This is game-changing news! You're the scoop guy, yeah? Well, check this scoop, Sweet Lou, because after this one, this company will NEVER be the same!

[Blackwell grimaces.]

SLB: That's quite a bit of hype. I'm guessing Todd Michaelson gave you the call?

[Martinelli's face twists into disgust.]

DM: No, I'm still being Todd Blocked quite firmly, thankyouverymuch!

[But then it's back to a glowing face of enthusiasm.]

DM: BUUUUUUUUT... I found Mr. Castillo backstage this weekend! And he couldn't have been nicer!

[Blackwell raises an eyebrow.]

SLB: Are you sure it was Javier Castillo?

[She ignores him, still gushing.]

DM: He invited me to his office... he had champagne brought in - to celebrate of course...

SLB: Of course. But what are you celebrating?

[Martinelli clasps her hands in front of her chest.]

DM: My debut! SQUEEEEEEEE!

[Blackwell shakes his head.]

SLB: I don't understand. I thought you were being... errr... Todd Blocked.

[Martinelli waves a dismissive hand.]

DM: Oh, I am... I am... but Mr. Castillo said he doesn't give two figs about what Mr. Michaelson says. So, he says he's going to give me a chance... a big chance... next week on Power Hour.

SLB: That's great news for you, Donna.

DM: Yes it is! It's not exactly what I had in mind. I was hoping to debut tonight... maybe get some pyro... a choir... I don't know... I'm just thinking out loud. But instead, I'll be in that grungy little studio in Atlanta.

[She waves a hand again.]

DM: But that's just the start! The start of big things! The start of HUGE things! The start of GAME CHANGING THINGS!

[Her voice gets a little high-pitched and squeaky at the end, causing Blackwell to grimace.]

SLB: Well, I wish you the best of luck, Donna. But... as you can see... I'm kinda in the middle of...

[He gestures towards the camera. She looks at it, jaw dropping.]

DM: OH! Yes! Of course! Okay... see you in Atlanta, Lou!

[And with that, she plants an excited kiss on his cheek before bouncing out of view, leaving a blushing Blackwell behind.]

SLB: Well now... uhh... do we have that... can we run that... oh, just get me out of here for crying out loud.

[Blackwell grins as we fade to...

"Too Old to Die Young" by Brother Dege plays, as archival black and white footage from wrestling's past is shown on the screen. We see legends of the squared circle: Blackjack Lynch, Hamilton Graham, Prince Izumi, and Roosevelt Wright, each walking down an aisle towards a wrestling ring with no ropes, their faces in various states of uncertainty and apprehension.]

#Round and round, round we go  
#Where it stops? Nobody knows it  
#Side to side baby, back and forth  
#God above and the devil below him

[We then cut to a montage of highlights: Lynch rocking Jackson Haynes with a flurry of punches that threaten to knock the Tennessee Madman out of the ring, a bloodied Izumi holding on for dear life as Wright has him locked in the Japanese stranglehold, and finally a shot of Hamilton Graham rocking Terry Shane Jr with a headbutt and then grabbing him for what looks like a backdrop suplex out of the ring and to the floor, but the video fades to black right before impact.]

#You got your reasons and I got my wants  
#Still got that feeling, but I'm too old to die young now  
#Too old to die young now

[We then fade into a shot of Roosevelt Wright, seated in the middle of a rope-less wrestling ring. A spotlight shines down on the Patriarch of the Wright family as he stares at the camera grimly.]

RW: All I wanted was a match with no ropes, so me and Prince Izumi could settle our rivalry once and for all. No rope breaks. No cheap escapes. The only way to claim victory was by knockout or submission. May the better man win.

[We cut to footage with the words "Courtesy of Tiger Paw Pro" written in the bottom right hand corner of Wright and Prince Izumi locking up inside the No Man's Land ring as Wright continues to speak.]

RW: It all sounded so simple in my head: A match inside a wrestling ring with no ropes. But I made a mistake. I miscalculated just how much that one simple change would turn a wrestling match into complete and total chaos. What I experienced in that ring wasn't a damn wrestling match... it was all-out war. And when it was all over, we all agreed...

"Never again."

But that's the funny thing about professional wrestling. Never say never. And like a bunch of idiots, we did it again. And again. And again.

[We see Wright executing a monkey flip and sending Blackjack Lynch flying high into the air...and out of the ring as people in the crowd watch on in horror. Once again, the video cuts out before impact. Then to a shot of Hamilton Graham scooping Tommy Fierro up for a bodyslam and tossing him towards the floor. This too fades right before impact. It then fades to a shot of Wright screaming in agony as he hangs helplessly off the ring apron, locked in a figure-four by Terry Shane Jr.]

RW: There's a reason why they call it "No Man's Land". 'Cause this match is wicked. It's evil. It's a piece of hell on Earth that nobody has any business fighting in and I'm sorry I ever came up with the damn idea.

[Theres a close up shot on Wright's weathered, wrinkled face, his voice shaking as he curses the very match he invented.]

RW: A man finds out a lot things about himself out there in No Man's Land...

[We see a shot of Blackjack Lynch putting the Iron Claw on a bloodied Jackson Haynes, but Haynes grabs him and dives out of the ring with him. We fade before impact. We see Wright leap onto Hamilton Graham's back, locking in the Japanese Stranglehold. However, Graham teeters close to the edge and then takes a leap backwards, sending the both of them plunging over to the floor. Once again it fades before impact.]

RW: ...I just hope these boys survive long enough to regret them all.

[Finally, we see a referee raising the hand of a barely conscious Roosevelt into the air in victory as he sits on the canvas right next to his defeated opponent, who lays face down on the canvas unmoving as "Too Old to Die Young" serenades us out.]

#Side to side baby, down in the hole  
#God above and the devil below him  
#You got your reasons and I got my wants  
#Still got that feeling, but I'm too old to die...

[Fade to black...

We fade up on a darkened room somewhere in the bowels of Mosaic Stadium. It seems even harder to see than we might expect thanks to some smoke wafting through the air. A wooden table sits in the middle of the room... and upon the table sit two of the nastiest looking bare feet you can imagine. Discolored and mangled toenails. Coarse hair. The soles are black... just pitch black from the amount of

filth someone might get walking around a football stadium barefoot all day. A deep voice rings out.]

"It didn't have to be this way."

[The camera pulls back a bit to reveal King Kong Hogan sitting in a chair, leaning back in it so that two legs are off the floor. He's puffing on a cigar which is contributing the cloud of smoke in the air.]

KKH: It really didn't.

When I got the call from Castillo late last year... when he asked me to come plant my flag in this place, I said no.

"No way, brother. There's no way they'll let me in the door."

[Hogan shrugs.]

KKH: Castillo told me it wouldn't be a problem... that he was in charge... calling the shots. And so I told him to make me an offer.

[Hogan whistles softly.]

KKH: It was big. More money than I'd seen from a promoter in years and if you'd seen the checks I was cashing in Japan, you'd know that's a whole lot of money. Enough to remodel the house... add on a room for upcoming additions... my wife was real happy.

But she wanted to know... "what do you have to do for that kind of money?"

[Hogan chuckles.]

KKH: The same thing I've done for years, my dear. Hurt people. Make 'em bleed. Get paid.

[Another shrug.]

KKH: That's been my entire career. The promoters took one look at me and knew I'd never be their cover model. I'd never be the poster boy. So, they looked around the locker room, found the nastiest bastard they could rustle up, and stuck him in the ring with me.

As long as I got paid, it didn't matter to me... not one bit.

In fact... I kinda enjoyed it.

[Hogan grins.]

KKH: So, I took the deal. I came to the AWA. And the first day I was here, I told Castillo - "who's the white whale?"

I wanted to earn my paycheck... so I wanted to know who he wanted hurt most of all.

He lifted up his arm and he pointed at the screen...

"That one. Right there."

[Hogan pauses.]

KKH: "Ryan Martinez."

[Hogan belly laughs, slapping a hand down on the table with enough force to shake it.]

KKH: Ryan Martinez! It wasn't even you, little puppy!

It was your running buddy. Your bestie. The White Knight.

[Hogan shakes his head.]

KKH: Now, don't get me wrong. That kid is tough. Tough as his ol' man and I can't pay a man a bigger compliment than that... believe me.

But if it was me and Martinez who'd tussled up?

[Hogan grins.]

KKH: It'd be over. He wouldn't be in that tournament this weekend. He wouldn't be nothin' but a bad memory to Castillo and the subject of the question "whatever happened to Ryan Martinez."

It woulda been a war... but it woulda been fun.

My entire career, little puppy... I've tried to never make things personal. I'm not in this sport for glory... for the love of the people... I couldn't give a damn if 40,000 fans are in the building tonight or not one damned soul...

I'm here to make my money, take care of my family, and hopefully get out while I got the brain cells left to enjoy my old age.

With Martinez, it woulda been business.

[He rubs his chin thoughtfully.]

KKH: But you... you're a different story, aren't you?

I knew that the first night I saw you...

No, no... not when I came to the AWA... the real first night I saw you...

[He smirks, arching an eyebrow.]

KKH: You don't even know that story. We were THIS close, kid... THIS close to meeting years ago.

[Hogan closes his eyes, puffing hard on the cigar, a bright orange ember burning before he exhales a cloud of smoke and speaks again.]

KKH: It was in Japan. You were the World Champion, coming to town to defend against Kitzukawa.

I was in the building... meeting with your boss.

[He chuckles.]

KKH: The promoters may tell everyone how much they hate ol' Dave here... their pocketbooks say otherwise. They're all about the money... and they know how much money I make for 'em.

So, your boy Stegglet wanted to meet me... and he played the part. He talked about "burned bridges" and "unpredictability" and how dangerous I can be to any promotion willing to employ me.

[The big man shrugs.]

KKH: Can't call the man a liar. But the interest was there... the money was good... and there was a chance we'd make a deal right there that night. We agreed to meet again after the show.

So, I was in the crowd.

I watched you.

[He points to his eyes.]

KKH: I saw you, Supreme.

Heh. "Supreme."

I'd heard of ya before I saw ya, of course. The legend of Supreme Wright was growing even in Japan. And you know what I thought before that night?

"What kind of a jackass is named Supreme?"

[Hogan chuckles.]

KKH: But it's a good name for you, kid... it really is. Because you are good. Damn good. One of the best.

And I saw it that night. I saw it against Kitzukawa.

I was on the edge of my seat.. not because I gave a damn who won or loss...

[He holds up his fingers an inch apart.]

KKH: Because I was THIS close to jumping the railing, putting the boots to you, and making sure I got the fight I wanted more than anything in that moment.

[Hogan shakes his head with disgust.]

KKH: But for once in my life, my better angels took hold and I resisted.

"No, no... we'll do this the right way. Sign the contract. Get the gig...

...and then tear his damn throat out."

I went backstage to meet with Stegglet again... and this time Taylor was with him. And I knew. I knew right away. He didn't have to say a word but he did.

[Hogan sits straight up, puffing the cigar before speaking.]

KKH: "After what you did to Simon, you'll NEVER work for me."

[Hogan claps his hands together.]

KKH: And that was it. No contract. No money. No job. And no match with you.

All because of something I'd done to some little freak in the middle of some nothing town in Japan all those years ago.

Life's strange, man... I'll tell ya that.

[Hogan shakes his head again.]

KKH: Flash forward years later and I'm standing with Castillo. He's made my mission clear. Take out Martinez and get paid.

And I was gonna do it. I really was.

And then I saw you...

[He taps his temple.]

KKH: ...and I remembered. I remembered that night in Tokyo. I remembered all the horrible things I've dreamed of doing to you over the years.

And my better angels took the beating of their lives when the Devil on my shoulder told me that I'd only have one shot at this.

And I took it. I came for you.

Not for glory. Not for money.

[His eyes are cold now, staring into the camera lens.]

KKH: This is personal, Supreme. This is personal.

[He pauses, clicking his tongue a few times.]

KKH: Supreme.

It's a good name. It really is.

Because people say you may be the best mat technician in the world... and it may be true... but I don't give a damn about that.

People say you may be the best submission wrestler on the planet... and it may be true. But I don't give a damn about that either.

But when they say you're the most dangerous man in wrestling...

[He whistles through his teeth.]

KKH: That's something I care a great deal about, Supreme.

Because that's my spot. That's my gig.

For years... when people asked who the most dangerous man in wrestling was, the list was all over the place. Was it Annis who once made a man's heart stop in the ring? Was it Temple who blew up someone's wife and dropped a literal glass ceiling on someone else's head? Was it Monosso, that crazy sumbitch who did actual time in a nuthouse?

Maybe it was that little bitch Ezra.

[Hogan grins.]

KKH: I'll never forgive you, Outlaw.

[He waves a hand.]

KKH: But the answer was clear, Supreme. Those who knew... knew the truth.

They knew it was me... they just didn't want to say it. Because to admit that King Kong Hogan was the most dangerous man in wrestling, they had to also admit that they couldn't control him. They couldn't control me.

That's my legacy. That's what my kids will be able to tell THEIR kids about someday.

But you... you want to take that away with me?

[He clenches his jaw angrily.]

KKH: I SAY TO HELL WITH YOU, WRIGHT! STRAIGHT TO HELL!

[He jumps out of the chair, sending it clattering on the floor.]

KKH: You want my title... you want my legacy... you're gonna have to pry it out of my cold, dead hands!

They say to win this one, you gotta knock someone out or make 'em quit.

[He nods.]

KKH: You try to knock me out. You give it everything ya got.

Because you will NOT tap me out. I will NOT quit.

[He shakes his head defiantly.]

KKH: So, you bring your little elbows... your knees... your kicks... and you aim for the skull, little puppy...

But ya better not miss...

Because I've got no problem with going out there and doing what I do best...

Maybe that's picking up a steel chair and breaking your kneecap.

[Hogan smirks.]

KKH: Maybe it's grabbing a baseball bat and shattering your elbow.

[A nod.]

KKH: I don't care what it is, Supreme. I don't care how bad I have to hurt you... just like I don't give a damn how bad I get hurt. This isn't about waking up and going to work tomorrow. If I wake up in a hospital bed, I can live with that.

As long as you're in the next room over with a damn tube running down your throat and your little girlfriend sobbing in the corner.

[Hogan's intensity relents for a bit as he sighs.]

KKH: It didn't have to be this way, Supreme.

[He pauses, looking off camera thoughtfully.]



KKH: Or maybe it did. Maybe this... this right here... this night in Canada... this is our destiny. Maybe we've been on this course since that night in Tokyo. Maybe we've been destined to go to war.

It seems right. It all seems right.

Now... if you'll excuse me... I made a promise to my mama a long time ago. A little pre-match ritual if you will.

[He shrugs.]

KKH: She was a God-fearing woman. In church every Sunday. Sang the gospel. Did the dance. Paid the money. When she passed, the church was a full house... hangin' from the rafters, brother.

[He closes his eyes, dropping to his knees, clasping his hands together in prayer.]

KKH: In the Name of the Father, of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit...

[Hogan pauses, his eyes clenched tightly as he looks up towards the ceiling.]

KKH: Forgive me, father, for I WILL sin tonight.

I am sorry for my sins with all of my heart.

In choosing to do wrong and failing to do good, I have sinned against you whom I should love above all things.

[A slight curving of the mouth into a smile.]

KKH: But Lord, I gotta tell ya... that ain't likely to change. I'm a man of sin. And for the love of my mother, I come to you and tell ya... so you know... so you're aware... but I don't expect forgiveness.

Hell, I don't imagine I deserve forgiveness.

I firmly intend to sin again... and again... and again...

So, forgive me if you want... that's your call. You do what you gotta do.

[He opens his eyes again, staring right into the camera.]

KKH: And I'll do the same. Amen.

[Fade to black...

...and then up into a shot backstage inside a locker room. There, we see two-time AWA World Heavyweight champion, Supreme Wright, seated on a bench. Wright is in his wrestling gear: Simple black trunks with three white stars across the waistline. His injured eye is covered by an eyepatch, but he stares straight ahead towards the camera.]

SW: Goodbye, Hogan.

[He doesn't even so much as blink.]

SW: I'll say it now, because I know there won't be an opportunity to say it to you later. This is the end of the road for us.

[It's stated as a simple matter of fact.]

SW: Since the moment you stepped foot into the AWA, you've come right at me. And you've kept on coming at me. You hated me before you even met me and you made damn sure I knew it.

[Without breaking his gaze from the camera, Supreme points to his eyepatch.]

SW: But I don't hate you, Hogan. Far from it.

I ENVY you.

[There's a pause, as he lets the heaviness of that statement settle.]

SW: You live so smugly in your bloodstained world of simple wants and simple needs. A big, dumb animal reveling in pools of blood, rolls of tangled barbwire and shards of broken glass. I'm jealous, Hogan. I truly am. I wish my life could be that simple.

I wish I could be that free.

But that wasn't the life that was chosen for me.

[Supreme finally breaks his stare, casting his eyes down on the floor.]

SW: Have you ever had the weight of expectations placed upon you, Hogan? Did anyone ever expect you to be anything more than a simple beast? Did you ever have to hold back what you are, to fulfill the obligations of what you were expected to be?

It was decided that my destiny was to be the greatest professional wrestler the world has ever seen, before I was even out of the womb. And I was supposed to do it with dignity. With grace. With honor. No shortcuts. I had to leave no doubt of my greatness.

Imagine, Hogan. Imagine being a child having those expectations placed on you. Imagine being raised to be a champion while learning inside The Dungeon at the foot of a man sadistic enough to come up with a match like No Man's Land. You think being Roosevelt Wright's chosen one was easy?

A spotless gym? Brand new punching bags?

Please.

You don't even begin to know what I went through to become what I am.

[A bitter chuckle.]

SW: I guarantee you, the path I took makes whatever torture you've put yourself through look like a damn joke.

[He raises his hand and stares at it, before he slowly makes a fist.]

SW: Do you realize that to this very day... in all my years in professional wrestling... I've never even thrown a punch?

How many have you thrown in your career?

How many hundreds of thousands times have you hit a man with a closed fist? My body is repulsed by the very idea of it. Imagine what I must've gone through to reach that point. My entire life is restraint. Discipline. Absolute self-control. All this

time, I've been holding back, doing what's expected of me and not what I'm capable of.

Can you imagine?

[His eyes narrow.]

SW: Of course you can't, Hogan. You live wild. You live free. Holding nothing back. No one, not me, not Javier Castillo and not even yourself has ever expected anything from you except pain, violence and blood. Like I said, a simple life for a simple beast.

[The look of disdain on his face is absolutely palpable.]

SW: The awful truth of it all is, you could never survive in my world...

...but I would THRIVE in yours.

[A smirk.]

SW: No wonder you hate me.

[He closes his eyes and takes a heavy breath.]

SW: But whenever I get the urge to release myself from my shackles, whenever I think about throwing away all restraint and really letting loose, I stop. I stop because I have no idea what would happen the second I decide to be what I want to be... what I CAN be.

[He shakes his head.]

SW: But No Man's Land isn't the place for restraint. I can't wear a mask and play the part of Supreme Wright, the best wrestler in the world. My grandfather explained it to me clearly: This match reveals a man's true character.

A hero or a villain. A god or a monster. I didn't choose this match for your benefit, Hogan. We already know what's in your heart: Chaos. Darkness. Bloody violence.

But... do we dare find out what's in mine?

[Silence. There's a long silence after that question.]

SW: I think it's about time... that the world was introduced to the real Supreme Wright.

[A beat.]

SW: Goodbye, Hogan.

[Fade to black...

...and then out to a wide shot of Mosaic Stadium, showing the ring dead center in the middle where we see the battlefield that will be No Man's Land.

Very little has changed to the ring we've seen all night with one glaring exception.

The ropes - all of them - are gone. The absence of the ropes leaves wide open gaps between the steel ringposts that are completely exposed as well - no turnbuckles or pads.

Such a simple change... with potentially catastrophic results.

Rebecca Ortiz stands center ring to get us started.]

RO: Ladies and gentlemen... it is now time to enter...

NOOOOOOOO MANNNNNN'S LANNNNNNNND!

[The crowd ROARS for the debut of this unique stipulation matchup.]

RO: The rules of this match are simple. There are no countouts. No disqualifications. No time limit. And no pinfalls.

To win the match, the survivor - if there is one - can only be declared by submission or knockout.

[Dramatic pause.]

RO: And that is it. Beyond that... ANYTHING GOES!

[Another huge roar from the Canadian crowd!]

GM: This is gonna be something else.

BW: The Canadians are hot for it. Bloodthirsty savages. Some of these people would've fit in nicely in South Philly a couple of weeks ago.

[Gordon chuckles as Rebecca continues.]

RO: And now... the two men willing to put their bodies... their careers... their physical well-being at stake in this one...

Introducing first...

[The signature opening to Led Zeppelin's "Immigrant Song" rips across the PA system to a huge explosion of jeers from the Canadian faithful.]

"Ahhh-ah-ah! Ahhh-ah-ah!"

[A few moments pass before the lyrics kick in and the Korugun monster known as King Kong Hogan tears through the curtain into view, wearing a snarl on his and bloodthirsty menace in his eyes.]

RO: From Parts Unknown... weighing in at 283 pounds...

KING! KONG! HOOOOOOOGAAAAAAAAN!

[Hogan leans over, smashing his bare knuckles into the steel stage a few times before he stalks down the aisle towards the ring. Hogan is barefoot on this night, clad in horribly stained blue jeans that have seen many, many better days. A white tanktop - also stained and grubby - covers his hairy torso. His hair is a tangled mess, sloppily yanked back into a ponytail. His snagged beard is wet and nasty as he sneers at the crowd over it.]

GM: And here comes the first man who will climb... well, NOT through the ropes as he enters the battlefield known as No Man's Land.

BW: I loved hearing Roosevelt Wright talk about this match, Gordo. The match he says he wishes he never created in the first place.

GM: Considering his grandson is about to step into it... into a battleground that has caused serious injuries... I'm not surprised to hear him say it... but knowing the history of it, I AM surprised that Supreme Wright asked for it.

BW: That just shows how far King Kong Hogan has pushed him to the edge, Gordo. Hogan's probably the most dangerous man that Wright's ever faced inside the ring... and he's a guy who has already put Wright on the shelf with a serious injury once and won't hesitate for a second to do it again.

[Hogan grins as he approaches the ring, nodding approvingly as he walks up, slapping his hand down where the ropes would've been, pulling himself up on the apron before striding out to mid-ring where he slowly takes a knee in the center of the ring. The crowd's boos pour down upon him as he smiles, nodding his head at their reaction...]

GM: King Kong Hogan has arrived. He scored a win over Wright just a few weeks ago at Eternally Extreme II in South Philly... thanks to Jeff Matthews. But tonight, Javier Castillo has ordered his troops to keep their hands off. Hogan demanded it... and even Castillo seems wary to cross Hogan.

BW: I think Korugun will stay out of it... and I don't know what that means for Hogan trapped in the exact match Wright was looking for.

GM: But does even Wright know what could happen in this match? He's followed his grandfather's advice his entire career... and I can't imagine Roosevelt would have EVER suggested he step inside this thing.

[Hogan stays on a knee, looking down the aisle for Wright's arrival...

The lights go completely dark in the stadium as "Black Skinhead" by Kanye West begins to play, bringing the crowd to their feet as they roar with a massive cheer!]

RO: He hails from Sherwood Forest, Baton Rouge, Louisiana... he weighs in tonight at 228 pounds... he is a former two-time AWA World Heavyweight champion...

SUPREME WRIIIIIIIGHTTTTT!!!!

[A lone spotlight hits the top of the aisle, where we see Wright standing, dressed simply in black wrestling trunks with three white stars on the front. He now sports a full beard and wears a black medical eyepatch with two strings that wrap across his face just above and below his one good eye. As always, his focus is solely on HIS ring, his face devoid of any and all expression or emotion.

Our fine Canadian sponsors have seemingly thrown out the entire entrance budget for Wright, as a massive display of pyro, lasers and fireworks explodes all around the stadium as the former World Champion walks down the aisle. However, Wright pays no attention to any of this pageantry... his focus straight ahead and on the ring.]

GM: You can set off every piece of pyro in the Great White North and I don't know if you'd get a reaction out of Supreme Wright who appears to be as ready for a fight as we've ever seen him, Bucky.

BW: And considering some of the fights we've seen him in, that's saying something. You think back to the Towel Match with Jack Lynch... the World Title war with Ryan Martinez... the Syndicate Street Fight last fall at SuperClash. For Wright to be this focused here tonight, it's strange to say, Gordo... but I fear for King Kong Hogan a little in this one.

GM: I fear for the health and welfare of both of these men in a match like this.

[Wright stops right before reaching the ringside area and sees the rope-less, soon to be war zone laid before him. The expression on his face tells us everything we need to know: This is no longer HIS ring... this is now No Man's Land.]

GM: Wright climbing up onto the apron, keeping that gaze locked on King Kong Hogan. There will be no sneak attack in this one. These two haven't taken their eyes off one another since Wright walked through that curtain.

BW: Well, in Wright's case, he hasn't taken his eye off Hogan.

GM: You're a real riot, Buckthorn.

[The tension in the air is palpable as the crowd buzzes - near silence - in anticipation of what comes next.

On one side of the ring, the wildman. The stringy, matted, greasy hair hanging down, slicked back and pulled into a ponytail on this night. His dark, nasty, dripping wet beard looking in bad need of a comb run through it. This savage monster for hire wears stained blue jeans, a white tanktop that could use a wash... well, really could use a date with an incinerator at this point... covers his torso that is littered with the occasional tattoo and very, very frequent scars. He has foregone boots on this night, his bare feet on display as he glares across, the slightest of smiles on his face.

King Kong Hogan is ready for this moment... even eager perhaps.

On the other side of the ring, the consummate professional. His hair is cut close to his head, shaved and streamlined for battle. This man bred for combat wears simple black trunks with three white stars across the waistline. His torso is bare but his boots are made for kicking... and stomping... and walking all over his opposition. His injured eye is covered by an eyepatch... for now.

Supreme Wright is ready for this moment... even eager perhaps.

An anxious-looking Davis Warren edges out between them, throwing a glance in both directions and getting a silent nod from both warriors that they are indeed ready for the battle to come. Warren exhales heavily...

...and waves an arm at the timekeeper.]

"DING! DING! DING!"

GM: And... HERE! WE! GO!

[The crowd ROARS at the sound of the bell, ready for the battle to begin. King Kong Hogan claps his hands together, nodding his head in anticipation as he lumbers from his corner, slowly edging towards the middle of the ring as Supreme Wright walks to the center with no hesitation, his eyes still locked on Hogan.]

GM: Supreme Wright may be out of his element in a match like this, Bucky, but if he's concerned about it, he's showing no sign of it.

BW: The man believes he's the greatest walking weapon on the planet. Fear does not exist in this Dojo, does it?

GM: No, sensei.

[Hogan edges closer... and closer... his arms extended from his frame, fingers wiggling as he reaches out towards Wright who keeps his eyes on the big man.]

GM: Wright's just waiting, not making a single move towards Hogan who is almost within reach now...

[And suddenly, Wright's hands dart out, trying to intertwine the fingers of Hogan with his own...

...but Hogan sees it coming and jerks his hand back, smashing his fist into the jaw of Wright, sending the technician stumbling back. Hogan lunges at him in one of the angriest collar and elbow tieups you've ever seen, shoving his 280 pound frame into Wright's chest, forcing the smaller man to back up.]

GM: And right away, Hogan with the tieup... he avoided Wright going for the fingers and now he's bullying him back, right across the ring...

BW: And remember, people... there are no ropes out there. No turnbuckle pads. Just steel and those thin protective mats on the floor covering the stadium grass.

GM: Hogan's using that size advantage, pushing Wright backwards bit by bit. Wright's trying to fight it but the size may be too much for him... and look at this now... right at the edge of the apron! Hogan trying to shove Wright off to the floor at the beginning of this one!

[The crowd buzzes with anticipation again as the big man tries to give one more burst of strength into his movements, looking to force Wright off the apron and down on the floor...

...but Wright extends his leg, planting his foot for resistance. He throws a glance over his shoulder, looking to see where he's at in the ring as Hogan continues to try and shove him down!]

GM: Hogan trying to take advantage of his surroundings, trying to use this no rope environment to his own gain... but Wright's fighting it! Wright's hanging on there and...

[Suddenly, Wright twists his body, using Hogan's own momentum against him, swinging him around so that Hogan's the one with his foot near the edge of the ring. The crowd "ooooohs" at the counter as Hogan's eyes flash with concern as he tries to hold his ground.]

GM: And Supreme turns it right around! Now it's Hogan fighting to hang on!

[Hogan's foot gets dangerously close to the edge of the ring, actually causing a brief slip that he just barely manages to recover from before Wright shoves him to the floor...

...and a powerful shove by Hogan forces Wright a few feet away, breaking the tieup to some applause from the crowd.]

GM: Just moments into this one and these fans like what they're seeing out of this very unusual matchup, Bucky.

[The two warriors circle one another again, eyeballing each other up and down for a few moments...

...and then lunge into another lockup, jostling each other hard in mid-ring as they look for an advantage.]

GM: Back to the tieup... and again, Hogan starts to use his size and power edge to back down Wright...

[Soon, we find ourselves in the same spot - Hogan pushing hard at the edge of the ring as Supreme struggles to keep himself inside the squared circle.]

GM: Again, Hogan trying to outmuscle the former World Champion and-

[Wright sidesteps, Hogan flying forwards.]

GM: Whooooa!

[Hogan slams on the brakes, arms flying out from his sides as he tries to keep his balance on the edge of the apron...

...and jerks around successfully, raising his fists in case Wright is coming for him but the former champion has backed off, nodding his head.]

GM: A little bit of mindgames going on at the outset of this one as Wright tries to show Hogan that all that power and size won't help him tonight.

BW: We'll see about that, daddy.

GM: The two warriors circling once more, looking for an opening... looking to get an early edge...

[After a few more moments, they move to tie up again...

...but Hogan slips a right hand into the jaw instead!]

GM: Oh! Hogan lands the right... and here comes another...

[This time, Hogan rears way back, laying in a big haymaker on the jaw.]

GM: Hogan hammering away, backing Supreme Wright across the ring, sending him back towards the edge of the ring once more...

[Wright's feet are just a couple of feet away from the edge of the ring when Hogan goes waaaaaaaay back for a haymaker aimed at knocking Wright off the apron...

...but ends up being telegraphed a little too much as Wright catches the arm coming in, hooking it under his own...]

GM: Wright blocks the right hand... spins under it...

[Holding a wristlock, Wright buries a short kick to the sternum... and another... and another... and again, Hogan is driven back to the edge of the ring...]

GM: Hogan's on the edge, Wright steps back...

[He switches his stance, throwing a right-legged high kick aimed at the skull of Hogan...

...who catches the leg on the way in, holding it under his arm as Wright did to his limb moments ago...]

GM: Wow! Blocked by Hogan and-

[And the wildman simply throws himself at Wright, diving into a sloppy tackle that takes them both down to the canvas!]

GM: Whoa!



BW: I'd say the feeling out process just ended, daddy!

[Hogan quickly gets on top, holding a sloppy-looking mount as he rains down right hands on Wright from the dominant position.]

GM: Right hand after right hand, pounding away on Wright who-

[Suddenly, Wright reaches up with both hands, snatching them around the torso of Hogan, rolling to the side to end up with Wright in the mount...]

GM: Wow! What a reversal and-

"SLAAAAAAAAAAAAAAP!"

GM: Open-handed slap, right on the ear!

[Wright lands a second one before Hogan can get a hand up to protect himself...

...which means Wright comes from the other side.]

"SLAAAAAAAAAAAAAAP!"

GM: From the left this time!

[Hogan gets the left hand up as well, blocking another slap from landing - although it doesn't stop Wright from trying, still throwing right and left open-handed blows before Hogan reaches up, snatching him around the body as Wright did to him, rolling again...

...but Wright keeps them rolling and they go right off the apron, crashing down on the ringside mats!]

GM: Oh, they rolled right out of the ring! Right out to the floor near us!

BW: And if they get too close to us, I'm making like that little Taco Bell dog and making a run for the border!

GM: Wrong border but... point taken.

[The big heavy hands of King Kong Hogan continue to land out on the floor until Wright manages to switch positions again, raining down slaps...

...which is when Hogan reaches up, ripping off the eyepatch and digging his thumb into Wright's eye!]

GM: HE GOES TO THE EYE!

[Wright immediately bails out of the mount, grabbing at his previously injured eye as Hogan gleefully tosses the eyepatch aside from his spot on the mat.]

GM: King Kong Hogan, at his first opportunity, goes right after the eye of Supreme Wright that he injured earlier this year, fans. That eye injury put Wright out of action for several weeks and we know that Hogan's obsessed with going after it again.

BW: It's a smart move. You might not like it, the fans might not like it... but that eye is a weakness on a guy who doesn't have a lot of them... and it could be Hogan's ticket to victory here tonight.

GM: Hogan climbing to his feet as Wright checks the eye, making sure there's no major damage...

[But as Wright does that, Hogan grabs him from behind...

...and SMASHES his face down on the ring apron, making sure to hit the side with the injured eye off the canvas!]

GM: And again, Hogan going after that eye... shoving Wright back into the ring... and it's just so odd for someone who has been at ringside for so many matches over the decades to see no ropes out there. It just completely changes the complexion of this matchup... not to mention the look of the ring which looks so bare.

BW: The ruthless, brutal genius of Roosevelt Wright in action, Gordo.

GM: You have to imagine Roosevelt is somewhere in the world looking on tonight and I wonder if he's pleased by seeing his creation in action.

BW: Which one?

[Gordon chuckles as Hogan climbs up into the ring, staying back as Wright struggles to get up off the mat...

...and Hogan charges right in, landing a big running kneelift that catches Wright under the chin, snapping his head back and dumping him down on the canvas!]

GM: Big kneelift finds the mark... and Hogan backs off, waving at Davis Warren to start our first ten count of the match.

BW: Knockout or submission is the only way to go... and they'll judge a KO by this ten count here.

GM: I can't imagine that single kneelift would be enough to keep Wright down, Bucky.

BW: I can't either but we saw the power that a single strike can get behind it when Lenny Strong of the LOE laid out poor Jimi Jam Jester earlier tonight. If Strong can do it, Hogan can do it too.

GM: But after just a three count here, Wright is getting back to his feet...

[As he does, Hogan comes to greet him, laying in a heavy right hand... and another... and another...]

GM: Huge shots by Hogan, just really putting his all into those blows...

[With Wright staggered, Hogan scoops him up, slamming him down on the canvas... and then promptly leaps into the air, dropping his 280 pound frame down on the sternum of Wright with a leaping kneedrop!]

GM: Slammed him down and then jumped right on top of him, crushing his chest under his near 300 pound body... and again, he's calling for a count.

BW: There's going to be a lot of counts in this one, Gordo. In a regular match, you often see guys for a pinfall early to gauge how much damage they've inflicted. This is similar. You won't know if you've done enough to get a ten count unless you try.

GM: And for someone like King Kong Hogan, Bucky... I'd say a knockout is his only shot of victory. He's not going to tap out a king of submissions like Supreme Wright.

BW: Never say never but Hogan's definitely not known for his submission skills.

[Another three count follows from the official before Wright starts to come off the mat, getting to his knee...

...which is when Hogan swoops back in, pulling him into a standing headscissors to a roar from the crowd!]

GM: What's this now?! Hogan perhaps looking for a homerun early!

[Hogan powers the kneeling Wright up into the air, flipping him over into powerbomb position...]

GM: Powerbomb on the way and-

[...but once up in the air, Wright slams the point of his elbow down between the eyes of Hogan once... twice... three times... four... five... six... and Hogan finally loses his grip, allowing Wright to lean forward, riding him down to the canvas where Wright slides back into the mount!]

GM: What a counter and right back into a dominant position here and-

"SLAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAP!"

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

[The open-handed slap lands again before Hogan can cover up, protecting himself as Wright rains down blows on either side of his head - mostly absorbed by the shielding arms of Wright...

...who switches to big powerful elbows from the top, again smashing down on the shielding arms!]

GM: Hogan's trying to protect himself -oh! Another big elbow!

[But Hogan's defensive stance manages to minimize the damage as Wright gets out of the mount, waiting for Hogan to get to his feet...]

GM: Hogan coming back up, Wright behind him... waistlock!

[The former World Champion hooks his grip, ready to lift Hogan into the air...

..but a well-placed back elbow jerks into the side of Wright's jaw once... twice... and a third one breaks his grip!]

GM: Hogan breaks out and-

[Without warning, Hogan whips around and uncorks a BRUTAL standing lariat that absolutely wipes out Wright!]

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

[Hogan smirks from all fours, downed from the effort he put into the lariat. He leans forward, his face just above Wright's.]

"Don't go to sleep now, little puppy. We're just getting started."

[Hogan pushes off the mat as the referee steps in to start another ten count.]

GM: Davis Warren's got two jobs in this one. Count and check for submissions. That's it, Bucky.

BW: Makes for an easy night for him... as long as he doesn't mind getting blood on his shoes.

GM: No blood in this one yet but it could be just a matter of time before the violence gets ratcheted up a notch.

[The referee's count is slow and steady, getting to about four before Wright starts to stir off the mat, sitting up as Hogan looks on...]

...and then runs in, driving the bottom of a bare foot between the eyes of Wright, knocking him right back down to the mat.]

GM: Ohh! Hard kick there... and I've gotta question the wisdom of the bare feet in this one, Bucky.

BW: It sure does seem like something that Wright might be able to take advantage of.

GM: Hogan pulling Wright to his feet now...

[Grabbing the wrist for an Irish whip, Hogan winds up...]

GM: He's gonna whip him off the apron, fans! Hogan looking to take advantage of not having any ropes!

[But Wright grabs the grasping hand, twisting his arm around into an armwringer, forcing Hogan to double up in pain...]

...which is when Wright snaps off a pair of short kicks to the forehead, straightening him up before twisting the arm a second time, turning his back to Hogan, and JERKING the arm down across Wright's own shoulder!]

GM: OHHHH!

[Hogan falls to the mat, crying out as he grabs at his elbow, rolling back and forth on the canvas as Wright looks disdainfully down at him.]

GM: An over-the-shoulder armbreaker right on that limb and Hogan's in a bad way now, really feeling the effects of that one.

BW: We talked about Hogan likely needing the knockout to win this... well, Supreme Wright can win it in a number of ways, Gordo. He could knock someone out with a kick... or a knee... or an elbow... he could choke someone out... and yeah, like we're about to see here, he's a master of submissions inside that ring.

[Grabbing the arm he attacked, Wright forces Hogan to his hands and knees as he tucks the arm under his armpit and torques it...]

GM: Straddle armbar applied here, one leg on either side of Hogan's torso as he cranks back on that limb.

BW: And I've gotta wonder what it takes to make a man like King Kong Hogan submit. I don't know if he's EVER submitted, Gordo.

GM: In all my years following his career, I don't ever recall hearing about a loss by submission, Bucky.

[Wright cranks on the trapped arm, causing a "no, no, no, NO!" from Hogan when the referee checks for a submission.]

GM: Hogan hanging on as Wright tries to change that history and get a win by submission here tonight in Mosaic Stadium. What a weekend it's been here in Regina, Bucky.

BW: And we've still got the Semifinals and the Finals of the Stampede Cup tournament PLUS the World Title on the line with Kerry Kendrick challenging Johnny Detson for the gold!

GM: The Battle of Saskatchewan is certainly one for the ages... and Hogan again says no to the submission attempt...

[Wright steps out of the straddle, using his knee on the shoulder joint to force Hogan facefirst to the canvas where he steps on the wrist, pinning the arm to the mat...

...and STOMPS the arm with his other foot!]

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

[Hogan again cries out, rolling away from Wright, clutching his arm in pain.]

GM: Supreme Wright doing a number on that arm over the last few moments here and perhaps he's opened up a chink in the armor of King Kong Hogan now.

BW: Wright can hurt you in so many ways, Gordo. If he puts his focus on the arm of Hogan, who knows what kind of damage he can do in this environment.

GM: An excellent point... Hogan trying to get up off the canvas now to defend himself...

[And as he does, he finds Wright waiting for him, measuring him up with a well-placed forearm strike to the jaw... and another... and a spinning back elbow sends him stumbling backwards towards the edge of the ring again.]

GM: And again, Wright batters him backwards. It's becoming quite clear that knocking your opponent off the apron... out of the ring... is a major strategy on the part of both men.

BW: Well, yeah, Gordo. The floor out here ain't soft. It may not be the concrete floors in the arenas we usually work in but this stadium grass ain't exactly like falling on a mattress... especially when you're falling from the ring out of control like that.

GM: Wright's got him on the edge again, measuring his man...

[Three more forearms find the mark, leaving Hogan right on the edge as Wright steps back...]

GM: SPINNING BACKFI- BLOCKED!

[Hogan lets loose a howl of pain as Wright's deadly strike lands on his raised arms in front of his face, absorbing some of the impact on the arm that Wright attacked moments ago...

...but the counter surprises Wright who is momentarily vulnerable as Hogan wraps his arms around the torso!]

GM: WAIT A MINUTE! WAIT A MINUTE!

[The crowd buzzes as Hogan attempts to lift Wright into a belly-to-back suplex off the apron to the floor..

...but the arm gives out and he sets Wright back down on the canvas as the crowd "ohhhhhhhs" in response!]

GM: Hogan went for a suplex to the floor! Can you imagine what kind of damage that would have-

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

GM: FOOT STOMP BY WRIGHT! RIGHT ON THE BARE FOOT!

[Hogan grimaces as he hops on one foot for a moment...

...which allows Wright to scissor that hopping foot, taking him down in a drop toehold towards the center of the ring.]

GM: Wright takes him off his feet now, rolling right back up to his own and...

[The crowd ROARS as Wright traps the injured foot in his hands... and twists!]

GM: ANKLELOCK!

[Hogan cries out, pushing up off the canvas as Wright torques the ankle!]

GM: And here's an example of Wright using the bare foot to his advantage, Bucky.

BW: Absolutely. With your foot in a boot, there's some protection against a hold like this... a little bit of bracing... of support. This is a bare foot being twisted against the grain in Supreme Wright's typically nasty fashion.

GM: Although it's probably a little harder to keep a hold on the bare foot.

BW: Very true, I'd imagine.

GM: But so far, Wright's doing an excellent job here as Hogan reaches out and- oh my stars, Bucky. I just realized something.

BW: What's that?

GM: Hogan's reaching for the ropes to break the hold but... there are no ropes! He can't get a hold broken that way!

BW: You're absolutely right, Gordo. With no ropes, he may get his ankle broken before he can break the hold!

[Hogan's stretching arms reach out towards ropes that aren't there as Wright nods in satisfaction.]

GM: And this... this right here is why Roosevelt Wright created this match... it's why Supreme Wright wanted this match! He wanted to be able to lock on a submission hold and no one but the Lord Above can force him to break it this time!

[Hogan's arms are grasping at the mat, pulling and tugging as he drags his body across the ring...]

GM: I don't know what Hogan's thinking about here, Bucky. There are NO ropes! He can't get out this way! He's gotta find another way to escape!

BW: You're absolutely right. He needs to roll through it... trying to kick him off... something else... but I don't know if a guy like Hogan has the technical expertise to do such a thing.

GM: With no ropes there to break the hold, Wright's just letting him exert his energy dragging them both across the ring. He can get to the edge of the apron all he wants but Wright will still have this hold on and he can keep it that way until next weekend if he wants to!

[Hogan again drags them another foot or two forward as Wright continues to hang on...

...and then shifts his grip slightly...]

GM: AHHH! THE TOES!

[The crowd groans as Wright's typical brand of small joint manipulation finds a new target - the bare toes of King Kong Hogan as he bends them backwards.]

GM: Hogan's screaming in pain now - and I don't know if I've ever heard Hogan scream like that either, Bucky!

[Hogan drags and lunges again, wrapping his hands around the ring apron!]

GM: Well, he got to the apron but now what?! Now he's still trapped in this hold! Still trapped in the merciless grip of King Kong Hogan who... wait a second! He's still going!

[Pulling and tugging at the apron, Hogan drags himself right out of the ring, falling forward so that his hands land on the ringside mats...]

GM: He's almost to the floor... but Wright's still got the leg! With no ropes, Wright can stay on the apron and keep that hold locked in! Hogan got OUT of the ring and there's still no escape!

BW: This is hard to watch, Gordo. I stubbed my toe on the dresser before we left for Canada this week and I cried for ten minutes... can you imagine the pain in having your toe bent like that by someone like Wright?

[Hogan lets loose a horrific scream of pain and makes one more lunge...

...and somehow manages to pull himself to the floor and Wright tumbling out with him!]

GM: Ohh! A hard fall off the apron by Wright there. I think he didn't expect that one - he didn't look prepared for it. A hard fall face first on the ringside mats and finally, Hogan gets out of that devastating anklelock.

BW: But at what cost, Gordo? He was in that hold an awfully long time and that's gotta do tremendous damage to the ankle to go along with the damage to the arm he already suffered.

[Grabbing onto the apron, Hogan grimaces as he drags himself to his feet, standing on one leg as he looks down menacingly at the prone Supreme Wright.]

GM: Hogan's the first one up... but look at him, Bucky. You called it. He can barely walk on that leg. He's having a hard time just standing there at this point.

[Hogan leans down, dragging a banged-up Wright off the ringside mats...]

"CLAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAANG!"

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

[...and whips him into the ringside barricade, the fans all around roaring for the action getting close to them!]

GM: Into the railing goes Wright and... this is where Hogan excels, Bucky. Out on the floor, surrounded by dangerous things he can use to his advantage.

BW: Absolutely... and this is NOT where Supreme Wright wants to be with him, I guarantee you that much.

[With Wright sprawled backwards against the security railing, Hogan spots something on the ringside mats, leaning down to retrieve it...]

GM: What in the... is that a power cable?!

BW: I think it's a camera cable, Gordo!

GM: Well, what's he gonna do with- ahhh!

[The crowd has a similar reaction as Hogan loops the camera cable around the throat of Supreme Wright, yanking back on it and ripping the air out of the former World Champion's lungs!]

GM: He's choking the life out of him out here at ringside!

[Wright claws at the cable around his throat, trying to pull it off as Hogan continues to pull on it.]

GM: And we talked about Wright choking someone out - this is Hogan attempting to choke Wright out!

BW: Not what I had in mind, Gordo!

GM: Nor I but it's EXACTLY what a maniac like King Kong Hogan has in mind, fans!

[The camera closes in on Wright's face turning red, his tongue lolling out the side...

...and the feed abruptly shifts drastically before it cuts out.]

GM: The camera shot is out... the action continues... we'll get another camera in position and-

[As another camera comes online, the shot jogging towards them, we see that Hogan has shoved down a cameraman and is now menacing them...]

GM: Oh! He knocked down one of our cameramen! That no good piece of garbage!

BW: He's not done with him either. What's he doing now?

[The bullying Hogan reaches down towards the floored cameraman and...]

GM: Oh no!



[...and lifts his camera into view, showing it high for all to see!]

GM: He's got the camera! He's got that twenty thousand dollar camera and-

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

[The crowd groans as Hogan SLAMS the camera down across Wright's back, knocking the former World Champion facefirst down on the ringside mats.]

GM: And King Kong Hogan has just cranked up the level of violence in this match, fans. Until now, this one was about the physicality of these two warriors but Hogan would NOT settle for that. He wants the weaponry involved and he's accomplished that goal.

"Get up, little puppy! Come get some more!"

[As Hogan verbally taunts the downed Wright, Supreme slowly starts to push back up off the mat, his arms under him. Hogan nods in approval, watching as Wright struggles to get back to his hands and knees...]

GM: Hogan's gonna do it again! To the skull this time!

[Hogan winds up, camera still in hand...]

...and Wright lashes out from his knees, driving a palm strike up into the midsection!]

GM: Ohh! Palm strike downstairs!

[Wright winds up again...]

GM: Another one! And a third! A fourth!

[Hogan drops the camera, clutching his ribs in pain as Wright surges up to his feet, lifting Hogan onto his shoulder, twisting around...]

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

GM: GUTFIRST ON THE RAILING! OHHHHH MYYYYYY!

[Hogan flops over onto the ringside mats, clutching his ribs in pain, rolling back and forth on the floor as Wright leans against the barricade for a breather.]

GM: What a move by Wright and that completely changes the momentum in this one, fans!

BW: The arm... the leg... the ribs... Wright's physically taking King Kong Hogan apart one piece at a time! By the time he's through with him, Hogan may not have a damn thing left, Gordo!

GM: That may be the gameplan for the former World Champion and he- OHH! Hard kick to the ribs of Hogan!

[Hanging onto the railing, Wright DRILLS Hogan with a second soccer kick to the ribs.]

GM: Good grief. Hogan could have broken ribs after that fall on the railing...

BW: Or after those kicks to the ribs.

GM: Absolutely... and now Wright's dragging Hogan back to the ring, rolling him back in...

[Wright climbs back up on the apron, getting back into the ring...]

GM: Both men back up inside the ring now - remember, for the knockout or submission to count, it has to happen inside the ring so they can fight outside all they want - there are no countouts and no disqualifications - but to win the match, it's gotta be inside the ring, Bucky.

BW: And this is where Wright wants him. Down on the mat and at his mercy.

[Wright leans down, grabbing Hogan by the wrist, hauling him back up to his feet in the middle of the ring...]

GM: Wright's got the arm and... whip!

[But Hogan holds his ground, refusing to be Irish whipped towards the open side of the ring.]

GM: Hogan's fighting it!

BW: Of course he is! You could break an arm, a leg - who knows - with a fall like that!

GM: We've both seen serious injuries come when the top rope breaks in a match and someone takes a tumble... and that's with some of the ropes still there to slow them down or maybe break the fall a little. This is pure velocity off the apron and pure impact on the floor! Both men need to avoid that at all costs!

[Wright attempts the whip a second time but again Hogan continues to block it...]

GM: Blocked again! Hogan fighting this one despite the damage he's suffered already and-

[Wright pulls again but this time ducks down, lifting Hogan up into a fireman's carry!]

GM: He's got him up! He's got 280 pounds up on his shoulders!

[The former World Champion walks across the ring, standing, looking at the middle of the ring...]

GM: Maybe Fat Tuesday on the way here - a further attack on those ribs he went after on the floor!

[Wright pauses... and then turns.]

GM: What's he...?

[With the crowd buzzing, Wright steps away from the middle of the ring towards the ring apron...]

GM: No, no... don't do this, kid. Don't do this!

[Wright takes another step, getting closer to the edge of the ring.]

GM: Supreme Wright with a dangerous idea here! The crowd in Regina on their feet as he... he's on the edge, Bucky!

BW: I see it!

GM: Wright's on the edge of the apron, looking out on this crowd and-

[Wright muscles Hogan up and over his head as he leaps off the apron, swinging his legs up...]

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

GM: FAT TUESDAY OFF THE APRON TO THE FLOOOOOOORRRRRRRRR!

[Both men are still on the floor, a grimacing Hogan clutching his ribs in agony as Wright lies still, his back having SLAMMED into the ringside mats at high impact.]

BW: Supreme Wright - ever the thinking man - may have just shown a flash of emotion guiding him here tonight, Gordo. Because THAT'S a man who is willing to put his own body on the line at this point if it means doing damage to King Kong Hogan!

GM: Incredible move... but you're absolutely right, Bucky. Supreme Wright just took a near-300 pound man across his legs and right down onto his back on the unforgiving stadium grass! Wright's been doing a number physically on Hogan throughout this match and he just did a number on HIMSELF right there!

[Both men are still down on the floor as the referee peers over the apron at them.]

GM: Remember, with no countouts and with a decision having to happen inside the ring, there is no count here. The referee's checking to see if they look like they can continue but Davis Warren truly has no authority to do anything else at this point. Wright's down, Hogan's down... but they can stay down for as long as they need at this point without fear of losing due to the referee.

[Hogan rolls onto his back, coughing violently as he holds onto his ribs.]

BW: How much damage was done to the ribs there? Cracked ribs? Broken ribs? Internal injuries? Hogan's in a tremendous amount of pain and Wright's responsible for it!

[Slowly, Wright sits up on the floor, pain all over his face as he grabs at his lower back, noticeably wincing as he reaches back towards the ring apron.]

GM: With nearly twenty minutes gone in this war, Supreme Wright may have just landed the first major blow in determining who will win this thing. King Kong Hogan is one of the most resilient competitors we've ever seen but even Hogan's gotta be seriously hurt from that.

[Wright grabs the apron with both hands, pulling hard to drag himself off the floor. He slumps back against the apron, again grabbing at his back as the referee calls for him to get the action back inside.]

GM: Wright on his feet... somehow managing to get back up... he's going after Hogan now, maybe looking to get him back in to finish this one off.

[He drags Hogan off the ringside mats by his ponytail, tossing him back into the ring.]

GM: Hogan's back inside now... and Wright's coming back in as well...

[Wright crawls in a few feet before forcing himself to stand, looking down on Hogan who is trying to get off the mat as well...]

GM: Wright's already up... Hogan's trying to get there, clutching those ribs...

[As the wildman brawler gets to his feet, Wright moves forward, lashing out...]

GM: Leg kick! Right to the side of the knee!

[Hogan stumbles, still holding his ribs as Wright lashes out with a second one.]

GM: Another one - right on target.

BW: Wright is surgical with those strikes, Gordo. Those leg kicks are RIGHT on the outside of the knee area... and that'll lock up your leg... it'll hobble you in a hurry.

GM: Wright again with the leg kick...

[Hogan stumbles forward, trying to create some space but Wright circles to cut him off, rearing back...]

GM: Ohhh! Body kick - roundhouse to the body... and another!

[The second one leaves Hogan gasping for air as he slumps down to his knees, looking up at Wright who stands over him. Hogan smiles, sucking wind as he speaks...]

"That... all... you got?!"

"WHAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAACK!"

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

GM: HEAD KICK! HEAD KICK! DOWN GOES HOGAN!

[Wright waves a dismissive hand at him, stepping back, grabbing the exposed ringpost for support as the referee starts a ten count on the downed Hogan.]

GM: That roundhouse head kick on the kneeling Hogan found the mark, knocking him flat... and now the question becomes - can King Kong Hogan get up from that head kick before the count of ten?

BW: We're about to find out - Warren starting his count now!

[The referee calls out "ONE!" as Hogan struggles to even move, a hand limply twitching on the canvas as Wright leans his forehead against the post, breathing heavily.]

GM: Both men have been put through the wringer so far in this one and you get the feeling that while this match could end at any time - neither of these men are likely to be satisfied until they leave the other a broken mess.

BW: It's been a long, hard battle for these two to get here. A lot of physical trauma along the way... and yeah, Hogan wants Wright's head on a pike but Wright would love to show the world that he's the baddest man on the planet still. He might not be the World Champion... although a lot of people say that's because he hasn't gotten the opportunity in a few years now... but he just might be the baddest man walkin'.

[Davis Warren's count continues, the fans starting to rumble as Hogan flips back onto his stomach at the count of "FOUR!"]

GM: Hogan perhaps starting to stir now... starting to try and get back to his feet as Wright attempts to recover from his self-inflicted injuries we saw moments ago... but both men are a physical mess at this point in the battle.

[At the count of "FIVE!" Hogan plants his palms underneath him, grimacing and crying out as he forces himself into a pushup.]

BW: Imagine the pain shooting through the core of King Kong Hogan here as he... he's getting up!

[The pushup takes him to his knees as "SIX!"... where he rises up just before "SEVEN!" comes down. Warren waves for the fight to continue as Wright slowly turns to face his rival...]

GM: They're ready to go again...

BW: I don't know about that... Hogan can barely stand...

[Wright lumbers forward, diving into a tieup that he quickly moves to a Muay Thai clinch...]

GM: Clinch! Wright's got the clinch and- ohhh! Knee to the body! Another one!

[The crowd groans with each knee to the body landed by the former World Champion...]

"OHHHHHHH!"

"OHHHHHHH!"

"OHHHHHHH!"

"OHHHHHHH!"

[The cavalcade of knees strikes sends Hogan wobbling backwards towards an exposed ringpost but Wright uses the clinch to halt him before he gets there, switching to a front facelock...]

GM: What's Wright got in mind here?

[The former World Champion slowly turns over, setting up for a reverse neckbreaker...]

...and then spins out, slamming an elbowstrike into the back of Hogan's knee, knocking him into the ringpost!]

GM: OHH! Hogan gets knocked into the post with that elbow!

[Wright backs off, raising his right arm for a cheer from the crowd...]

...and then goes into a spin, SLAMMING his elbow into the back of Hogan's head, smashing his face into the steel post!]

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

[The blow causes Hogan to slump to his knees, hugging the post as Wright backs off, waiting to see if Hogan will go down for a ten count...]

GM: What a shot by Supreme Wright! Hogan's skull SLAMS into the steel and...

[Wright angrily steps back in, snatching the ponytail and pulling Hogan's head back...]

BW: He's busted open, Gordo!

GM: He certainly is... blood streaming down the face of King Kong Hogan and-

[Wright winds up, bringing the point of his elbow down onto the bloody forehead...]

GM: ELBOWSTRIKE! RIGHT ON THE CUT!

[The former Team Supreme leader winds up, bringing his elbow down a second time... a third... and then a flurry of vicious and violent elbows to the forehead, each one deepening the cut and splattering the crimson of Hogan all over the place!]

GM: WRIGHT'S TRYING TO DESTROY HOGAN BEFORE OUR VERY EYES!

[With Hogan a bloody mess, Wright slowly pulls him up by the hair...]

GM: And he's STILL not done! Not allowing for a ten count! Not looking for a submission! Supreme Wright's on a mission here tonight and... he pushes Hogan back up against the post. Maybe another elbow here and...

[Wright whips around, a spinning back chop aimed for the throat of the bloodied Hogan...]

...who slumps down JUST enough!]

"CLAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAANK!"

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

[Wright SLAMS his wrist and forearm into the exposed post at a very high speed, causing him to immediately scream out in pain. He stumbles from the corner, his back to Hogan as he cradles his right arm in his other hand against his chest...]

GM: He hit the post! Wright hit the post!

BW: He may have broken his own damn arm, Gordo!

[The bloodied wildman just throws himself at Wright's back, tackling him down to the canvas where he grabs the right arm, extending it out from his side...]

GM: Hogan's got him down... got him-

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

GM: KNEEDROP ON THE WRIST!

[Pinning the wrist to the mat with his hands, Hogan lifts up, driving his knee down into the forearm once... twice... three times...]

GM: He's going after the arm like a wild animal! Like a savage beast!

[Hogan plants his knee on the forearm, grabbing the hand and wrist with both hands...]

...and CRANKS back on the hand, pulling the arm against the grain from where his near-300 pounds is holding it down!]

GM: AHHH! He's trying to break his arm!

[The crowd groans as Wright claws at the canvas, digging his fingers into his head as Hogan screams at him...]

"QUIT! QUIT, YOU PIECE OF SH-"

[The audio cuts out for a few moments but we can still see Hogan shouting at Wright in silence...]

GM: -no rope breaks in this one! If Wright wants out of this, he's gotta get out of it on his own!

BW: We didn't think Hogan had any submissions in him but right now, Supreme Wright may be regretting the rules of this one!

[Several moments pass of Wright clawing at the mat before he reaches over to the edge of the ring, pulling on the apron, trying to escape in a similar fashion to how Hogan did from the anklelock early in the match...]

GM: Wright's trying to pull himself out... trying to get out of this and-

[Seeing Wright's strategy, Hogan slides to the other side of Wright, kneeling on the mat as he pistons his fist repeatedly into the back of Wright's exposed head!]

GM: Oh! OH! OHHH! COME ON!

BW: There's nothing to "come on!" about, Gordo! The ref can't stop this!

GM: Of course, you're absolutely right, Bucky... and with Wright dazed after that blow to the back of the head, he's at the mercy of King Kong Hogan as Hogan drags him to his feet...

[Lowering his shoulder, Hogan grabs Wright around the torso... takes aim..]

GM: NO!

"CLAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAANK!"

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

[...and DRIVES Wright's spine into the exposed ringpost!]

GM: GOOD GRIEF!

[Wright arches his back, his face etched in pain as Hogan straightens up, stepping back as Wright stumbles towards him...]

GM: What's he... oh no!

[He lifts Wright up in his powerful arms... steps towards the ring apron...]

GM: No, no! Don't do it, Hogan! Don't you-

[...and leaps up, stepping off the apron as he SLAMS Wright's spine down on the apron and he himself drops down to the floor!]

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

GM: SIDE SLAM ON THE HARDEST PART OF THE RING!

[Wright arches his back, rolling in pain back towards the middle of the ring as a grinning Hogan leans on the apron, blood streaming down as his face as he wipes at his eyes...

...and then rubs a bloody palm print diagonally across his stained white tanktop.]

GM: A war banner across the chest of King Kong Hogan, painted in his own life's blood as Supreme Wright tries to recover from another devastating blow to the spine!

BW: The unusual rules of this match strike again, Gordo... without the ropes there, that was an easy move for Hogan to execute - easy but damn effective!

GM: Wright's down. Hogan's bloody but on his feet... and I've gotta wonder what either of these two have left in the tank at this point, Bucky.

BW: We're closing in on... what? Almost a half hour now.

GM: That's right.

BW: We've seen Supreme Wright go over an hour before, Gordo. The World Title match with Dave Bryant. And nearly an hour with Ryan Martinez at SuperClash.

GM: But we've never seen him go an hour in a war like this, Bucky. A half hour of the insane brutality these two have put one another through... how much can they possibly have left?

BW: Hogan's climbing back in... so I think we're about to find out...

[Hogan stalks towards Wright who is on his chest, breathing heavily...

...and then STOMPS the lower back!]

GM: Ohh!

[He does it again, causing Wright to arch up in pain...]

GM: A second stomp... bare feet down on the spine... heel meeting spine in a most brutal fashion...

[And with Wright still prone at his feet, Hogan leaps into the air...]

GM: KNEEDROP!

[...and BURIES a near-300 pound kneedrop in the lower back of Wright, again causing the former World Champion to cry out in pain.]

GM: Another horrific blow to the back...

BW: And at this point, I gotta point out that Wright's might not be anywhere near this banged up if he hadn't used the damn Fat Tuesday on the floor!

GM: An excellent point...

[Hogan stands over Wright, leaning back against the post, gesturing for the referee to count...]

GM: And now, Davis Warren starting a ten count on Supreme Wright as we wait to see what Wright's got left in this one.



[Hogan again wipes blood from his eyes, watching as Wright plants his elbows underneath him...]

GM: Wright's starting to move already though... the former champion's got more in him than most competitors could ever dream of. More will to compete. More drive to win.

[Wright forces himself off the mat as the count gets to "THREE!"]

GM: We're at three and Wright is trying to get off the canvas... Hogan looking down at him, shaking his head...

[With a shout of effort, Wright forces himself to his knees, staring right up at Hogan who shouts something that just BARELY gets muted before he steps forward, pulling Wright off the mat into a standing headscissors, swinging him around so Hogan's facing the post...]

GM: Wright's up thanks to Hogan and-

BW: Oh my god!

GM: NO!

[Hogan angrily lifts Wright into the air...]

"CLAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAANK!"

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

[...and HURLS him into the exposed ringpost with a powerbomb to the "buckles!"]

GM: GOOD GOD ALMIGHTY! SPINEFIRST INTO UNFORGIVING DAMN STEEL!

[Wright collapses forward, falling facefirst to the mat as Hogan backs off.]

"Count the son of a bitch now, ref."

[Hogan walks away, moving across the ring to watch as Supreme Wright struggles to move on the canvas and Davis Warren starts counting anew.]

GM: The referee starting his ten count. Hogan just threw Wright spinefirst into solid steel and... I don't know if anyone's getting up from that, Bucky.

BW: You add the jolt to the spine to the whiplash effect and... whew. He's in a lot of pain... and you could be right, Bucky. That might be all she wrote in this one.

[The referee continues to count as Hogan waves a hand, counting along with him.]

GM: What a battle... a war this has been. Wright's trying to move on the mat but the count is up to four already and he's still down on the mat. I just don't know if he's got enough left in him.

[Wright pulls his arms up, sliding them underneath himself as the fans start to cheer again, urging him up as the ref counts five.]

GM: Hold on now... hold on one second... we're at five but Wright's trying, fans! He's trying!

[The former World Champion pushes up on his elbows, still looking down but with part of his body now up off the canvas...]

...and as the count goes to six, he slides a knee underneath himself.]

GM: Supreme Wright, for the love of God! He's trying to get up! He's trying to keep fighting! Can you believe this?!

[The count goes to seven as Wright slides the knee under him, still down but on a knee now, staring at a disbelieving Hogan...]

GM: He's on a knee! He's almost there! He's almost-

[And as the referee counts eight, Wright rises to his feet, wobbling and almost falling as he does!]

GM: He's up! Wright's up! The fight continues!

[Hogan angrily stomps across the ring, rearing back a right hand...]

GM: Big righ- blocked by Wright!

[Wright blocks the haymaker and snaps off a leg kick at almost the same time, taking Hogan back a few steps.]

GM: Wright goes downstairs again, Hogan barely able to stand!

[Hogan winds up again... but Wright beats him to the blow, throwing an elbowstrike to the jaw that causes Hogan's eyelids to flutter as he stumbles backwards!]

GM: Wright's trying to battle his way back into this... trying to...

[Wright winds up, looking for another elbow but as he throws it, Hogan ducks down, scooping him up, shoving him up onto his shoulder as if for a powerslam...]

GM: He's got him up and-

[...and sprints on his bad leg towards the corner as quickly as his bum wheel will carry him...]

GM: What in the...?

[...and HURLS Wright through the air, his shoulder - or maybe his skull - SLAMMING into the steel ringpost!]

"CLAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAANK!"

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

GM: OH MY STARS! HE THREW HIM LIKE A DAMN JAVELIN! HEADFIRST!  
HEADFIRST INTO THE STEEL RINGPOST!

BW: Was it his head or was it his shoulder, Gordo?!

GM: I think it was his head! I think Supreme Wright's skull just slammed into solid steel and...

[Wright rolls over on cue, revealing a horrific gash on his forehead that has blood streaming and the crowd groaning!]

GM: Oh... oh my...

[And with a gleeful expression on his face, Hogan pounces on his bloodied foe, swinging his fist down into the cut as he does.]

GM: And Hogan's on him like the proverbial shark who smells blood in the water!

[The crowd groans as Hogan continues to pummel the cut with clenched fists, deepening the wound and increasing the blood flow until Wright's sporting the crimson mask!]

GM: Both men severely busted open now... and that can only serve to take MORE wind out of their sails in this one!

[Breathing heavily, Hogan rests on all fours, Wright rolling over onto his chest nearby, blood dripping down onto the canvas...

...which is when Hogan gets a second wind, grabbing the back of the head and SMASHING him facefirst into the mat once... twice... three times!]

GM: Hogan's all over him, driving his face down into the canvas! And now he's... oh jeez, rubbing his face back and forth on the mat, ripping and tearing at that damn cut!

[After a few more moments, Hogan pushes back to his feet, his tongue lolling out of the side of his mouth as a sadistic smile overtakes his face. He nods at the downed Wright, watching as Supreme drags himself towards the ringpost, trying to get away from his wild-eyed attacker...]

GM: Wright's trying to create some space, leaving a bloody streak on the canvas behind him as he pulls himself towards the corner...

BW: He's got nowhere to hide, Gordo. King Kong Hogan DOES smell blood in the water and the Korugun hired gun is looking for the kill now. He's looking to finish this one off - and perhaps finish off Supreme Wright once and for all.

GM: We just passed the thirty minute mark in this one but no time limits... barely any rules at all really. Both of these men are bloodied... they're exhausted... they're battered and broken... and yet they keep fighting. Incredible.

[Reaching the corner, Wright pulls himself closer so he's practically hugging it, his head resting against the side of it as blood continues to drip down his face. Across the ring, Hogan drops to his knees, rolling to the floor. He paces back and forth a few times, slamming his own fist into his face...]

GM: This guy is sick, fans. Absolutely twisted.

BW: Hell, we've known that for years, Gordo. You watch his matches with the likes of Ebola Zaire... of Muteesa... of Blackwater Bart and Bram Black in Japan... he likes to fight, he likes to make money, and those two things go hand in hand.

GM: But this? This isn't about money. We heard him say it before. This started about money... but now it's very personal.

[Hogan circles around the ringpost, stopping cold as he spots Wright...

...and with a nod, he breaks into a sprint...]

GM: What the hell is he...?

[...and swings up his leg, his bare foot aimed at the side of Supreme Wright's head... which just happens to be against the steel ringpost!]

GM: CONCUSSIONIZER!

[But JUST before the bare foot connects, Wright pushes himself clear and Hogan's foot SLAMS into the steel ringpost!]

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

[Hogan's ankle jams into the post as he immediately falls back, stumbling to a knee, wincing in pain...]

GM: He missed the big kick, hits the post, and now Hogan's down again... and now you have to wonder if that opens a window for Supreme Wright to get back into this thing! This match is crazy, Bucky!

BW: I'm going to need a nap after this - is that built into the format?

GM: Hardly. We've still got four big matches to come and... whew. You're right though. We might all need a vacation after this month of action. July seems like it's lasted for months, Bucky.

BW: Time is a flat circle... or something.

[With Hogan down, Wright rolls from the ring to the floor, holding onto the apron to steady himself as the blood continues to flow.]

GM: Wright's a bloody mess in there... Hogan's not much better though...

[Wright slowly approaches the kneeling Hogan from behind, dragging him up to his feet...

...which is when Hogan promptly jabs his thumb into Wright's injured eye again!]

GM: OH! BACK TO THE EYE! BACK TO THE EYE GOES HOGAN!

[He snatches Wright by the head before he can stumble back and SMASHES Wright's eye area right on the edge of the apron!]

GM: OH, GOODNESS!

[Wright stumbles back this time, falling to his butt on the floor as King Kong Hogan angrily spins away, leaning on the apron as he stumbles down the length of the ring towards the timekeeper's table.]

"Give it to me, kid."

[The timekeeper looks puzzled for a moment before Hogan shoves him out of his own chair, knocking him down to jeers from the crowd!]

GM: Give me a break! This guy's knocking down cameramen... he's attacking the timekeeper! This is ridiculous!

BW: Good thing he's got friends in high places.

GM: Or low ones depending who you ask.

BW: I ask the guy in high places who signs my paycheck - who do you ask?

GM: The one in the lowest of places who is a real piece of-

BW: CHAIR!

[The crowd roars as Hogan lifts the steel chair the timekeeper was sitting in, holding it high above his head as he turns back to the kneeling Wright...]

GM: King Kong Hogan's got a steel chair in hand - and fans, we know he's not afraid to use it!

[On cue, the bloodied Hogan winds up with it...]

"WHAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAACK!"  
"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

[...and SMASHES it across the lower back of Supreme Wright, sending him down onto all fours!]

GM: Right across the injured back with the chair!

BW: Hogan's not done!

[He winds up again...]

"WHAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAACK!"  
"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

[The second shot with the chair causes Wright to flatten out on the floor but Hogan's still not done.]

"WHAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAACK!"  
"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

GM: Make it three! Three absolutely brutal chairshots across the back... and again, you have to wonder what Wright's got left. What in the world does he possibly have left?

[Hogan recklessly tosses the chair over his head into the ring, sending the referee scampering clear...]

GM: Look out! This guy's a real menace out here... and what's he doing now?

[Digging under the ring, Hogan starts pulling steel chairs into view.]

GM: What?! We need more chairs now?!

BW: That's two... three... how many do we need?!

[Hogan pulls a fourth out, sneering at the referee who is trying to get the action back inside the ring. And one by one, Hogan starts opening up the chairs, depositing them out near the entrance ramp so that they're facing one another in sets of two...]

GM: I don't know what kind of diabolical construction Hogan's putting together out here but I don't like the looks of it, Bucky.

BW: I can't blame you for that. And after those shots with the chairs, I don't even know if Wright can defend himself from what's coming next.

[Pulling Wright off the floor, Hogan shoves him back into the ring, turning away from his monstrosity of steel on the floor.]

GM: Hogan perhaps choosing to go a different direction, leaving the chairs outside the ring behind as he slowly gets back up on the apron and-

[As Hogan crawls in on all fours, Supreme Wright charges quickly a few short steps...]

“WHAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAACK!”

“OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!”

GM: PUNT KICK TO THE HEAD!! OUT OF NOWHERE FROM WRIGHT!

[And Wright collapses to the mat as well, having used his burst of energy to save himself... for the moment at least.]

BW: And the only saving grace for Hogan there is that Wright didn't get the full distance of the ring to hit that. He only got a few steps in so the kick - while effective - probably didn't send Hogan on a one way ticket to Dream Land.

GM: An excellent point... and the exertion of the kick left Wright down as well. So both men down here... and the referee is checking them both.

BW: Could the referee count them both?

GM: I suppose he could but if he does, I wouldn't want to be Davis Warren when either one of them gets up.

[Wright slowly pushes to his knees, gasping for air, blood streaming down onto his torso now.]

GM: Whew... Supreme Wright was cut deep, fans.

BW: Do your thing, Gordo.

GM: Well, it's a good time to point out that parental discretion on all AWA events is advised and we're certainly seeing some disturbing images at this point for the little ones at home.

[Wright rubs a hand across his blood-stung eyes, trying to clear his vision as he pushes back up to his feet. He leans down, grabbing two hands full of Hogan's hair, dragging him up to his feet...]

GM: Hogan can barely stand right now and... ohh! Hard elbowstrike by Wright! And another! And a third!

[The blows knock Hogan backwards, sending him staggering back towards an exposed ringpost...]

GM: Hogan trying to back off but Wright moving in on him and-

[Suddenly, Hogan lunges forward, grabbing the back of Wright's head with one hand and shoving his thumb into the eye, gripping the eyesocket with his index finger!]

GM: WHAT THE-?!

[Wright wails in pain as Hogan forces him backwards, the referee at first moving to call for a break...

...and then stops to ask for a submission instead.]

BW: The only thing I know to call that is an Eye Claw!

GM: He's gouging the eye of Supreme Wright and the referee's asking for a submission?!

BW: It's no holds barred, Gordo! Anything goes!

[Hogan grits his teeth, digging deeper into the eye as the referee asks again and Wright lets loose a sickening scream...]

...and then LASHES OUT with his right leg, kicking the side of Hogan's knee so hard that Hogan completely collapses, screaming in pain himself as he grabs the side of his leg!]

GM: Thank heavens for that. Wright escapes but-

[Wright sinks to his knees, doubling forward into a prayer position as he grabs at his face. The referee kneels next to him, trying to check his condition.]

GM: -what kind of damage has been done here. Supreme Wright spent weeks on the shelf with that eye injury before - as we said - and Hogan's looking to put him right back in the hospital again.

[Still holding the side of his knee, Hogan rolls off the apron again, dropping down to the floor. He leans against the apron, lifting his bad leg off the floor.]

GM: Hogan standing on one leg out there...

BW: We may find out the answer to if a one-legged man can win a butt-kicking contest, Gordo.

GM: We certainly might - and look at Supreme Wright. Look at the fighting heart of this kid... back on his feet already, rubbing at that eye, trying to clear his vision as he comes over here near where Hogan is standing...

BW: He's having a hard time though, Gordo. How badly is his vision hampered right now? The constant attacks to it, the blood running right into it. He's having a really hard time seeing it looks like to me...

[As he wobbles across the ring, Wright nearly trips and has to grab onto the ringpost near Hogan to save himself...]

...which is when Hogan lunges forward, grabbing the back of Wright's ankles and yanking his legs out from under him.]

GM: Hogan trips him up from the floor... still fight left in both of these men... somehow, someway...

[Hogan switches his grip, making sure that there's a Wright foot on either side of the ringpost. He sneers at his rival...]

"For Theresa..."

[...and YANKS Wright's groin into the steel ringpost!]

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

[Hogan stumbles away from the corner, leaning against the apron, looking into the ringside camera...]

"You'll thank me later, baby."

[And with that, he blows a kiss at the camera.]

GM: What a sick piece of work that guy is.

BW: You think Theresa will really thank him?

GM: I think I have no desire to talk about our co-worker's social life no matter how many people seem to want to.

[Hogan, still leaning against the ring apron as Wright writhes in pain on the mat, shoves his hand into his jeans pocket...

...and slowly withdraws his weapon of choice.]

BW: The Golden Spike!

GM: What was once the weapon of Anton Layton now sits in the very dangerous hands of King Kong Hogan and this is not the first time we've seen him try to use this weapon against Supreme Wright, Bucky.

[Hogan crawls back into the ring, the Spike now clenched between his teeth as he slowly and methodically inches towards the still-downed Supreme Wright.]

GM: Wright is down... Wright is helpless... and you know that King Kong Hogan would love nothing more than to force Wright to give up with that Golden Spike, Bucky.

BW: I can think of one thing he'd like more.

GM: What's that?

BW: Wright's eye on the Spike.

GM: Dear god. What a horrible thought that is... but with this man, who knows what he's capable of.

[Hogan crawls closer and closer until he's kneeling next to Wright. He reaches down, rolling him onto his back. Hogan grips Wright by the throat, trying to hold him down as he grabs the Spike in his right hand...]

GM: No, no! Don't do it! Don't do this!

[Hogan swings the Spike down, aiming for the eye area on the former World Champion as the crowd squeals in terror...

...and Wright brings both arms up, grasping at the wild-eyed Hogan's other arm, blocking the Spike from coming any closer!]

GM: Wright blocks it! Hang on, kid!

[Wright holds his arms up, keeping the Spike at bay. Both men's limbs are trembling with exertion as Hogan tries to drive the Spike down and Wright battles to keep it away.]

BW: How long can he hold on?! He's gotta find a way out!

[Hogan lifts his hand off the throat, adding it to his other arm for more pressure, slowly forcing the arms down and the Spike closer...]



GM: Wright's fighting it but for how long?! Can he keep him back?! Can he keep the Spike away from-

[...and with the Spike mere inches from his eye, Wright slips one hand free... just for a moment...]

GM: What's he...?

[...and DIGS his fingers into Hogan's eye!]

GM: AHHHHHHH!

[Hogan howls in pain, falling backwards to the canvas, rubbing at his face as he drops the Golden Spike down on the canvas. Wright drags himself to his feet, looking down with hate-filled eyes at Hogan...

...and then looks down at the Spike itself.]

GM: Uh oh.

BW: There's no way, Gordo. There's no damn way!

GM: Wright's looking at the Spike! Wright's got the Spike right at his feet!

BW: Is he really going to use it?!

GM: I don't know. Ordinarily, I'd say no but perhaps King Kong Hogan has pushed him that far! Perhaps King Kong Hogan's attempts to blind the man - to put him out of wrestling, to take Wright away from the thing he loves most in the world - has driven him too far!

[Wright glares down at Hogan... then back at the Spike...

...and he kicks the Spike away, sending it rolling across the canvas out of both men's reach to a bit of a disappointed reaction from many in the crowd.]

GM: No! Supreme says no!

BW: After all this, he STILL won't use a weapon.

GM: You almost sound like you envy him, Bucky.

BW: Envy. Pity. Something like that, I guess.

[Supreme looks down at Hogan again...

...and then drops down to the floor, grabbing Hogan by the legs.]

GM: Uh oh!

[Hogan sits up, shaking his head, begging off as Wright holds one foot on either side of the post...]

GM: He might not use a weapon but the ring is fair..

[...and YANKS Hogan's groin into the ringpost!]

GM: ...GAME!

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

[Hogan clutches his groin, writhing in pain on the canvas.]

GM: And it's only fitting here in the home of the Saskatchewan Roughriders that Supreme Wright just spilt the uprights!

BW: The AWA might've just gotten their own Deflategate scandal, daddy!

[Hogan rolls to his side, rolling right off the apron and out to the floor as Supreme Wright nods to the roaring crowd. He walks around the ring, pulling the hurting Hogan off the floor...]

GM: Supreme Wright's not done with him, fans...

[Holding Hogan's bloodied hair, Wright snaps his foot up into the face... and again... and again... and again... and again...]

GM: Short kicks to the head! Hogan's reeling!

[Wright drags him over to the set of chairs near the aisleway, seating Hogan in one of them facing up the ramp...]

GM: And now he's got Hogan in the chairs! In whatever that evil contraption was that Hogan assembled in the aisle and...

BW: Is Wright done? Is he calling it a night?

GM: No chance of that. But Supreme Wright is walking up the ramp... heading up towards our entrance stage...

[Wright walks about halfway up the ramp... and slowly turns to face Hogan who is still sitting in the chair, barely able to sit up straight...]

GM: Hogan's in a daze and Wright's looking to keep it that way, fans!

[Wright looks out at the fans who are on their feet, roaring their approval for what comes next...]

...and the former World Champion breaks into a sprint, tearing down the ramp as quickly as he can, putting as much momentum into his downhill run as he can manage so that when he reaches the bottom...]

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

[...he swings his leg up and DRILLS Hogan with a running Yakuza kick with so much force, it sends Hogan flying backward out of his chair where he crashes down on the floor in a heap as the crowd ROARS for the highlight reel maneuver!]

GM: SUPREME WRIGHT CAME CHARGING IN FROM SOUTH OF THE BORDER FOR THAT ONE! AND KING KONG HOGAN GOT DROPPED LIKE A BAD HABIT!

[Wright grabs the downed Hogan by the hair, dragging him across the ringside area, pulling him up to shove him into the ring.]

GM: Wright tosses him in... getting in there with him now...

[Wright takes a step towards him but the referee steps in, starting a ten count...]

GM: The count begins again as we cross the forty minute mark in this war!

BW: I can't believe either of them are still fighting, Gordo.

GM: Neither can I. Incredible fighting spirit on the part of BOTH of these men. It's really unbelievable in a lot of ways. You can love or hate either of these competitors but you cannot deny their will to win is off the damn charts tonight here in Regina!

[Wright watches Hogan closely as the referee counts "THREE!"]

GM: Is it enough? Is that running kick from down the highway enough? Wright's waiting to see...

BW: Almost like he doesn't believe it will be.

GM: Can you blame him? He's given it all he's got and he can't keep him down. Hogan's given it all he's got and he can't keep Wright down. What a war these two have been through tonight.

[Hogan's arm moves, causing Supreme to step forward but the referee raises a hand, asking him to stay back as he counts "FIVE!"]

GM: We're up to five now. Supreme Wright saw the slightest flicker of movement and he was ready to strike again... but Davis Warren is trying to finish this count. Trying to count Hogan down and end this match... this battle... this war..

[Wright is wiggling his fingers with anticipation as "SIX!" rings out.]

GM: The brutality in this one reminds me a lot of the Jack Lynch/Demetrius Lake Texas Death Match from a few years back, Bucky.

BW: It certainly does. What a war that one was too.

GM: That one ended when one man willingly backed down... that seems unlikely here tonight.

["SEVEN!" is heard as Wright glares daggers through Hogan as he slides his arms underneath him...]

GM: Hogan's trying to get up... trying to get into a position where he can get to his feet... I don't know if he can make it though. It's a race now.

["EIGHT!" fills the air, the crowd counting along as Hogan plants his palms on the canvas, letting loose a guttural roar as he tries to muscle up off the mat...

...and ends up on his knees, looking up at Supreme Wright...]

GM: He's on his knees! He's almost there!

"NI-"

[But before the referee can finish counting, Wright whips around and BURIES his boot into the injured ribs of Hogan!]

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

GM: ROLLING SOLE BUTT!

[Wright yanks Hogan off his knees into a standing headscissors...]

GM: What in the...?! What's Wright gonna do now?!

[The former World Champion reaches out, lacing his arms together between the legs of King Kong Hogan to a HUUUUUUUGE ROAR!]

GM: OH MY STARS! COULD IT BE-?!

BW: Well, it's Roosevelt's match - ya might as well break out his signature move, kid!

[Wright goes to lift the near-300 pound Hogan into the air for the pancake piledriver...]

...but he suddenly cries out, dropping Hogan down onto all fours as he grabs at his lower back in pain!]

GM: The back gave out!

[Wright grimaces but falls forward onto the back... quickly spinning around amateur style to end up behind Hogan...]

...and wraps his arms around the head and neck!]

GM: SLEEPER! THE JAPANESE SLEEPER MASTERED BY HIS GRANDFATHER, THE LEGENDARY ROOSEVELT WRIGHT!

BW: He's got it in deep too!

[With Hogan on all fours, Wright manages to slip his legs around the torso, getting even more control of his victim's body...]

GM: And with this sleeper, he could force a submission OR knock him out, Bucky!

BW: It won't take that long either. If Hogan's got something in mind to get out of it, he'd better find it fast... he'd better...

[Hogan starts grasping on the canvas, a level of panic in his eyes that has not been seen since arriving in the AWA...]

GM: He's clawing at the mat! Trying to find a way out! But there are no ropes here - no rope breaks! The last time Wright had him trapped in a submission, Hogan bailed to the floor. Maybe he can-

BW: He's not looking for ropes, Gordo! He's-

[The crowd suddenly reacts as the camera catches a glimpse of exactly what Hogan's grabbing for...]

...the Golden Spike.

Oh, and he's got it too.]

GM: Oh n-

[A howl of pain from Supreme Wright fills the air as Hogan digs the sharpened end of the Spike into Wright's forearm, causing him to immediately break the hold!]

GM: HE SPIKED HIM! HE SPIKED WRIGHT'S ARM!

[And as a trickle of blood appears on the arm, Hogan rolls away from Wright, gasping and coughing on the canvas as Wright cradles his arm in his hands.]

GM: Hogan with that damned Spike just cut the arm of Supreme Wright and...

[Hogan slips the Spike back into his jeans pocket as he comes up off the canvas, still coughing... still rubbing at his neck. He throws a glance down at Wright who has rolled to all fours...

...and then marches across the ring, picking up the steel chair he tossed in earlier.]

GM: Oh no... he's got the chair again. He used that chair to wear out the back of Supreme Wright earlier and what do you want to bet he's got the same plan right about now, Bucky?

BW: He's coming back with... no, hang on now...

[Stopping in mid-ring, Hogan opens up the chair, setting it down on the canvas...]

GM: What's he doing now?

[Hogan slaps the seat of the open chair, a twisted smile on his face as he walks back over to the kneeling Wright. He grabs him by the hair, dragging him up to his feet as the referee steps back to see what's coming next...]

GM: Pulling Wright over by the chair... whatever he's got in mind obviously involves that steel chair, fans...

[Hogan scoops Wright up off the mat, slinging him over his shoulder...]

GM: Hogan's walking over towards the chair now... what's he got in his twisted mind here?!

[With a sick grin, Hogan shifts Wright's position, now holding him in front of him...]

GM: Wait a second! Hogan's got Wright in that piledriver position - that reverse piledriver, the one often called the Tombstone piledriver...

BW: What's he gonna do here?

[Hogan stands in front of the chair, trying to figure out his next move as the crowd roars with shock and concern...]

GM: Is he... is he trying to step up ON the chair?!

BW: No... no way. He can't be!

[But as Hogan tries to puzzle out his next move, Wright starts kicking his legs, causing the already off-balance Hogan to get ever moreso...

...and Wright manages to slip back onto the shoulder, sliding right over the back to end up behind Hogan as the crowd sighs with relief!]

GM: Wright slips free and... WAISTLOCK!

[The crowd gets louder as Wright secures the waistlock...

...and if there was a roof on Mosaic Stadium, it woulda been blown clear off as Wright spins Hogan around so that a theoretical German Suplex would put Hogan RIGHT on top of the open chair!]

GM: OH MY STARS! OH MY STARS!

BW: He's gonna end this now!

GM: He truly is! Wright's set, trying to get-

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

[The crowd ERUPTS - first in shock... then in rage as Hogan swings his bare foot backwards, smashing it up between the legs of the former World Champion in a mule kick!]

GM: HOGAN GOES LOW! HOGAN GOES LOW ON SUPREME WRIGHT!

[Hogan spins around, grabbing the doubled-up Wright and yanking him into a standing headscissors...]

GM: What the hell?!

BW: What now?!

GM: Hogan's got him hooked!

[The bloodied and exhausted wildman takes a few quick breaths, steeling his body and his nerve as he prepares...]

...and LIFTS Wright into the air, flipping him over into powerbomb position...]

"CRAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAASH!"

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

[...and DRIVES Wright's body down onto the open chair with a released powerbomb that leaves a mangled and twisted beyond use steel chair underneath the former World Champion's destroyed body!]

GM: OH MY GOD! OH MY HOLY GOD!

[Hogan collapses to a knee alongside the prone Wright, the crowd absolutely ROARING over what they just witnessed. Referee Davis Warren's eyes go wide, grabbing his own head in disbelief as Hogan nods his head tiredly, spitting some blood that had run into his mouth onto the canvas.]

BW: He's done, Gordo. Wright's done. And I'm not just talking about this match. I'm talking about his career! I'm talking about the ability to walk! Supreme Wright may have had his damn spine just cracked by this damn lunatic!

GM: And we know this wasn't about the money anymore... we know this was personal... but you've gotta wonder if this wasn't Javier Castillo had in mind when he made this match tonight. The ultimate chance to take Supreme Wright out of action for good! The ultimate chance to knock Supreme Wright out of this war... out of this company... and out of this business!

[A weary Hogan gets to his feet, grabbing the nearby referee by the collar and yanking him close...]

"Count... this motherf-"

[The audio cuts again as Hogan shoves the referee towards the motionless Wright. Warren kneels down, checking to see if Wright is okay...]

"COUNT!"

[The bellow from Hogan seems to snap Warren out of his concerned trance as he gets up, ready to do his job...]

"ONE!"

[Hogan nods approvingly, staring down at the prone Wright as the referee stands over him, looking for any signs of movement...]

"TWO!"

GM: The amount of punishment that BOTH of these men have been through. We're well over forty-five minutes into this war. I don't think any of us expected that. I don't think anyone expected these two to wage war on each other to THIS level for that long, Bucky.

BW: Well, the four teams left in the tournament oughta send these two a damn bottle of champagne to their hospital rooms after this because they just got a nice long recovery time before coming back out to compete in the Semifinals.

"THREE!"

GM: The count is up to three now... still no signs of movement from Supreme Wright.

BW: Did you really expect there to be, Gordo?

GM: No... no, of course not. But I hoped. I hoped there would be something. But there's nothing, Bucky. Nothing at all. Not even a grimace. Not even a twitch.

"FOUR!"

GM: King Kong Hogan, you miserable son of a...

BW: Easy, Gordon.

GM: I can't help it. This... this isn't about trying to win a match at this point, Bucky. That was a deliberate attempt to end a man's career. It was a deliberate attempt to put one of the sport's finest competitors in a wheelchair for the rest of his life. It's wrong. It's wrong, damn it... and if that piece of garbage Castillo won't say it, I damn sure will.

"FIVE!"

GM: Halfway there. Halfway to the ten count that King Kong Hogan needs to win this match... this war. We knew this would be intense. We knew it would be violent. But I don't think any of knew it would be this, Bucky.

BW: I sure didn't.

"SIX!"

GM: Supreme Wright... did he blink? I think I saw a blink there. The first signs of movement - any movement - out of Wright since he hit that chair. The steel chair... the back of that seat... did it hit his back? The back of his neck? I have no idea but whatever it hit, you know it did damage... serious damage... perhaps permanent damage...

"SEVEN!"

GM: And that garbage... that worm-ridden filth Hogan looking on... so proud of himself... so pleased with his work. This is terrible. I hope this is the last we see of him, Bucky. We should... us, the locker room, the fans... nobody should ever have to see this guy in an AWA ring again. Send him back to the indies where he can do garbage like this for a hot dog and trans. Send him to Japan to break glass over his head and fall through barbed wire tables. Get him out of here. Get him the hell out of our rings, damn it.

BW: Gordon, calm down.

GM: Bucky, I will NOT calm down! I will NOT-

"EIGHT!"

GM: The count is up to eight now. The count is at eight and-

[And Supreme Wright's right arm SHOOTS up into the air as the crowd EXPLODES in shock!]

GM: What the...?

BW: No. No way.

GM: Supreme Wright just lifted his arm! He just got that hand up in the air and-

[The other arm shoots up as well as the crowd ERUPTS again. Davis Warren looks shocked, looking over to Hogan who looks just as surprised, shaking his head now.]

GM: Davis Warren can't believe it either! He stopped counting, he was so surprised!

"NINE!"

[And Wright sits up to an EARTHSHATTERING ROAR!]

GM: HE'S UP! MY GOD, HE'S UP!

BW: Not yet he's not! He's not up! He's not up on his feet! He hasn't broken the count! He hasn't-

[And a pissed-off King Kong Hogan marches in, yanking Wright to his feet by the throat, shaking him back and forth with a two-handed choke...]

"YOU WANNA FIGHT, LITTLE PUPPY?! YOU WANT A GOD DAMNED WAR?! I'LL TAKE YOU TO HELL, SON! WE'LL GO SEE THE DEVIL HIMSELF HAND IN GOD DAMNED HAND!"

GM: Fans, we apologize for the language there and-

[He lets go of Wright who falls to his knees as Hogan backs off, digging into his jeans again, holding the glittering Golden Spike up for all to see. He turns his back on Wright, nodding to the crowd who are buzzing with concern as Hogan slowly turns around, watching Wright try to drag himself to a standing position...]

GM: HOGAN CHARGES! WITH THE SPIKE!

[The sadistic, cruel, savage wildman barrels across the ring, the sharpened Spike at the ready as he sprints with intent... with the goal of driving the Spike THROUGH Supreme Wright's skull...]



GM: HOGAN WITH THE SPIK-

“WHAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAACK!”

[The noise is deafening. Sudden. Yet it produces no reaction at all. None. Zero.

Except shock. Pure, unadulterated shock.

Because as King Kong Hogan attempted to deliver the Golden Spike to the skull... perhaps the eye... of the former World Champion... perhaps the greatest in-ring competitor on the planet...

The man who has never thrown a single blow in his AWA career..

...has thrown one now.]

GM: HE PUNCHED HIM! HE PUNCHED HIM!

BW: WHAT THE HELL?!

[The most picture perfect overhand right hand you can imagine catches the charging Hogan FLUSH, buckling his knees and dropping him down on the canvas. Wright stumbles back from the delivery of the blow, grabbing the ringpost to keep from falling to the floor as the crowd noise slowly starts to build again, the shock of what they just saw starting to wear off as they get louder.. and louder.. and louder..

...and when the king of scientific wrestling throws himself blindly at Hogan's form, knocking him down onto his back with Wright in the most imperfect mount of his career, they lose their minds...]

GM: HE'S BEATING THE HELL OUT OF HOGAN! RIGHT HAND! RIGHT HAND! RIGHT HAND! HE'S BEATING HOGAN TO HELL AND BACK AND IT'S ABOUT DAMN TIME IF YOU ASK ME!

[The crowd is ROARING with disbelief, clips of fans jumping up and down, screaming themselves hoarse on display as the man who has never thrown a punch in a match is throwing them in bunches and he's throwing them with intent...]

GM: HOGAN'S TRYING TO DEFEND HIMSELF BUT WRIGHT'S PUNCHING THROUGH THE DEFENSE! HE'S BATTERING HOGAN LIKE...

BW: LIKE HE'S A GUY WHO TRIED TO GOUGE OUT HIS DAMN EYE!

GM: OH HELL YES, HE IS!

[With Hogan prone on the canvas, Wright gets to his feet, letting loose a huge roar, throwing back his arms as the sold-out crowd EXPLODES into another roar, breaking into a chant!]

“SUPREEEEEEEME'S GONNA KILL YOU!”

“SUPREEEEEEEME'S GONNA KILL YOU!”

“SUPREEEEEEEME'S GONNA KILL YOU!”

[Wright nods his head at that one, pointing to the fans to acknowledge them for one of the few times in his career. He turns back to Hogan, striding across the ring as Hogan pushes to his knees, blood pouring from new wounds on his head and face...

...and tiredly pulls back his arm, Golden Spike still in hand...]

GM: LOOK OUT FOR-

[But this time, Supreme is ready for it, grabbing Hogan by the wrist and violently twisting it, forcing him to drop the Spike...

...which Wright retrieves while still holding the wrist...]

GM: Uh oh!

BW: If a man is willing to throw a punch, is he willing to...?

[Wright looks down at Hogan with... anger? Rage? No. Disgust. He's disgusted by Hogan - his actions, the depths he's willing to sink to, the shortcuts he's willing to take...

Because Supreme Wright is a professional wrestler.. like his grandfather before him.

And he tosses the Spike away with the same disgust on his face...]

GM: Yeah! Alright! He doesn't need that damn Spike, Bucky! He never did!

[...and then slowly backs up, measuring the bloodied and battered Hogan as he slowly starts to climb off his knees.]

GM: Hogan's getting up! The son of a bitch won't stay down either! Incredible!

BW: What the hell is it gonna take, Gordo? What in the world does Wright have to-

[With Hogan on his feet, barely able to stand, he fails to notice that he's standing RIGHT at the edge of the ring...

...but Supreme Wright does not, rushing across the ring, leaping into the air, lashing out with one leg - the foot catching Hogan flush under the chin!]

GM: EXCALIBUR?!

[The flying Yakuza that Wright taught to the AWA's White Knight connects, sending Hogan off the apron...

...through the air like a limp body...

...and RIGHT DOWN ONTO A SET UP QUARTET OF STEEL CHAIRS!]

"CRAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAASH!"

"OHOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOO!"

GM: Holy...

[The crowd ROARS for several sustained seconds... and then fills in the rest for Gordon, much to the dismay of our seven second guy who seems to have no idea how to handle this situation.]

"HO-LY SHIT!"

"HO-LY SHIT!"

"HO-LY SHIT!"

"HO-LY SHIT!"

"HO-LY SHIT!"

[The Canadian crowd continues to roar as Supreme sits up on the canvas, looking out on King Kong Hogan who just Nestea Plunged off the apron and went through the pile of four chairs - his near 300 pound body wrecking all four chairs on the way down to the ground, leaving his in a wreckage of twisted steel!]

GM: HOGAN GETS KICKED STRAIGHT TO THE BOWELS OF HELL!

[Wright, sitting on the apron, nods with approval at the scene in front of him as he slips off the apron to the floor, walking calmly across the ringside area to where Hogan is motionless in the pile.]

GM: Wright's gotta get him in. There's no way Hogan's getting up... but Wright's gotta get him in!

[Wright drags Hogan's limp carcass out of the pile of chairs, pulling him towards the ring where he muscles Hogan's barely-moving body up onto the apron. Hogan immediately rolls away from Wright, moving on instinct... no clue at what he's doing as Wright pulls himself back on the apron. The referee steps forward, ready to start his count...

...but Wright puts a light hand on Davis Warren's shoulder to a ROAR from the crowd!]

GM: Oh my god.

BW: The referee wanted to count Hogan out but Supreme won't let him! He won't let him end this!

GM: This is going to end on Supreme Wright's terms, Bucky. We can all see that now.

[And as a broken and bloodied Hogan tries to get his arms underneath him, trying desperately to stand and fight, Wright breaks into a run across the ring, drawing his leg back...]

"CRAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAACK!"

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

[...and delivers a running punt kick to the arm that causes Hogan to scream in pain, rolling back and forth, clutching his arm as Davis Warren turns away, sickened by what he just saw...]

GM: WRIGHT KICKED HIS ARM! HE KICKED HIS DAMN ARM!

BW: He BROKE his damn arm, Gordo.

GM: That's certainly possible with the way Hogan's reacting!

[Hogan is still rolling back and forth in pain on the mat as Wright grabs the right arm, yanking it straight. He locks his fingers with Hogan who reaches up with his left hand, trying to break free...

...but Wright locks those fingers up as well.]

GM: Oh my... this can't be-

[With both hands trapped and Hogan helpless, Wright raises his leg...

...and STOMPS the face.]

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

[Again.]

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

[And again.]

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

[And again.]

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

BW: For the love of God, somebody stop the damn match!

GM: Hogan can stop it! Hogan can stop it at any time he wants! All he has to do is quit!

[Davis Warren is down on his knees, begging Hogan to quit but the stubborn bastard refuses...]

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

[And again.]

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

[And again. And again Hogan screams no. Wright looks down with an odd expression. Perhaps almost a begrudging form of respect...

...which quickly vanishes he lets go of the right arm for the moment, twisting Hogan's left arm behind him, holding it there with his legs as he reaches out for the right arm...]

GM: We've seen this before! The fans know what's coming - and so does Hogan! Hogan's trying to keep his arm out of reach! Trying to keep Wright from grabbing that arm and-

"SLAAAAAAAAAAP!"

[A hard blow to Hogan's injured ribs forces him to instinctively pull his right arm back to shield the ribs...

...which gives Wright the chance to grab the injured right arm, pulling it back at an awkward angle...]

GM: Bobby O'Connor has felt this! Casey James has felt this! And now King Kong Hogan will-

[Wright abruptly yanks back on the arm!]

"CRAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAACK!"

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

[Hogan slumps over on the mat, turtling up as he tries to protect the arm. Wright gestures at him to the official who gets closer...]

GM: If the arm wasn't broken before, it's gotta be now! Hogan's trying to protect the arm but I'm guessing it's already broken and...

[Davis Warren sighs, looking up at Wright... and shakes his head.]

GM: He STILL won't quit?!

BW: My god.

[Wright bites his lower lip, shaking his head in disbelief...

...and then knows exactly what comes next. He reaches down, yanking Hogan's likely-broken right arm into his hands, twisting it in his grasp as he slides his other hand up under the armpit onto the neck...]

GM: Wait a second! Hang on here!

[...and drops down to the mat, cranking back on the most feared submission in all of the American Wrestling Alliance.

The Cobra Clutch Crossface.]

GM: THE CROSSFACE IS ON! THE ARM ACROSS THE NECK! HOGAN BEING STRANGLED WITH HIS OWN BROKEN ARM!

[Hogan is howling in an instant, screaming and flailing, hunting... searching... praying for an escape.

But there is no escape from this hold.

None.

And as that realization sets in, King Kong Hogan's legendary threshold for pain surpasses its limits and he does the one thing that he swore he'd never do.

Never.]

"YES! YESSSSSSSS! I QUIT!"

"DING! DING! DING!"

[The referee's wave to the timekeeper and the resulting sound of the bell causes Mosaic Stadium to ERUPT in a deafening roar! Wright keeps the hold cinched in for a few more moments, just for good measure...

...and then lets go, falling back onto his back on the canvas as the crowd continues to cheer!]

GM: He did it! I didn't think he could do it, Bucky, but Supreme Wright just forced King Kong Hogan to submit! He gave up!

BW: Wow. I didn't think it could be done.

GM: These two... these two warriors, I don't know a better way to describe them than that... they gave it everything... they gave it their all. They've been in this hellacious battle for... what was it? Fifty-five minutes!

BW: Incredible.

GM: Hogan's still down on the mat. He's gotta have a broken arm.

BW: At least. So many brutal attacks... vicious attacks on the part of both of these guys.

GM: Wright's down as well but he's sitting up now. The referee's down checking on both... and he's... yeah, he's signaling to the back now. We're going to need medical help for... probably for both of these guys.

[A cut to the aisle shows Dr. Bob Ponavitch racing down the aisle, some of his team in tow with a stretcher.]

GM: Supreme Wright - in his pre-match interview - said goodbye to Hogan. He said this would be it. The last time for them. And after what we just witnessed, I have to pray he's right, Bucky.

BW: Yeah... this one will go down as an epic brawl... a total war... and something I don't want to see again any time soon.

[The medical team has entered the ring, splitting into two groups to check on the two individuals still down on the mat.]

GM: And now Dr. Ponavitch - one of the AWA's unsung heroes - goes to work here, first checking on King Kong Hogan who appears to barely be conscious at this point. We're fairly certain he's got a broken arm... you can see him holding onto it. Supreme Wright is hurting as well but...

[Wright extends an arm as one of the medical team members slips under it, supporting him and helping him get to his feet.]

BW: Wright's getting up, Gordo. This guy is... he's something else.

GM: The two-time former World Champion is on his feet... this crowd saluting him as only they can...

[Wright nods to the cheering fans, raising a fist in the air to them as he looks down on the prone Hogan...

...and gives a nod in that direction too. Respect? Satisfaction at a job completed? We may never know as Wright slowly hobbles away from his downed rival, stepping off the apron as the medics continue to help him.]

GM: Well, Supreme Wright at least is going to walk out of here on his own power... I don't know we can say the same for King Kong Hogan. Fans, this is going to take some time to get Hogan out of here as well as to get our ring back into normal condition so... well, we're being told we've got footage from a little earlier with Javier Castillo essentially fleeing Mosaic Stadium. Let's take a look.

[We get a flash of the ACCESS 365 logo as we fade out to the exterior of Mosaic Stadium where we see a waiting black limousine in the parking area. A loud voice is heard from off-camera, approaching quickly.]

"Hurry... hurry! They could be anywhere!"

[Javier Castillo walks into view, looking around frantically as John Law and MAWAGA follow behind. Veronica Westerly is the trailer, trying to keep up as they seem content to leave her behind.]

JC: Where's the... okay... there's the car... over there. Mr. Law, keep your eyes open... I don't want to walk into a trap... MAWAGA, up front. You're the first line of defense.

[Westerly cries out after them.]

VW: Are you seriously leaving?! The tournament's not done! Kendrick and Detson are still-

[Castillo waves a dismissive hand.]

JC: We took our shot. I'm not getting in the middle of all that again.

[Westerly looks exasperated.]

VW: So you're just going to let Carver and Martinez win?!

[Castillo pauses at the car door, breathing heavy as MAWAGA climbs in.]

JC: If the Gods will it, Ms. Westerly... so be it.

[Castillo nods to her.]

JC: Now, as I said... you're in charge for the rest of the night. I'll see you in Winnipeg.

[Westerly sighs as Castillo climbs into the car...

...and then beckons for John Law to follow him.]

VW: You're taking them BOTH?!

[Castillo reaches back over Law, slamming the door shut on the question, leaving a shocked (and fuming) Westerly behind as we fade...

...to another location outside Mosaic Stadium, the location earlier in the night where the Soldiers of Fortune were storing the Fat Man, their custom Hummer that has made several appearances at the Stampede Cup so far tonight. Leaning against the Fat Man are the Soldiers of Fortune, who are deep in preparation for their next match. Suddenly, a voice calls out, jarring the Soldiers out of their concentration.]

?: Blackwell didn't tell me you guys were all the way out here..

[Joe Flint turns his head towards the location where the voice is coming from. The voice belongs to Mark Stegglet, who appears on screen. Flint seems disappointed that Stegglet was sent to do the pre-match interview and sharply asks...]

JF: Where's Blackwell?

MS: He didn't want to come out here to interview you as long as you had those 'victory' cigars.

[Flint snorts.]

JF: Well, he ain't got anything to worry about. We put those boys away. We realized that we ain't got time to celebrate.

[Stephens nods in agreement.]

CS: It's true that we made short work of the Lights Out Express, Stegglet. Yeah, we should have plenty of time to celebrate, but we put our heads together and decided that we needed to focus. The prize is in sight now. All eyes on it. We can always have the beer and the cigars at our post show celebration.

MS: Yes, we're down to the four best teams in the wrestling world in the semi-finals of the Stampede Cup, but weren't you two jumping the gun a bit earlier, coming out and scouting Next Gen instead of your potential semi-final opponents?

[Flint rubs his chin, unfazed by the question.]

JF: Heh, not at all, Stegglet. We're gonna be seein' plenty of Next Gen over these next few months, and it's always good to come out and see in person what the champs are made of. We weren't out there to bust their chops, or their heads. We did our scoutin', and we were impressed.

[Stephens nods in agreement.]

JF: Boys, ya gotta learn to keep yer eyes on the ball, though. We came out to watch, we had no intent of doin' anythin' more. When we finally strike, you'll know. Like Charlie told Blackwell earlier, it was just a recon mission, nothin' more... at this time.

[Flint flashes an evil grin.]

MS: Well, you may get your hands on Next Gen sooner than you think, they're on the other side of the bracket in the Semi Finals where they are going to go up against the American Idols. Before you get your hands on them, you two have the biggest match of your careers as a team to date. You'll be taking on the former AWA World Champion Ryan Martinez and Hannibal Carver in the semi-finals. However, after MAWAGA's post match assault on Martinez and Carver, you two find yourself at an advantage this time.

[Stephens nods his head, stepping forward as Flint lets him have the floor for the moment.]

CS: Well, I was wonderin' when Castillo and his boys were gonna crap before they got off the pot, and they finally did. Not like we wanted the help, 'cuz we don't.

[Stephens clears his throat.]

CS: Castillo.. the man with the plan, tryin' to make sure that we weren't supposed to be here. He wanted someone, anyone, to rid him of the meddlesome Martinez and Carver. This whole thing started ever since he started runnin' the show, and we just so happened to be in the way. However, we're still here. We ain't goin' anywhere, and I guess it's up to us to finish the job that Castillo and his stupid goons started.

[Flint turns towards Stegglet.]

JF: Hey Steggy, where's Castillo anyway?

MS: He's already long gone. He left with John Law and MAWAGA to get ready for the Winnipeg show in two weeks.

[Flint snorts in disapproval.]

JF: Shame. I was hopin' he'd get a front row seat as we put MAWAGA's beating to shame. It was his choice not to do business with us when Law tried to make Charlie a stain on the mat.



[Stephens glares at the camera.]

JF: We always want to do business where we can. We're the Soldiers of Fortune, Stegglet. What we do is in our name. Whether we like ya or not, and we don't like most of ya filthy pukes. Yer money's all the same to us. Write us a check, pay us in a briefcase fulla cash..

CS: No crypto.

JF: No crypto, that's the only exception. Just pay us enough money and we'll take care of what needs to be taken care of. Something real Americans should be doin' in 2017, the year of our Lord. Castillo coulda easily slide us a few extra tax-free bucks under the table, and we'd finish the job, bringin' Martinez and Carver's heads to him on pikes.

[Stegglet gulps.]

JF: Their loss as far as we're concerned. We're just gonna be leavin' Martinez and Carver a broken mess for our sake.

MS: While Castillo's gone for the night, Veronica Westerly and Castillo's other henchmen are still here. They might not wait and see what you can do, and they could still make their presence known in your match as they look to finish what MAWAGA started.

[Stephens rolls his eyes.]

JF: Well, we don't need them. They've done enough damage so far tonight. We're just here to use some ol' fashioned American elbow grease to get that pay day we so richly deserve in the finals.

CS: You said we have the advantage, right?

[Stegglet nods his head.]

MS: They're being evaluated right now, as a matter of fact.

CS: Dunno if you'd call it an advantage. Don't buy it for one second. They'll show up.

[Flint nods his head in agreement.]

JF: We know how much of a fight Martinez an' Carver are gonna put up in that ring. Individually, they are two of the most dangerous men on the roster. Martinez is a punk but we know he'd crawl through broken glass to compete, let alone win. MAWAGA put him down but he ain't put him out. Carver... well, Carver's a tough son of a gun when sober, an' he's probably five sheets to the wind already tonight. That kick to the head probably made it six. We're just gonna have to out fight 'em, by ourselves.

It would be in Castillo's best interest for Westerly to keep those dogs of theirs on a leash, 'cuz if they wanna stick their nose in our business again... we'll be leavin' heads on pikes in Castillo's office in Winnipeg after all.

[Flint grins.]

CS: We got this, Stegglet. Let us finish the job. That's all there is to it.

[Flint nods his head and glares into the camera.]

JF: At ease.

[Flint nods at Stephens, and both men walk back into the stadium. Suddenly, Stegglet looks on as they leave, and he turns back towards the camera.]

MS: Well, it looks like the Soldiers of Fortune are ready for their match with Ryan Martinez and Hannibal Carver who are standing by with my friend, Theresa Lynch. Theresa?

[We go backstage, where Theresa Lynch stands with two of the pillars of the AWA. Former World and World Television Champion Ryan Martinez, and the Boston Brawler himself, Hannibal Carver. Both men are battered and bruised. Carver is holding an ice pack against the right side of his face, and when he lowers it, we see his eye is swollen and most of his face is an ugly purple color. Martinez continually reaches for his throat, rubbing the reddened flesh.]

TL: After having to deal with another Martinez tonight, I have to say, I am happy to be here with these two men. But I'd be remiss if I didn't acknowledge the fact that "walking wounded" is the kindest way to describe your current state.

[Before speaking, Martinez draws a deep breath, which causes him to cough.]

RM: Theresa...

[The White Knight's voice is a harsh rasp, and after just those few syllables, Martinez is rubbing his throat again.]

RM: Sorry about that...

TL: It's fine, please go on.

RM: You're right. I'm not at one hundred percent, and neither is my partner. But we're two wins away from the Cup.

And I don't know about Carver, but I didn't fly to Canada, go to war with Europe's meanest men, and then go toe to toe with my half-brother and the Beast for forty minutes just to get beat by a couple of pretend patriots.

[Theresa turns towards the Boston Brawler.]

TL: I've got to assume that you feel the same, Mr. Carver.

HC: Well, I wish I could say I had my mind just on what's in front of us.

[Carver looks at the ice pack, scowling. He shakes with anger, hurling it at the wall behind him with incredible fury.]

HC: But it's little hard to look straight ahead when yeh've got one eye swollen shut! It's a little hard to focus on Cap and Bucky when that scumbag set two big monsters to take our heads!

[Carver closes his eyes, breathing in deeply and exhaling.]

HC: But I didn't come here for anything easy. If I was, I'd be taking that bonus like those two big bastards have. Because believe me, I have danced that number before. I get it. The money is good and the money is easy.

[Carver nods.]

HC: But anyone that knows anything about how I do my business here, knows I don't ever take the easy road. So we are focused on this next round while at the same time keeping our heads on a swivel. Doesn't mean I like it. Doesn't mean I'm happy.

But it sure as hell does mean that those two toy soldiers are going to get the beating of their lives...

[Carver fixes Martinez with a knowing look.]

HC: ... just because we have to wait to best the hell out of those two lackeys.

TL: There is no denying, however, that even though the Soldiers of Fortune went to war against the Prophets of Rage, their last match did not tax them the way your bout with KAMS did.

HC: Let's not even pretend that the match we were SUPPOSED to have is why we're in the shape we're in now. Not to take anything from those two, they brought everything they had in the damn tank and then some. But if it wasn't for that little twerp sending in his goons to rob us, it'd be a whole other story right now.

TL: You're right. And arguably, the returning MAWAGA did just as much damage, if not more, than your match with KAMS.

RM: There's no point in denying it, Theresa. Everyone saw what happened. Everyone saw MAWAGA all but tear my jugular out. Everyone saw Hannibal get his face smashed in. But for years now, there's something everyone else has also seen.

For just about two decades, the world has seen Hannibal Carver backed in a corner and watched him come out swinging. In the AWA alone, they've seen him in battle with Terry Shane, the Dogs of War, Johnny Detson...

[Martinez glances over at Carver.]

RM: They've seen him take me to the limit twice, and beat me once.

And me?

[Martinez lowers his head a moment, clearing his throat and rubbing his neck. But when his head lifts, his expression is one of defiance and determination.]

RM: I've spent my entire career with the odds stacked against me. I went into the most famous arena in the world against the greatest technician alive, and after an hour of being stretched and worked over, I won my first world title.

I went into the Woodshed with Juan Vasquez and won my second World Title.

So are our backs against the wall? They are. Are the chips down? You bet. But Theresa, the world knows that Ryan Martinez lives with his back against the wall. The world knows that Hannibal Carver is at his best when he's been beaten to a pulp and he has no choice but to dig a little deeper and fight his way out of a corner.

We're two wins...

[Martinez holds up two fingers.]

RM: Away from a million dollars, and more importantly from the chance to cram all of our wins down the throat of Javier Castillo.

Do you want to be the one to bet against us?

TL: Not me. As you said, we know what you two can do. But do you honestly think you have enough left to beat both the Soldiers of Fortune and either the American Idols or the World Tag Team Champions – Next Gen?

HC: Ryan just rolled out his history for anyone that hasn't been paying attention.

And me?

[Carver smirks.]

HC: I'm sure there's plenty of clips someone got off a bootleg tape that will show you exactly what kind of punishment I can take and still keep swinging. This right here?

[Carver points to his swollen face.]

HC: I hate to burst Castillo's bubble, but this doesn't even crack my top 200 battle scars. If he wants to keep us out of this tournament... he better make sure we can't walk away.

RM: Before we're done, I need to say something about the Soldiers of Fortune. And I know we're in Canada, and I know that what I'm about to say may not mean as much to people who aren't from the United States. But it needs to be said, because what I'm about to talk about doesn't stop at a border.

Ever since Flint and Stephens got together, I've had to listen to you two. I've had to listen to you two spew out some twisted and imagined version of what it means to be an American.

Well I want you to look at me Flint, and I want you to look at Hannibal Carver. And I want you to understand that he and I are the real America.

Hannibal Carver may not fit your vision of white picket fences and gas guzzling Humvees, but he's a man who came from the streets. A man who knows his roots, and who did pull himself up by his bootstraps and make himself into not just a star, but an icon.

And I know...

[Martinez chuckles, but it's a humorless sound.]

RM: That a kid named Martinez from the west coast doesn't fit into your vision of America either.

But the beat of my heart is the sound of America's fighting spirit. And the blood that pumps through my veins is the soul of our great country. Neither of us fit into your pretty little picture of what you think America is. But you're both operating under a delusion and imagining something that has never been true.

You two are loud, obnoxious, belligerent and you represent all of the worst traits of humanity. And for all this time, I've had to sit by and listen to you two spew your hate and your bile and there was never anything I could do about it.

But that ends tonight.

Tonight, we have the chance to shut you up. And when either I or Carver get our hands on you, Stephens and Flint, know that it isn't about the Cup and it isn't about the million dollars. Its about exactly what I've been saying.

Its about proving a point.

Its about a cause.

It's the same reason we came here. To shut demagogues like Javier Castillo up, and to prove that the so-called patriotism of the Soldiers of Fortune is nothing but a lie built on the insecurities of little men.

And what's going to happen to the little men in the Soldiers of Fortune?

HC: Theresa, I know your whole family. But I especially know your brothers. When they were growing up, I bet they did that deal where kids put firecrackers in their GI Joe's.

[Theresa nods, confused.]

HC: Well after tonight? A pair of toys that got blown up in the backyard?

[Carver cracks his knuckles.]

HC: Are gonna look helluva lot better than you two jokers.

[Martinez nods.]

RM: And there's nothing else to say, except that Flint and Stephens. You can...

Count on it!

[We fade from a determined Martinez out to the ring where Rebecca Ortiz is standing.]

RO: The following contest is set for one fall with a sixty minute time limit and is the first of our two Semifinals matchups!

Introducing first...

[A faint buzzing noise echoes throughout the stadium. The moment the buzzing starts, the crowd starts to boo. There's crackling noise and static accompanying the buzzing. The buzzing intensifies, and after a few moments, a distorted voice starts to sing over the buzzing.]

# Land where my fathers died!  
# Land of the pilgrim's pride!  
# From every mountain side,  
# Let freedom ring!

[The buzzing and crackling grow louder and louder before slowly fading into the opening notes from the Damn Yankees' "Don't Tread On Me." The Soldiers of Fortune's new logo: a large golden shield, with a soldier front and center, and two Apache helicopters off in the distance appears on the video wall. The words "Soldiers of Fortune" are at the top of the shield.

Stepping into the arena, for the third time tonight, are the Soldiers of Fortune. The booing from the crowd is just as intense as the first time the Soldiers appeared. Joe Flint and Charlie Stephens, each holding one of their usual flags, look out over the

booing crowd, seemingly soaking in the negative reaction. Flint is holding the "Don't Tread On Me" flag, while Charlie Stephens is holding the American flag.]

RO: ...at a total combined weight of 523 pounds..

CHARLIE STEPHENS....

"CAPTAIN" JOE FLINT....

THE SOLDIERS OF FORTUNE!!!

[Egging on the crowd, Stephens starts waving the American flag back and forth. The crowd responds with a chant that shouldn't be repeated on air.]

GM: Folks, if you can make out what the crowd is chanting, I apologize in advance.

BW: This is blatant disrespect!

GM: Every single person in that crowd does not appreciate the Soldiers' display of patriotism, and quite frankly, can you blame them?

[Flint turns his head towards Stephens, who stops waving the flag to return Flint's glance. Flint nods his head, then turns towards the ring. He shouts out "FORWARD, MARCH!", and both men start to make their way to the ring.]

GM: At least the Soldiers kept their gaudy Hummer in the back.

BW: This is the biggest match of the Soldiers' careers to date. Sure, you say this display is a bit too much.

GM: It is.

BW: But they know what is on the line, and they still have one more match to go.

[The Soldiers make their way to the ring, climbing onto the apron. Stephens hands Flint his flag, and Flint sets both flagpoles against the corner they are going to be using in this match.]

GM: The Soldiers are not looking for help here tonight, they've already indicated that they don't want Castillo and his crew out here to interfere, and they're definitely getting no help from this crowd tonight.

[The boos continue as the Soldiers enter the ring. They march to the center of the ring and turn towards the aisleway. Flint and Stephens clasp their hands behind their backs, awaiting the arrival of their opponents.]

RO: And their opponents....

[The arena fills with the sound of orchestral music as, on the video screen, we seen an open field, tall stalks of wheat swaying in a gentle breeze. Over this, we hear the voice of Lena Headey as Queen Gorgo from the movie 300.]

"Spartan! Come back with your shield... or on it!"

[As the heavy guitar riff of Gojira's "Silvera" kicks in, the idyllic field shown on the video wall is replaced by two icons – the first consists of two concentric circles, the first gold, the inner circle black. There are eight spokes inside the circle, like a wheel, also black outlined in gold. In the center of the circle, with the same black outlined in gold color scheme are the letters "HC". Next to this is the logo of a

golden shield, with a pair of swords crossed over the shield, the letters "RM" done in stylized red colored gothic lettering beneath.]

# Quit moaning about fate and change  
Stand up on your feet and rise  
With every fall you get the pain, you learn the lesson  
Start now, open your eyes#

[Through entranceway, a half dozen men, dressed as Spartans emerge. Eagle-eyed viewers may recognize the men as people they've seen on CCW shows. The men bear two large shields, carried over their heads.]

# Time to open your eyes  
When you clear your mind you see it all  
You're receiving the gold of a better life  
When you change yourself, you change the world#

[The shields are set down and the Spartans step to the side. Two spotlights shine down, one on each shield, and a moment later, the Pillars rise.]

RO: Introducing first... from South Boston, Mass... weighing in at 260 pounds...

[The six foot three, wild eyed Boston Brawler is the first to rise.]

RO: HAAAAAAAAANNNNNNNNNIBAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAL  
AAAAAAAAAAARRRRRRRRRRRRRRRRRVERRRRRRRRRRRRRRRRRRRR!

[Over his face, Carver wears a goalie's mask, with a unnerving red smile, in the style of the Joker, painted over the mouth. Carver wears a black hooded zip-up sweatshirt and black tights with a barbed wire design around the waist. His black boots read "CARVER"... and are emblazoned with brass knuckles.]

RO: And his partner... from Los Angeles, California... weighing in tonight at 255 pounds...

[Slowly, the two time former AWA world Heavyweight Champion rises from where he'd been lying on the shield.]

RO: RYYYYYYYYYYYYYYYYYYYYYAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAN  
MAAAAAAAAAARRRRRRRRRRRRRTIIIIIIIIIIINEEEEEZZZZZZZZZZZZZZ!

[As the spotlight shines on Martinez, we see him in familiar gear. Martinez wears a long, white and red, sleeveless ring jacket, one that extends all the way to his ankles. The midsection of the ring jacket is cut out, though there is no longer a title belt around his waist. Martinez is clean shaven, his dark hair cut short and slicked back. White gloves that extend from wrist to fingertips cover his hands, and Martinez raises his hands in the air, fingers splayed open, and hands locked together, to show the sword and shield logo on the inside of his gloves.

Both men look to each other and nod, and as they march to the ring, a familiar chant breaks out. With one side of the Mosaic Stadium breaking into half the chant, and the other side providing the accompaniment.

And once more, the dueling chant is meant to show unity, not division.]

"LET'S GO RY-AN!"

"HAN-NI-BAL!"

"LET'S GO RY-AN!"

"HAN-NI-BAL!"

"LET'S GO RY-AN!"

"HAN-NI-BAL!"

[Over and over, until both men enter the ring and wait for the war to begin.]

GM: The first of our two Semifinal showdowns here tonight. Four teams remain... only two can be at the end of the road - the Stampede Cup Finals. What a battle this is gonna be, Bucky.

BW: Battle? The Soldiers are here for war, daddy. And that's what this is gonna be - a war for tag team supremacy!

GM: All four men in the ring now, each team talking things over as the official checks with both squads and...

"DING! DING! DING!"

[The crowd cheers for the start of the first Semifinal matchup as Joe Flint nods approvingly.]

GM: And here we go! One fall, sixty minute time limit with a trip to the 2017 Stampede Cup Finals on the line!

BW: Wishful thinking, Gordo. With the amount of punishment Martinez and Carver have taken here tonight, there's no way they're getting to an hour. I'm surprised we didn't need an ambulance to bring them out here.

GM: If you compare the total ring time of these two teams here tonight, you definitely would give the advantage to the Soldiers of Fortune. They did have that total war with the Prophets of Rage in the second round, nearly hitting the thirty minute time limit of that one... but thanks to some superior strategy out of Charlie Stephens, they defeated former tag team champions, the Lights Out Express, in a reasonable amount of time. But Carver and Martinez on the other hand have had two very lengthy, physically taxing matches with Ringkrieger and KAMS - you have to believe that'll come into play in this one.

BW: Absolutely, Gordo. And the Soldiers will be ready to take advantage of it.

[After Flint and Stephens exchange a salute in the corner, we see that Joe Flint is going to start things off for his team against Hannibal Carver as Ryan Martinez stands on the apron, his hand creeping up to rub at his neck.]

GM: It looks like it'll be Carver and Flint starting things off in this one... two roughneck brawlers to be sure.

[Carver glares across the ring at Flint as the man once known as Captain USA marches out of his corner, returning the stare...]

GM: If looks could kill, Bucky...

BW: I guess it'd be a draw then, Gordo, because both of these guys are shooting daggers at the other right now. A lot on the line... a lot at stake. The Soldiers of Fortune are the Number One Contenders to the World Tag Team Titles and what better way to have momentum on your side going into that eventual title match than to be carrying the Stampede Cup with you.



GM: And of course, Carver and Martinez came into this weekend with one purpose - to ruin Javier Castillo's weekend. Castillo may be gone from the building at this point but you know he's still watching... and you know that the thing he'd hate most right about now is to see these two holding the Cup in the air at the end of the night.

BW: And the million dollar check.

GM: Absolutely. We can only hope that with Castillo out of the building, we won't have to endure the kind of shenanigans we saw when Carver and Martinez took on KAMS in the Quarterfinals.

[The two brawlers tie up in the middle, jockeying for position as the crowd cheers the lockup...

...and the 281 pound Flint down, scooping Carver up, slamming him down to the canvas!]

GM: Scoop and a slam right there... wasting no time...

[Carver grabs at his lower back as he scrambles up...

...and gets scoop slammed a second time!]

GM: Back to back body slams by Captain Joe Flint...

[Carver comes up again, ready for a fight...

...but again gets scooped up for a third slam...]

GM: Again!

[...but this time, Carver slips out over the top, snatching the three-quarter nelson...]

GM: BLACKOU- NO!

[Flint desperately shoves off Carver towards the Soldiers' corner where Stephens looks to deliver a cheap shot...

...but a charging Carver lands an elbowstrike that sends Stephens sailing off the apron to the floor to a big cheer!]

GM: Ohhh! And down goes Stephens off that elbow!

[Flint marches to the corner, swinging Carver around for a right hand that Carver blocks before landing one of his own...]

GM: Big right hand!

[...and another...]

GM: Make it two!

[...and another, causing Flint to backpedal further with each blow landed.]

GM: Third time's a charm!

[And this time, it's Carver who scoops up Flint, throwing him down in a big slam!]

GM: And Carver with the slam!

[Flint rolls under the ropes, dropping out to the floor. He looks up at Carver, glaring as he slams his hands down on the apron in frustration.]

GM: Flint bails out to the floor... and he's not exactly happy about it.

[The veteran paces back and forth inside the ring as Carver smirks, beckoning Flint back inside. A few more counts from the referee follow before Flint pulls himself up on the apron, ordering referee Scott Ezra to make Carver back up.]

GM: Flint giving the official a hard time before coming back in... and back into the lockup they go...

[Flint uses his size advantage to shove Carver across the ring, getting him right up against the ropes before burying his knee into the midsection a pair of times...]

GM: Flint going downstairs... and here we go... whips him across...

[As Carver rebounds, Flint lands a right hand to the midsection, doubling him up...]

GM: Joe Flint, a student of the legendary former World Champion Hamilton Graham, lands that big right hand... hooks him up now...

[Flint attempts a vertical suplex but as he lifts, Carver kicks and gets back down on the mat...

...where he reverses the effort, taking Flint up and over with a suplex of his own!]

GM: Ohh! And Carver lands the suplex instead!

[The former Marine rolls around on the mat, clutching his lower back as Carver gets to his feet to cheers from the Mosaic Stadium crowd. Flint rolls to a knee near his corner, looking up as the referee prevents Carver from pursuing.]

GM: This one is not working out as you imagine Joe Flint was hoping for so far...

[Back on the apron, Charlie Stephens glares at Carver as he sticks his arm over the top rope, taking a tag from his partner.]

GM: The tag is made and Charlie Stephens steps in off the exchange. He's in this match for the first time...

BW: And he may be looking for a little bit of payback after that cheap shot by Carver a little earlier.

[Stephens hops through the ropes as Flint exits, the former eyeballing Carver from several feet away. The smaller Stephens sidesteps from his corner, keeping his eyes on Carver who can strike - and strike hard - at any time.]

GM: Charlie Stephens in now, looking to create some distance from-

[Stephens suddenly pauses, straightening up...]

"You think I'm afraid of you?"

[Carver smirks, shrugging.]

"I'M NOT AFRAID OF YOU, MAGGOT!"

[Carver waves a dismissive hand at Stephens who seems to get madder.]

"You think I can't take your best shot and keep on coming?!"

[Stephens slaps himself in the jaw.]

"Come on. Right here. RIGHT! HERE! GIVE IT TO ME!"

[Carver arches an eyebrow at the insistent Stephens.]

GM: We've seen this before, Bucky.

BW: Sure seems like it.

[Stephens slaps himself again.]

"WHAT ARE YOU WAITING FOR?! THAT MAGGOT PRESTON TO WALK AGAIN?!"

[That does it. Carver's eyes flash with anger, going into a spin...]

GM: ROLLING ELB-

[But just as he did in the Quarterfinals, Stephens ducks the elbow thrown with pure emotion, snatching Carver and rolling him into a schoolboy!]

GM: ROLLUP! CAN LIGHTNING STRIKE TWICE?!

[The referee dives down to count.]

GM: ONNNNNNNNNE! TWOOOOOOOOO! THR-

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

GM: CARVER KICKS OUT! CARVER KICKS OUT!

BW: Just barely!

[Stephens pops up, shaking his head, insisting it was a three count...

...and getting so caught up in his shouting, he fails to see a rising Carver surging towards him, connecting with a lunging clothesline that takes Stephens over the top rope, dumping him out on the floor!]

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

GM: AND OUT TO THE FLOOR GOES STEPHENS!

[A pissed-off Carver steps out on the apron, raising his arm as he backs down it, giving himself room to work as Stephens struggles to get off the ringside mats...]

GM: Stephens is trying to get to his feet but if he does, he's gonna find Carver waiting for him, fans!

[The former Army private rises up off the floor, stumbling in a circle...

...which is when Carver runs down the apron, leaping off to CRACK Stephens upside the jaw with a flying elbowstrike!]

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

GM: AND CARVER TAKES HIM DOWN AGAIN! OHHHH MYYYYY!

[With Stephens down on the floor, Carver crawls over to him, grabbing him by the back of the head and starts pummeling him repeatedly.]

GM: Hannibal Carver taking the fight to Charlie Stephens out on the floor, looking to cash that ticket to the tournament finals alongside his longtime rival but partner for this night, Ryan Martinez!

[A fired-up Carver drags Stephens to his feet, grabbing him around the head and neck...

...and HURLS him into the air, flipping upside down with the biel throw...]

"CLAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAANG!"

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

[...and sends him crashing into the ringside railing!]

BW: Jeez... maybe he shouldn't have mentioned Preston.

GM: Maybe not! Charlie Stephens just got physically wrecked on the outside, throwing upside down backfirst into the railing and... and Carver's not done with him yet!

[The Boston Brawler hauls Stephens to his feet, marching him across the ringside area where he SLAMS his head down into the ring apron!]

GM: Facefirst off the apron! Stephens got rocked there...

[Stephens stumbles away, putting his hands on the timekeeper's table for support but Carver is right behind him, grabbing him by the back of the head again...]

"WHAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAACK!"

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

GM: FACEFIRST OFF THE TABLE TOO!

[The timekeeper goes scurrying away as Carver turns back towards the ring, shoving Stephens back inside as the referee counts "SIX!"]

GM: Carver tosses Stephens in... and now rolls himself back in, breaking the referee's ten count and keeping this one going.

[Climbing to his feet, Carver makes sure that Stephens doesn't escape across the ring and then heads to his own corner, sticking out his hand.]

GM: Tag! And in comes the White Knight!

[Martinez steps in to big cheers as Carver pulls Stephens' arms back behind him...]

GM: Carver holding him open annnnnnd...

"WHAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAACK!"

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

GM: BIG KNIFE EDGE CHOP ACROSS THE CHEST!

[Stephens collapses to all fours, rubbing at his chest as Martinez grins at the crowd's reaction to the chop.]

GM: One of the hardest blows in wrestling, Bucky.

BW: Absolutely. The kid can throw a chop, that's for sure. Well, he's got lots of practice at it.

[Martinez walks the ring for a moment, watching as Stephens attempts to crawl to his corner where Captain Joe Flint awaits him but as Stephens gets about halfway across the ring, Martinez cuts him off, dragging him to his feet before tossing him back into the neutral corner...]

GM: Martinez sends him back to the corner...

[Grabbing the arm, the White Knight whips Stephens across, charging in after him...]

GM: Big running clothesline by Martinez!

[He grabs the arm again, whipping Stephens back the other way...

...and gives his right leg a firm slap, causing the Canadian crowd to cheer loudly.]

GM: Martinez calling for the Yakuza!

BW: What?!

GM: He may be looking to end this early after all the punishment he and Carver have taken so far in this tournament!

[The White Knight stands in the corner, staring across at a stunned Stephens...

...when suddenly Joe Flint tries to come through the ropes to intervene!]

GM: Flint's coming in illegally! The referee trying to stop him!

[Flint is full of fire, spewing venom in the direction of Martinez who moves over in his direction, trading words with the pro wrestling veteran...]

GM: Martinez trying to get Flint out of there as well...

[As the two trade words, Charlie Stephens slinks out of the corner, his hands clasped over his head as he approaches Martinez from behind...

...and a shout from Hannibal Carver alerts the former World Champion who whips around...]

"WHAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAACK!"

"OHFFFFFFFFFFFFFFFFFFFFFFFFFFFF!"

[The knife-edged blow catches Stephens across the pectorals, knocking him back down to the canvas!]

GM: Ohhh! Another hard chop! Stephens thought he had an open shot at Martinez there but that wasn't the case!

BW: Not at all... and Stephens is feeling the effects of that one for sure, Gordo.

GM: Martinez pulls him up, shoving him back into the neutral corner as the referee gets Joe Flint out... for now at least. And this is NOT where Charlie Stephens wants to be.

[Martinez points to the corner where Stephens is, getting a big cheer from the crowd, and then starts walking towards him...]

GM: And he may be looking for some more of those well-practiced chops!

[But before Martinez can reach him, Stephens hops up to the midbuckle, leaping into the air...]

"WHAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAACK!"

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

GM: GOOD GRIEF! HE CHOPS HIM RIGHT OUT OF THE SKY!

BW: Charlie Stephens is gonna be having nightmares about those chops pretty soon, Gordo.

GM: Stephens is down again... Martinez looking pretty pleased with how this match is going so far as we're a little less than ten minutes into this sixty minute time limit.

[Carver implores Martinez to stay on his man and the White Knight gives his partner a nod as he leans down, dragging Stephens up and away from the corner, tugging him into a side waistlock...]

GM: Martinez hooks him... suplex on the way!

[He hoists Stephens into the air, holding him high...]

...and DROPS him down with a back suplex, causing the back of Stephens' head and neck to smash down into the canvas!]

GM: Ohh! High impact suplex there by Martinez and-

BW: Uh oh!

[With a grimace, Martinez sits up on the mat, grabbing at the back of his neck.]

GM: The White Knight grabbing at his neck... we all know the history of neck injuries of Ryan Martinez... and what he's gone through this weekend - including that assault by MAWAGA after the last match - that neck's gotta be bothering him.

[Martinez gets to his feet, looking over to the corner where Carver's wearing an expression of slight concern. The former World Champion waves a hand at him, calming him for the moment.]

GM: Martinez seems to be okay though, keeping the fight going here...

[The White Knight reaches down, pulling Stephens back to his feet again, snatching a front facelock...]

GM: Snap suplex! On the money!

[Martinez rolls over, applying a lateral press...]

GM: Martinez gets one! He gets two! He gets-

[Stephens kicks out at two to break the pin.]

GM: Just a two count there off the suplex.

[Martinez rises to his feet, a visible wince as he grabs at the back of his neck again.]

GM: And again, the White Knight showing a chink in the armor.

[Stephens rolls to all fours as Martinez tends to his injury, starting to crawl across the ring as the former World Champion tries to recover.]

GM: Martinez trying to shake off whatever's going on with his neck... trying to get back into this...

BW: Isn't this what got him in trouble last year, Gordo? Trying to shake off the effects of an injury?

GM: It certainly was part of the problem, yes.

[Martinez clenches his jaw, stepping in behind Stephens, reaching down to hook a rear waistlock...]

GM: Waistlock...

[The White Knight yanks him to his feet, still holding the waistlock...]

GM: Setting for a German Suplex perhaps and- oh!

[Stephens jerks his elbow back into the side of Martinez' jaw... and again... and again...]

GM: Stephens elbows out... to the ropes now, rebounding back...

[But as the former Army private bounces towards him, Martinez throws himself into a clothesline, knocking Stephens off his feet!]

GM: DOWN GOES STEPHENS OFF THE CLOTHESLINE!

[Carver sticks out a hand, looking for a tag...

...but Martinez doesn't tag out, pulling Stephens up to his feet by the arm, whipping Stephens into the neutral corner...]

GM: Stephens to the corner... Ryan coming hot!

[The former World Champion lands a big running clothesline, lifting Stephens off his feet before he settles back down to the mat...

...and gets whipped right back the other way, smashing into the turnbuckles.]

GM: Stephens hits the corner again - in comes Martinez!

[The White Knight charges in, twisting around for a back elbow...

...but at the last moment, Flint grasps Stephens by the wrist, pulling his partner clear as Martinez SLAMS into the turnbuckles!]

GM: OHH!

[Martinez immediately grabs at the back of his neck as Carver again looks alarmed from across the ring.]

BW: The neck was already hurting, Gordo, and when you toss in the whiplash effect from hitting those buckles - the kid's really in trouble now.

GM: Martinez staggering out of the corner, holding his neck and... boot downstairs...

[As Martinez doubles up, Stephens snatches a front facelock...

...and DRIVES the White Knight's skull into the canvas, jamming his neck in the process!]

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

GM: DDT! HE SPIKED HIM!

[Stephens flips the former World Champion onto his back, diving across his chest.]

GM: We've got one! We've got two! We've got- no! Martinez slips the shoulder out!

[Stephens claps his hands together in frustration, climbing to his feet and slapping the hand of his partner.]

GM: There's the tag and in comes Captain Joe Flint...

[Flint comes through the ropes, winding up his arm as Martinez rolls to his chest...]

GM: 281 pound elbowdrop, down on the back of the neck!

[The former Marine gets back up, dropping a second elbow on the neck...]

GM: Another heavy elbow, right on target!

[...and gets up once more to drop a third elbow, smashing Martinez' neck under the weight!]

GM: Flint with a cov- no!

[On his knees, Flint opts to pummel instead of pin...]

"WHAAAAP!"

"WHAAAAP!"

"WHAAAAP!"

"WHAAAAP!"

"WHAAAAP!"

"WHAAAAP!"

GM: Flint just clubbing the back of the neck, hammering away at Martinez!

[Flint gets to his feet, hauling Martinez up into a front facelock...

...and then slowly turns him over to face the sky, dropping to his tailbone and jolting the neck of the former World Champion!]

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

GM: REVERSE NECKBREAKER! EXPERTLY EXECUTED!

[Flint flips Martinez over onto his back, leaning into a North-South cover.]



GM: Flint gets one! Flint gets two! Flint gets - no! Again, Martinez kicks out at two!

BW: The kid's got guts, Gordo.

GM: Over the years, the most admirable quality I've come to find this young man has been his tremendous heart. His fighting spirit, if you will.

[Captain USA climbs to his feet again, looking out on the jeering crowd as he pulls Martinez up to join him there for a moment before he scoops him up and slams him down on the canvas...]

GM: Scoop and a slam by Flint... to the ropes...

[Flint leaps into the air, dropping a heavy leg across the neck!]

GM: Ohhh!

BW: Big legdrop by a real American in Joe Flint! And Flint covers!

[Another two count follows before Martinez kicks out in time.]

GM: Another two count for Flint... the Soldiers continue to pour on the punishment but Martinez continues to keep fighting as we creep towards the fifteen minute mark in the time limit for this one.

[Flint pulls himself up off the mat, glaring at the official as he slaps his hands together three times quickly.]

GM: Joe Flint with some words for Scott Ezra on the speed of the count... it looked good to me though.

BW: Well, with the exchange rate...

GM: That's not how that works.

[The Duke shakes his head in disgust as he drags Martinez to his feet again, slamming the point of his elbow down on the neck... again... and again... and again... and then uses a snapmare to flip him over into a seated position...]

"WHAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAACK!"

"OOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOO!"

[A kick to the back of the neck has Martinez reeling as Flint lowers to his knees, locking in a tight rear chinlock.]

GM: And now Flint's gonna try and grind down on Martinez' neck, really wear him down here...

[Flint cinches the hold in as Martinez grimaces. In the corner, Stephens shouts encouragement towards his partner, miming locking in a chinlock of his own.]

GM: Flint pulling back on the neck, really wrenching it back... and wherever he is, Javier Castillo's gotta like the looks of this one, Bucky.

BW: Absolutely. The Soldiers have this one well in hand right now... they just gotta find a way to finish it.

[Martinez pumps his arms, the crowd getting louder as he does...]

"LET'S GO RY-AN!"  
clap clap clapclapclap

"LET'S GO RY-AN!"  
clap clap clapclapclap

"LET'S GO RY-AN!"  
clap clap clapclapclap

[With the Canadian crowd cheering him on, Martinez manages to battle up to his feet, still trapped in the chinlock by Flint...

...and buries an elbow back to the midsection!]

GM: Martinez going downstairs, trying to fight out of this hold...

[A second elbow breaks the grip, freeing Martinez to cheers from the crowd. The former World Champion breaks to the ropes, rebounding back...

...and gets his head snapped back with a back elbow up under the chin, knocking him back down to the canvas!]

GM: Ohhh! And down goes Martinez again, his neck jolted hard once more by that elbow... and there's a tag to Charlie Stephens.

[Stephens comes quickly into the ring, promptly hopping up on the middle rope as Martinez rolls over onto his chest, trying to push up off the mat...

...and Stephens leaps off, landing on his knees as he JAMS the point of his elbow into the back of Martinez' neck!]

GM: Oh! What a shot! Right on target!

[Stephens flips Martinez over, diving across into a lateral press as he reaches back to snatch a leg...]

GM: We've got one! We've got two! We've got- no! Again, Martinez kicks out in time!

BW: And look at the frustration on the face of Charlie Stephens. He's gotta be wondering what it'll take to keep this kid down for a three count, Gordo.

GM: It's gonna take a lot. You can ask the likes of Caleb Temple... of Percy Childes... of Hannibal Carver and Supreme Wright and Juan Vasquez!

[And now it's Stephens who bullies the ref a bit about the count, forcing him back the corner with some angry words. Stephens turns around, watching Martinez sit up, holding the back of his neck as he does...]

GM: Martinez trying to get to his feet and...

[Stephens sprints forward, flipping into a front somersault, grabbing Martinez' head and SNAPPING his neck on the way down!]

GM: OHH! ROLLING NECK SNAP!

[Martinez flails about on the canvas, clutching his neck in pain as Stephens sits there, looking up at a fuming Hannibal Carver with a sneer on his face.]

GM: Stephens with an excellent move there, leaving Martinez in a bad way... and Carver looks like he wants nothing more in the world right now than to get inside that ring and punch Charlie Stephens right in the mouth.

"FIFTEEN MINUTES! FIFTEEN MINUTES! FIFTEEN MINUTES GONE BY!"

[Carver and Stephens trade words as the former Army private climbs to his feet...

...and then SPITS at Hannibal Carver to the shock of the crowd!]

GM: Oh, come on! There's no call for that and-

[The Mosaic Stadium crowd ROARS as Hannibal Carver comes rushing through the ropes into the ring. The referee dives in front of him, trying to stop him from intervening...

...which is when Joe Flint slips in behind the referee's back.]

GM: And now we've got BOTH Soldiers of Fortune in the ring... double whip on Martinez annnnnd...

[The Soldiers take Martinez off his feet with a running double clothesline, leaving him in a pile in the middle of the ring. Flint quickly bails out before the official turns around!]

GM: The double clothesline takes down the White Knight!

BW: See, this is the problem when a so-called "super team" takes on a dedicated tag team, Gordo. They don't know the game. They don't know the strategy. They're not two men thinking with the same mind.

[Stephens dives atop Martinez, hooking both legs this time.]

GM: ONNNNNNNNNNE! TWOOOOOOOOO! TH-

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

GM: Kickout! Kickout! Martinez kicks out in time!

[Stephens again gives an earful to the official as he climbs to his feet, marching to his corner to slap Joe Flint's offered hand.]

GM: Another tag by the Soldiers, keeping the fresh man in...

BW: Another part of being a world class tag team - something that Carver and Martinez know nothing about, daddy.

[As Flint comes in, the two Soldiers stand on either side of Martinez as he tries to push up off the canvas...]

GM: Oh, and here come the Soldiers now, laying in some heavy blows!

[The crowd jeers as Flint and Stephens take turns dropping double axehandles on the back, neck, and head of Martinez, forcing him to flatten out on the canvas again. The referee reprimands the Number One Contenders as Stephens exits, leaving Flint behind with Martinez.]

GM: No cover this time though as Flint drags the White Knight to his feet again...

BW: Martinez is barely able to stand, Gordo. He almost fell right back down...

[Grabbing the arm, Flint whips Martinez into the neutral corner, getting a running start behind him...]

GM: Ohhh! Big clothesline in the corner by Flint!

[He grabs the arm, whipping Martinez back the other way, chasing him in with a second heavy clothesline...]

BW: Flint's breaking out the Heavy Artillery now, daddy!

GM: And he whips Martinez across again... here he comes!

[The charging veteran comes hard, extending his arm...

...and at the last possible moment, Ryan Martinez LUNGES out of the way, causing Flint to slam hard into the corner, flying backwards where he flips over and ends up on his belly!]

GM: MARTINEZ MOVES! THE WHITE KNIGHT GETS CLEAR!

BW: But can he take advantage of it?!

GM: Martinez down on his knees, looking to the corner... looking to his partner...

[Carver insistently sticks out his hand, shouting "COME ON, MARTINEZ!"]

GM: The Boston Brawler wants in there in the worst way... Martinez crawling towards him... inching closer and closer...

[Carver leans out further, stretching his arm as far as he can as Martinez gets closer...]

GM: Can he get there in time?! Can he make the tag?!

[...but just as it looks like a tag is imminent, Charlie Stephens comes through the ropes, races past a protesting official, and DIVES into a double axehandle on the back of Ryan's head, cutting him off!]

GM: OHHH! COME ON!

[The crowd is all over Stephens as the referee shouts at him...

...and in comes Hannibal Carver!]

GM: CARVER'S IN! CARVER'S IN!

[The referee tries to stop Carver from getting involved but he has no luck this time as Carver lights up the surprised Stephens with big right hands to the jaw, backing him further across the ring with every blow...]

GM: Stephens in a daze and-

[Carver drops back, starting to go into a spin...

...but the official jumps in front of him, blocking Carver's rolling elbow attempt!]

GM: OH, COME ON!

BW: Are you getting paid a bonus every time you say that?!

GM: Hannibal Carver was just about to make Charlie Stephens pay for his actions in this match and the referee stopped him - backing him all the way across the ring now, Carver arguing with him all the while... and now look at this garbage!

[The crowd jeers loudly as the dazed Stephens grabs Martinez by the leg, dragging him across the ring back to the Soldiers' corner...]

GM: Stephens pulls him back - he's not even the legal man!

BW: Not yet but...

GM: Tag!

[The referee turns around just as Flint tags Stephens in and Stephens comes in fast, diving on top of Martinez with a flurry of fists to the ear and clubbing forearms to the back of the neck!]

GM: Charlie Stephens has been a man of questionable ethics and ridiculous actions throughout this tournament and he strikes again here in the Semifinals, pulling Martinez off the mat now...

[He drags the White Knight over towards the ropes, draping his throat over the middle rope as he slides his shin over the back of the neck, choking him as he bounces up and down on the ropes for extra leverage!]

GM: A blatant choke by Stephens, adding to that "questionable ethics" resume!

[Stephens holds until the count of four, breaking the choke to dash to the far ropes, rebounding back...

...and leaping into the air, jamming his knee into the back of the neck, snapping Ryan's throat down on the ropes again!]

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

GM: That'll do even more damage to the neck of the White Knight... that neck that was seriously injured at the hands of Juan Vasquez about a year and a half ago. Stephens and Flint came into this one with a gameplan and so far, they are executing it to pure perfection, Bucky.

BW: You think soldiers won't come onto the battlefield with a strategy? No chance of that.

GM: Stephens throws Martinez down to the mat... another cover!

[The referee drops down to count once... twice... but again, Martinez' shoulder pops up before three!]

GM: Another near fall for the Soldiers... getting oh-so-close to a trip to the Finals of the 2017 Stampede Cup tournament! We're closing in on the twenty minute mark of this sixty minute time limit as Stephens AGAIN argues with the official. These two are out of control with this.

BW: I don't know that they're out of control but they definitely need to stay focused on their opponents. I've never met a referee who changed the count after the fact so it doesn't do you any good to bark at them and lose your focus.

GM: An excellent point as Stephens is STILL talking to the official as he pulls Martinez up, right into a front facelock by the ropes...

[Stephens continues to badmouth the official as he sets his feet, grabbing Martinez under the arm...]

GM: Swinging neckbreaker on the way perhaps!

BW: He's too close to the-

[...and goes to jerk Martinez over to the canvas but the former World Champion slips his arm out, hooking it around the ropes, causing Stephens to flip himself down hard on the canvas!]

GM: OHHH! Down goes Stephens! A miscalculation on his part!

BW: I was about to say he was too close to the ropes, Gordo... because something like that might happen! He lost his focus because he was arguing with the referee and that led directly to that happening!

GM: A mistake on the part of the Soldiers of Fortune - a rare one in this one so far... and this gives Martinez a chance, down on his knees... crawling across the ring...

BW: We've seen Martinez have the chance before... but maybe this time...

GM: Martinez inching across the ring - the crowd getting louder with each movement he makes! They want to see the tag! And you know Hannibal Carver wants to see it!

[Carver hops up and down, insistently sticking his hand over the ropes, shouting to his partner who continues to crawl towards him...]

GM: Martinez has a clear path here! There's no one stopping him! No one but-

[But a lunging Charlie Stephens dives towards Martinez, hooking him around the ankle!]

GM: Oh! Stephens cuts him off! Martinez can't go any further, reaching up towards Carver but he's not close enough! Stephens stops the tag again!

[Stephens climbs up to his feet, still holding the foot as Martinez struggles to get free. The former Army private shakes his head.]

"Not on my watch, civilian!"

[...and then Martinez rolls to his back, drawing his knees towards his chest.]

GM: Martinez rolls over and-

[The crowd ROARS as Martinez kicks Stephens off, sending him sailing across the ring, crashing back into his own corner...]

GM: The White Knight kicks him off!

BW: But to the wrong part of town, Gordo! Flint tags himself in!

[Captain Joe scrambles through the ropes, charging across as Martinez rolls back to his knees...]

...and DIVES!]

GM: TAG!

[The Mosaic Stadium crowd ERUPTS as Hannibal Carver FINALLY makes the tag, ducking through the ropes and greeting the incoming Joe Flint with big right hands to the jaw, the crowd reacting to each blow.]

GM: CARVER TAKING THE FIGHT TO FLINT!

[With Flint staggers, Carver grabs the wrist, shooting him into the ropes...]

GM: Carver fires him... ducks low... BIIIIIIIIIG BACK BODY DROP BY CARVER!

[The Boston Brawler is fired up, letting out a whoop as he wheels around...

...and catches an incoming Charlie Stephens with a big right hand! And another! And another!]

GM: And now it's Stephens taking a pounding at the hands of Hannibal Carver... Carver whips Stephens across now...

[Carver doubles up again, lifting Stephens high into the air, sending him flipping over and crashing down to the canvas where he promptly rolls out to the floor clutching his lower back!]

GM: AND STEPHENS GETS SENT SKYWARD AS WELL!

[Carver pumps his fists as Joe Flint gets back up in a bit of a daze, throwing a wild right hand at Carver who ducks under, snatching a full nelson as Flint goes by...]

GM: Carver's got him hooked!

[...and lifts Flint into the air, sitting out with him in a full nelson drop!]

GM: DORCHESTER DROP!

[As Flint's spine rattles from top to bottom, Carver rolls back to his feet, looking out on the cheering crowd with a nod!]

GM: And just like that, Hannibal Carver has completely turned this one around, fans! We're past the twenty minute mark as Carver pulls Flint back up... whips him to the corner...

BW: Which oughta do wonders for his spine.

[Raising a right hand, Carver steps up on the midbuckle, taking aim as the Canadian crowd cheers...]

"ONE!"

"TWO!"

"THREE!"

"FOUR!"

"FIVE!"

"SIX!"

"SEVEN!"

"EIGHT!"

"NINE!"

"TEN!"

[With the crowd roaring, Carver hops back down, grabbing a loose side headlock on Flint. He charges out of the corner, leaping up as he raises his knee...

...and JAMS Flint's face down into the raised knee!]

GM: A modified bulldog headlock - right down on his own knee! Innovative offense out of Carver!

[Carver gets to his feet, letting loose another roar as he turns around...

...and finds Charlie Stephens sprinting towards him!]

GM: Stephens on the attack and-

[The Boston Brawler catches him on the way in...

...and LAUNCHES him overhead with a T-Bone Suplex into the turnbuckles!]

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

[Carver nods to the roaring crowd as he gets up, turning back to Stephens, yanking him to his feet and shoving him back into the buckles...]

GM: Uh oh!

[Carver winds up as Stephens hooks his arms over the top rope...]

"WHAAAAAAAACK!"

[...and BLASTS the former Army private across the chest with a knife edge chop and keeps on going...]

"WHAAAAAAAACK!"

"WHAAAAAAAACK!"

"WHAAAAAAAACK!"

[...and switches to heavy clubbing forearms to the head and neck, battering Stephens down...]

"THUUUUUUUUUD!"

"THUUUUUUUUUD!"

"THUUUUUUUUUD!"

"THUUUUUUUUUD!"

"THUUUUUUUUUD!"

[...into a seated position in the corner where Carver grabs the top rope, switching to stomps on the stunned Stephens!]

GM: The Boston Beatdown is in full effect here in Regina!

[Carver is about to switch to stomps when Joe Flint charges Carver from behind and a weary shout from Ryan Martinez alerts the Boston Brawler who whips around, catching Flint coming in...]



GM: CAUGHT! 281 POUNDS IN HIS ARMS AND-

[Carver elevates Flint, throwing him overhead and right down onto a seated Stephens in the corner!]

“OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!”

[The Boston Brawler gets up, echoing the roar of the crowd as he looks around at the sold out stadium crowd...]

GM: And Hannibal Carver is PUMPED UP, fans! He’s looking to finish this and cash his ticket to the Finals of this tournament!

[Dragging Flint - the legal man - out of the corner, Carver scoops him up and slams his 281 pound frame down in the middle of the ring. He cups his hands to his mouth, shouting “BOOT PARTY!” to the roaring crowd.]

GM: Carver’s got him down and...

[Carver leaps up, stomping the right ankle of Flint... then a leaping stomp on the right thigh... then the right arm...]

GM: Carver stomping his way all around the body of Flint... the legs... the arms... the chest... and finally...

[A big leaping stomp to the cheekbone ends the Boot Party. Carver steps off, looking down on Flint...]

...which is when Charlie Stephens rushes back in, nailing Carver from behind, knocking him down to the mat! The crowd jeers as Stephens stands over Carver, laying the badmouth on him as the referee tries to get Stephens out of the ring and...]

GM: Martinez back in!

[Martinez steps in, swinging a surprised Stephens around...]

“WHAAAAAAAAAAAAAACK!”

“OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!”

GM: What a chop!

[With Stephens backpedaling, Martinez switches to open-handed slaps...]

“WHAAAAAAAAAAAAAACK!”

“WHAAAAAAAAAAAAAACK!”

“WHAAAAAAAAAAAAAACK!”

“WHAAAAAAAAAAAAAACK!”

“WHAAAAAAAAAAAAAACK!”

[...driving Stephens back across the ring as the referee continues to try to get both of them out of the ring!]

GM: Carver’s getting back up now as well...

[Martinez grabs Stephens by the wrist, looking for an Irish whip...]

...but Stephens reverses it, sending the former World Champion CRASHING into his own partner who was throwing an elbowstrike aimed for Stephens!]

“OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!”

[Martinez goes down from the elbow, promptly rolling out to the floor, holding the back of his neck as Carver reels from the collision, falling back near the ropes...]

GM: Stephens getting put out by the referee here...

[Carver throws a glance down at Martinez on the floor, shouting “what happened?!” at him...

...which is when Joe Flint drags him down in a schoolboy.]

GM: CRADLE! CRADLE!

[The referee dives down to count...

...which is when Flint pops his feet up on the second rope for leverage!]

GM: No, no! Referee! Referee!

BW: ONNNNNNNNNNE! TWOOOOOOOOOO!

[But the official suddenly pulls up, shaking his head as he points to the feet on the ropes! The crowd ERUPTS!]

GM: Yes! The official spots the illegal assist and-

[Flint breaks up his pin attempt, coming up hot as he gets RIGHT up in the referee’s face!]

GM: Joe Flint is all over Scott Ezra - like it’s his fault or something!

BW: He stopped counting!

GM: Flint was cheating! I know that doesn’t bother you but it IS illegal and-

[As Flint argues with the referee, he suddenly finds himself dragged down in a schoolboy by Carver!]

GM: CARVER ROLLS HIM! ONNNNNNNNNNE! TWOOOOO!

BW: FEET ON THE ROPES! FEET ON THE ROPES!

[Never one to disavow that “turnabout is fair play”, Carver does indeed slip his feet up on the middle rope for leverage as the referee counts...

...but a DIVING Charlie Stephens breaks up the pin!]

“OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!”

GM: STEPHENS MAKES THE SAVE!

BW: Why aren’t you irate about Carver cheating?!

GM: Well, I suppose it’s because the Soldiers did it first!

BW: They did it first?! What are you - five years old?!

[Stephens argues with the official as Carver comes off the mat to his feet...

...and DRILLS Stephens with a right hand!]

GM: Ohh! What a shot!

[Carver keeps on throwing, battering Stephens back across the ring with big haymakers...

...and then twists around, snatching a three-quarter nelson!]

GM: BLACKOU-

[But before he can deliver his signature move, Stephens SHOVES Carver off...

...RIGHT into a thunderous lariat from Joe Flint!]

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

GM: HOWITZER! HOWITZER BY FLINT!

[Flint covers the downed Carver, hooking a leg as Stephens steps out...]

GM: ONNNNNNNNNNNE! TWOOOOOOOOOOOO! THREEEEEEEEEE-

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

GM: SHOULDER UP! JUST IN TIME!

[Flint angrily slams his hands down into the canvas, shouting again at the official as he climbs to his feet, slapping his partner's hand...]

GM: The tag is made... both Soldiers in now with Hannibal Carver..

[A double whip sends Carver across the ring as Flint grabs his partner's wrist, rushing forward...]

GM: Double clothesli- ducked by Carver!

[The Boston Brawler comes off the far side, charging hard as the off-balance Soldiers turn around...

...and Carver leaps into the air, wiping out both men with a leaping double clothesline!]

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

[The crowd ROARS for the double knockdown as Carver gets up, pumping his fists as Flint rolls out to the floor. Carver turns his attention back to the downed but rising Stephens...

...and then spots Ryan Martinez up on the apron.]

GM: Martinez back on the apron after that collision with his own partner and...

[Carver sticks out his hand towards his partner who eyeballs him for a moment... just a moment...

...and then slaps the hand.]

GM: And there's the tag by Martinez after a moment's hesitation... perhaps a little resentment over that miscommunication a little earlier.

[Martinez steps in, moving to the neutral corner at a word from Carver who grabs Stephens, whipping him to the opposite corner...]

GM: Stephens hits the buckles - in comes Carver!

[The Boston Brawler charges across the ring, leaping into the air, landing a heavy elbowstrike on the jaw...]

...and then clears out as Martinez races across the ring, swinging his leg up...]

"WHAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAACK!"

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

GM: YAAAAAAAAAKUUUUUUUUZAAAAAAAAAAAA!

[Stephens staggers out of the corner, falling into a Martinez front facelock as the Mosaic Stadium crowd EXPLODES in anticipation...]

GM: Martinez sets! He's got him hooked!

[Desperately trying to save his partner, Joe Flint rushes back in, clubbing Martinez across the back of the neck with a double axehandle!]

GM: OHH!

[Martinez collapses to his knees, clutching his neck, his face blanketed in extreme pain as the referee reprimands Flint...]

...and Carver provides a reprimand of his own by rushing Flint with a right hand. The Captain returns fire, the crowd roaring for the exchange near the ropes!]

GM: We've got a fight on our hands again and- ohh! Flint with a knee to the gut...

[Grabbing Carver by the back of the head, Flint HURLS him through the ropes and out to the floor!]

GM: Flint tosses Carver to the outside!

[Flint moves to his corner, sticking out his hand as a dazed Charlie Stephens stumbles into a tag...]

GM: Another tag is made! Flint coming in...

[He gestures to Stephens who stays in the ring, leaning against the ropes as Flint goes to pull Martinez off his knees, dragging him to his feet and lifting him up into a bearhug...]

GM: Flint's got him up... they're looking for the Second Amendment!

[Stephens shakes the cobwebs enough to dash to the far ropes, rebounding back to hit the next set...]

GM: Stephens building up steam!

[As Stephens bounces off the ropes again, Flint leans down slightly, putting Martinez into position as Stephens leaps into the air...]

...and DRILLS Martinez across the throat with a hanging clothesline!]

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

GM: HE GOT IT! HE GOT IT!

[Stephens rolls out to the floor as Flint dives on top of Martinez, hooking a leg...]

GM: ONNNNNNNNNNE! TWOOOOOOOOOOO! THR-

[The crowd ROARS as Carver reaches in, dragging Flint under the ropes and out to the floor...]

GM: CARVER WITH THE SAVE!

[...and DRILLS Flint with a right hand... and another... and another...]

GM: Carver's all over Flint on the outside!

[But with his back turned, Carver doesn't see Charlie Stephens rushing in from behind, leaping up to drive his knee into the upper back of the Boston Brawler!]

GM: Ohh! And now Stephens attacks as well!

[With Carver down on the floor, the Soldiers of Fortune go to work on him, stomping and kicking him into the ringside mats as the fans jeer...]

...and the referee comes over, shouting at the Soldiers to back off... to get Flint back in the ring...]

GM: Martinez is down and...

[The crowd's jeers become much, much louder in a hurry...]

GM: What the...?!

[...when someone comes over the railing, sliding into the ring, and climbing to their feet.]

GM: That's John Law! John Law's in the ring but...

BW: I thought he left the building!

GM: So did I! Castillo pulled a fast one! Castillo pulled a-

[Law grabs Martinez by the throat, lifting him to his feet...]

GM: He's going for the chokeslam! He's gonna-

[...but before he can do it, the referee whips around and sees what's going on!]

GM: He got caught! Law's broken the rules all weekend here and he finally got caught! Scott Ezra caught him!

[Ezra points at Law with a loud "YOU!"...]

...and then whips around, waving his hand towards the timekeeper!]

GM: He's going to disqualify the Soldiers! He's going to-

"NO!"

[The camera abruptly cuts to find the timekeeper about to ring the bell...

...but frozen in his tracks by the man standing over him, fury in his eyes and cold menace on his face.]

GM: CASTILLO?!

[The referee waves again but Castillo glares down at the timekeeper.]

"Don't you dare. Don't do it."

[The timekeeper is frozen as the referee looks down with shock.]

GM: What the HELL is going on?! The referee tried to disqualify the Soldiers for John Law's interference but-

[Castillo jerks a thumb down at Law who nods, lifting Martinez into the air...

...but the former World Champion slips out, landing on his feet, throwing himself back into the ropes...]

GM: Martinez breaks free and-

[...and leaps into the air, catching Law under the chin with the flying Yakuza!]

GM: EXCALIBUR! EXCALIBUR!

[The blow sends Law flying across the ring, rolling limply to the floor as the Mosaic Stadium crowd roars. Martinez gets to his feet, raising his arms overhead as the fans get louder...]

GM: Martinez lays out John Law! He dropped Castillo's enforcer!

[...and gets BLASTED in the back of the neck with a Joe Flint lariat!]

GM: OHH! HOWITZER! HOWITZER FROM BEHIND!

[Flint stands over Martinez, glaring down menacingly at him...

...and then drags him up by the back of the tights, grabbing the right wrist as he laces his arm behind the neck!]

GM: The Pledge of Allegiance! That Cobra Clutch he's used for years!

[Flint jerks Martinez back and forth, twisting the neck, wrenching it...]

GM: Can Martinez get out of it?! Can Martinez escape?!

[The crowd is roaring, trying to urge the White Knight to escape...]

GM: Martinez is hanging on! Can he hang on long enough to get out? Can he-

[And a voice rings out that changes everything...]

"NOW! NOW! RING THE BELL NOW!"

[The timekeeper looks up in shock at Javier Castillo.]

"RING THE BELL! RING THE BELL, DAMN IT!"

[The timekeeper looks up again, shaking his head...

...but the fury in Castillo's eyes is persuasive.]

"DING!" "DING!"

[The referee whips around as the crowd buzzes.]

GM: What in the...?!

BW: He gave up! He gave up!

GM: He did NOT! The timekeeper just rang the bell and...

[Castillo smirks up at the ring as the referee spins, walking over...]

"What's going on?! Who called for the bell?!"

[Castillo glares at Scott Ezra as Joe Flint allows Martinez to slump to the mat, raising his arms in the air.]

BW: The Soldiers win!

GM: They did not! Martinez didn't give up and you know it!

BW: The bell rang, Gordo!

GM: That was Castillo! That son of a-

BW: Gordo!

[Castillo continues to look up at the ring, watching Martinez slowly sit up on the canvas, clutching the back of his neck...

...and staring right down at El Presidente.]

GM: Martinez knows! He knows what just happened! He knows what Castillo just did!

[Castillo gestures to Rebecca Ortiz who glares at him, letting loose a sigh before speaking in a flat, monotone voice.]

RO: Here is your winners... the Soldiers of Fortune.

[Carver rolls back into the ring, throwing out his arms at Martinez, asking what just happened...

...and Martinez points an accusatory finger at Javier Castillo.]

GM: And now Carver knows as well!

[And with Carver glaring down at him, Castillo's arrogant expression has shifted dramatically as he slowly starts to back up... back up... and then turns and RUNS!]

GM: Castillo's running for it! Javier Castillo is making a run for it... AND CARVER'S GOING AFTER HIM!

[A still-hurting Martinez stays on the mat, holding onto his neck, shaking his head angrily as his partner chases after the AWA President...

...and the Soldiers celebrate their victory at ringside!]

GM: Chaos with Castillo aside, the Soldiers of Fortune have won this match... the referee may disagree but Javier Castillo had them declared the winners! They're moving on to the Finals of this tournament and... my stars, what an awful series of events we just saw! We're... hold on... hold on now... we've got a camera backstage with Mark Steg-

[The shot abruptly cuts to the Chimpanzee Position where Mark Stegglet is rushing into position, mic in hand...]

MS: Thanks, Gord- hang on...

[The curtain swings violently open as Javier Castillo rushes through it, gasping for air as he stumbles, nearly falling down a small set of steps.]

JC: GET OUT OF MY WAY! OUT OF MY WAY!

[Stegglet sticks the mic out.]

MS: Mr. Castillo, where are you going?! Why did you just-

[Castillo shoves Stegglet aside, nearly knocking him down as he tears past him, down a hallway...]

MS: Well, as you can see, Javier Castillo is running for his life... perhaps literally... after directly influencing the result of-

[The curtain tears open again as Hannibal Carver rips into sight. Stegglet sticks out the mic again.]

MS: Mr. Carver! Hannibal!

[Carver reaches Stegglet, looking around wildly.]

HC: Where did he go, Steggs? Which way?

MS: Mr. Carver, can I-

[Carver grabs Stegglet by the lapels, yanking him closer.]

HC: WHICH. WAY.

[Stegglet nervously points in the direction that Castillo fled as Carver nods, nudging him back and running off in the direction of the point.]

MS: A wild scene back here backstage and... wow. We're going to take our cameras down the hallway... we're going to try and catch up with Castillo and Carver and while we do, let's go over to Sweet Lou! Lou?

[We fade to the backstage area where we find Sweet Lou Blackwell standing in front of the updated tournament bracket shaking his head.]

SLB: Absolutely unbelievable, Mark. Just when I think this wrestling veteran has seen it all, something like that goes down... this... this... this Saskatchewan Screwjob! And... I can't believe it all over again. The Soldiers of Fortune advance thanks to Javier Castillo's antics and... plots... and schemes... this isn't how this is supposed to happen. This isn't how this was supposed to go down. Javier Castillo, again, doesn't give a damn about this company... its history or its legacy... its reputation... none of it. He cares about his power... and his money... and his...



[Blackwell trails off, waving a hand in disgust. He clears his throat, straightening up before he speaks again.]

SLB: One-half of the Stampede Cup Finals is set! One of the teams fighting for a million dollars has been revealed - and now we need to find out who they're going to face. Will it be the current, reigning AWA World Tag Team Champions, Next Gen? Or will it be the team joining me at this time... accompanied by their partner in The Experience, Michael Arons... Chaz and Chet Wallace, the American Idols!

[Chaz and Chet come striding into view, wearing matching black full-length tights with silver trim and the vests to match...

...but most surprisingly, they're wearing very solemn expressions.]

SLB: Gentlemen, you've got quite the battle ahead of you here in the Semifinals against the World Champions and-

[Blackwell abruptly stops, looking at both men.]

SLB: Okay, what's going on?

[Chaz shrugs.]

Chaz: Whaddya mean, Lou?

[Blackwell shakes his head.]

SLB: This! You! I've known you two a long, long time and I've never seen you come out for a match like this. Even earlier this month when you had barbed wire and ladders to look forward to, you were joking and laughing so... what gives?

[Chet shrugs this time.]

Chet: This is... this is different, Lou.

Chaz: Yeah... Lou, do you understand what's at stake in this one?

[Lou's jaw drops.]

SLB: Well, of course I do! Do you?

[Chaz nods emphatically.]

Chaz: One more win, Lou. One more win and we're in the Stampede Cup Finals. Nobody remembers the guys who got to the Semis... but if you're in the Finals... you're in the history books!

Chet: And you're one win away. One win away, Lou. A million dollars. The Cup. Glory.

[Lou nods.]

SLB: Absolutely. So, you two are ready for this?

[Chaz looks down, shaking his head.]

Chaz: I don't know, Lou. I just don't...

[Lou's jaw drops.]

SLB: Guys, I have to say that I'm in a bit of shock here. I'm very surprised at your demeanor right now. This is... this is a big step for you.

[Chaz looks up at Lou.]

Chaz: What did you expect? This is big! This is the big time, Lou!

Chet: Really. What did you think you were going to see with us? Did you think we were coming out here to make a bunch of jokes?

[Lou looks defensive.]

SLB: Well, it would hardly be-

[Chet interrupts.]

Chet: Did you think we were going to come out here and tell someone to ask Howie Somers how it feels to have a sister who is a bigger star than he is?

[Chaz smirks, leaning in.]

Chaz: Lord knows we don't know how that feels.

[Chet continues.]

Chet: Did you think we were going to come out here and ask Daniel Harper how it feels to win championship gold... and not be old enough to drink a man's drink to celebrate?

Chaz: Liddle baby Danny!

[Lou sighs.]

SLB: Yes. This is more what I expected. So, what was all this? A joke? A put-on? 'Cause I gotta say-

[A voice comes from off-camera, loudly clearing their throat. The camera pulls back to reveal Trish Wallace standing, arms crossed, staring at her brothers.]

TW: I'll take this, Lou.

[Chaz shakes his head.]

Chaz: Hey, no one asked you to be here.

Chet: This is Stampede Cup superstar time. Don't you have a match on Power Hour to get ready for or something? Shoo, Patty, shoo.

[Trish grimaces.]

TW: I'll go... but first, I'm gonna speak my part.

[Trish sighs.]

TW: What the hell is wrong with you two?!

[The Wallace twins look caught off-guard slightly.]

TW: Can you take NOTHING serious in your lives? NOTHING?! You're in the Stampede Cup Semifinals! You're facing the World Tag Team Champions! Forget everything else - this is the biggest match of your damn lives!

And you're out here joking? Talking about their families?

Can you be serious for once?!

[Chaz bristles at the comment.]

Chaz: We take things seriously.

[Trish smirks.]

TW: Really? Like at grandpa's funeral when you snuck a walkie talkie into the casket and nearly gave grandma a heart attack during the burial?

[Chaz grins.]

Chaz: That was great.

[Chet chuckles.]

TW: Or when you, Chuckles, had this one tie you, gag you, and toss you in the trunk of my car... RIGHT BEFORE MY DRIVING TEST!

[Chet turns away, laughing heavily as Chaz glares.]

Chaz: You've had your fifteen minutes, Patty. Get lost.

[Trish shakes her head.]

TW: You two drive me crazy. But we're family. So... make me proud out there, will ya?

[Trish turns, striding away. Chaz and Chet look at each other.]

Chaz: Can you believe that?

Chet: Seriously. Mikey?

[Chaz and Chet look to Michael Arons who sighs.]

MA: She's right.

[Chaz and Chet's jaws drop.]

MA: She's absolutely right. Lou's absolutely right. You two need to take this seriously or these two are going to clean your clocks.

This is the Stampede Cup, guys.

[Arons shakes his head.]

MA: This is the seventh Stampede Cup. Only five teams have ever held that Cup. Only nine teams have even made it to the Finals.

[Arons smirks, jerking a thumb at himself.]

MA: Including this guy right here. So trust me that I know what I'm talking about. Winning this match can change your lives, guys. It can change everything about your career.

Tag team wrestling is a fickle thing. Tag teams just don't make it for the long term most of the time. I know you're brothers... I know you're family...

...but look at the Prophets. They're brothers... they're family... they're one of the greatest tag teams of all time and they hate each other. They haven't teamed in years before tonight.

[Aarons shrugs.]

MA: That could be you. It could be you before you know it. Look at me and Mertz. Two years ago, we won that Cup. We beat VU. We were on top of the damn world.

And now?

Where's Cody Mertz now, guys? Where?

[Aarons sighs.]

MA: Your sister says it's the biggest match of your lives. And she's not wrong. She knows it, Lou knows it, I know it...

[He pauses.]

MA: Do you? Cause if not, you better figure it out... fast.

[Aarons turns, making his exit, leaving the Wallaces all alone. A few moments pass before Chaz looks up at Chet, locking eyes with his brother...]

Chaz: Yeah?

[Chet nods confidently.]

Chet: Yeah.

[The twins bump fists before making their exit, leaving Sweet Lou behind.]

SLB: The American Idols - perhaps a different American Idols - on their way down the aisle! Now, let's go over to my broadcast colleague and good friend, Theresa Lynch, who is standing by with the World Tag Team Champions!

[We cut to another part of backstage where we find Theresa Lynch standing between the members of Next Gen. Howie Somers and Daniel Harper are dressed in their wrestling attire, their vests, and the World tag team belts strapped around their waists. Sweat glistens off their bodies.]

TL: In a few minutes, it's going to be The American Idols facing my guests, Next Gen, to determine who will advance to the Finals of the Stampede Cup. But before we get to that, gentlemen, it appears you had one team keeping an eye on you during the Quarterfinals.

HS: Yeah, I get it, Theresa. When you're the champions, there's a target on your back and everyone's taking aim. And it's no secret we've had a few words for The Soldiers of Fortune and how we see things about legacy and who represents tag team greatness. But if my partner and I spend too much time thinking about matches to come and not enough time thinking about the next match, things aren't going to end well for us. So let's focus on what's ahead, if we may.

TL: Fair enough, Howie. It's you and Daniel facing the Wallace brothers. You already saw them end the run Kentucky's Pride had in the Stampede Cup. Now they could be thinking about ending your run, and perhaps getting themselves in line for a title shot.

HS: Once again, I get it, Theresa. The target on our backs and all that. I also get that Chet and Chaz took delight in putting an end to the dream of the AWA legends, Kentucky's Pride, making it all the way to the Cup Finals. And I get that they're probably thinking about putting an end to our dream of doing that as well.

Heck, they're probably thinking about how we don't like their attitudes, how they're full of themselves, how they're always up to no good and every other saying used to describe guys like them. Well, the way Daniel and I see it, there are only five words to describe what we think about them right now.

They are in our way.

[Harper just gives a nod as Somers gestures to the belt around his waist.]

HS: You see, we worked our tails off to win these belts, to prove that we deserve to be called the best tag team in the AWA, and now, we get another opportunity to do that, to continue to build a legacy that ensures that we deserve to be mentioned in the same breath as the greatest tag teams of all time, be it in the AWA or otherwise, and prove we live up to our family names.

And if Chet and Chaz think they're just going to breeze right past us on the way to their happy ending of winning the Cup or winning the belts or whatever it is they dream about at night, all I have to say is this.

[He casts a hardened stare at the camera.]

HS: Like hell.

[He turns to Harper and nods.]

TL: Daniel, I don't suppose you have anything else to add.

DH: Theresa, there's a lot I could add. I could add something about the Wallace family drama, about how their sister wishes Chet and Chaz would mind their own business, how Larry's upset about them not having his back, or for all we know, how they never took the advice their mother and father tried to give them. Or perhaps I can add something about how the Idols still can't beat The Shooting Stars even after getting them in the ring for the... wait, how many times was that?

[He extends a hand and flips his fingers, as if he's counting.]

DH: Well, I lost track of that. Heck, I could even add something about Michael Aarons, ask questions about who really carried who in Air Strike, about who really carries who for the Idols, or does Aarons carry them both, or do the Idols carry Aarons, or they spend time taking turns carrying each other, but you know what? I'm not going to talk about that.

Instead, I'm going to talk about what I remember about Michael Aarons... about how he and Cody Mertz won the Stampede Cup. How Howie and I were there that night, making sure they had a fair fight, seeing them celebrate with the Cup and the tag team titles, and thinking that, some day, that could be Howie and me in there. And that was when Howie and I set our goals and promised that, some day, we would accomplish the same... win the tag belts and win the Stampede Cup!

[He slaps the tag belt around his waist.]

DH: Howie and I have the belts right now, but we're still missing the Cup. We aren't going to get the Cup unless we get past The American Idols. And if getting past Chet and Chaz Wallace means we have to get past Michael Aarons, too, then so be it. The Wallaces could bring out their entire family, but if that takes getting past them all, then that's what we'll do! Nothing is going to stop Howie and I from our objective of winning the Cup, and if slapping the taste out of a couple of loudmouths like the Idols gets us there, then all the better!

[He holds up his hand.]

DH: Apologies, Howie, I did have to get that off my chest.

HS: No apologies necessary... but there's one thing I will say.

[He gestures off camera.]

HS: To the ring!

[Harper nods at his partner, then the two walk off the set.]

TL: There you have it... but who is going to advance to the Cup Finals? Let's go back to ringside and find out!

[We fade to a panning shot of the Mosaic Stadium crowd, waiting to see who will be the other half of the Stampede Cup Finals. We cut to the ring where Rebecca Ortiz is standing.]

RO: The following contest is set for one fall with a sixty minute time limit and is the other Semifinal matchup in the 2017 Stampede Cup tournament. Introducing first...

[The sounds of Calvin Harris' "This Is What You Came For" rings out over the PA system as the house lights start to flash in rhythm to the music creating a dance party atmosphere.]

RO: From the Shibuya area of Tokyo, Japan... at a total combined weight of 342 pounds... Chaz and Chet Wallace...

THE AMERRRRRRRICAN IIIIIIDOLLLLLLS!

[The Wallaces spring through the curtain in the same gear we saw them in moments ago, trading a leaping high five before heading down the aisle towards the ring. There is no crowd taunting... no crotch chopping and flexing... the Idols - for once - are all business as they head down the ramp towards the ring.]

GM: Well, this is a surprise.

BW: What's that?

GM: We're used to the boisterous, obnoxious Idols and right now, they're-

BW: As serious as a heart attack?

GM: Essentially, yes. And I, for one, don't know what to make of it, Bucky.

BW: Dueling pep talks backstage seem to have had an influence.

GM: Perhaps. Time will tell, I suppose.

[The Wallaces get halfway down the ramp before coming to a halt, still looking at the ring as the music switches to "My Type" by Saint Motel and Michael Aarons comes skipping out from the back to a fairly big negative reaction. He is wearing long red tights with patterned pink and purple shapes scattered throughout. He also has on a black leather vest sans shirt.]

BW: Gordo, I gotta know... have you ever been Experienced?!

GM: I'm simply not answering that question as Michael Aarons - who has certainly been busy at ringside for the Idols during this tournament - makes his way out here to join them. The American Idols, of course, knocked off the team of Osborne and Rhodes and Kentucky's Pride to make it to the Semifinals. One more win - against the World Tag Team Champions no less - would put them one win away from being on top of the world.

[Aarons joins the Idols in the aisle, getting a serious expression on his face as he walks the rest of the way to the ring with them.]

GM: A win for the Idols would also be huge for The Experience, Bucky... and you have to wonder if that's part of the motivation for Michael Aarons here tonight. You know he loves the spotlight on himself.

[Reaching the ring, the trio spread out along one side of the ropes, slingshotting in synchronicity over the top rope into the ring to jeers from the Canadian crowd.]

GM: The Idols are in... and now we wait for the champions...

[The music fades as the Idols move to their corner with Aarons, discussing strategy as the crowd buzzes with anticipation.

First there's silence, then you hear a little chanting.]

"Do-do-do-do do-do-do-do  
Do-do-do-do do-do-do-do"

[And then, it kicks into the unmistakable chorus of "Centuries" by Fall Out Boy.]

#Some legends are told#  
#Some turn to dust or to gold#  
#But you will remember me#  
#Remember me for centuries#

[Up on the video screen, this time around, we see a quick montage of some of the great AWA tag teams of the past.

Kentucky's Pride.

Violence Unlimited.

Jack and James Lynch.

And most notably, a certain duo holding up the Stampede Cup -- Air Strike.]

#And just one mistake#  
#Is all it will take#  
#We'll go down in history#  
#Remember me for centuries#

[And then two words flash up on the video wall.

"NEXT GEN"]

RO: Introducing, from Boston, Massachusetts, and El Paso, Texas, at a combined weight of 495 pounds, ... they are the AWA World Tag Team Champions...

HOWIE SOMERS... DANIEL HARPER... THEY ARE... NEXT! GEN!

[The members of Next Gen emerge from the entranceway. Howie Somers and Daniel Harper are each dressed in a navy blue vest with the words "NEXT GEN" printed across the back in white, block lettering. They wear the same wrestling attire: a white singlet with the letters "NG" on the front, in the center, in navy blue, block lettering, navy blue tights, white knee pads and wrestling boots. Somers and Harper each have one of the AWA World tag team championship belts strapped around their waists.]

GM: The World Tag Team Champions are one match away from wrestling for the Stampede Cup.

BW: They got past The Gold Standard, I'll give them that. But now they've got the hottest tag team in the Cup field, Gordo.

GM: You might call them hot, I'd call them extremely fortunate, especially after we saw how they advanced.

BW: In wrestling, it doesn't matter how you got there, the point is, you got there. And now, the American Idols could really vault themselves up the ranks by beating the champs to reach the Cup finals.

[Somers and Harper turn to look at one another, share a nod, then face the crowd and raise their arms in the air, the crowd cheering.]

GM: It would indeed be a huge win for the Idols, but let's not forget that the champions had to go through two tough teams to get to this point defeating Colton and Hunter as well as the aforementioned Gold Standard...

BW: And I grant them that, Gordo. But give the Idols this: They faced two tough teams in their own right and I imagine some people didn't think they'd get this far.

GM: That may be true, but this would be their biggest test yet, facing two young men who have earned their way to the tag team titles, and now are looking to earn their way to the Cup.

[Somers and Harper turn back to each other and exchange a high five. The duo then makes its way down the aisle. They extend their arms to slap hands with fans. However, their eyes remain focused on the ring ahead, never taking their gaze off of the Wallace brothers.]

GM: It was interesting to see Next Gen's video package featuring some of the past greats in the AWA tag team ranks -- including a couple who walked out with the Stampede Cup.

BW: Yeah, they've been getting inspiration from just about anybody from the past, it seems. But you better believe the Idols are getting inspiration, too, and no doubt more than a little advice. After all, Michael Aarons is a previous winner of the Cup too.

GM: I'd say Aarons has done more than just inspiration and advice tonight. Case in point, what happened in the Idols' last match against Kentucky's Pride.



BW: And Derrick Williams did more than give inspiration and advice to Next Gen in their match with Hunter and Colton.

GM: Well, I won't deny that, but I can guess, between Williams and Aarons, who is more likely to get involved here.

BW: I'd call that making assumptions, Gordo.

[Upon reaching the ring, Somers and Harper are JUST about to get up on the apron when Chet Wallace comes sprinting across the ring, leaping into the air, flying between the ropes...

...and DRIVES his feet into the face of Daniel Harper, sending him sprawling backwards onto the ringside mats just beyond the edge of the entrance ramp!]

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

GM: CHET WALLACE DIVING INTO ACTION BEFORE THE BELL AND-

[An agitated Howie Somers yanks Chet Wallace to his feet, ready to attack...

...which is when Chaz Wallace follows his brother's flight plan, hurling himself over the top rope in a somersault plancha!]

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

GM: AND CHAZ WIPES OUT HOWIE SOMERS BEFORE THE BELL AS WELL!

[The Canadian crowd is roaring as Chaz climbs to his feet, grabbing his brother and pointing to the downed Somers...]

GM: The Idols off to a quick start in this one, trying to take advantage of some illegal activities before the bell!

[The Idols haul Somers to his feet, one on either side grabbing a handful of tights...]

"CLAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAANG!"

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

[...and DRIVE him skullfirst into the ringside railing!]

GM: GOOD GRIEF!

BW: Headfirst into the steel - he hit hard and down he goes!

GM: And now the Idols are turning their attention to Daniel Harper - a little divide and conquer perhaps.

[The Idols toss Harper under the bottom rope, scrambling up into the ring to join him as referee Pete "Blue Shoes" Miller encourages one of them to stay outside so he can make the match official...]

GM: Pete Miller trying to get one of the Wallaces out but... no luck yet... double whip across...

[The Idols elevate Harper on the rebound, throwing him down in a double hiptoss, immediately breaking into a dash to the ropes, coming off together just as Harper sits up...]

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

GM: Double basement dropkick by the Promoters of the Dropkick Party!

[The four feet send Harper crashing back down on the canvas as the referee again shouts at the Idols, trying to get one of them out... and finally Chaz obliges, stepping out to the apron...]

"DING! DING! DING!"

[...and then immediately steps back in, ignoring the protests of the official.]

GM: What in the...?! Oh, come on!

BW: The referee wanted one of them out to start the match... and he got it!

GM: Yeah, but Chaz is right back in!

[Pulling Harper off the mat, the Idols double whip him across again, measuring him on the rebound for a double dropkick that sends Harper sailing backwards, tumbling over the top rope and out to the floor!]

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

GM: Hard fall out to the floor for Daniel Harper! The Idols are working together in there to great effectiveness so far - despite their cheating ways - and as they-

BW: LOOK OUT!

[The Idols just BARELY manage to duck under a charging double clothesline attempt from a still-dazed Howie Somers who dragged himself in to help his partner...]

"WHAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAACK!"

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

[...and score with a double superkick that sends Somers tumbling through the ropes and out to the floor alongside his partner!]

GM: AND THE IDOLS STRIKE AGAIN!

BW: SUPERKIIIIIIICK!

[The Idols turn, facing the World Tag Team Champions, staying focused on the matter at hand as Michael Aarons cheers them on from the floor.]

GM: The referee again trying to get Chaz out of the ring but-

[Chaz and Chet break away from the official, charging to the ropes behind them, rebounding back off... charging hard...]

GM: HERE THEY COME ANNNNNNNNNND...

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

[The Idols hurl themselves between the ropes, crashing into the rising Next Gen members with a pair of suicide dives, sending the World Tag Team Champions flying backwards into the ringside railing!]

GM: THE IDOLS TAKE FLIGHT AGAIN!

BW: Next Gen's in trouble early, Gordo! The champions are in trouble!

GM: They certainly are... and the Idols stay right on Harper. No taunting, no celebrating. The Idols are dangerously focused here tonight and that's serious trouble for the champions of the world!

[The Idols toss Harper back under the ropes into the ring. Both members of the Idols go back in, ignoring the protesting official...]

GM: And you have to wonder where the line is for ol' Blue Shoes. How far is too far? Would he be willing to disqualify the Idols for their doubleteaming and end their run in this tournament?

BW: If he does, he might end up getting Experienced here tonight.

[Chet gestures to the ropes as Chaz charges them, rebounding back towards his twin brother...]

...who hiptosses him up and over, throwing him down in a somersault senton on top of the downed Harper...]

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

[...and then snaps off a somersault senton of his own, crushing Harper underneath as Chaz rolls out to the floor!]

GM: Another effective doubleteam... and Chet makes the first cover of the match!

[A two count follows before Harper kicks out. Chet doesn't react at all, simply getting to his feet, marching to his corner, and tagging Chaz into the match.]

GM: There's the first legal tag of the match for the American Idols - but certainly not the first time both men have been inside the ring for them.

[A double whip shoots Harper across the ring, rebounding back towards the Idols who team up for a double hiptoss...]

...which HURLS Harper high in the air and far across the ring, nearly launching him into the ropes as the back of his feet kick the bottom rope upon landing!]

GM: OHHH! What a throw by the American Idols! Chaz drags him back to the middle by the arm... dives across...

[Another two count follows before Harper kicks out again.]

GM: Just a two count off the double hiptoss... a monster double hiptoss at that.

[Chaz gets up, quickly moving to the corner to slap his brother's hand.]

GM: Another tag! These American Idols are truly a tag team to the core - quick tags, cutting the ring in half...

BW: Lightning quick tags, Gordo. I don't know if either of them have been in there alone for more than a minute or so...

GM: If that!

[With both in the ring again, they whip Harper across to the neutral corner. Chet steps back, cupping his hands to his mouth...]

"DROPKIC-"

[But Chaz grabs his wrist, cutting him off with a shake of the head.]

BW: No time for love, Gordo!

[And with a nod, Chet steps back as Chaz runs across the ring, landing a running dropkick on the chin that stuns Harper...]

GM: One dropkick...

[...and Chet charges right in behind him, leaving his feet with a second running dropkick, knocking Harper down to a seated position in the corner!]

GM: ...make it a double! And down goes Harper once more...

BW: The Idols ain't done either!

[Back on their feet in opposite corners, the Idols charge in, leaping high into the air with double hesitation dropkicks...]

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

[...and DRIVE all four feet into the face of the stunned Harper to a huge reaction from the Mosaic Stadium crowd!]

GM: Harper's down! He may be out... Chet drags him out to the middle... double leg cradle, rolls through to cover!

[Chet hangs onto the legs, bridging as the referee counts.]

GM: ONNNNNNNNE! TWOOOOOOOOO!

[But Harper's shoulder pops up off the mat, breaking the pin again.]

GM: But still Daniel Harper - one half of the World Tag Team Champions - manages to kick out. We know that Harper's gotta a lot of guts... a lot of resilience... it's going to take a lot to put him down for a three count and the Wallaces haven't gotten to that limit quite yet, fans!

BW: It's crazy, Gordo... we're not even five minutes into this yet but the action's been so fast-paced, so nonstop... it feels like a lot longer.

GM: It may feel that way to the World Tag Team Champions as well as they've been playing defense since before the bell even rang in this one. The Idols have been all over them since before this got started and they just keep on going. And there's yet another tag, Chaz coming back in...

[This time, Chet bails out of the ring, opting not to double team as Chaz waves him off, racing to the far ropes...]

...and the crowd ROARS as Howie Somers slides in while Chaz' back is turned to the action so when Chaz rebounds back, Howie is waiting to catch him on the run, lifting him up and shoving him skyward!]

GM: GORILLA PRESS! GORILLA PRESS!

[The referee is shouting at Howie Somers, trying to get him out of the ring as he angrily throws Chaz down to the canvas with a big slam!]

GM: He throws Chaz down HARD to the mat!

BW: He's in there illegally, Gordo!

GM: He certainly is and ol' Blue Shoes is letting him hear all about it...

[With Somers in illegally, Chet decides he's going to do the same, slingshotting over the ropes, charging towards the Next Gen powerhouse...

...who catches Chet coming in as well, pushing him into the air!]

GM: AND ANOTHER PRESS BY SOMERS!

[Somers turns slightly, shoving Chet upwards...

...which brings him crashing chestfirst down on the prone Chaz to a huge reaction!]

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

[Chaz flails about on the mat as Somers pumps both arms triumphantly. Again, the referee steps in, trying to get Somers out of the ring but the fired-up tag team champion argues with him, pointing out both Wallaces.]

GM: And you can hardly blame Howie Somers for coming in illegally after all the illegal doubleteams by the American Idols early on in this one!

BW: I can blame him! I can blame him big time!

[Chet and Chaz are both slow to their feet but as they get there...]

GM: Somers is still arguing with the official and-

[Reaching out, Somers sure grabs the referee under the armpits, lifting him into the air, and setting him down gently on the canvas behind him...]

BW: What the-?! That's a disqualification! You can't touch the official!

GM: Both teams risking disqualification early in this one and they- OHHHH MYYYYYY!

[The crowd ROARS as well as Howie Somers hits a double clothesline that takes both Chaz and Chet over the top rope, dumping them outside of the ring on the floor!]

GM: DOUBLE CLOTHESLINE CLEANS HOUSE!

[Back on his feet, an equally-fired up Daniel Harper shoves his partner in the chest, giving him a double high five as the Canadian crowd roars their approval for the action so far!]

GM: And listen to these fans here in Regina! The Battle of Saskatchewan is raging and this night ain't over yet, fans! Two more huge matches still to come - the AWA World Title on the line with Johnny Detson defending the gold against Kerry Kendrick and the Stampede Cup Finals which will see this team take on- WAIT A MINUTE!

[The sold out crowd ROARS as Somers grabs his partner, pressing him straight up overhead as well!]

GM: HE'S GOT HIS OWN PARTNER UP! WHAT IS HE...? OHHHHH MYYYY STARRRRRS!

[The fans EXPLODE at the sight of Somers HURLING his own partner over the top rope onto both American Idols!]

GM: ARE YOU KIDDING ME?! WHAT JUST HAPPENED, BUCKY?!

BW: Somers is going nuts right now! He's slamming everyone in sight - get down, Gordo... we might be next!

[Somers lets loose this roar, throwing back his arms as the fans scream and shout their support for the World Tag Team Champions.]

GM: Howie Somers has kicked his intensity into a whole other level here in this Semifinal match! We've got bodies all over ringside and-

BW: And on top of it all, this maniac Somers isn't even the legal man!

[Ignoring the referee, Somers goes through the ropes, climbing down to the floor where he retrieves Chaz - the legal man - and tosses him back inside the ring.]

GM: Chaz is back in...

[Somers goes to aid his partner in getting up off the mat. Harper nods that he's okay as he moves back towards the ring and Somers starts to head back to his own corner.]

GM: We may be getting back to a one-on-one situation here. The referee's still letting Somers have it but it looks like finally, the young man from Boston, Mass is obliging.

[With Harper back inside the ring, he pulls Chaz Wallace up off the mat, decking him with a right hand... and another one sends Chaz stumbling back towards the neutral corner...]

GM: Harper backs him down to the corner...

[Grabbing the wrist, Harper whips Chaz across the ring...

...but the high flying American Idol runs right up the ropes, leaping off, twisting around towards the approaching Harper...]

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

[...who BLASTS Chaz out of the sky with a European uppercut!]

GM: Good grief! What a shot that was!

[Harper dives on top of Chaz, wrapping up a leg for a two count of his own.]

GM: Harper gets two off the uppercut... and now it's time for Next Gen to make the exchange.

[Harper offers up a tag and Somers accepts it, coming into the ring to join his championship partner...]

GM: Next Gen with the double team down... Harper shoots him across...

[The young man throws himself at the rebounding Wallace's feet, causing Chaz to hurdle over him...]

...which puts him in the waiting beefy arms of Howie Somers who twists him through the air...]

"THUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUD!"

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

GM: SPINEBUSTER SLAM BY SOMERS!

[Somers slides into a lateral press, reaching back for a leg...]

GM: We've got one! We've got two! We've got-

[But Chaz kicks out again, breaking the effort.]

GM: Another two count for the champions, looking to get that win and move on to the Finals...

[Back on his feet, Somers looks down on Chaz as he pushes up to all fours, trying to get back off the mat...]

GM: Somers standing over Chaz Wallace and... ohh! Heavy double axehandle blow down across the back...

[The blow knocks Wallace down to his gut but he pops back up to all fours only to get hit again... and again... and again.]

GM: Devastating blows across the back by the heavy hitter of Next Gen, Howie Somers. The young powerhouse pulling Chaz Wallace back to his feet now... big whip on the way...

[Chaz hits the buckles hard as Somers lets loose a roar, charging in and laying in a big shoulder tackle to the midsection...]

GM: Ohh! That'll knock the wind out of Wallace's sails...

[Grabbing the middle rope, Somers drives home a second tackle... and a third...]

BW: Chet's on the move, Gordo!

[Chet Wallace slingshots over the top rope, racing past a protesting Blue Shoes towards Somers...

...who hears him coming, sidesteps, and throws him into his brother before driving a shoulder into his gut as well!]

GM: And Somers has them stacked up in the corner now!

[The Mosaic Stadium crowd roars as Somers drives tackle after tackle into Chet's midsection, smashing into Chaz as well. With both Idols sucking wind, Somers walks across and slaps his partner's hand...]

GM: And there's the tag to Daniel Harper, bringing him back in...

[Somers walks to the corner opposite the stacked up Idols, pumping his arm a few times as Harper joins him, grabbing the other arm...]

GM: Big whip across!

[...and Somers leaps up, diving into a big tackle onto both Idols again!]

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

[Somers straightens up, grabbing Chet by the back of the head and tossing him from the corner towards a waiting Daniel Harper who drops him with a back elbow up under the chin, knocking Chet down to the canvas as Somers steps up to the midbuckle, lifting his right hand to a big cheer...]

"ONE!"

"TWO!"

"THREE!"

[As the crowd continues to count along and the referee implores Somers to exit the ring, Daniel Harper drops to the mat, rolling to the outside and dragging Chet Wallace along with him so that the Idol's legs are dangling under the ropes and slightly off the apron...]

GM: Harper's out on the floor and... what's he doing, Bucky?

BW: I can't... wait a second!

[The crowd cheers as it becomes apparent what Harper is doing.]

BW: He's taking off the man's boot! But why?!

[Harper quickly unlaces the boot with Chet kicking and flailing his legs, trying to get free...

...but young Harper yanks the boot right off, wheeling around with it, and firing it DEEP into the Mosaic Stadium crowd!]

GM: What the...?! I don't get it.

[As Somers drops down off the punches, Harper rolls back in, pointing to Chet Wallace out on the floor, looking out into the crowd shouting "WHO HAS MY BOOT?! BRING IT BACK!"]

GM: Daniel Harper talking to the official and...

"THAT ONE IS CHET! HE'S GOT NO BOOT!"

GM: Oh ho! A brilliant move on the part of Daniel Harper! He saw the Wallaces use a little bit of identity theft earlier on to steal that win from Kentucky's Pride and he's going to make sure the referee can tell the Wallaces apart this time!

BW: But he took the man's boot off! That's gotta be a DQ!

GM: I don't think so, Buckthorn! It's just a great strategy and-

[Somers grabs the arm, whipping Chaz towards the waiting Harper who lifts him up under his arm, dropping him down across a knee in a side backbreaker!]

GM: Ohhh! Backbreaker and a beauty on the part of Harper!

[With Chaz writhing in pain on the mat, Harper hops up to the middle rope, takes aim, and leaps off, driving the point of his elbow down into the throat of Chaz!]

GM: And an elbowdrop on the money! Harper with the cover... with the leg hooked... ONNNNNNNE! TWOOOOOOOO!



[But again, a kickout occurs, leaving Harper glaring down at Chaz Wallace.]

GM: Chaz slips out at two... and Daniel Harper showing a little bit of frustration at that, Bucky, but he needs to calm down, stay focused, and stay on his opponent.

BW: That's right, Gordo. Harper's known for having a bit of a temper... a bit of a short fuse... no time for that in this one. A spot in the Stampede Cup Finals is on the line and Harper needs to keep going if he wants to get his team into that coveted position.

[Getting back to his feet, Harper pulls Chaz with him, holding the back of his head as he...]

GM: Ohhh! What an uppercut! That European-style uppercut that Harper learned from his mother, the legendary Stephanie Harper, finds the mark and sends Chaz staggering back across the ring as we cross the ten minute mark in this sixty minute time limit.

[Harper pursues Chaz, forcing him back to the corner where he lays in a second uppercut... and then a third, leaving Chaz on rubbery legs.]

GM: Chaz may be out on his feet, fans... Harper lifting him up, setting him down on the top turnbuckle...

[Harper reaches up, smashing a right hand to the side of the head... and a second before he steps up on the second rope...]

GM: Look at this now. Daniel Harper on the second rope... perhaps looking for a superplex like he used in that cage back in Philly earlier this month. Perhaps looking to finish off the Idols and book that trip to the tournament finals! Perhaps-

[The crowd jeers loudly as former Stampede Cup winner Michael Aarons pulls himself up on the apron, causing a ruckus as the referee rushes over to confront him...]

GM: Aarons is on the apron! Get him down from there, referee!

BW: Blue Shoes is trying, Gordo, but Aarons is quite persistent!

GM: We've got Aarons and the official tied up and... wait a second!

[With the chaos on one side of the ring, Howie Somers drops down off the apron, angrily stomping around the ringside area towards where Aarons is...]

GM: Somers is going after Aarons and... hang on now...

BW: Chet's in! Chet's in!

[Chet Wallace rolls in while everyone is distracted, moving swiftly to step under Harper...]

...lifting him off the midbuckle up in an Electric Chair!]

GM: Chet Wallace coming to make the save for his partner - for his brother - yet again! He's got Harper up on his shoulders and...

[With Harper stuck on the shoulders, Chaz steps to the top rope, shaking the cobwebs for a moment before he leaps off...]

...snarcs Harper's head between his legs...

...and YANKS him off Chet's shoulders, flipping him through the air and down HARD to the canvas with a flying rana!]

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

GM: HOLY... did I just see that, Bucky?!

BW: You sure did! That's gonna make the highlight reel!

GM: It certainly will... and Chet rolls out as Chaz dives across!

[Aarons shouts at the official, pointing out the pin attempt just before Somers yanks him down, threatening him with a haymaker. Aarons begs off as the referee whips around, diving to the mat to count...]

GM: ONNNNNNNNNNE! TWOOOOOOOOOOO! THR-

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

GM: HARPER GETS THE SHOULDER UP!

[Back on the apron, Chet screams for a tag, bouncing on the bottom rope with only one boot on his foot...]

GM: Chet's calling for a tag... Chaz crawling in his direction as quickly as he can!

[Chaz lunges, slapping his brother's offered hand.]

GM: Tag! And in comes ol' One Boot Chet!

BW: Oh, you're hysterical!

[Chet rushes into the ring, pulling a dazed Harper off the mat and whipping him the short distance to the neutral corner. Chet rushes across the ring to the other corner, hopping up on the midbuckle, twisting around to charge across again...

...and throws himself into a spinning leg lariat that carries him all the way over the top rope, landing on the floor!]

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

GM: Another spectacular piece of offense out of the American Idols, really bringing their A Game here tonight in this one... all weekend long really!

BW: About time you show the Idols some love, Gordo!

GM: I wouldn't go that far and... look at this!

[Harper stumbles out of the corner on the leg lariat, getting about halfway across the ring before he falls to his knees, slumping down to all fours.]

GM: A miscalculation perhaps on the part of Chet Wallace! Harper fell out of the corner after that leg lariat but he's in an excellent position to get to his corner and make that tag!

[Harper inches closer and closer as Chet tries to get up off the floor.]

GM: Harper's getting close now! Somers with the arm outstretched!

[The crowd is getting louder with each inch cleared as Harper looks up at the corner, nodding his head at his waiting partner...]

GM: Can he get there? Can he make that tag?

[Harper gets closer... and closer... and closer...]

GM: He's gonna do it! Harper reaches up and-

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

[The crowd reacts as Chet Wallace - who sprinted around the ring - reaches up and pulls Howie Somers down off the apron JUST before Harper is able to make the tag!]

GM: Oh, come on!

[But Chet quickly gets more than he bargained for as Somers cracks him with a right hand... and the two begin brawling on the outside as the official moves closer to reprimand them both...]

BW: We've got a fight on the outside, daddy!

GM: We sure do! A slugfest has broken out here at the Stampede Cup semifinals! The Battle of Saskatchewan is certainly living up to its name this weekend here in Regina and-

[With the official distracted again, Chaz Wallace comes in, grabs Harper by the ankles, and drags him back across the ring towards the Idols' corner.]

GM: Chaz Wallace brings Harper back to the corner... and he's out just as Chet rolls back in!

[Rubbing his jaw and fleeing Howie Somers, Chaz scoots back towards the middle, pointing out the furious Somers who the referee manages to block, preventing him from entering the ring!]

GM: Somers wants to get in there but the referee's got him stopped for the moment... Chet's back on his feet now...

[A smirking Chet looks over at Somers, making sure Blue Shoes has him in check, before he pulls Harper up off the mat, snatching a front facelock...]

GM: Chet hooks him here...

[Holding the facelock, Chet runs to the corner, running right up the turnbuckles, pushing off, twisting out...]

GM: TORNADO DD- NOOOO!

[The crowd ROARS as Harper shoves him off in mid-move, sending Chet crashing chestfirst down on the canvas!]

GM: What a counter! A timely counter by Daniel Harper... and that might turn this thing around, fans!

[The Mosaic Stadium faithful are still roaring as Harper slumps to a knee, trying to take a breather as Chet pushes up to all fours, clutching his ribcage.]

GM: Both men are down off that. Both men hurting for sure here at the Battle of Saskatchewan...

[And as Chet manages to push to his feet, so does Harper who breaks into a sprint...]

GM: Chet's up and- ohh! Harper with a dropkick of his own!

[The running dropkick sends Chet flying backwards, crashing into the Next Gen corner as Harper rolls to his knees..]

GM: Chet's in the wrong part of town, fans! He's right where he doesn't want to be annnnnnnnnnd...

[Harper surges to his feet, stumbles forward, reaching out...]

GM: TAG!

[To a huge cheer, the powerhouse - Howie Somers - steps in to join his tag team champion partner. They pull Chet out to mid-ropes, whipping him across together...]

GM: Double whip by the champions... ohhh! BIIIIIIIIIG BACK BODY DROP BY NEXT GEN!

[The backdrop gets such elevation, Chet actually flips all the way over, landing on his chest to a HUGE reaction!]

GM: WOW!

[Chet cradles his ribs as Next Gen looks around...

...and spots Chaz coming in hot, racing towards them...]

GM: AND A DOUBLE CLOTHESLINE DROPS CHAZ WALLACE AS WELL!

BW: The champs are lookin' good, daddy!

[Harper steps out of the ring as Somers stays in, dragging a hurting Chet Wallace to his feet...]

GM: Irish whip by Somers...

[Chet hits the ropes, rebounding back to duck a clothesline attempt...]

GM: Somers misses the clothesline... Chet's off the far side...

[Chet leaps up, attempting a crossbody block...]

GM: CAUGHT!

[The Next Gen powerhouse catches Chet in his arms to a big cheer. Somers looks out on the crowd, nodding his head emphatically...

...and lifts him up just a little higher before CRUSHING him under his 265 pounds with a front powerslam!]

GM: OHHHH!

[Somers stays on top, hooking a leg as Blue Shoes drops down.]

GM: ONNNNNNNNNNNE! TWOOOOOOOOOOO!

[But Chet slips the shoulder in time, breaking the count.]

GM: Two count off the powerslam... Somers looking perhaps to finish him off here as-

"FIFTEEN MINUTES! FIFTEEN MINUTES! FIFTEEN MINUTES GONE BY!"

GM: We've just crossed the fifteen minute mark in this sixty minute time limit as you heard right there, fans...

[Somers climbs to his feet, dragging Chet up with him... and drives a big overhead elbow down between the eyes...]

GM: Elbowsmash by Somers... make it two there by one-half of the World Tag Team Champions...

[With Chet dazed in the middle, Somers drops back to the ropes...

...where Chaz trips him up, knocking him down to the mat!]

GM: Again, outside illegal interference by the Idols - and the referee's giving them a LOT of leeway in this one!

BW: He's giving BOTH teams a lot of leeway if you ask me, Gordo. Ol' Blue Shoes wants to see a clear winner as badly as we do!

[Chaz drags the fighting Somers under the bottom rope to the outside, throwign a right hand...

...that Somers easily blocks before smashing Chaz in the jaw with one of his own, dropping the Idol with ease!]

GM: Ohh! And Somers lays out Chaz with a right han-

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

[The crowd reacts as Chet Wallace races across the ring, driving a boot and a bare foot into the face of Somers with a baseball slide dropkick, knocking Somers all the way back towards the ringside steel railing!]

GM: DROPKICK FROM THE INSIDE OUT ON THE PART OF ONE BOOT CHET!

[Chet slides through the ropes, climbing to his feet on the apron. He looks out at a dazed Somers, turning to grab the top rope with both hands...]

GM: Wait a second! Wait one-

[Chet leaps into the air, springing off the middle rope...]

GM: MOONSAULLLLLLLLLLLT!

[..and uncorks a picture perfect moonsault that wipes out Howie Somers and Chet Wallace near the ringside barricade as the Mosaic Stadium crowd roars for the daredevil move!]

GM: We've got bodies all over ringside! Somers is down! Both Wallaces are down!

[Michael Aarons scampers over towards that area of ringside, shouting at his allies to get back to their feet and keep the fight going.]

GM: Aarons is over there, trying to encourage his friends to get up...

[A dazed Chet Wallace climbs to his feet, dragging Somers up with him and SMASHES him torso into the railing!]

GM: Chet sends him into the steel!

[Chet waves the cameraman out of the way as he walks across the ringside area, traveling the length of the ring...]

GM: Where's he going now?

[Reaching his destination, Chet turns, sizing up Somers who is leaning against the railing...

...and breaks into a dash, sprinting towards the staggered Somers...]

GM: CHET ON THE CHARGE AND...

[...and Somers lowers his head, elevating Chet Wallace in a backdrop that sends him flying into the air, over the railing into the crowd, and down HARD on the stadium grass beyond the ringside mats!]

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

GM: BACKDROP INTO THE CROWD FOR SOMERS! OHHHH MY!

BW: Chet Wallace just got chucked over the railing into the paying patrons!

[Somers leans against the railing, breathing heavily as Chet does the same on the stadium grass as the ringside fans berate him from all around.]

GM: The Canadian fans giving Chet Wallace a hard time out there... and now where in the world is Howie Somers going, fans?! Howie Somers is climbing over that railing! He's going over that railing into the crowd and that can't be good news for one-half of the American Idols!

[Somers steps out onto the grass, walking over towards Chet. He leans down, dragging him up to his feet...

...which is when Chet shoves him a few feet back...]

"WHAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAACK!"

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

BW: SUUUUUPERRRRKIIIIICK!

[The foot catches Somers under the chin, sending him falling back into the railing, slumping back against it as the Mosaic Stadium crowd roars, craning their necks to see the action going on beyond the railing...]

GM: The fight continues out in the crowd... and these two need to be aware that Blue Shows is laying down a double count.]

BW: What?! But what happens if that happens?!

GM: Then the Soldiers of Fortune would win the Stampede Cup!

BW: Oh. Well. I can live with that. Keep counting, ref!

[Chet backs up several feet, waving fans out of the way as he does...]

GM: Chet Wallace going deeper into the crowd now... taking aim on one-half of the World Tag Team Champions...

[Breaking into a sprint, Chet runs in one boot through the grass, drawing closer and closer, leaping high into the air...]

GM: DROPKICK!

"CLAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAANG!"  
"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

GM: He missed! He misses the running dropkick!

[The leaping running dropkick lands with enough force to move the barricade, knocking it a couple of feet closer to the ring as Somers dives out of the way. Chet grimaces, grabbing at his ankles as he writhes in pain on the grass.]

GM: Chet Wallace misses that dropkick... he's hurting out there on the ground. Somers still out there with him and the referee is STILL counting!

[The official looks out on the action with a loud "SIX!"]

GM: He's up to six! Somers has gotta get back over that railing... gotta get back into the ring before ten or this one's over!

[Blue Shoes grimaces as he counts again...]

GM: That's seven now!

BW: I don't know if EITHER of these guys is gonna make it, Gordo!

[Somers hears Harper shouting to him as he pulls himself up using a ringside steel chair. The fans are slapping his back and shoulders, shouting for him to get back into the ring...]

GM: Somers, I think... just became aware of the count and he's going to go over the-

[But as Somers steps closer to the displaced railing, Chet Wallace wraps his arms around his leg, preventing him from stepping away...]

BW: Chet's got him!

GM: What?! Chet Wallace has got the leg of Howie Somers! Somers is caught! Somers is stuck!

[Somers turns back, trying to shake loose as the referee calls out.]

GM: We're up to eight! Somers is trying to get loose! Somers is trying to shake Chet off him and...

[The crowd begins to buzz as Chaz looks nervously to the action in the crowd... then to the referee...]

...and then walks down to the corner and starts climbing.]

GM: What is he...?! What is Chaz Wallace doing?!

BW: Oh my god.

[Chaz steps to the top rope, looking out on the crowd as Somers drags Chet to his feet, pummeling him as he tries to break free just beyond the railing...]

GM: No! NO! Don't do it, kid! Don't do it!

[The referee looks up with alarm at Chaz, shouting at him to get down as Chaz takes a deep breath...

...and HURLS himself off the top rope, flipping through the air as he soars through the Canadian night sky...]

GM: OHHHHH MYYYYYY STARRRRRRRRS!

[...and JUST clears the displaced railing, crashing down onto Somers and Chet, wiping them both out with a somersault plancha off the top rope!]

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

[The announcers lay out for a bit, allowing the roar of the crowd to fill the air - a roar that quickly turns into a familiar chant.]

"HO-LY SHIT!"

"HO-LY SHIT!"

"HO-LY SHIT!"

GM: Fans at home, we again apologize for the language of your fellow fans here in Mosaic Stadium but-

BW: Foul-mouthed Canadians.

GM: Can you blame them, Bucky?! What a death-defying leap by Chaz Wallace, shifting to a whole other gear here tonight as they try to take down the champions and advance to the Finals of this tournament!

[The official ceases his count cold, diving from the ring to go check on the bodies strewn about the ringside grass beyond the railing.]

GM: We've got bodies down all over the place. The referee's checking to see if this match can even continue at all. Daniel Harper coming off the apron now too, wanting to go check on his partner.. Michael Arons over there to take a look at his friends as well...

[The camera cuts to a slightly elevated shot beyond the railing, showing the bodies all over the grass, all slightly moving around but none making an effort to get up yet.]

GM: There you see the aftermath, fans.

BW: Looks like a damn car wreck. A sixteen car pileup on the Regina Bypass, daddy.

GM: The official's checking on all of them... he's giving a thumb up now... looks like the match can continue and... oh, come on!



[The crowd jeers as Michael Aarons hurdles the railing, grabbing Chet Wallace in a fireman's carry and dumping him back over the barricade. The referee glares at Aarons, getting up in his face as Aarons backpedals, pleading innocence...]

GM: Aarons getting himself involved again and-

BW: Oh, say it now, Gordo! Say it now!

[The crowd cheers as Harper pulls up Somers, helping him back over the railing behind the referee's back.]

GM: Well, can you blame him?!

BW: You've got nothing but excuses when your favorites cheat!

[The referee slides back in as both Chet and Somers tiredly roll under the ropes, still down on the canvas as Aarons slaps his hands on the canvas, shouting encouragement to his Experience ally as Harper does the same to his fellow tag team champion.]

GM: Both men back in... but I don't know if EITHER of them are getting up to continue this any time soon and-

BW: Are you kidding me?! Put your damn hands in your pockets, Miller!

[The crowd jeers as Blue Shoes starts a double count on the two downed competitors.]

GM: Not a popular call but perhaps the right one as Pete Miller starts that ten count on the two downed wrestlers... and again, if we get to ten and they're both still down, the Soldiers of Fortune will be your 2017 Stampede Cup winners.

BW: I like the sound of that, Gordo.

GM: I bet you do. We're a little over twenty minutes into this battle, fans... a sixty minute time limit in this one so plenty of time left for these two teams to find their way to the Winner's Circle.

[As the count reaches "FOUR!", Somers rolls over onto his chest, attempting to drag himself across the ring to his waiting partner...]

GM: And it's Howie Somers who is the first to move! Howie Somers who is looking to get to his corner and make that tag!

BW: Chaz Wallace is still down out on the grass! That crazy dive really took him out for the time being so Chet Wallace has gotta find a way to stay in this one on his own until his partner - his brother - can get back into this thing.

GM: Somers getting close now, Harper reaching out for him...

[Somers pushes up to his knees, throwing himself into the corner...]

GM: TAG!

[The crowd ROARS as Harper comes through the ropes just as Chet Wallace pushes himself to his feet in a daze.]

GM: Chet's up but Harper's in! Right hand! Another one! Make it three!

[Grabbing the arm, Harper whips Chet to the ropes, catching him on the rebound with a big right hand to the midsection.]

GM: Ohhh! Harper goes downstairs... ties him up... and SNAPS him back with a side Russian leg sweep!

[Harper rolls over, applying a lateral press.]

GM: He's got one! He's got two! He's got- no! Chet Wallace kicks out at two!

[Harper climbs to his feet, looking down on Chet...

...when suddenly, Michael Arons is up on the apron again, barking and fussing in the direction of Daniel Harper...

...who doesn't hesitate to wheel around and DRILL Arons with a right hand, knocking him down to the floor to a HUGE cheer!]

GM: HARPER DROPS ARONS! OH YEAH!

BW: You're cheering that?!

GM: After all the garbage we've seen out of Arons trying to interfere tonight...

[Harper leans through the ropes, straightening up to lay a badmouth down on the floored Arons...

...when Chaz Wallace suddenly appears on the apron, winding up...]

"WHAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAACK!"

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

BW: SUPERKIIIIIIIIICK!

[The dazed Harper stumbles backwards as Chet reaches up, dragging him into a schoolboy!]

GM: ROLLUP BY CHET!

[The referee drops down to count...

...and Chet slips his feet up on the ropes for leverage!]

GM: FEET ON THE ROPES! FEET ON THE ROPES!

BW: ONNNNNNNNNNE! TWOOOOOOOOOO! THREEEEEEEEEEEE-

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

GM: HARPER KICKS OUT! CHET HAD HIS FEET ON THE ROPES AND HARPER \_STILL\_ KICKED OUT!

[Chet slowly gets off the mat, staggering towards his corner where Chaz is waiting.]

GM: The tag is made - Chaz Wallace on his way in... no, check that... he's on his way UP!

[Chet pulls Harper off the mat, scooping him up and slamming him down as Chaz climbs the turnbuckles...]

GM: Chet puts Harper down... Chaz is going up... to the top and...

[Chet walks over to the corner, reaching up to grab his twin brother..

...and HURLS him off into a flying splash on the prone Harper!]

GM: ROCKET LAUNCHER! THE WALLACES GOING OLD SCHOOL ON THAT ONE!  
CHAZ HOOKS THE LEG!

[He nods his head along with the referee's count.]

GM: ONNNNNNNNNNNNE! TWOOOOOOOOOO! THREEEEEEEEEEE-

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

GM: NEAR FALL THERE!

BW: The champs almost got beat!

GM: A half count away - maybe less! The American Idols almost shocked the world right there and beat the World Tag Team Champions!

[A frustrated Chaz glares at the official for a half second, not saying a word though, and then grabs Harper by the head, smashing his fist into his face once... twice... three times...]

GM: Chaz Wallace thought he had him on the Rocket Launcher and now he's showing signs of frustration!

[Dragging Harper to his feet, Chaz backs him up into the ropes, pushing his arms back...]

GM: What is he...?

BW: Chaz is tying him up in the ropes!

GM: I can see that... but why? You can't beat him that way!

[Chaz walks over, slapping Chet's hand.]

GM: Quick tag... bringing Chet back in...

[The twin brothers back off, taking aim. They trade a double high five and then bring those same four hands CRASHING down on the chest of Harper!]

"WHAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAACK!"

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

BW: FOUR SLAPPIN' HANDS!

[Chaz steps out as Chet pulls him out of the ropes...]

"This one's for Riley!"

[...and whips him across the ring. As Harper bounces off, Chet leaps up, pumping his leg...]

"WHAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAACK!"

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

GM: HIS OWN VERSION OF INSTANT KARMA!

[The bicycle knee connects, sending Harper falling backwards into the ropes where he bounces off, falling limply to the mat as Chet dives across.]

GM: ONNNNNNNNNNE! TWOOOOOOOOOO! THREEEEEEEE-

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

GM: And again, Harper kicks out JUST in time! The World Tag Team Champions are showing tremendous resiliency in this one, giving it everything they've got to stay in this thing!

[Michael Aarons paces nervously on the floor as Chet pulls Harper up again, whipping him into the Idols' corner. Chet signals Chaz as he rushes across the ring, leaping up...

...and Chet lands a running dropkick as Chaz snaps off a running enzugiri to the back of the head!]

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

[Chet shoves him out of the corner, slapping Chaz' hand...]

GM: Harper's down... Chaz back in... somersault senton connects!

[He rolls over, hooking a leg...]

GM: ONNNNNNNNNNE! TWOOOOOOOOOO! THREEEEEEEE-

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

GM: Another kickout for the champs! Daniel Harper fighting through all of this spectacular offense from the American Idols to keep their hopes of being Stampede Cup champions alive!

[A shout from Michael Aarons gets the attention of Chaz and Chet Wallace who nod quickly.]

GM: What is Aarons...?

[The camera cuts to the other side of the ring, showing Aarons lurking near the apron with his hand behind his back...

...and a familiar boot dangling from it.]

GM: He's got the boot!

BW: Where the heck did he get that?!

GM: Michael Aarons has Chet Wallace's boot and-

[Chaz pulls Harper up as Chet comes through the ropes illegally and the referee rushes to confront him...]

GM: The referee's got Chet, keeping him out but the real threat is- look at this now!

[Aarons scrambles up on the apron as Chaz pulls the arms behind Harper's back, holding him...]

GM: Aarons has got the boot and-

[Suddenly, the referee whips around, spotting Aarons on the apron with the boot. Aarons' eyes go wide as the official tears away from a surprised Chet...]

"YOU! YOU'RE GONE!"

[The crowd ROARS as Aarons gets ejected from ringside!]

GM: He's gone! He's outta here! Hit the bricks, Michael Aarons!

[The protesting Aarons drops off the apron, spiking the boot down on the ringside mats as he starts backing down the aisle. Chaz Wallace lets go of Harper, arguing with the referee as well...

...which allows Harper to rush him from behind, hooking a waistlock, driving him into the ropes, and rolling him back into a rolling reverse cradle!]

GM: CRADLE! CRADLE!

[The referee dives to count!]

GM: ONNNNNNNNNNE! TWOOOOOOOOOO! THRE-

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

GM: DIVING SAVE BY CHET WALLACE! OHHHH MYYYYY!

[Chet Wallace pumps a fist as the referee holds up two fingers, climbing to his feet off the mat...

...which is when Howie Somers comes stampeding across the ring, leaping into the air and scoring a flying clothesline that takes out Chet Wallace!]

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

[The crowd ROARS for the big move as Chaz Wallace and Daniel Harper get to their feet, trading right hands... and within a few moments, Somers and Chet are up trading haymakers as well!]

GM: All four are in! All four are fighting! The referee is losing control of this one, fans... and Next Gen is GAINING control!

[The cheers get even louder as Somers batters Chet back to one corner and Harper uses a series of forearm uppercuts to drive Chaz back to the opposite corner...]

GM: The Wallaces have been driven back to the corners... here we go!

[Somers and Harper each grab an arm, whipping the Idols towards one another...

...but the Idols hook arms mid-ring, swinging each other around to go back the other way...]

GM: OHHH! DROPKICKS FROM THE IDOLS ON NEXT GEN!

[A double whip by the Idols sends the stunned champions on a collision course...

...but Daniel Harper ducks down low, still running as Somers goes right past him...]

GM: Countered and...

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

GM: SPEAR! SPEAR! SPEEEEEEEARRR ON CHAZ!

[In the meantime, Daniel Harper dropped into a baseball slide, going under the ropes as he trips up Chet, taking him down on the mat...

...and then promptly drags him out to join him on the outside.]

GM: Remember, fans... Chaz and Harper are the legal men and... ohh! What an uppercut!

[Harper stuns Chet with a European uppercut before grabbing him by the arm...]

"CLAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAANK!"

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

[...and whips him towards the post where Chet goes airborne, hitting the post, flying through the air and crashing down on the canvas!]

GM: CHET GOES DOWN HARD ON THE OUTSIDE!

[Harper rolls back in as Somers picks up Chaz, walking him over towards the corner, lowering him down over a bent knee as Harper hops up on the middle rope, the crowd surging to their feet in a loud roar for the champion as Harper stands tall, takes aim...]

GM: HARPER OFF THE SECOND ROPE! ELBOOOOOOOW!

[The elbowdrop flips Chaz off of Somers' knee, dumping him to the canvas. Somers rolls out as Harper dives across Chaz, not bothering to hook a leg as the referee drops to count!]

GM: ONNNNNNNNNNNNNE! TWOOOOOOOOOOOO! THREEEEEEEEEEEE-

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

GM: SHOULDER UP! SHOULDER UP! HE JUST FLINCHED THAT SHOULDER OFF THE MAT IN TIME!

BW: How the hell did he do that, Gordo?!

GM: And now it's the Idols who are really showing us something tonight in Regina! They want to go to the Finals! They want their shot at the Cup! Can they get there?! Can they beat the World Tag Team Champions and face the Soldiers of Fortune in the Finals?!

[A weary Harper gets to his feet, dragging Chaz into a spot near the ropes before slapping his partner's hand. He gestures to Somers who nods, walking down to the middle of the apron...]

GM: We've seen this before! They're looking for that slingshot splash!

[Harper and Somers both grab the top rope, ready to execute one of their signature doubleteams...]

GM: Somers leans back... HARPER PULLS!

[The catapult brings Somers over the top rope, his 265 pound frame with the intent crushing Chaz Wallace underneath...]

GM: KNEES! KNEES!

[The crowd groans as Chaz Wallace slips his knees up into the air, catching Somers across them!]

“OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!”

[Before a shocked Harper can react, Chet Wallace comes charging down the ring apron, leaping into the air, snatching his legs around the head of Daniel Harper..

...and drags him up, over the ropes, and down onto the barely-padded stadium grass with a rana!]

BW: WHAT THE HELL WAS THAT?!

GM: INCREDIBLE ATHLETICISM ON THE PART OF CHET WALLACE!

[With Somers down and clutching his midsection, Chaz gets to his feet, tiredly running to the ropes, leaping into the air to land on the middle rope, snapping off a picture perfect moonsault!]

GM: MOONSAULT BY CHAZ!

[Chaz rolls clear as Chet - still on the apron - leaps into the air, springing off the top rope into a somersault...]

GM: 450 SPLAAAAAAAAAASH!

[...and CRUSHES Somers underneath the somersault splash!]

GM: CHET ROLLS OUT! CHAZ WITH THE COVER!

[The referee dives to the mat...]

GM: ONNNNNNNNNNNNE! TWOOOOOOOOOOOO! THREEEEEEEEEEEEEEEE!

[There's a moment's pause before...]

GM: NO! NO! SOMERS GOT THE SHOULDER UP!

BW: HOW CLOSE WAS THAT?!

GM: My apologies, fans... I thought he got him! I thought it was three!

BW: You weren't alone on that, Gordo! Chaz can't believe it!

[Chaz rolls off of Somers, sitting on the canvas, burying his head in his hands as Somers breathes heavily on the mat, having just barely beat the count that would've sent the World Tag Team Champions out of the tournament.]

GM: Chaz Wallace is in shock but he doesn't have time to be, fans! Harper's still down. This is their shot! This is their chance!

[A weary Chaz Wallace climbs to his feet as Chet gets back up on the apron as well. Chet's shouting encouragement from the corner as Chaz pulls the 265 pounder off the mat, looking for a way to finish him off...]

GM: Chaz whips him to the corner... tag to Chet...

[Chet and Chaz stand in the corner for a moment, whispering to one another before Chaz Wallace sprints across the ring, throwing himself into a dropkick...]

"OHHHHHHHHH!"

GM: Big dropkick on the money... in comes Chet!

[But as Chet rushes in, Somers snatches the back of Chaz' tights, pulling him back into his chest...

...and Chet dropkicks his own brother accidentally!]

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

GM: CHET DROPKICKS CHAZ! WHAT A MOVE BY SOMERS!

[Somers shoves Chaz out of the corner into his rising brother, knocking Chet back down and sending Chaz staggering aside.]

GM: Somers coming out... ducks a clothesline...

[Somers runs to the ropes, bouncing back...

...and leaps up, landing a flying shoulderblock that sends Chaz flying through the air, falling to the mat where he promptly rolls out to the floor!]

GM: CHAZ GETS CLEARED OUT!

[A dazed Chet gets to his feet, rushing towards Somers who ducks low...

...and lifts him up into a fireman's carry!]

GM: He's got him up! He's got him...

[Somers falls back, crushing Chet underneath him in a Samoan Drop!]

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

[And then pushes off the mat with his powerful legs, rolling into a somersault, keeping Chet on his shoulders as he gets back to his feet...

...where Daniel Harper comes rushing across the ring, snatching Chet's head and neck as he leaps into the air, twisting him into a swinging neckbreaker as Somers falls back...]

GM: GENERATION GAP! GENERATION GAP!

[Harper rolls to a knee, holding a protective stance as Somers flips over, diving across Chet and wrapping up both legs...]

GM: ONNNNNNNNNNNNNE! TWOOOOOOOOOOOO! THREEEEEEEEEEEEEEEE!

"DING! DING! DING!"

[The Mosaic Stadium crowd EXPLODES in a giant roar as Somers rolls off, throwing his arms in the air as Harper dives to his knees, embracing his partner for the hard-fought victory!]



GM: What a match and what a win for the champions of the world, Bucky!

BW: A hell of a match and a hell of a win. I'll give 'em that.

GM: The American Idols just gave Next Gen one of the hardest matches of their young careers and came up JUST short of winning this one and moving on to the Finals but it's going to be Next Gen - the World Tag Team Champions - heading on to the Finals to face the Soldiers of Fortune for the Stampede Cup!

[Harper and Somers get to their feet wearily, celebrating their win with the Canadian crowd as they continue to cheer the champions.]

GM: And now, the gear has to shift for the champions. They can celebrate now but they know in just a short while, they've gotta go back into battle for what will likely be their hardest-fought battle of this tournament. The Soldiers of Fortune are waiting for them, fans... and what a war that just might be.

[Chaz Wallace rolls in, boosting his brother to a seated position, putting an arm around his shoulders as they sit on the canvas.]

GM: What a heartbreaking loss for the Idols. They came so close, Bucky... so close.

BW: This might be the end of their night, Gordo... but this isn't the end for the Idols. They showed this weekend that they're one of the best tag teams in the world and now they just have to keep on proving it.

GM: Amen to that. What a match. I'm exhausted, Bucky... I don't know about you... but we've got two big matches still to come! Of course, we've got the Stampede Cup Finals but coming up next, the AWA World Heavyweight Title is on the line with Johnny Detson defending the greatest prize in professional wrestling against Kerry Kendrick!

[As Next Gen continues to celebrate, we fade backstage to Sweet Lou Blackwell who is standing in front of the updated tournament bracket one more time.]

SLB: What a matchup and at the end of it all, fans, we've got ourselves one heck of a Stampede Cup Finals here at the Battle of Saskatchewan as it'll be the AWA World Tag Team Champions, Next Gen, taking on the Number One Contenders, the Soldiers of Fortune with the Stampede Cup on the line! I can't wait for that one but before we get there, we've got the AWA World Title at stake when...

[Blackwell trails off as someone walks past. Blackwell furrows his brow then gestures for the cameraman to pan and follow. As the camera shot does exactly that, we see the AWA's White Knight - an ice pack on his neck - heading down a corridor. Blackwell trails behind with his cameraman until we reach the door leading to the office of Javier Castillo. There is no MAWAGA outside the door. No John Law. Not even a Polemos. Martinez takes a deep breath and then shoves it open, the cameraman trailing behind.]

As the camera comes into the room, we find it mostly abandoned.

Except for Veronica Westerly sitting behind the desk. She looks... amused... at his arrival.]

VW: Young Ryan.

[Martinez grimaces.]

RM: Where is he?

[Westerly smirks as she plops her elbows down on the desk, resting her chin in her palm.]

VW: Where is who?

[Martinez glares at his former stepmother.]

RM: You know damn well who I mean. Where is Castillo?

[She sighs, shrugging.]

VW: Your guess is as good as mine, dear boy.

[Martinez nods.]

RM: You trying to tell me you didn't know that was going to happen? What he had planned?

[Westerly raps her well-manicured fingernails in rhythm on the wooden desk.]

VW: Not a clue. I thought he was gone... just like you did.

[Martinez nods again, clearly not sure he believes her.]

RM: Then it seems like we've both got a problem then.

[Westerly arches an eyebrow.]

VW: How so?

[Martinez shrugs.]

RM: I've got a powerful executive willing to break every rule in the book to get one over on me...

[She nods in agreement.]

RM: ...and you've got a business partner who doesn't trust you enough to tell you all his plans.

[It's Veronica's turn to grimace.]

RM: Unless you're lying to me.

[Martinez shakes his head.]

RM: But I don't think you are.

[He turns to leave.]

RM: You were never that good of a liar.

[He calls over his shoulder.]

RM: Tell him I'm coming for him, Veronica. And anyone who gets in my way. Make sure he understands.

[He shoves the door open, walking back out of the office, still holding the ice pack in place as we fade to another part of the backstage area.]

MS: A tense scene backstage here in Regina as you saw right there. This Saskatchewan Screwjob as Sweet Lou put it really has a lot of folks on edge because if Javier Castillo is willing to do that... what WON'T he do? I caught up with a couple of AWA competitors here to give me their thoughts on what went down earlier tonight... come on in here, Grant.

[“Golden” Grant Carter slides into view, dressed in street clothes of skinny jeans and a black t-shirt with a red Michael Jordan Nike logo in the corner.]

MS: GGC, you saw what happened... your thoughts.

[Carter shakes his head.]

GGC: It's a hell of a thing, Mark. Look, I don't pretend to be a sophisticated guy. I may not get all the power broker stuff... all the backroom deals... but I know one thing for sure. Ryan Martinez is a good man. He's the face of this company... and he doesn't deserve to be treated like this.

MS: One sentiment I've been hearing a lot of is that if Javier Castillo is willing to do something like this to Ryan Martinez - who wouldn't he do it to?

GGC: That's for damn sure, Steggs. Castillo hasn't crossed me yet... he's done some stuff that I ain't a fan of like kicking my girl, Ricki, to the curb... but you know... this company ain't about him. He may think that it is... but it's not. It's about us... the boys... the girls... the people in this locker room who bust their asses for this business and for the fans. And what he did tonight was show that he thinks his desires are more important than all of those things.

MS: Thanks, Grant, for your time. It looks like we've also got Curtis Kestrel over here. Curtis, thanks for joining us...

[The very serious Kestrel steps into view in a Battle of Saskatchewan t-shirt and black athletic pants.]

CK: Of course, Mark.

MS: You saw what happened, Curtis. What's going through your head right now?

[Kestrel grimaces.]

CK: This sport, Mark, should be a battle of wills. A physical and mental struggle to determine the better man or woman or tag team or-

MS: We get the idea.

CK: Of course. But when something like this happens. When someone exerts undue influence to directly impact the result of a professional wrestling contest, it completely sullies the sport. I am disgusted. And Javier Castillo should be ashamed of himself.

MS: Thanks, Curtis. Similar sentiments being expressed all over the locker room area since that controversial scene out there during our first Semifinal... and you have to wonder if Javier Castillo may have finally gone too far. Gordon, Bucky... back to you.

[We fade back to Gordon Myers and Bucky Wilde standing by their ringside announce table.]

GM: Thanks, Mark. While this so-called Saskatchewan Screwjob is certainly on our minds, right now we want to push all that aside because we're just about to see the

first half of our Double Main Event when Johnny Detson puts the World Heavyweight Title on the line against the man who - allegedly - won this year's Rumble, Kerry Kendrick.

BW: There's no allegedly about it, Gordo! He won the Rumble and he just might win the World Title here tonight!

GM: Often times, fans, when you think of professional wrestling, you think of that clash between good and evil... well, tonight will not be that. Neither of these men are going to win any popularity contests for sure.

BW: And neither of them will care if they walk out of Mosaic Stadium as the greatest professional athlete on the planet, daddy.

GM: On that, my friend, we agree. Fans, earlier today, I conducted a sit-down interview with tonight's challenger - Kerry Kendrick - and his... associate... Miss Sandra Hayes - an interview that should certainly raise some eyebrows. Let's take a look...

[We fade from the announce team to footage captioned "EARLIER TODAY." It is early afternoon in the VIP box overlooking Mosaic Stadium. Two leather chairs sit facing each other in the classic face-to-face in-depth interview set-up. In one, the venerable Gordon Myers in an AWA-branded polo shirt. Across from him is Kerry Kendrick in jean shorts and a black t-shirt, his shoulder-length dirty blonde hair pouring out the back of a backwards leather pageboy hat. Miss Sandra Hayes is perched at his arm, her hand stroking Kendrick's shoulder]

GM: Now, Kerry Kendrick... the Self Made Man... you and Miss Hayes requested this interview this afternoon. And you made a very striking, at least to me, request:

No topic was off-limits, was what you requested.

[Kendrick nods.]

GM: So my first question obviously pertains to that. Why would you make such a request?

KK: You know, there's been this knock against me that I've had an easy ride to get where I am and you've been one of the ones that's fed into that. "Kendrick the opportunist." "Kendrick the loudmouth." "Kendrick the entitled." There's been this knock that I've been hiding behind legalities and privilege. So if you want to ask me something before tonight, now's the time to ask, Gordo.

GM: Meaning...?

MSH: If you want to ask about Ricki Toughill, now's your chance.

GM: Well, if that's the case...

[Myers adjusts his glasses and glances down at his clipboard.]

GM: ...Then I can outright pose the question: What do you say to those who say that Ricki Toughill can be partially credited for you being on the cusp of winning the AWA World Championship?

KK: I say, she got credit. She got all the credit in the world. She got a percentage of my action for almost two years. Now if you want me bawling my eyes out in pity for her, then I'm truly sorry, but since when did sentimentality count for anything in this business? She became a liability, Gordo.

Where was she at SuperClash? Less than 100% because she had to get involved in some high risk brawl and get thrown from the stage like a suicidal stuntwoman.

Where was she at Memorial Day Mayhem? The first woman to ever enter the men's Rumble match, and how does she prepare? Wasting half her energy in some silly grudge against Gal Gadot.

In fact, Gordo... Ask me about the Rumble. I know what people are saying. Ask me about Supernova.

[Myers glances at Sandra Hayes, who replies with an affirmative smirk.]

GM: Well then... There's a contingent of the fan base who believe that this title shot tonight doesn't belong to you. They believe it belongs to the true winner of the 2017 Rumble at Memorial Day Mayhem.

How do you respond to those who feel that... Supernova... deserves to challenge for the AWA World Championship tonight?

[Kendrick sneers at Myers before responding.]

KK: Let me remind you of something: Supernova had the opportunity to do just that earlier this year. Castillo offered him that. What did Nova do?

He took his ball and went home: that's what he did. He saw the changes rolling toward him and he didn't want to roll with it. You know, a few years ago, I'm sure you remember I was involved in a little disagreement with AWA management. Ask the San Jose Shark to confirm it for you. Yeah, I was unprofessional. Yeah, I said some things that even Sin City Sid would say was over the line.

But you know what? I played my way back in. I worked my way back into the AWA the long way. I did my time in CCW. I spent the better part of a year wrestling Hugh Jenner and Caspian Abaran every other night.

And Supernova sneaks in as the Masked Outlaw. He backdoors his way back into the Main Event.

What am I supposed to do? Sit back and reward him for his ingenuity? Compliment him on the workmanship of the Masked Outlaw smoke and mirrors?

You know, there's a whole lot of people who don't realize that they had their time in the sun, and now it's through. Ricki Toughill can't let go. Supernova can't let go.

Brian James--

GM: [trying to steer the conversation back] Alright...

KK: Brian James won the Battle of Boston and he spent months holding Johnny Detson's jock. The moment passed the Engine by too. That's the difference in this business between them and me, Gordo.

Ricki Toughill, Supernova, and Brian James are all ticket BUYERS. The Self Made Man is a ticket SELLER.

[Myers grimaces.]

GM: Well, since you mentioned him... Johnny Detson is, of course, the reigning and defending AWA World Champion, and he has seemingly run a gauntlet to get here tonight, while you have been rested and in training since Memorial Day Mayhem.

You must be feeling pretty confident too, knowing that Detson is now persona non grata with President Castillo and the faction representing Korugun.

[Kendrick smiles.]

KK: You know what, I'm gonna surprise you again, Gordo: Johnny Detson is probably the greatest World Champion the AWA has ever had. Look at his resume. Look at his trophy case full of belts.

Look at the other World Champs: Detson doesn't rest on his old man's laurels like Ryan Martinez and Jack Lynch. James Monosso was already a shell of his peak when he won the strap. Dave Bryant has a permanent asterisk hanging over him thanks to Marty Meekly. Vasquez needed to form his own cult to even contend for the World Championship, and Supreme Wright is delusional enough to think his first World Title win was on the level.

GM: You didn't mention-

KK: I didn't.

[Kendrick's Kubrickian death glare stops Myers' line of questioning in its tracks.]

KK: In my mind, Johnny Detson is probably my toughest opponent to date, and I am taking this deadly seriously. I have to wrestle the best match of my life tonight, because no other World Champion knows how to win more than Johnny Detson. But lately, I don't know if Johnny wants to win any more. And if he doesn't want it any more, he should move out of the way, because I want it. I want it more than I've ever wanted anything.

The time of "Fox's Favorite Son" is over. I am walking out of Mosaic Stadium as the AWA World Champion. No asterisks. No one else to swoop in and claim the credit. You can stop the talk about "Kendrick abusing loopholes" and "hiding behind his connections." I am walking down to that ring tonight and I am wrestling the best match I have ever wrestled. I am seizing the moment, and there is not a damn thing that anyone can do about it.

[For the first time since the interview began, Miss Sandra Hayes speaks up.]

MSH: And you know, Gordon, I'm struck by something someone said a few years ago, at another Battle on a hot summer night in Los Angeles. A wise man said, "this is what stands in front of you, the undeniable, unmistakable, unbeatable force. There is no chance for you, there is no hope... the only solace to be gained was from the fact that you could have prevented all of what is to come and yet, you did not. So your failure and demise, like always, is on your hands. This ends tonight, you choose this path..."

And now the Self Made Man chooses to destroy the AWA World Champion to claim that prize for himself.

[Hayes gently caresses Kendrick's shoulder with a manicured nail as the challenger intensely glares down the barrel of the camera.]

MSH: Ruminates on that, Johnny.

[The AWA's Power Couple stares into the camera as we fade to black...

...and then fade the backstage locker room. There we see Johnny Detson, sitting on the bench, head resting in his hands. The AWA World Heavyweight rests on the bench to his right. With a loud sigh, he picks up his head and acknowledges the camera.]

JD: The questions... they've become... tiring.

[Detson rolls his eyes.]

JD: Do I have to defend my hostility over an organization that held my career down for years because I wasn't willingly to endure the obscene; willing to pour my blood out show after show; wasn't willing to lose a limb or years off my career... for that I'm hidden away, while that place thrives?

[Detson scoffs.]

JD: Am I not going to take offense when Adam Rogers stands in the back resting on his laurels, praised heaped upon him? Maybe I'm bitter, maybe it shouldn't bother me, but it does. And don't even get me started...

[Detson frowns as he glances over at the title.]

JD: I've had my fill of Brian James questions, so you'll excuse me if I don't invite Matthew, Mark, Lou or John back here to ask me them again.

[Detson points back and forth between the camera and himself.]

JD: We can answer all those questions ourselves, yes?

[Detson shakes his head.]

JD: You know, it's funny. Two people who I dropped on their heads conspired together and pulled one over on me. Well no, not funny... getting choked out isn't very funny and isn't something I'm very likely to forget anytime soon. I guess the funny part is that you took your shot at the absolute wrong time and ruined any element of surprise you had.

[Detson smirks.]

JD: You let Chris Blue "pop" his buyrate for five seconds of redemption and then what? Back to obscurity? You enjoy that, Brian, and I'll enjoy this.

[Detson slaps the gold plate.]

JD: But enough of the past and on to the present... the reason we're here tonight. Castillo's new pal, Castillo's new puppet.

[Detson laughs and holds up his hand.]

JD: Now don't go thinking I'm going to fault you, tell you you're choosing the wrong path, and try to reach your better sense of virtue. I've made a career of finding the easiest way possible and exploiting every avenue so I can succeed, I can't really fault anyone for doing the same. But every once in a while you get to a line that even you might not be willing to cross. Maybe... someday. Then again maybe not. Either way to tell you the truth, I couldn't really care less.

[Detson shrugs.]

JD: So you're the Foundation now? The new Favorite Son? The Standard upon which this business is built? To be honest, I've been so many things and accomplished so many things, I've forgotten all the things you're trying to rip off from me. But I'm sure they were great, and plus what does a "Self Made Man" need with another man's schtick right?

[Detson smirks.]

JD: But no, you're Kerry Kendrick, and as we said you're a Self Made Man. You were in the very first AWA match! Who won that match by the way? Never mind. And this past SuperClash, you made all the sports shows, all the magazines, the blogs, talk radio... because unlike me who was defeating an Engine of Destruction... you faced off against a Major League Baseball player! And who won that match?

[Detson dismissively waves his hand.]

JD: Again, never mind that. And then you fire the person who helps you get the title match and replaced her with someone who can get someone to the top of the mountain, but not quite over it? Yup, sounds good to me!

[Detson smiles for a brief second before staring at the camera.]

JD: All kidding aside though, Kerry... you're coming out tonight the same way you came into this organization... a loser. And all the hand-me-down monikers and all the hand-me-down managers aren't going to change that. You sit there and you think you have it all figured out. The best plan, the best people there to guide you to greatness, but that's your problem. I am great, no one guided me there. Did I take shortcuts? Yes, but my greatness allows for the easiest way possible. You? You're relying on people to make you great, and that... that will only get you so far, but not far enough.

[Detson stands up, he is dressed in his long gold tights and his black wrestling boots. He picks up the title and throws it over his shoulder.]

JD: I have a career of accomplishments. You, Kerry have a career of footnotes: first person to lose a match in AWA; first person to lose a Rumble but be declared the winner; and first person to lose to an overweight baseball player. So I know you're going to go out there with the best plan you can, I'm sure Miss Hayes has something cooked up as well. Maybe even Castillo will pull out all the stops for you. I know this is going to be a fight, I know this isn't going to be easy.

[Detson smirks.]

JD: For you.

[With that, Detson winks and walks out of the locker room as we fade to a wide shot of the Mosaic Stadium setup, the animatronic beer up on stage taking in a nice chug as the crowd buzzes with anticipation for what they're about to see.

To the buzzing of what sounds like household electronics being tortured, the lights in the arena dim, then cycle through blue, green, and red hues...

"The Business of Emotion" by Big Data blares to life over the PA system of Mosaic Stadium. On the stage, an overhead shot reveals that the opening in the entrance stage has been covered with a large, glossy, black sheet, emblazoned with a silver logo. The logo is a pair of lowercase 'k's in a blackletter-style gothic font. To the sounds of jeering and (drunken) catcalling, Miss Sandra Hayes struts confidently through the entrance, a glittering pink baseball bat slung over her shoulder. She smirks as she blows a dainty pink bubble, and puts on a pair of... plastic safety glasses?

Sandra Hayes raises the bat overhead, and slams it down on the glossy sheet...]

\*SMAAAASSSSSH!\*



[...which shatters completely. Hayes gestures upward, summoning Kerry Kendrick to defiantly ascend the staircase it concealed. Kendrick, intensity written across his face, stops and stares down the entranceway to the ring.]

BW: From the first wrestler to ever step foot in an AWA ring to challenging for the richest prize in our industry today, the Self Made Man is within sight of his destiny, Gordo!

GM: When I spoke to the challenger earlier today, I couldn't help but be struck by his all-consuming desire to fulfill what he thinks is his destiny to be the top guy in this business. And the only way to become the top guy is to be the AWA World Champion. Can he do it tonight?

[Slowly, six of the riot-gear private security recruited by John Law flank the power couple as they make their way down the ramp.]

GM: Not taking any chances tonight, are they?

BW: Not unless we want a repeat of you-know-what when you-know-who showed up uninvited.

GM: That could refer to anyone come to think of it.

[Kendrick has a toned, muscular physique with stringy dirty blonde hair to just past his shoulders and a stubble beard. He wears black and midnight green trunks with a silver, mirrored "double K" logo in gothic font on the front and back, thick black kneepads, and black boots. The man who calls himself "the heart and soul of the AWA" sips from a plastic water bottle, eyes fixated on the ring. Beside him, Miss Sandra Hayes looks smugly at her man, hand on her hip as she struts proudly beside him.]

GM: You know, I was also speaking to our friend and colleague Marcus Broussard earlier today. He's long been an advocate for the Self Made Man, and The Shark still thinks that in spite of his rocky path over the past several months that Kendrick has what it takes to carry the AWA into this tumultuous new era in our business.

BW: Well, look at Sandra Hayes, Gordo! She doesn't back any lost causes any more. She knows she's picked a winner, and this is a power couple to watch.

GM: In the five years of the AWA World Championship's existence, eight men have obtained and held that belt. Kerry Kendrick, in mere moments, will get his shot at defeating one of them.

BW: Nine years in the AWA, ninth man to hold the World Championship. Nine is a very lucky number, Gordo. It just makes me sad to think that either Kendrick or Detson have to lose. They're both salt of the earth grapplers, daddy.

[Kerry Kendrick reaches the end of the aisle and looks on into the ring, a serious look on his face. He turns to Hayes, and they softly plant a kiss on each other's lips. Kendrick ascends the steps, dumps the contents of the water bottle over his head, and tosses the empty plastic container into the crowd. The Self Made Man turns to face the fans from the ring apron. He faces out to the audience, and spreads his arms overhead, glistening in the high-angled stage lighting before stepping through the ropes.]

GM: Kendrick a former AWA Television Champion; so is his opponent tonight, in fact. Kendrick also a Coastal Carolina Champion a few years back. Johnny Detson as the challenger alluded to, like or hate the man, is a highly decorated competitor himself. I'm curious to see how these raucous fans react: neither the challenger nor the champion have particularly endeared themselves to the AWA Galaxy.

[Kendrick stands on the middle rope facing out at the stadium crowd. He watches the half-dozen masked security guards take up positions around ringside. Miss Sandra Hayes looks up at her man and twirls her high, dark-colored ponytail, a sinister, smitten smile across her face.]

BW: Oh, to be young and in love.

[Beat.]

BW: And to see your former ungrateful clients bounced from the Stampede Cup.

GM: I assume the Lights Out Express share the same bad blood with Terry Shane when it comes to Miss Hayes.

BW: Young love and old grudges. Powerful tools when it comes to motivation, Gordo.

[As Kendrick's music starts to fade, he settles back into the corner, staring down the aisle where he awaits his opponent...

...and with the signature riff that kicks off Led Zeppelin's classic "Kashmir," the crowd reacts. Not all overly deafening boos as one might anticipate. Not a raucous roar of cheers to be certain.

Solid ambivalence.

After a few moments, Johnny Detson appears in the aisleway, cloaked in his black hoodie. There is no sign of it paying homage to the Korugun Corporation. No sign that he's Fox's Favorite Son.

It's all black with a streak of gold that runs over his shoulder from the front of his waist to the rear that reads "DETSON" etched into the gold on both sides.

Available at [AWAShop.com](http://AWAShop.com) as you watch. Buy two. Great gifts.

Detson looks down at the broken glass at his feet, reaching up to unzip the hoodie and reveal the glittering golden title belt around his waist.]

GM: There it is, fans. The reason both of these men are about to go to war.

BW: There's no bigger prize than that one, Gordo.

GM: Absolutely not.

[Detson strides down the ramp, the music still rocking Mosaic Stadium as he keeps his eyes locked on the ring. The crowd noise is still strong but still split as the World Champion heads towards battle.]

GM: We saw a World Title match last night - the UWF World Title on the line for the final time - but you better believe these two men want nothing more than for you - the fans at home - to forget all about that. This is the prize. This is the ultimate prize. And you're about to witness two of the best in the world doing battle for it.

[Detson slows as he reaches the end of the ramp and finds John Law's hand-picked guards blocking his path. Dressed in riot squad gear, they make for an intimidating sight but not for the World Champion who waves a hand at them, waiting for them to part.

For an anxiety-inducing moment, no one budes...

...and then two step apart, allowing the World Champion to stride through. He grabs the middle rope, pulling himself up on the apron. Ducking through the ropes, he unclips the title belt, holding it high over his head to a slightly louder reaction. Detson strides towards Kendrick who steps forward, shoving the title belt in his direction so he can see it. Sandra Hayes places a hand on Kendrick's chest, keeping him in the corner as Detson paces the ring, ending up in the far corner where he steps on the midbuckle, holding the title over his head again to another roar from the crowd.]

GM: Johnny Detson trying to get inside the head of Kerry Kendrick before this one even gets started.

BW: A World Title match can often be won on one square foot of real estate, Gordo - someone's mind.

[Detson hops down off the middle rope, settling back into the corner as Rebecca Ortiz takes center ring and the spotlights hit the ring.]

RO: Ladies and gentlemen... it is now time for the first half of our DOUBLE MAIN EVENT!

[HUGE ROAR!]

RO: This match is scheduled for one fall with a sixty minute time limit... and it is for the AWA WORRRRRRRRLLLLLLD HEAVYWEIGHT CHAMPIONSHIP!

[BIGGER ROAR!]

RO: Introducing first... he is the challenger...

[The fans ERUPT in jeers!]

RO: From Philadelphia, Pennsylvania... weighing in at 253 pounds... being accompanied to the ring by Miss Sandra Hayes...

[Hayes doesn't react to the outburst of jeers, simply stroking her charge's shoulder lightly.]

RO: He is the declared winner of the 2017 Rumble...

He is a former AWA World Television Champion...

He is the SELF MADE MAN...

He is THE FOUNDATION...

KERRRRRRRRYYYYYYYYYYYYYYY KENNNNNNNNNNNNNNDRICK!

[Kendrick steps from the corner, staring across emotionlessly at Detson as the boos pour down on him.]

RO: Annnnnnnnnnd his opponent...

From Hollywood, California... weighing in at 248 pounds...

He is a former AWA World Television Champion...

He is a former Steal The Spotlight winner...

He is the current, reigning, defending two-time AWA HEAVYWEIGHT CHAMPION OF THE WORRRRRRRRRRLLLLLLLLLLD...

[Ortiz takes a deep breath.]

[illegible]

[Detson steps from the corner, shrugging out of his hoodie, thrusting the title belt over his head as the crowd reacts, showering him with a mix of cheers and boos. After a moment, Detson holds the title belt in front of his face, giving it a long look before he hands it over to referee Koji Sakai.]

GM: And there it is. Detson handing over the title - knowing very well that every time you step inside that ring to defend the title, you can be handing it over for the last time.

[The official takes the belt, walking to mid-ring where he holds it overhead, showing the fans the big prize as they cheer for it.]

GM: Referee Sakai showing the people what this one's all about...

[Sakai turns to the timekeeper, handing the title belt outside the ring. He steps out to the middle of the ring, about to start the match...

...when suddenly Sandra Hayes waves her arms at him.]

GM: What's this about now?

[Hayes mimics throwing a punch, pointing to Detson.]

GM: She's telling Sakai something here...

[Sakai points to Detson, nodding his head.]

GM: It looks like Sandra Hayes is telling the referee she wants Detson searched!

[Detson smirks at her as he leans back in the corner, looking at Sakai. He nods his head with a "go for it."]

GM: And Johnny Detson seems okay with it.

BW: Well, Sandra's gotta be looking for Black Beauty. She wants that glove out of the picture.

GM: The official patting Detson down and...

[He turns back to Sandra with a shrug.]

GM: ...it looks like he came up empty, Bucky.

BW: That's a little surprising. Johnny's always carrying that studded leather glove Wes Taylor gave him so long ago - Black Beauty.

GM: Well, he's not at the moment at least. Sakai explaining that to Sandra right now...

[Sandra smirks at Detson, shaking her head before she leans in, planting a kiss on the Self Made Man's cheek before making her exit down the steps.]

GM: Well, now that that's out of the way... maybe we can get down to business.

[Sakai checks with both champion and challenger, making sure they're ready to go...]

"DING! DING! DING!"

GM: The bell has sounded and we are off and running in this World Title showdown. One fall, sixty minute time limit for the biggest prize in our sport - the World Heavyweight Title.

[Kendrick leans over the ropes, getting a smack on the cheek from Sandra Hayes as Detson looks on in annoyance. As she drops off the apron, Kendrick smirks in the champion's direction, edging out of the corner...]

GM: You think about the career path of Kerry Kendrick and what a moment this must be for him. From the very first match in AWA history to a shot at the World Title... what a run.

[The two circle one another for a few moments, building anticipation from the sold out Mosaic Stadium crowd before they finally come together in a collar and elbow tieup.]

GM: And here we go! Lockup in the center... and the challenger goes right to the side headlock, cranking on the head and neck of the champion.

[Detson looks for a way out, first grabbing at the wrist... then at the hair of Kendrick, earning a warning from the official.]

GM: The referee telling Detson to stay out of the hair - expect to see plenty of shortcuts taken by BOTH of these men here tonight. Johnny Detson may not want anything else to do with Korugun and Javier Castillo but that doesn't mean he's changed his evil ways as Carlos Santana might say.

[Detson backs Kendrick into the ropes, getting a little bounce to shove Kendrick off the far side. The World Champion dives onto his belly, causing Kendrick to hurdle up and over him.]

GM: Kendrick over the top, off the far side and...

[The crowd groans as Kendrick runs Detson right down, flattening the World Champion with a shoulder tackle.]

GM: Kerry Kendrick puts his 253 pounds to good use there with a big tackle!

[Detson looks up at Kendrick who stands over him...]

"Down on your back already, Johnny? Get used to it! That's how you're gonna end your night - on your back staring at the damn lights!"

[Referee Koji Sakai steps in, forcing Kendrick to step back as Detson comes up off the canvas with a grimace, nodding his head at his challenger.]

GM: And one thing's for sure, Bucky - if Johnny Detson came into this match taking Kerry Kendrick lightly, we may be in for history in the making.

BW: Absolutely. Kerry Kendrick's at the top of his game right now. And I know Johnny's got a lot on his mind as of late. He's gotta be focused on the matter at hand. He can't be thinking about Javier or any of the other stuff. It's Kendrick or bust here tonight in Regina.

[Champion and challenger circle one another again, looking for the early opening in this sixty minute time limit as Sandra Hayes looks on with great interest from the outside and John Law's security forces stand at attention, cutting off the aisle from the ring.]

GM: Back to the lockup here... both men jostling, fighting for an edge...

[And this time, it's the World Champion who secures the side headlock, tightening up on it as Kendrick shouts "no, no, no, nooooo!" to the questioning official. He too starts grasping at Detson, looking for an escape of his own...

...and he quickly finds it, twisting the wrist as he spins out of the headlock into a rear hammerlock.]

GM: Nice reversal there by Kendrick... and he switches right back to the side headlock on the World Champion!

[Detson doesn't hesitate this time, getting a bounce off the ropes again, shoving Kendrick across the ring...]

GM: Kendrick to the ropes, bouncing off... Detson sets and-

[And again, Kendrick runs Detson down with a big shoulder tackle, knocking the World Champion down to the mat. The crowd jeers as Kendrick stands over Detson, dropping some verbal elbows down on him.]

"You're done for, Johnny! Finished! This is my time now! My time!"

[Again, the official steps in, forcing Kendrick to back off as Detson slowly gets to a knee, glaring at his challenger... and then rises back to his feet, dusting himself off.]

GM: This isn't going the way Detson envisioned, I'm sure.

BW: Absolutely not. Kerry Kendrick with two big tackles probably has Detson rethinking his early gameplan for sure.

[Detson looks across at Kendrick who is eager to get back into it...

...and the World Champion obliges, waving a hand at Kendrick.]

"Come on, kid! Let's see what you've got!"

[Kendrick bristles at "kid," breaking into a charge across the ring...

...which Detson sidesteps, grabbing the back of the head, and HURLS Kendrick over the top rope to the floor to a sprinkling of cheers!]

GM: All the way down to the floor goes Kerry Kendrick... and you can hear some of these fans in Regina actually cheering for Johnny Detson. A rarity to be sure and likely - in part at least - due to Detson's spurning of Castillo and Korugun recently.

[Hayes rushes to Kendrick's side on the floor, helping him off the ringside mats where he turns, glaring up at Detson who is waving him back in...]

GM: Kendrick's on the outside looking in but perhaps not for long!

BW: Detson got him fired up, Gordo!

[The Self Made Man slaps his hands down on the apron angrily, scrambling up on it, ducking through the ropes...

...and gets caught with a big right hand on the jaw!]

GM: Detson with the right hand... make it two!

[A third one has Kendrick stunned, hanging onto the ropes to stay on his feet as the World Champion winds up again...]

GM: UPPERCUT!

[...and connects with a big blow to the chin that flips Kendrick over the top rope, knocking him right back down to the floor to a scattering of cheers from the Regina crowd!]

GM: AND DOWN GOES KENDRICK AGAIN!

[Sandra Hayes looks horrified, staring up at Detson who paces around the ring, fired up in the early moments of this one as Hayes takes a knee next to Kendrick, trying to help him back to his feet again...]

GM: Hayes trying to get Kendrick up... pulling him up off the floor... and this is NOT how the Power Couple wanted to see this go down, fans.

[Hayes whispers to Kendrick, slipping an arm over his shoulders from down on her knees. Kendrick glares up at Detson who again waves him back in.]

GM: A little emotional support on the outside for Kendrick... and make that physical support as Hayes helps him back to his feet...

[Kendrick stands up, hands on his hips as he looks up at Detson who sits on the middle rope, waving him back in...]

GM: And Johnny Detson showing a little more fire in him here tonight, fans. This is not the usual cowardly ducking and dodging World Champion we're used to seeing. This is a fired-up, ready to fight Johnny Detson after recent events with Korugun. This is Javier Castillo's chosen challenger and Detson is looking to prove everyone wrong right here. He says he doesn't need Castillo and he doesn't need Korugun.. and tonight he's trying to prove it.

[Kendrick starts to take a walk around the ring, breathing deeply, trying to calm himself down as Detson keeps his eyes on him...]

...until Sandra Hayes pulls herself up on the apron, ranting and raving in the direction of the referee and Johnny Detson.]

GM: Hayes is giving Sakai an earful... and Detson as well.

[The World Champion walks towards Hayes, shouting in her direction, stabbing at the air with an accusatory finger...]

...which is when Kendrick rolls back in, rushing Detson from behind!]

GM: KENDRICK FROM BEHIND!

[But Detson sees it coming, sidestepping as Kendrick hurdles past towards Hayes...]

...and just BARELY slams on the brakes in time!]

GM: Whoa, whoa, whoa!

BW: Gordo, he almost ran right into Sandra and that would've been a national tragedy! Global since we're in Canada!

GM: Oh, I'm sure.

[Hayes clutches at her chest over the near-miss as Kendrick whips around, fists flying...

...but Detson responds with a right hand of his own... and another... and another...]

GM: Detson grabs him... Irish whi- no, reversed by Kendrick!

[The reversal sends Detson into the ropes where he rebounds back towards Kendrick who winds up a right hand...

...that Detson ducks and ALSO has to slam on the brakes before running right into Sandra Hayes who yelps in fear!]

GM: And now Detson almost runs her right down!

BW: Sandra, get down from there! You're in danger!

[Kendrick grabs the off-balance Detson by the shoulder, spinning him right round, baby, right round into a right hand...

...but Detson blocks it, landing one of his own instead! Kendrick falls back, giving Detson the chance to grab the arm, whipping him across the ring again.]

GM: Kendrick to the far side...

[Detson winds up a right hand but Kendrick drops down, sliding between the legs of Detson...

...and right between Sandra's as well, ending up out on the floor. Detson doesn't even look after the slide, rushing across the ring, rebounding back...]

GM: Detson on the run and-

BW: SANDRA!

[Detson comes barreling in on Sandra who again yelps loudly, throwing herself backwards...

...and lands in the waiting arms of Kerry Kendrick out on the floor!]

BW: Awwww, her hero!

[Kendrick turns, setting Sandra down on the ringside mats, whipping back around...

...and gets DRILLED with a baseball slide to the mouth, sending Kendrick falling back on the floor, Hayes just BARELY getting out of the way in time!]

GM: A near miss for Sandra Hayes but her man wasn't so lucky as Detson kicks him right in the mouth!

BW: Detson's out here on the floor now too, going right after Kerry Kendrick!

[Detson grabs Kendrick by the hair, dragging him towards the ring...

...and SMASHES him facefirst into the ring apron!]



GM: Ohh! He drives his head down into the apron!

BW: He's not done either.

GM: I don't know the last time we've seen this kind of aggression out of the World Champion, Bucky. Look out now...

[Following behind the stunned Kendrick, Detson grabs him by the back of the head again, draws him back...

...and SMASHES his face down into the timekeeper's table, sending the timekeeper and Rebecca Ortiz scattering!]

GM: Into the table now as well! The referee counting both of these men out... Detson's gotta be aware of that.

BW: Does he? He's got the champion's advantage in this one, Gordo. Detson can't lose the title by countout or disqualification. Kendrick's gotta pin him or make him submit.

[The champion grabs Kendrick again, still walking down the length of the ring...]

GM: Wait, wait, wait...

BW: I'm gettin' out of here, Gordo!

[The announcers scramble out of the way as Detson SLAMS Kendrick's face down on the announce table, sending a water bottle and a stack of papers flying aside. Kendrick bounces off the table, running under the ropes into the ring.]

GM: The challenger back in... and the champion's right behind him!

[Getting to his feet, Kendrick dashes to the ropes, bouncing back towards Detson...

...who drives a boot into his gut, stepping forward into a standing headscissors!]

GM: DETSON SETS! DETSON SETS FOR THE WILDE DRI-

[But Kendrick bails out of the move, sliding out to the floor. He looks up, wagging a finger and shaking his head at the World Champion.]

GM: Close call there for the challenger!

BW: And a great reminder for Kerry Kendrick that Johnny Detson can end your World Title dreams just like that, daddy.

[Detson sits on the ropes again, waving Kendrick back in but the challenger throws a dismissive wave in his direction, taking a walk on the outside as the Canadian crowd jeers loudly.]

GM: Kendrick not so eager to get back in there now... taking his chance to regroup on the outside... taking a little breather perhaps...

[Hayes starts to walk towards him... and then gives a loud yip at the sight of Johnny Detson sliding out to the floor.]

GM: But Johnny Detson's not giving him time for any of that! Johnny Detson's on the chase!

[Kendrick starts to run around the ring as the champion races behind him in hot pursuit...]

GM: Kendrick rolls back in... Detson in behind- ohhh! And Kendrick catches him on the way in with a diving double axehandle! Right across the back of the head and neck!

[Grabbing the champion by the hair, Kendrick smashes his fist down between the eyes once... twice... three times... a whole bushel of blows to the skull of the World Champion as the fans jeer and the referee reprimands him for the closed fists.]

GM: Kendrick getting back up, dragging Detson up with him...

[Grabbing a side headlock, Kendrick twists away, his back to the referee as he smashes his fist repeatedly into the head of Detson before letting him go.]

GM: Detson a little dazed now, staggering over by the ropes...

[The self-proclaimed Foundation pleads his innocence to the official before grabbing a headlock again, pressing Detson's face down on the top rope...

...and slowly drags Detson's face down the rope, raking his skin against the rope covering!]

GM: Ohhh! And that'll leave some skin of the World Champion on that top rope!

[Kendrick walks from one corner to the other, shoving Detson back into the buckles as Hayes claps excitedly from out on the floor.]

GM: Sandra Hayes certainly likes what she's seeing, fans... and a big right hand to the body... and another... Kendrick hammering away at the midsection...

[Grabbing the arm, the challenger whips Detson from corner to corner, running in after him to deliver a knee to the midsection!]

GM: Big running knee to the gut... a move that we've seen out of Detson in the past as well but this time, it's Kerry Kendrick using it to perfection right there!

[Detson doubles over as Kendrick takes aim...]

GM: Big elbowsmash, right down on the back of the neck... and make it two...

[With Detson reeling, Kendrick uses a snapmare to flip him out of the corner into a seated position...

...and then JAMS his knee into the base of the neck!]

GM: Ohhh! Good grief!

[He stands up, swinging Detson down on the mat, and then leaps up to deliver a crushing kneedrop across the sternum!]

GM: Kneedrop connects - and there's a cover by the challenger!

[A two count follows before Detson kicks out, sending a ripple of cheers through the crowd.]

GM: Some cheers there on the kickout. And we've gotten used to some bizarre crowd reactions this weekend here in Mosaic Stadium but I'm not sure that's what this is, Bucky.

BW: I think you're right, Gordo. You mentioned that some fans are gaining new appreciation for the champion after his defiance of Castillo and Korugun... I think that's part of it. And the rest is just the crowd's utter disdain for Kerry Kendrick... not that I understand why.

GM: I'm sure you don't. We're about ten minutes into this one and... oh!

[Kendrick swings a leg over Detson's prone body, swinging a right hand down into the temple... and again... and again...]

GM: Kendrick pounding away on Detson again... just letting those fists fly from the mount position...

[The challenger breaks off his attack as the referee counts to four, pulling himself to his feet and dragging Detson right up with him, right into a front facelock...]

GM: Kendrick hooks him up... and snaps him up, over, and down with a snap suplex! Nicely done by the challenger!

[Kendrick foregoes any attempt at a pin off the suplex, getting up and backing to the corner where he boosts himself up onto the middle rope...]

GM: The challenger on the midbuckle and... FISTDROP!

BW: RIGHT BETWEEN THE EYES!

[Kendrick settles into another lateral press, earning another two count before Detson kicks out.]

GM: Two count again off the fistdrop.... and now Kendrick appears to be getting into a groove, Bucky.

BW: The Foundation is layin' down bricks for a new era here in the AWA, daddy!

GM: How quickly you've turned from the man who named his own finishing maneuver after you.

BW: No way, Gordo. I'm still the biggest Johnny Detson fan around. This one is tearing me apart. It's like watching your kids fight each other... only no one's got a camera rollin' with the idea of showing it at family reunions in the future.

[The challenger drags Detson off the mat again, whipping him across the ring to the turnbuckles. The champion slams against the corner, stumbling out into a running clothesline!]

GM: Ohh! What a clothesline right there! And Kendrick covers again for one! He gets two! He gets- no, two count only!

[And as Kendrick pushes to his knees, he barks a little at Koji Sakai who holds up two fingers.]

GM: Kerry Kendrick, never one lacking a complaint to anyone who will listen, is giving the referee a hard time for the count there.

BW: Looked a little slow to me too.

GM: It most certainly did not... and he's still giving it to the ref as he gets to his feet.

[Sakai is arguing with Kendrick as he gets up, slapping his hands together...]

BW: That's right, Kerry. Explain to him how to co-

[A loud shriek is heard from Sandra Hayes as Detson reaches up, using a schoolboy to drag Kendrick down to the canvas!]

GM: ROLLUP! ROLLUP! ONNNNNNNNNE! TWOOOOOOOOO! THR-

[Kendrick just BARELY kicks out in time to break up the surprise pin attempt, causing many in the crowd to grumble!]

GM: Kendrick just barely got out of that... both men scrambling to their feet now...

[And again, Detson buries a boot into the midsection, pulling Kendrick into a standing headscissors...]

GM: Detson sets again! He's-

[...and Kendrick straightens up, backdropping Detson out of his Wilde Driver setup...]

GM: SUNSET FLIP!

[Detson drags Kendrick down to the canvas as Koji Sakai drops down to count.]

GM: ONNNNNNNNNE! TWOOOOOOO! THR-

[The crowd groans again as Kendrick BARELY escapes the pin attempt...

...and then promptly rolls out to the floor, dropping to a knee, clutching his chest as he tries to regroup from the pair of near falls from Detson!]

GM: Detson almost got him TWICE right there...

[The World Champion steps through the ropes, taking aim...

...and then leaps off, smashing a double axehandle down on the back of Kendrick's head, knocking him flat out on the ringside mats to a smattering of cheers!]

GM: ...and now Detson's taking the fight to him out on the floor again!

[A pissed-off looking Detson pulls Kendrick up with a handful of hair, walking across the ringside area towards the ramp where a line of Korugun security is standing. Detson angrily shouts "GET THE HELL OUT OF MY WAY!" at them...

...and then surprisingly, they part like the Red Sea, allowing Detson to drag Kendrick through, standing on the metal ramp, looking out at the crowd as he pulls the challenger into a front facelock...]

GM: They're out on that steel ramp now! What's Detson got in mind here?!

[Detson slings Kendrick's arm over his neck as Sandra Hayes screams "NO!" at him. The World Champion nods, grabbing a handful of tights as he goes for the suplex...]

GM: Suplex on the steel!

[...but Kendrick slips a leg around Detson's, blocking the lift!]

BW: Kendrick blocks it, Gordo! What a counter!

[And with the two men still entwined, Kendrick reverses their position, lifting Detson into the air...]

"CLAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAANG!"

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

GM: SUPLEX ON THE STEEL RAMP! OHHHH MYYYYY!

[Detson cries out, arching his back and rolling onto his hip as he holds his lower back in pain.]

GM: Johnny Detson went for a big shot there and he ends up being the one taking that shot right to the back!

BW: A big mistake by the World Champion, Gordo!

GM: It could certainly be a costly one, Bucky... and Kerry Kendrick's reversal of that suplex could go a long way to determining the winner of this matchup.

[Kendrick gets to his feet, reaching down to drag Detson up as well. He starts walking back towards the ring when one of the Korugun security guards stands in his way.]

"Get out of the way, damn it!"

[A moment passes before the guard steps aside, allowing Kendrick room to whip Detson across the ringside area...

...where his lower back SLAMS into the edge of the ring apron!]

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

GM: The lower back - the spine - SLAMS into the ring apron there!

[Detson cries out again, groaning as he sinks to his knees on the floor. Kendrick looks out at the jeering crowd, smirking as he gestures to his waist.]

GM: Kendrick telling these fans in Mosaic Stadium that it's just a matter of time before he secures that title around his waist. The World Title is within his grasp and Kerry Kendrick's gotta have visions of championship gold dancing through his head right about now.

[Pulling Detson up with a handful of blond hair, Kendrick tosses him back under the bottom rope into the ring before rolling in after him.]

GM: Both men back inside the ring now...

[With Detson down on the mat on his chest, Kendrick takes aim, dropping his elbow down in the lower back...]

GM: Elbowdrop finds the mark!

[Kendrick scrambles up, taking aim again...]

GM: And a second one! 253 pounds crashing down on the injured lower back of the World Heavyweight Champion as we creep closer to the fifteen minute mark of this sixty minute time limit...

[The Philadelphia native gets up, looking out on the jeering crowd...]

...and then grabs the hair of Detson again, pulling him to all fours before hooking the arms over his knees...]

GM: Camel Clutch! He locks it in!

[Kendrick pulls back on the chin as he sits on the lower back, bending Detson backwards as the World Champion cries out in pain.]

GM: And it's sunk in deep, Bucky!

BW: It sure is! The AWA has seen its share of top notch holds like this one over the years, Gordo. You think back to Sultan Azam Sharif who was a master of this hold and I think Kerry Kendrick here is giving him a run for his money.

GM: I don't know if I'd go that far... but pain is shooting through the spine of Johnny Detson - you can see that from the look on his face... and could this be it right here? Could Kerry Kendrick force the World Champion to submit and give up his World Title in the middle of the ring here in Regina?

BW: Detson loves that World Title as much as he loves breathing... and money. I can't imagine it happening but pain is a hell of a motivator, daddy.

GM: Detson planting his hands on the mat, trying to do a push-up... that's the best counter to this hold... the best way to fight to your feet and get out of it...

[The crowd - more of them from the sound of it - are cheering louder now as they try to inspire Detson to get up off the canvas. The World Champion extends his arms, pushing his chest off the mat, getting his knees underneath him as well as he tries to battle to his feet...]

GM: He's fighting it! Detson's fighting it! He's up on all fours and-

[Kendrick abruptly breaks the hold, rising up and jumping into a butt drop on the lower back of Detson, putting him right back down on the mat!]

GM: Ohhhh! And with 253 pounds down on the back, he puts Detson right back down on the canvas, fans.

[The challenger hooks Detson up again, cranking into the Camel Clutch for a second time...]

GM: And he reapplies the Camel Clutch, pulling back on that chin... straining the neck, the ribs, the back...

BW: Most importantly the back, Gordo.

GM: At this stage of the matchup, absolutely.

"FIFTEEN MINUTES! FIFTEEN MINUTES! FIFTEEN MINUTES GONE BY!"

GM: You heard it there, fans. Fifteen minutes of this sixty minute time limit have elapsed. Plenty of time left for both of these elite level competitors to make sure that they're the one who walks out of Mosaic Stadium with the World Title.

BW: In the most important time of the year, Gordo. It's the end of July so we're all starting to look down the road... to Mexico in September... and of course, to Toronto and Atlanta at the end of November..

GM: SuperClash IX just four months away - it'll be here before you know it. And you know both of these men would do anything for the honor of being the man who walks into either the Rogers Centre or the Georgia Dome with that title wrapped around their waist.

[Kendrick shouts at the referee to check for a submission. Sakai obliges but informs Kendrick that Detson wants to keep going.]

GM: Johnny Detson refusing to give in... refusing to quit here...

BW: And not just that, Gordo - he's fighting out of it again!

GM: The crowd cheering Detson on - quite a few of them at least...

BW: And did you ever think you'd say that, Gordo?

GM: I absolutely did not... but Detson's fighting up onto all fours and-

BW: Kendrick's gonna do it again!

[Kendrick lets go of the hold, leaping to the air again...

...but Detson flips over to his back, raising his knees!]

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

GM: OH MY!

BW: LOW BLOW!

GM: But the referee's waving it off! The referee says it was essentially accidental!

BW: Accidental?!

GM: Well, Johnny had his back to Kendrick! He theoretically had no idea what Kendrick was trying to do there!

[Kendrick stumbles away from Detson, holding his groin in pain as Hayes angrily slaps the canvas at ringside, shouting at Koji Sakai who explains his ruling to Miss Sandra as well...]

GM: Kendrick in a world of pain... Detson pulling himself to his feet using the ropes...

[Kendrick staggers in a circle, moving back towards Detson who is barely able to stand...]

"WHAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAACK!"

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

[...and LASHES OUT with a superkick up under the chin that flattens Kendrick!]

GM: JOHNNYKICK! JOHNNYKICK!

[The World Champion collapses forward, diving onto the prone Kendrick!]

GM: ONNNNNNNNNNNNNE! TWOOOOOOOOOOOO!

[But Kendrick slips the shoulder off the mat, breaking the pin as many in the crowd groan!]

GM: Detson gets the two count... but more importantly, he's got an opening to get back in this after several minutes of punishment at the hands of Kerry Kendrick. Can he take advantage of it?

BW: He's trying, Gordo!

GM: Johnny Detson again crawling to the ropes, grabbing his lower back as he drags himself to his feet...

[Detson leans against the ropes, breathing heavily as he watches Kendrick slowly push up off the mat...

...and pushes himself off towards him, landing a big jaw-jacking right hand that stuns Kendrick, knocking him back into the turnbuckles...]

GM: Detson grabs him... whips him across...

[Grabbing at his lower back, Detson grimaces as he lumbers across the ring, driving his knee up into Kendrick's midsection!]

GM: Running knee downstairs!

BW: He didn't get all of that, Gordo. The back slowed him down - he couldn't get the speed and impact he usually does!

GM: Whips him back the other way... here we go again!

[A second "running" knee lands, doubling up Kendrick as Detson leans against the ropes, holding onto his lower back again...]

GM: Detson's definitely in some pain here, fans. He's on the attack but his every move is slowed down... is lessened in some way by that back pain...

[Detson pushes off the ropes, cracking Kendrick on the jaw with an uppercut, straightening him up!]

GM: What a right hand that was!

[Grabbing the arm, Detson gives a yank...

...and knocks Kendrick flat with a short arm back elbow up under the chin!]

GM: Down goes Kendrick again!

[Grabbing the top rope, Detson rains down stomps on the downed Kendrick, the crowd getting louder and the referee shouting at an increasing decibel level!]

GM: Detson's all over him!

[Falling back into the corner, grabbing at his lower back, Detson winces for a few moments before he forces himself to slowly climb up to the midbuckle, waving a hand for Kendrick to get back to his feet...]

GM: Kendrick's getting up... a little slowly... and Detson's waiting for him!

[The World Champion leaps off the second rope, crashing a double axehandle down between the eyes of the challenger!]

GM: And Detson scores with the double axehandle! Lateral press!



[Another two count follows before Kendrick escapes.]

GM: Two count only off that axehandle!

[Detson rolls off to his hip, grabbing at his lower back again. He grimaces as he rolls to a knee, forcing himself to his feet...

...where he steps up on the middle rope away from the buckles, springing off with an elbowdrop down on the chest, sliding into another cover.]

GM: And another two count! Detson showing a little bit of desperation perhaps, trying to wrap this up in a hurry.

[A weary Detson takes the mount, grabbing Kendrick by the hair, smashing a fist down between the eyes... and another... and another... and another...]

GM: Detson's hammering away on his challenger, pounding him into the canvas like a six foot three inch nail!

BW: Take that, Trent Reznor!

[With Detson repeatedly smashing his fist down onto Kendrick's head, Sandra Hayes is again up on the apron, screaming and waving her arms. The official goes to confront first but Detson peels off Kendrick a moment later, shouting at Hayes as he approaches...]

GM: Hayes drops back down... she doesn't want to risk getting run into like she almost did earlier...

[Detson stays near the ropes, still shouting at Hayes who returns verbal fire, keeping him distracted as Kendrick peels himself off the mat, rushing Detson from behind...]

GM: KENDRICK FROM THE BLIND SIDE!

[...but again Detson senses him coming, turning to lift Kendrick by the torso, twisting his body...]

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

[...and DROPS Kendrick throatfirst across the top rope! Kendrick collapses to the mat, kicking his feet wildly as he grabs at his throat. Detson dives across, hooking a leg!]

GM: DETSON WITH THE HOT SHOT! HE'S GOT HIM DOWN!

[Sakai dives to count.]

GM: ONNNNNNNNNNE! TWOOOOOOOOOO! THR-

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

GM: AND KENDRICK KICKS OUT IN TIME!

[Detson grimaces as he rolls to a seated position, angrily clapping his hands together as he asks the referee about the count. The official holds up two fingers as Detson tiredly nods his head.]

GM: Johnny Detson - the man who went sixty minutes with Ryan Martinez - is showing some signs of fatigue here, Bucky.

BW: You gotta remember - Johnny's coming off that surprisingly hard-fought title defense against Bret Grayson from a few weeks ago... and he had that encounter at Eternally Extreme 2 with that guy who is suspended who I'm not talking about at all!

GM: It's been a tough month for a lot of people here in the AWA including Johnny Detson but if he can make it out of Regina with the World Title around his waist, it will have been all worth it!

[Wearily, Detson drags himself to his feet, waving his hands at Kendrick to get up... and as the challenger does, Detson buries a boot in the gut...]

GM: Detson looking for the Wilde Driver! He's been looking for it all night and-

[But again, Kendrick escapes, this time sweeping the legs out from under him, staggering back as he does...]

GM: Kendrick takes him down... moving back in, grabbing those legs...

[But as the challenger grabs the legs, Detson pulls them towards his chest, kicking out and sending Kendrick SMASHING back into the turnbuckles!]

"OOHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

GM: What a counter by Detson and-

[Kendrick stumbles forward out of the corner...

...and collapses facefirst into the groin of Johnny Detson!]

"OOHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

[Kendrick rolls to the side, both men lying on their backs in pain as the crowd buzzes!]

GM: A hard fall and an even harder landing there! Detson's down! Kendrick's down! And what a battle these two are enduring for the World Heavyweight Championship, fans!

BW: I just checked the time, Gordo - we're over twenty minutes into this sixty minute time limit! These two are putting each other through the wringer but who can blame them when you know the prize at the end of the rainbow.

GM: The most important prize in our entire sport - some might say in all of professional sports.

BW: That's right, daddy. You can keep your World Series... you can keep the Lombardi Trophy... give me the AWA World Championship any damn day of the week!

GM: Both men down... both men in pain... both men tired... who can get up first? Who can get to their feet and try to finish this thing off and walk out of this incredible weekend of action with the World Title around their waist?!

[Hayes again slams her down on the apron, shrieking for Kendrick to get back to his feet and try to finish off the World Champion.]

GM: Kendrick trying to get up off the mat... perhaps being... inspired by Sandra Hayes... although I can't imagine why.

BW: Oh, I can.

GM: Easy there, tiger.

[Kendrick pushes himself to his feet to much applause from his corner, falling back into the ropes. He leans against them as he watches Detson try to get up as well.]

GM: The challenger's on his feet... but he looks like he's waiting on the champion to join him...

[Detson pushes up to a knee as Kendrick leans forward, nodding his head as he watches Detson stir across the ring...]

GM: Detson on his feet...

[But with the World Champion doubled over, Kendrick rushes forward...]

GM: LIBERTY BELLRINGER!

[...but he whiffs on the running kneelift, falling off-balance as Detson drops down, dragging him into a schoolboy!]

GM: ROLLUP! ROLLUP!

[The referee dives down to count as Detson pops his feet up on the middle rope for leverage!]

GM: Detson's got the feet on the ropes but the referee doesn't see it!  
ONNNNNNNNNNE! TWOOOOOOOOOO! THR-

[The crowd ROARS as Hayes shoves the feet off the ropes, causing the pin to be broken and saving Kendrick's title chances!]

BW: THANK SANDRA! THANK SANDRA FOR THAT RIGHT THERE IF YOU'RE A FAN OF KERRY KENDRICK!

GM: Not many of those... but you're right, Bucky. Sandra Hayes just saved this title match for Kerry Kendrick who was almost certainly about to be pinned by Detson with his feet on the ropes for leverage!

[Detson rolls out of the ring, slapping his hands down on the apron angrily...

...and then points at a gloating Sandra Hayes whose expression quickly changes to one of concern!]

GM: Uh oh!

BW: Oh, come on, Johnny! I don't know what you're thinking here but think of something else!

[The World Champion starts walking towards Hayes who slowly backpedals, shaking her head, begging off as Detson glares at her...]

GM: Sandra Hayes moving a little quicker now! I have no idea what Johnny Detson's got in mind here but it can't be good news for Sandra Hayes who just got herself involved in this match and potentially robbed Detson of retaining his title!

[Detson circles the ringpost as Hayes continues to back off, shaking her head, pleading with Detson to rethink what he's going to do...

...all of which allows Kendrick to step out on the apron, leaping into the air with his hands clasped over his head...]

GM: KENDRICK FROM BEHI-

[The crowd groans as Detson wheels around and BURIES a right hand in Kendrick's midsection on the way down!]

GM: What a right hand by the World Champion! How does he do it, Bucky? How has Detson known Kendrick was coming from behind almost every time in this one?!

BW: They're two sides of the same coin, Gordo! Detson knows that Kendrick's gonna jump him from behind because DETSON would jump Kendrick from behind!

GM: That hadn't really occurred to me, Bucky - but you may be absolutely right!

[Pulling Kendrick off the mat, Detson looks over at Hayes, nodding his head as he drags the challenger away from her...

...and right back towards the announce table again.]

GM: Here we go again! I'm getting out of here!

BW: Wait for me!

[Detson SMASHES Kendrick's head down onto the announce desk as Myers and Wilde scurry away. There's silence from the announcers but a roar from the crowd as Detson SLAMS the head down a second time...

...and then the crowd starts buzzing even louder as Detson climbs up on the announce table, dragging Kendrick up with him!

The camera shot cuts to a wide shot of Mosaic Stadium, showing 40,000+ on their feet as Detson drags Kendrick into a standing headscissors on the announce desk as Hayes screams, pleading with the World Champion not to do it...

...but before Detson can go further, Kendrick yanks the legs out from under him again, tucking the legs under his arms...

...and drops back in a catapult, sending Detson flying through the air...]

"CLAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAANK!"

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

[The crowd ROARS as the flying Detson SLAMS skullfirst into the steel ringpost, flopping down on the canvas, rolling over onto his chest as Kendrick lies on his back on the table, breathing heavily as Gordon Myers stands nearby, jaw dropped at the sight before him. Hayes can be heard shouting "YES! YES! YES!" repeatedly as she pumps her arms into the air. She rushes around the downed Detson over to Kendrick, pushing him to a seated position, violently shaking him to try to get him to move...]

"Come on, Kerry! COME ON! YOU GOT THIS! FINISH IT!"

[Kendrick nods at Hayes, rolling off the table onto his feet, kicking one of the announcer chairs aside. He staggers towards the downed Detson, reaching down to grab a handful of long blond hair, dragging him to a kneeling position...]

“OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!”

[...where the crowd reacts at seeing a splash of blood on the forehead of Detson, quickly running down his face!

Kendrick gleefully grabs a loose chinlock, slamming his knuckles down into the cut forehead once... twice... three times... then too many to count as he pistons the punch into the wound repeatedly!]

GM: Is this... can everyone hear us?

BW: Where the heck did my chair go?

GM: Bucky, can you-

BW: I can hear you find, Gordo. We've got-

GM: We've got a bloody mess in the World Champion! That's what we've got! Johnny Detson's skull hit that steel ringpost and he's been busted right open! Blood just streaming down the head of the champion as Kendrick looks to take advantage of perhaps the biggest counter of his career!

[Dragging Detson the rest of the way to his feet, Kendrick SLAMS his bloodied face down into the ring apron, leaving a bloody smear before he shoves Detson under the ropes into the ring. Kendrick gets up on the apron, yanking the middle rope to pull himself through into a lateral press...

...with his feet on the middle rope for leverage!]

GM: KENDRICK COVERS! AND HE'S GOT HIS FEET ON THE ROPES TOO!

[The referee slaps the mat once... twice... and as he raises his hand to slap the mat again, he spots the feet and waves it off!]

GM: Sakai caught him! Koji Sakai caught him with his feet on the ropes!

[Kendrick quickly gets to his feet, breaking the cover. He angrily kicks the bottom rope, twisting around to advance on the official who quickly backs off, shaking his head, pointing to the AWA logo stitched on his chest.]

GM: Kendrick may have just snapped! He's going after the referee...

[The furious challenger backs Sakai all the way to the corner, shouting him down, shoving a finger in his face...

...and Sandra Hayes is battering the canvas with her hands as quickly and loudly as she can, trying to pull Kendrick's focus back on the downed champion.]

GM: Kendrick's bullying Sakai in there but Sandra Hayes is trying to get him on task... trying to keep him on his target...

[A fuming Kendrick jerks away from Sakai, marching across the ring, pulling Detson to his feet and promptly smashing his bloodied forehead into the top turnbuckle, pushing him back into the corner...]

GM: Kendrick's got Detson in a lot of trouble here as the blood continue to flow and... look at this now...

[The arrogant Kendrick steps up on the middle rope, holding his fist high before he SLAMS it down between the eyes, aiming at the bleeding wound on the forehead...]

BW: ONE!

GM: Oh, give me a break!

[Kendrick lands a second... and a third... and a fourth...]

GM: Kerry Kendrick pounding the World Champion, deepening that cut, making the blood flow right down into the eyes of Johnny Detson!

[Kendrick hops down after a half dozen blows, grabbing a handful of rapidly reddening blond hair, pulling Detson up into his arms where he slams him down on the canvas.]

GM: Scoop slam out of the corner... Detson just crashes down to the canvas hard after that one...

[The Self Made Man backs out of the corner, giving his leg a slap... and another... and another. The crowd refuses to clap along, jeering loudly as Kendrick measures his man, watching as the bloodied Detson pushes up off the mat, crimson dripping down onto the formerly white canvas...]

GM: Kendrick's got him in his sights - for what, I'm not sure but I think it might be that Liberty Bellringer again, Bucky.

BW: If he hits it, he's gonna put a crack in Detson's bell and maybe a final crack in the title reign as well!

[Detson pushes to his feet, Kendrick set to strike...]

GM: Here comes the challenger!

[Kendrick races across the ring, Detson doubled over and stunned...]

...and CRACKS him with the running kneelift, snapping Detson back and down to the canvas. Hayes lets loose a wild "YESSSSSSS!" as Kendrick whips his arms apart in a "it's over!" gesture before dropping into a lateral press.]

GM: KENDRICK COVERS!

[Sakai dives to the mat.]

GM: ONNNNNNNNNNNNNE! TWOOOOOOOOOOOO! THREEEEEEEEE-

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

GM: SHOULDER UP! SHOULDER UP IN TIME!

[The crowd buzzes for the near title change as Kendrick rolls off, sitting on the canvas, burying his head in his hands as Hayes lets loose another diatribe aimed at referee Sakai!]

GM: Kerry Kendrick thought he had him there, fans, and I can't blame him at all! We very well could have had a brand new World Champion right there.

BW: Yeah, but we don't... and that means Kendrick needs to focus. It means he needs to shake off the frustration, get on his feet, and find another way to put Detson down for a three count.

GM: Sounds like some managerial advice there, Bucky.

BW: Old habits are hard to break sometimes, Gordo.

[Kendrick lets loose a disgusted sigh as he gets to his feet, leaning down as Hayes nods emphatically. He grabs Detson by his bloody hair, dragging him back up to his feet...

...and yanks him right into a front facelock.]

GM: Kendrick hooks him by the ropes!

[Hayes loudly exclaims "YES! NOW'S THE TIME!" as Kendrick pulls Detson closer to the ropes...]

GM: Kendrick's looking for something here...

[As the Foundation looks to lift Detson into the air, the World Champion counters, plucking him into a small package!]

GM: SMALL PACKAGE! SMALL PACKAGE!

[The referee dives to count as Hayes screeches in surprise.]

GM: ONNNNNNNNNNNNE! TWOOOOOOOOOOO! THR-

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

GM: Kendrick kicks out in time!

[Kendrick spins away, scrambling up off the mat as Hayes pounds her fists into the ring apron...]

GM: Detson trying to get up too but-

[As Detson gets to a knee, Kendrick hooks the front facelock again, using it to pull Detson to his feet...

...and the World Champion surges forward, smashing Kendrick back into the turnbuckles!]

GM: Ohh! Detson drives him back! Whatever Kendrick's got in mind with that front facelock, Detson wants no part of it!

[Detson pushes off of Kendrick, throwing a heavy right hand to the gut... then one to the head... and another... and another...]

GM: Detson's firing off! Pounding away on Kendrick!

[With a blood-soaked roar, Detson spins away, pumping his arms as a surprising number of fans cheer in response...]

GM: Detson perhaps catching a second wind, looking to find a way to put his challenger away...

[Detson grabs Kendrick by the wrist, looking for a whip...

...but Kendrick lashes out, raking his fingers across Detson's bloodstung eyes!]

GM: OHH! Kendrick goes to the eyes!

[The World Champion stumbles away, rubbing at his eyes, trying to clear his vision as Kendrick steps from the corner...]

GM: Kendrick spins Detson back around... bodylock!

[The crowd buzzes as Kendrick hooks Detson around the torso, twisting around, lifting Detson into the air, torquing his hips and DRIVING Detson down into the canvas!]

GM: BELLY TO BELLY! HE GOT IT!

[Kendrick dives on top, reaching for a leg...]

GM: ONNNNNNNNNNE! TWOOOOOOOOOOO! THRE-

[The referee peels off, pointing down...]

GM: AND DETSON GETS A FOOT ON THE ROPES! DETSON SAVES THE TITLE!

[Kendrick lets loose a word or two that earn him a quick silencing from the guy with the seven second button...

...and then climbs to his feet, stomping towards the official again.]

GM: Again?! Come on! Stop being a damn bully and try to win the World Title!

[An irate Kendrick again backs Koji Sakai across the ring, getting right up in his face as Detson struggles to roll over onto his chest, grabbing at the ropes.]

GM: Sakai telling Kendrick that Detson got his foot on the ropes... Kendrick is... well, at least he seems to be letting poor Koji off the hook for the moment.

[Kendrick turns around, Sakai still trapped behind him in the corner as the Foundation takes aim at Detson who is using the ropes to drag himself to his feet...]

GM: Kendrick on the move!

[The challenger rushes in towards the bloody and tired champion...]

GM: CLOTHESLI-

[But Detson bails out of the way, causing Kendrick to SLAM chestfirst into the corner!]

GM: He misses!

[Detson catches Kendrick in an inverted facelock as he stumbles back out...

...and DROPS to a knee, jamming the other one up between the shoulderblades of the challenger!]

GM: Ohhh! Nice move by Detson... Kendrick's down, feeling the pain from that one...

[A weary Detson pushes up off the mat...



...and points to the corner.]

GM: What in the...?

BW: Detson's going up top! Johnny Detson making the rare decision to go to the corner and he's climbing, Gordo!

[The crowd begins to buzz as Detson climbs up from the inside of the ring...]

GM: We've seen this from time to time but it's certainly not the usual brand of offense out of the World Champion!

BW: Desperate times call for desperate measures, Gordo!

GM: Detson on the second rope... now to the top!

[The bloodied World Champion stands on the top rope, delicately balanced as he sets his feet, looking out on a shockingly roaring crowd...]

GM: DETSON LEAPS!

[...and blindly leaps from the top rope, flipping backwards...]

GM: MOOOOONSAULLLLLLLT!

[...and CRASHES DOWN on the prone Kerry Kendrick as Hayes twists around in the rear of the shot, shouting angrily!]

GM: HE GOT ALL OF THAT! DETSON HOOKS THE LEG!

[Referee Sakai dives through the air, landing on the canvas...]

GM: ONNNNNNNNNNNE! TWOOOOOOOOOOOOO! THREEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEE-

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

GM: KICKOUT! KICKOUT! KIIIIICKOUUUUUT!

[The Mosaic Stadium crowd is buzzing as Detson rolls to the side, flopping onto his back. He reaches up, rubbing the blood from his eyes as he stares at the lights and the fans continue to roar!]

GM: Johnny Detson hit the moonsault and it STILL wasn't enough to put Kerry Kendrick down for a three count!

[Sandra Hayes snakes her torso under the bottom rope, speaking to Kendrick who is laying on his side, having twisted out from under the pin attempt and stayed right there.]

GM: Hayes speaking to Kendrick - maybe some strategy, maybe just some words of encouragement...

BW: Johnny Detson sits up on the mat...

[Detson angrily slams an open hand down on the mat with a loud "DAMN IT!"]

GM: And now some frustration on the part of the World Champion...

"THIRTY MINUTES GONE BY! THIRTY MINUTES REMAIN!"

GM: We've reached the halfway point now in this sixty minute time limit. Quite the battle shaking out here between the World Champion and the man who... sort of... won the 2017 Rumble, Kerry Kendrick.

[Detson rolls to his side, pushing up to a knee, slowly getting up as he again wipes the blood from his eyes...]

GM: The World Champion getting back to his feet... Kendrick starting to stir off the canvas as well, holding on to those ribs after Detson hit the moonsault...

[With Detson on his feet, he wobbles towards the rising Kendrick, driving the toe of his boot into Kendrick's midsection...]

GM: Shot to the gut! Pulls him in again!

[The crowd buzzes as Detson snatches the standing headscissors, reaching down to hook one arm...]

...which is when Hayes leaps into action, climbing up on the apron again!]

GM: Get her down from there! She's been up on the apron repeatedly in this match... repeatedly getting involved in this World Title matchup!

[The referee twists away from the action, shouting at Hayes to get down off the apron as Kendrick slumps to a knee...]

...and with the official's back turned, Kendrick SLAMS his arm up into Detson's groin!]

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

GM: LOW BLOW! KENDRICK GOES LOW BEHIND THE REFEREE'S BACK!

BW: You may not like it but a brilliant move by Kendrick and Hayes!

[Kendrick pulls himself to his feet, yanking Detson into a standing headscissors.]

GM: Wait a minute!

[The Foundation reaches down, snatching one arm... then the other...]

GM: Are you kidding me?!

[...and leaps up, DRIVING Detson facefirst into the canvas!]

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

GM: WILDE DRIVER! WILDE DRIVER BY KENDRICK!

[Kendrick pumps his fists excitedly, flipping Detson onto his back, diving into a lateral press, grabbing a leg and rolling back into the pin...]

GM: ONNNNNNNNNNNNNNE! TWOOOOOOOOOOOO! THREEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEE-

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

GM: SHOULDER UP! SHOULDER UP! SHOULDER UP! MY STARS! HOW CLOSE WAS THAT?!

BW: Close enough that the AWA's Power Couple could SMELL the champagne, daddy! Holy...

[Kendrick flips out, pounding his fists into the canvas repeatedly as Sandra Hayes shouts at the referee too. Sakai rolls to the side, holding up two fingers to both then lifting his hands an inch or two apart to show how close it was to a win.]

GM: Sakai says it was THAT close, Bucky!

BW: It sure was... but Kendrick and Sandra think it was closer than that. They think they won this thing! They think Kendrick should be the new champion right NOW!

GM: Well, he's not... and he needs to snap out of this tantrum of his if he wants to be!

[Hayes pulls herself up on the apron, throwing a huge tantrum of her own, reaching down to yank off her high heel shoe, menacing Sakai with it as he tries to get her down off the apron...]

GM: She's gonna hit the ref with her shoe!

BW: Don't do it, Sandra! If you do it, you're gonna get him disqualified!

[Kendrick climbs back to his feet, looking over to Hayes. He lifts his hands, raising his eyebrows to her. Still arguing with the official, Sandra casually chucks the shoe into the air into a waiting Kendrick's hands. Kendrick grins, holding the shoe high...]

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

[...and gets an arm slammed between the uprights by a kneeling Detson!]

GM: DETSON GOES LOW! DETSON GOES LOW!

[The World Champion grabs the high heel shoe that Kendrick dropped on the mat after the low blow, winds up with it...

...and BLASTS Kendrick with the shoe, tossing it aside as he dives on top of Kendrick!]

GM: HE HIT HIM WITH THE SHOE!

[Sandra grabs hold of the referee, trying to keep him from counting...

...but Sakai wriggles free, diving to the canvas!]

GM: ONNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNE! TWOOOOOOOOOOOOOO! THREEEEEEEEEEEE-

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

BW: KENDRICK KICKS OUT! KENDRICK KICKS OUT! Sandra bought him JUST enough time to kick out! Incredible!

[Detson again rolls to a seated position, shaking his head back and forth.]

GM: Johnny Detson was a half count - maybe less - from retaining the title right there. These two have gone back and forth, back and forth... what a battle!

BW: And now it's Johnny who needs to shake off the frustration, get up... do something. Hit the Wilde Driver. Hit that moonsault again. Do something!

[The World Champion climbs to his feet, looking around the ring. He sees the referee back over to Sandra Hayes, reprimanding her for getting involved again...

...and then walks over to the corner, quickly untying the top turnbuckle.]

GM: Detson working on the buckle - it looks like he's removing that turnbuckle cover, exposing that steel...

[But that doesn't seem to be Detson's mission as he starts digging in to the buckle pad itself...

...and comes away with a confused expression. He looks around again...]

GM: What is Johnny Detson looking for?

[...and spots a smirking Sandra Hayes holding a studded black leather glove dangling from her hand.]

GM: What the-?!

BW: She's got Black Beauty! She's got-

GM: How?!

BW: I don't know. Remember, she ordered the referee to look for it earlier and... has she had that all along?!

GM: Johnny Detson looks surprised! I think he stashed it in the buckle, knowing they might search him for it and...

[Detson angrily stomps over towards Hayes who holds the glove further away, shaking her head...]

GM: How did SHE get it?!

BW: Maybe someone stooged him off, Gordo! Maybe someone told Sandra where the glove was!

GM: They would've had to get it for her! She hasn't touched the buckle since she got out here and-

[Hayes balls up the glove in her hand, her eyes drifting past Detson...

...and coming onto a rising Kerry Kendrick who looks over to her again.]

GM: She's got the glove and- she's gonna throw it in!

[But before she can, one of the masked Korugun security squad members climbs up on the ring apron...]

GM: What in the...?!

BW: What's this idiot guard doing?!

GM: I don't-

[Hayes seems to be asking the same question when suddenly the guard reaches out, grabbing the glove out of her hand to a HUGE ROAR!]

BW: WHAT THE-?!

[Kendrick looks shocked, staring at the scene as Hayes berates the guard who jumps off the apron, glove in hand...

...and as he turns around, he gets CRACKED in the skull with the World Heavyweight Title!]

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

[The crowd ROARS as Detson tosses the title clear, diving across the motionless Kendrick! The referee whips around, spotting the pin before diving to the mat.]

GM: ONNNNNNNNNNNNNNE! TWOOOOOOOOOOOO! THREEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEE!

"DING! DING! DING!"

[A relieved Detson rolls off Kendrick, throwing an arm to the air for a moment before sinking down onto his back, crimson caked onto his face at this point. The ring announcer makes it official as the referee points to the downed Detson, raising a hand.]

GM: Johnny Detson has survived this extremely tough challenge for the AWA World Heavyweight Title, fans. By hook or by crook-

BW: Definitely by crook.

GM: -Detson keeps the title here at the Battle of Saskatchewan!

[Sandra Hayes looks shellshocked, sinking to a seated position on the ring apron, staring into the ring blankly as if she can't believe what she just witnessed.]

GM: And all the best laid plans of Kendrick and Hayes fall to the wayside as Johnny Detson goes a little bit deeper into his bag of tricks and manages to keep the title in this brutal, bloody battle, Bucky.

BW: Kendrick seemed to have everything going his way, Gordo. He had Sandra in his corner, the momentum from the Rumble win, Detson on a tough schedule as of late, the support of management... but in the end, Johnny Detson did what Johnny Detson has done his entire career. He found a way. He survived. And he's walking out of Regina still the AWA World Champion.

[Having retrieved the belt from the floor (how did it get over there?), the official hands it over to Detson who gratefully hugs it to his chest as he sits up on the canvas.]

GM: Bloodied but not beaten, the World Champion continues to reign as the AWA's hottest summer on record rolls on.

[Kendrick has managed to roll to the floor, being tended to by Sandra Hayes on the outside as Detson slowly gets to his feet, holding the title belt to his chest as many in Mosaic Stadium cheer the controversial World Champion...

...and with a roar, Detson holds the title over his head, thrusting it towards the sky as the fans react again.]

GM: There it is. What it's all about. The prize that put these two men through a half hour war. The prize that brings competitors from all over the world to the AWA looking to get a crack at it. The prize that-

[And suddenly, the lights in the stadium go out.]

GM: What in the...?

[They stay out for a few moments before the video wall erupts in a burst of static before flickering to life. It's a black and white shot of the face of the man known as Supernova... which causes the Canadian fans to ROAR with delight.]

"Congratulations, Johnny."

[In the blackened arena, we cannot see Detson's reaction but... well, I think we can imagine what it might be.]

"You've had a tough July..."

[The voice has some kind of weird echo effect applied to it, off-putting and more than a little disconcerting.]

"The suits say it's the hottest summer in AWA history..."

[From around the on-screen graphic, we start to see flames lick up the sides, surrounding Supernova's face.]

"I say you haven't begun to feel the heat."

[With a "burst" of flames on the on-screen video, Supernova's image is consumed by fire as the lights go back out...

...and when they come back on, we see Supernova standing in the ring, snatching the World Champion in an inverted facelock!]

GM: SUPERNOVA! SUPERNOVA'S IN THE RING! SUPERNOVA IS-

[And with a loud "THUUUUUUUUD!," Supernova drives the back of Detson's head into the canvas, causing the Mosaic Stadium crowd to EXPLODE in cheers. Supernova rises to his feet, looking down at Detson...

...or rather at what Detson was holding before he hit the canvas.

The formerly face-painted warrior leans down, lifting the AWA World Title belt off the canvas as the crowd gets louder.]

BW: HE DOESN'T EVEN WORK HERE ANYMORE!

GM: And here comes security!

[A flood of AWA security guards and John Law's masked team come running into view, sprinting down the aisle as Supernova stares at the World Title belt in his hands...

...and the lights go out.]

BW: How does he do that?!

GM: The lights are out once more in Mosaic Stadium and...

[The lights flicker back to full life, revealing a swarm of security inside the ring, surrounding the prone form of Johnny Detson...

...who has the World Title resting on his chest.]

GM: He's gone! Supernova's missing in action! But I believe he's made his message crystal clear here tonight, fans! He's coming! He's coming for the AWA World Title and Johnny Detson!

BW: HE DOESN'T EVEN WORK HERE ANYMORE!

GM: So I hear! Fans, it's been an insane weekend of action here in Regina and after all of this, we've still got one more match to go! The 2017 Stampede Cup Finals! It's the champions, Next Gen, taking on their Number One Contenders, the Soldiers of Fortune and I can't wait for this one! Let's go backstage right now and hear from these two tremendous teams just moments before their big collision!

[We fade from the shot of the ring...

...and go outside to the loading area where the Soldiers of Fortune have been all night. The Fat Man is parked, with a line of soldiers standing in front of it. The Soldiers of Fortune are standing at attention, with Joe Flint barking out orders that we can't quite make out. The cameraman zooms in, hoping to catch what Flint is saying.]

JF: ...alright, men. You all know what to do, right?

Soldiers: YES SIR!

JF: Good...

[It looks like the conversation is over. Two of the soldiers put the usual flags that the Soldiers carry around next to the Fat Man, while two others get in the vehicle. Several others line up behind the custom Hummer, awaiting instructions that will come later. Flint and Stephens are huddling up, when Mark Stegglet walks in. Stephens, looking over Flint's shoulder, signals to Flint that Stegglet is already behind him. Flint nods his head and slowly turns around to greet Stegglet. Before Stegglet can start his line of questioning, Flint begins to speak.]

JF: Oh, it's you, again. I can't wait until this is all over. Blackwell's gonna have to come out an' celebrate with us when we get our business taken care of.

[Flint snorts.]

JF: History has been made already tonight, and in just a few short minutes, it's gonna happen again. How many men in their career are gonna say that they put Ryan Martinez, the White Knight, the AWA's resident hero of millions to sleep, Stegglet?

Not many. I can.

[Despite the glee in his voice, the look on Flint's face seems to betray how he truly feels about what transpired at the end of the match.]

MS: Well, there is a lot of controversy surrounding that ending, and..

[Stephens narrows his eyes, staring daggers right through Stegglet.]

MS: I'm not going to get an answer from either of you about what happened at the end of your Semifinal match, am I?

[The cold silence from both men is their answer. Stegglet awkwardly shuffles his feet, and decides to change the subject.]

MS: I guess it's best to move to a different line of questioning, then. The Stampede Cup Finals are upon us, and in what may be a preview of things to come over the next few months, you two are going head to head with the AWA World Tag Team Champions, Next Gen. The titles will not be on the line, but the grand prize of one million dollars will be, and that beautiful Stampede Cup trophy. Could I get your thoughts on your first in-ring meeting with Next Gen?

[Flint rubs his chin.]

JF: Ya know, Stegglet, I've said it before and I'll say it again. Next Gen are a couplea good kids. In an alternate reality somewhere, ol' Captain USA here woulda dragged Harper and Somers into my recruitment office, size 'em up for some fatigues and we'd go to war! Alongside Charlie here, we woulda fought for truth, justice, and the American way, and everyone would have respected us for it. Three fresh faced kids that will lead our country over the next few decades, with a lovable drill sergeant barking orders along the way.

[Flint mockingly wipes a tear from his eye.]

JF: Delusions can be sweet sometimes. Unfortunately, in the reality we live in.. there was a Soldiers of Fortune in a promotion that's clingin' to life support. The old Soldiers were much like Next Gen. Only difference is I kinda respect those two cornball kids. They put the time an' effort, and weren't afraid to get dirty, and they're currently the number one tag team in the world. Meanwhile, I wasted a good part of my days trying to get the old Soldiers to do somethin'. It was like herdin' cats. All they did was play video games, while collectin' a meager paycheck and lettin' the old man do all the work. Then, they had the nerve to slap me with a lawsuit 'cuz I didn't bring them along to the AWA.

CS: Turns out you can't trust a bunch of snowflakes. Really, Stegglet, can you blame us for being jaded?

[Stegglet pauses, unsure of how to answer the question.]

JF: It's true that Next Gen is a rare breed among the youth of the nation in 2017. As the time for war draws ever closer, I'm findin' it harder and harder to care. The time for pleasantries is going to be over once that bell rings. I am not going to see a couple of good hard workin' kids across that ring that have earned our respect. I'm gonna see some pukes...

...some slime.... some turds...

[A wide sneer forms across Flint's face.]

JF: SOME MAGGOTS... Next Gen, you might not be the Soldiers of Fortune of old, you two ain't wastes of space. But I am going to see them in ya anyway, an' I'm gonna flush ya like I shoulda flushed those turds years ago.

CS: Fact of the matter is, boys, while Flint's got a soft spot for ya, I don't particularly care for you two. I always kinda got the impression that you think you're better than everyone else.

MS: Well, they are the tag team champions and have beaten accomplished teams to get to the Finals. While they probably do deserve to think that way, I don't get that impression at all when I talk to them.

[Stephens glares at Stegglet before turning back towards the camera.]



CS: The last two that thought they were better than us? We put one of 'em to sleep, Martinez' head's probably jigglin' like a bobblehead while Dr. Whatshisname is checkin' him out. Ain't the first neck that we wrung, an' it ain't gonna be the last.

Hey, Next Gen, that's a real impressive family tree ya both got there, but personally all I see were two guys whose ancestors came from the same primordial ooze that we did four billion years ago. All I see are two guys in the way of us takin' a million dollars home, and eventually takin' home the tag team championships. Since our final obstacle in rulin' the wrestlin' world, the way REAL AMERICANS do, happens to be you two... Allow me the pleasure of sendin' you straight on back to that primordial ooze. We're gonna all be joinin' ya eventually, but for us, tonight ain't gonna be that night.

[Stephens glares at the camera as Stegglet's eyes grow wide. Flint turns to Stephens.]

JF: This is what I've always wanted to hear from my fellow soldiers. Ya know, Stegglet, this man right here has done so much more to advance our cause than my ol' army of Gomer Pyles ever accomplished. He's an example of hard work and elbow grease actually payin' off for a change. Tonight, Charlie, I am promotin' you to Corporal.

[Stephens' eyes go wide, a rare smile forming on his face.]

CS: This.. this is the greatest night of my life.

JF: At ease, soldier. The night is still young.

[Stephens nods his head.]

JF: We got a war to win first, then it'll be the greatest night of our lives... an' things are only gonna get greater from here. Let's grab our flag poles an' get the party started.

[Flint and Stephens grab a flag pole leaning against the Fat Man, and then exit stage left off screen. The engine of the Fat Man starts up, startling Stegglet briefly. Stegglet then turns towards the camera after quickly regaining his composure.]

MS: The Soldiers of Fortune, ladies and gentlemen. They're ready for the Finals and getting ready to go to war with the AWA World Tag Team Champions in Next Gen. This is likely going to be the first of many battles these teams are going to have throughout the rest of the year, and the world's on the edge of their collective seats waiting for the bell to ring. Over to you, Sweet Lou...

[We fade to another part of the backstage area where we find Sweet Lou Blackwell standing before an AWA backdrop. He is with the members of Next Gen. Howie Somers is to Blackwell's right and Daniel Harper is to Blackwell's left. The Next Gen members are dressed in their wrestling attire and vests, and they have the AWA World Tag Team Titles strapped around their waists.]

SLB: Thanks, Mark... and thanks for putting up with those two for me.

[Lou chuckles.]

SLB: It's been a long night - actually a long and memorable weekend, at the Battle of Saskatchewan, and with me are the World Tag Team Champions, Next Gen! It's the champions against the Number One Contenders, the Soldiers of Fortune! Howie and Daniel, it's no secret that Joe Flint and Charlie Stephens are not only out to win the Stampede Cup and a million dollars, but they want the World Tag Team Titles as

well. The belts are not on the line, but I can imagine the Soldiers see this as their chance to secure a title shot, too.

[Somers and Harper exchange a glance.]

DH: You mind, Howie?

HS: I told you it was fine to talk about it now, Daniel. Go ahead.

[Harper gives a quick nod, then turns to Blackwell.]

DH: Lou, we know all too well that the Soldiers are after the gold around our waists. In fact, after we beat System Shock and proved our point, I figured it was only a matter of time before we would face the Soldiers, because like them or not, they've had quite a run through the tag team ranks.

Let's give them credit, Lou -- beating the Prophets of Rage is a big accomplishment. The Rages may not get along these days, but they are still one of the best tag teams to ever step inside that ring.

I may not have liked the tactic they used against the Lights Out Express, but hey, those two are former tag team champions. Certainly a big accomplishment to beat them as well.

But then, what do we get after that?

[He turns to the camera and raises his voice.]

DH: We get a damn travesty, that's what we get!

Now, I'm sure we're going to hear from Flint and Stephens about how they didn't need Castillo's help to beat Carver and Martinez. How they were led to believe that Castillo and company had left for the night. How they didn't know what was going to happen and then just shout another warning at Castillo and his men.

So, let me ask you this, Flint and Stephens -- what were you doing when Castillo decides to take it upon himself to overrule a referee and then call for the bell when Martinez never gave up?

You're off celebrating like you just won the battle on your own, that's what!

[He shakes his head.]

DH: So don't think I'm going to buy into your chatter about what you think about Castillo. Especially when you say you'll do it for the right price, which makes me wonder if the money is right, you'll sacrifice whatever principles you say you have.

And if so, all that does is mean you fit what some assume to be the worst of America, that all anyone does is pursue the almighty dollar.

But let me make one thing clear: My friend here and I will no longer stand by and watch Castillo and company pull their constant shenanigans, whether it's against Carver, Martinez or anybody else! And anybody who happens to benefit from that shenanigans, or who hints that they might want to benefit, is not somebody we're going to trust when they say they had no idea!

So, tonight, Soldiers of Fortune, when you face us in that ring, there's just one thing we're gonna do to you...

We're gonna kick your asses!

[He takes a deep breath, then turns away in disgust. Somers reaches out to him and taps him on the shoulder.]

HS: Okay, that's off your chest. Good.

SLB: Some strong words from Daniel Harper. Howie Somers, I can't imagine what you must be thinking right now?

[Somers purses his lips and takes a short breath.]

HS: Where to begin, Lou? The Soldiers of Fortune came out to do a little recon earlier on. Now, we're gonna find out if their recon pays off for them.

But you know what? The further the Soldiers got in the tournament, the more Daniel and I figured they were going to reach the finals -- even if we never figured things were going to go down in the semifinals the way they did.

We had to stay focused on one thing, though, and that was the next match. But now, Flint and Stephens, that it's just the two of you, and the two of us, you have our attention -- full and undivided.

So what about Flint and Stephens?

[He clasps his hand together for a moment, as if he's thinking.]

HS: Some people say the American dream and the American reality aren't always the same thing. Some people may disagree about what the American dream is to begin with. But the one thing I do know is what the American dream isn't.

It's not your dream, Flint and Stephens.

Not the one in which everybody has to conform to a narrow standard of how everything should be, in which everybody looks, acts, eats, drinks, talks and thinks the exact same way.

It's the one in which anybody from any background, no matter their strengths or their flaws, can find their way to success and earn everyone's respect.

It's the one in which, despite all our differences, we come together for a common cause and do our fellow citizens proud.

And it's the one in which we recognize that those before us, even if they weren't perfect human beings, influenced how America has evolved through the years -- maybe not always for the best, but more often than not, striving for the idea that America can always be better.

Or to put it another way -- they leave a lasting legacy on America.

[He exchanges a glance with Harper, who nods.]

HS: I know what your opinion is of people like the Epitome of Cool, the Down Boys and the Fraternity Boys, but whatever you thought of their style and their methods, one thing was always true about them: They represented what the American dream is all about -- how those from any background, no matter their strengths and flaws, can find their way to success and earn everyone's respect.

That's why they've left a lasting legacy on wrestling. Just like all the other great tag teams in wrestling, including those in the AWA that came before us.

And the truth, Flint and Stephens, is that you could be another team that can leave a legacy behind, for what it means to be a great tag team, but there's just one problem.

Your narrow mindset stinks.

And while Daniel and I respect your talent, your ability, your military background, the one thing we'll never respect is that narrow mindset.

[He slaps the title belt around his waist.]

HS: This right here is what you ultimately want, isn't it, Flint and Stephens? But let me remind you that this is what Daniel and I worked to earn, and this right here is why, no matter our strengths or flaws, we have found success and earned respect, despite just two years teaming together and my friend here only being in this business for that long.

It's the first part of building our legacy, and now, we intend to add the Stampede Cup to that legacy. And just like I said about the American Idols, I have five words that describe you, Soldiers of Fortune.

You are in our way.

[He gestures to Harper.]

HS: Shall we, my friend?

[Harper gets a quick smile and nods.]

DH: To the ring!

[They walk off the set.]

SLB: Some strong words from Next Gen, fans. Can they cap the night with a Cup win? Let's go to the ring and find out!

[We fade from the backstage area out to a panning shot of the Mosaic Stadium crowd, buzzing with anticipation for the final night of a long, thrilling weekend.

We fade to the ring where Rebecca Ortiz is standing.]

RO: The following contest is set for one fall with NO TIME LIMIT and is the final match in the 2017 STAMPEDE CUP TOURNAMENT!

[HUUUUUGE ROAR!]

RO: The winner of this match will take home the prestigious Stampede Cup trophy... the right to call themselves the best tag team in the world... and the prize of ONE... MILLION... DOLLARS!

[Another huge roar!]

RO: Introducing first...

[The unmistakable voice of Lee Greenwood blares throughout the stadium. As the chorus to "God Bless the U.S.A." rings throughout the arena, the crowd starts booing like crazy. There is some static and feedback throughout the chorus, and the sample sometimes slows down and speeds up. Rebecca Ortiz looks a little uncomfortable.]

# And I'm proud to be an American  
# Where at least I know I'm free  
# And I won't forget the men who died  
# Who gave that right to me  
# And I'd gladly stand up next to you  
# And defend Her still today  
# 'Cause there ain't no doubt  
# I love this land  
# God Bless the U.S.A.

[At the very end, the final note is held, far longer and far shriller than it actually should. There is more feedback and more static as the note starts turning into a loud buzz.]

GM: Gah! This is very hard to listen to! The Soldiers aren't even out yet and this noise is egging on this hostile crowd!

BW: The Soldiers have only been hostile in response, Gordo! It's only a perfectly natural response!

GM: This noise doesn't bother you?

[Pause.]

BW: Well, a little.

[The buzzing continues as the all-too familiar distorted voice starts crackling over the buzzing.]

# Land where my fathers died!  
# Land of the pilgrim's pride!  
# From every mountain side,  
# Let freedom ring!

[The buzzing and crackling grow louder and louder, then slowly fades into the opening guitar wailing from the Damn Yankees' "Don't Tread On Me." The booing only gets more and more intense, and a loud chant starts to break out.]

"WE WANT NEXT GEN!"  
clap clap clapclapclap

"WE WANT NEXT GEN!"  
clap clap clapclapclap

"WE WANT NEXT GEN!"  
clap clap clapclapclap

"WE WANT NEXT GEN!"  
clap clap clapclapclap

[The custom Hummer known as the Fat Man appears at the top of the aisle, driven by a soldier, with another sitting in the passenger seat. Flanking both sides of the Hummer is a line of soldiers, with a member of the Soldiers of Fortune at the front of each line. Charlie Stephens is carrying a flag pole with an American flag, while on the other side, Joe Flint carries the Gadsden "Don't Tread On Me" flag. As the chorus to "Don't Tread On Me" kicks in, the crowd switches to a different chant.]

"YOU SUCK! YOU SUCK! YOU SUCK! YOU SUCK!"

[A smirk forms on Flint's face, as he stares down towards the ring. With a mighty bellow, he yells out..]

JF: FORWARD... MARCH!

[With that, the Hummer starts rolling forward, with the Soldiers marching in tune alongside the Hummer. Ortiz is in the ring, trying to get the crowd to simmer down slightly so she can finish her introduction.]

RO: ...at a total combined weight of 523 pounds..

"CORPORAL PUNISHMENT" CHARLIE STEPHENS....

"CAPTAIN" JOE FLINT....

THE SOLDIERS OF FORRRRRRRRTUNNNNNNNNNNE!

[A deafening explosion of jeers breaks out at the announcement of the first team in the Finals.]

GM: This crowd's been wanting the Soldiers to get theirs all night, and even more so considering how the Semifinal match came to an end.

BW: They were hoping Martinez and Carver woulda shut the Soldiers up and send 'em back over the border, but you can't always get what you want. They're here, in the Finals. They're the Number One Contenders to the very tag team titles Next Gen holds. They're here to stay, Gordo.

[The Soldiers make their way to ringside, each handing their flag to the soldier standing behind them. They climb onto the apron and step into the ring.]

GM: Could you believe how Joe Flint ran down his former crewmates in the old Soldiers of Fortune? I've known Jeff Jagger, Clayton Shaw and Scotty Mayhem for a long time, and lazy is the last word I would have used to describe them. They are honorable men! I don't know what went on with them over the years, but it's an unfortunate situation and sad to see that these men no longer matter to Flint.

BW: From what Flint told me one time, shortly after him and Stephens dropped the American Pride name, things went well for the Soldiers for the longest time! Then Jagger showed up. Jagger got Shaw and Mayhem into video games, and they all got fat and lazy. On top of that, Jagger ended up turning Shaw and Mayhem against Flint which led to the lawsuit!

GM: I find that hard to believe.

BW: Hey, there's one reason why Flint recruited Stephens into the AWA version of the Soldiers of Fortune. Stephens has never even heard of video games!

[The Soldiers are standing in the middle of the ring, and it looks like Flint has an earpiece. He's whispering something into the earpiece, then, he turns towards Stephens. With a nod of his head, both men face the crowd and start waving their flags. Suddenly..]

BOOOOOOM!

BOOOOOOM!

BOOOOOOM!

BOOOOOOM!

BOOOOOOOM!

BOOOOOOOM!

GM: Goodness!

[Red, white, and blue fireworks shoot into the sky, lighting up the night sky as the Soldiers vigorously wave their flags.]

GM: The Soldiers with a very extravagant and loud fireworks show. Going big before the match even starts!

BW: Huh? I can't hear you, Gordo.

[Flint walks over to the ropes, and hands his earpiece to one of the soldiers stationed at ringside. He then walks over to the Soldiers' corner and places his flag against the ringpost. Stephens follows suit, placing his flagpole against the corner as well. Flint walks over, and gives a hearty salute to the ringside soldiers, who return the salute. The soldiers march away, as the Hummer slowly backs down towards the entrance.

Meanwhile, Stephens and Flint walk to the center of the ring, face the aisleway, and clasp their hands behind their backs to wait for their opponents.]

RO: And their opponents...

[First there's silence, then you hear a little chanting.]

"Do-do-do-do do-do-do-do  
Do-do-do-do do-do-do-do"

[And then, it kicks into the unmistakable chorus of "Centuries" by Fall Out Boy.]

#Some legends are told#  
#Some turn to dust or to gold#  
#But you will remember me#  
#Remember me for centuries#

[This time, the video screen features footage of several tag teams from the past -- and it appears, somehow, they acquired EMWC footage for it, because look who is being featured now.

The Down Boys.

The Fraternity Boys.

The Epitome of Cool.

In between each footage, one word flashes up on the screen.

"LEGACY"]

#And just one mistake#  
#Is all it will take#  
#We'll go down in history#  
#Remember me for centuries#

[And then two words flash up on the video wall.

"NEXT GEN"

Which then segues into footage of their matches, and in between those clips, the words "LEGACY" and "NEXT GEN" flash in between.]

RO: Introducing, from Boston, Massachusetts, and El Paso, Texas, at a combined weight of 495 pounds, ... they are the AWA WORRRRRRRRLD TAG TEAM CHAMMMMMPIONSSSSSS...

HOWIE SOMERS... DANIEL HARPER... THEY ARE... NEXT! GEN!

[The members of Next Gen emerge from the entranceway. Howie Somers and Daniel Harper are each dressed in a navy blue vest with the words "NEXT GEN" printed across the back in white, block lettering. They wear the same wrestling attire: a white singlet with the letters "NG" on the front, in the center, in navy blue, block lettering, navy blue tights, white knee pads and wrestling boots. Somers and Harper each have one of the AWA World Tag Team Championship belts strapped around their waists.]

GM: It all comes down to this, fans. The AWA World Tag Team Champions against the two men who have made it known they want a shot at the gold.

BW: And if the Soldiers of Fortune get the win tonight, it's not gonna be hard to figure out that they will be getting that shot.

GM: They would certainly deserve that, but first, they have to prove they can beat the champions.

BW: I absolutely believe they will, but even if they don't, they should be first in line. They are the Number One Contenders after all.

[Somers and Harper turn to look at one another, share a nod, then face the crowd and raise their arms in the air, the crowd cheering.]

GM: As much as the Soldiers want the shot, Next Gen has made it no secret they want the Stampede Cup. They have said they see it as another means of building their legacy.

BW: Yeah, they talk about legacy, but who they are wanting to model themselves after?

GM: Their family, for one, and they have talked up those Hall of Fame tag teams as well.

BW: And those Hall of Fame teams are slackers and show-offs. If that's the legacy they want to live up to, give me the Soldiers!

[Somers and Harper turn back to each other and exchange a high five. The duo then makes its way down the aisle. They extend their arms to slap hands with fans. However, their eyes remain focused on the ring ahead, never taking their gaze off the Soldiers.]

GM: Say what you want about those Hall of Fame teams, Bucky, but you don't win multiple titles just by being lucky. They were all skilled, in their own way, just as Next Gen is.

BW: Yeah, well, the Soldiers are just as skilled. After all, they've beaten a legendary tag team, former AWA World Tag Team Champions and two AWA Main Event stars who formed a duo that some had favored to win it all!



GM: Don't remind me about that last one, Bucky. That one was not without controversy.

BW: I have no idea what you're talking about, Gordo!

[Upon reaching the ring, Somers and Harper climb onto the apron and duck between the ropes. Somers walks to the corner and leans against the turnbuckles, focus in his eyes, while Harper walks to the opposite corner on the same side, climbs to the second rope and raises his arms.]

GM: But let's not forget that Next Gen has had to overcome three tough teams, including the American Idols, who came so close to beating the champions to advance to the finals.

BW: Hey, I take nothing away from Next Gen, but let's face it: This may be their biggest test yet. The Soldiers have shown not just tonight, but the past few months, that they are a force in the tag ranks!

GM: I won't deny that, but the same could be said of Somers and Harper.

[After a moment, Somers walks toward Harper and slaps him on the back. Harper then leaps down from the corner and turns to Somers, the two exchanging another high five, then remove their vests and hand them over to an attendant.]

GM: The champions are just about set here... we've got senior official Davis Warren as the man in the middle for this one.

[Warren walks over to both corners, speaking to both teams before he returns to the middle of the ring.]

GM: The electricity in the air - you could cut it with a knife, Bucky.

BW: What does that even mean?

GM: It's... a saying.

BW: Uh huh.

[Warren stands mid-ring, watching as Joe Flint and Daniel Harper step out of the ring to their respective spots on the apron...]

GM: And the 2017 Stampede Cup Finals are ready...

[...and signals for the bell!]

"DING! DING! DING!"

GM: ...to begin!

[The crowd ROARS as Charlie Stephens and Howie Somers come out of their respective corners, circling one another in the opening moments as the two men look for an opening to give them an early advantage.]

GM: No time limit in this one. They can have all the time they need to finish one another off and walk out here with that Stampede Cup...

BW: ...and a million bucks.

GM: Of course. But after the wars these teams have been through here tonight, I gotta wonder how much of that no time limit will even be needed, Bucky.

BW: It's a great point, Gordo. You look at the bracket for this thing and the Soldiers had a rough road. They beat perhaps future Hall of Famers in the Prophets of Rage... they beat former World Tag Team Champions, the Lights Out Express... they beat two of the best in the world in Carver and Martinez... and now... to win it all... they've gotta beat the World Tag Team Champions.

GM: But Next Gen didn't have a walk at the park either, Bucky. Their path to the Finals was a win over Blake Colton and Jackson Hunter... a win over the Gold Standard... and then a win over the American Idols... three very tough tag teams.

BW: No doubt... but if you're being honest with yourself, Gordo... you gotta say the Soldiers had the tougher road.

GM: I don't know if I agree with that at all - but the point is that BOTH teams have gone through perhaps the toughest night of their careers to get to this point and I just don't know how much they've got left in the tanks.

BW: Now THAT'S something we both can agree on.

[Suddenly, the two competitors come together in the middle of the ring, locking up in the center...]

GM: We're off and running in this one... and right away, the 265 pound Somers pulls the 241 pound Stephens into a side headlock... really going to work with those big powerful arms.

[Somers cranks the hold, nodding as Stephens cries out with a "nonononononooooo!" to the official.]

GM: No submission on the part of Stephens.

BW: No retreat, no surrender, daddy.

GM: Give me a break.

[Stephens jabs a few short forearms to the ribs, trying to break the grip of Somers but the Next Gen powerhouse hands on, keeping his hands together as Stephens starts to look for another way out.]

GM: Stephens backs him to the ropes, shoots him off- or maybe not!

[The crowd cheers as Somers simply tightens his grip, refusing to be shoved off to the ropes. They end up back in mid-ring, Somers grinning at the cheering fans as he shakes his head - "I don't think so, Private!"]

GM: Somers hanging on to that powerful headlock, continuing to wrench the head and neck of Charlie Stephens who is certainly in the biggest match of his life, Bucky.

BW: When you think about the career path of Charlie Stephens to get to this point, it truly is remarkable. In fact... if you think about Stephens AND Kerry Kendrick here tonight, how can anyone down the rung here in the AWA not be inspired? How can you not look at those two and think that with enough hard work, you could be in the Main Event in a few years? Kerry Kendrick was in the opening match in AWA history... the very first one... and got steamrolled. Charlie Stephens spent years here in the AWA trying to break through to the upper levels but it wasn't until he found his place alongside Joe Flint that he really started to shine. You may not like either of those guys, Gordo, but you gotta respect what they've accomplished here tonight - win or lose.

GM: I'll give you that, for sure. In the meantime, Stephens backs to the ropes again, trying to shove off a second time... and again, Howie Somers hangs on! Keeping that headlock in place and these fans are loving it so far.

[Stephens grimaces, again shouting a "NO!" to Davis Warren as he tries to find a way out...

...and then jams his elbow back into the midsection of Somers!]

GM: Stephens goes downstairs... make it a pair of elbows now...

[The third one is the charm, breaking Somers' powerful grip as Stephens gets free, dashing to the ropes, rebounding back towards Somers...

...who holds his ground and flattens the incoming Stephens with a tackle!]

GM: Oh hooo! Big tackle by Somers and down goes Charlie Stephens!

[Stephens rolls towards the ropes, pulling himself to a knee and staring up at Somers who grins again, waving him forward...]

GM: We've been waiting to see this showdown between the champions and the top contenders for a while now... and I suppose I always thought their first encounter would be with the titles on the line not the Stampede Cup.

BW: 24 of the best tag teams in the world - and why wouldn't it come down to the champions and the Number One Contenders? We shoulda saw this one comin' a mile away.

GM: You just never know in a tournament like this. So many teams. So many great teams yield such a high chance of upsets. I know many, for example, thought the Gold Standard might make it this far or perhaps that Martinez/Carver superteam... maybe even the Shooting Stars!

BW: Oh, I knew those two goofs weren't making it.

[Stephens gets to his feet, the gears in his head working hard as he eyeballs Somers... and then points him towards the ropes.]

GM: Stephens is asking Somers to try that tackle again?

BW: I can't say I agree with this particular strategy but Stephens has been on a roll when it comes to outthinking their opponents this weekend so I'm willing to give him the benefit of the doubt.

[Somers shakes his head but then does exactly that, dropping back to the ropes, bouncing off towards Stephens who dives at the feet with a drop down.]

GM: Up and over goes Somers, to the far side...

[Stephens dives at the feet a second time, trying to trip up the Next Gen powerhouse...

...who slams on the brakes, raises his arm, and drops the elbow down into the lower back of Stephens to a big cheer!]

GM: Elbow finds the target!

[Stephens kicks and flails on the mat before scrambling up, the fans still cheering the elbowdrop...]

GM: Stephens right back up, charging in...

[...and he runs right into Somers' powerful arms as Somers lifts him up and slams him down to the canvas!]

GM: Scoop and a slam by Somers!

[Stephens grabs at his lower back for a moment before scrambling back up, charging in again...]

GM: Somers scoops him up again... and slams him down again!

[Stephens gets up again - a little slower this time...

...and when he spots Somers waiting to slam him a third time, Stephens slams on the brakes, stumbling backwards, and falls to his knee in the corner where Joe Flint looks on.]

GM: And Charlie Stephens wanted no more part of Howie Somers after that pair of ring-shaking bodyslams... and it looks like we're going to get our first tag of the matchup here as... there it is, Joe Flint tagging in for the first time.

[Stephens slides out to the floor as Flint comes through the ropes, the Captain eyeballing Somers as he steps in...]

GM: Captain Joe Flint... another man that you'd certainly have to argue is in the biggest match of his long career.

BW: Absolutely, Gordo. Flint's been a star for a long time but for many years, he was working the regional territories. He's been a champion in Texas, in Florida, in Georgia, in the Carolinas... but he's never had a chance to win a million dollars in one night... he's never had a chance to be a part of the best tag team on the planet. This is huge for him too no doubt.

[Flint doesn't waste any time locking up with Somers, the two big men jockeying for position in the middle of the ring...]

GM: And this is a closer matchup in the strength and power department.

[Somers tries to shove Flint backwards but the slightly bigger Flint gets the edge, forcing him back to the corner...]

GM: Flint's got him back in the corner... the referee calling for a break...

[Flint slips a knee up into the gut on the break, doubling up Somers. The official continues to shout at Flint to step back as he piefaces Somers, shoving his head back and CLUBS him across the chest with a forearm smash!]

GM: Heavy forearm across the sternum by Flint... and another one on target as well!

[Grabbing the arm, Flint shoots Somers across the ring to the opposite neutral corner...]

GM: Whips him in, Flint on the move here!

[And the Duke runs headlong into the corner, crashing chestfirst into the buckles as Somers bails out!]

GM: Ohh! Swing and a miss as Flint hits the corner hard!

[Captain Joe staggers out in a circle, grabbing at his chest as Somers swoops in on him...]

GM: Somers lifts the 280 pounder up and SLAMS him down! What power on the part of Howie Somers!

[Flint scrambles up off the mat, grabbing at his back...

...and finds Somers waiting for him, right hand drawn back and ready to throw!]

GM: And whoooooa nelly! Flint slams on the brakes upon seeing that haymaker on deck and he drops right back into the Soldiers' corner.

[Flint grimaces in Somers' direction just before the official steps in, forcing Somers to stay back. Stephens leans over the ropes, cupping his hand over Flint's ear as he whispers to him.]

GM: Perhaps a little strategy session mid-match going on here. Perhaps Charlie Stephens sees an opening that Joe Flint has not.

[The Duke gives a little nod, slowly moving back out as Somers waits for him in the middle of the ring...]

GM: Flint coming back out... and right back into a tieup!

[They again begin battling for position when Somers starts pushing back hard, forcing Flint back a couple of steps with ease...

...which is when Flint spins it around, using Somers' momentum against him as he forces him back into the buckles...]

GM: Uh oh! Flint gets Somers back in the wrong part of town here... and there's a quick tag to Charlie Stephens.

[Stephens is quickly through the ropes, joining his partner in the corner where they both start raining down right hands on the trapped Somers!]

GM: A two on one mugging in the corner by- look at this! Look at this now!

[The crowd ROARS as Somers fires back, throwing right hands as quickly as he can, battering his way out of the corner where he sends both Stephens and Flint down to the canvas before dancing back out to mid-ring, waving them forward as the crowd continues to cheer!]

GM: Howie Somers fights his way out of the corner and he leaves both of the Soldiers of Fortune down on the canvas as he does! Oh my!

[Flint rolls out of the ring as Stephens gets to a knee, rubbing his jaw as he stares up at Somers who is waiting for him, waving for him to get up and keep fighting.]

GM: Somers wants another piece of Charlie Stephens and as Stephens gets up... the feeling is - apparently - not mutual!

[The crowd jeers as Stephens shakes his head at Somers, pointing over towards Daniel Harper who is on the apron.]

GM: Well, I think these fans wanted to see more of Somers smacking Stephens around but Charlie Stephens wants Daniel Harper instead.

[Somers nods his head, pointing to Harper which gets a big cheer from the Canadian crowd before Somers reaches out and slaps the offered hand.]

GM: There's the tag and in comes Daniel Harper!

[Harper steps through the ropes as Stephens nods his head approvingly. The former Army private rubs his hands together as he sizes up Harper on the way into the ring...

...and then steps forward.]

"Alright, kid! Whatcha got?"

[Stephens points to his chin.]

"COME ON, KID! GIMME YOUR BEST SHOT!"

[Harper looks around at the crowd, balling up his fists.]

"That's right! That's right! They want you to do it! You want to do it!"

[Harper is still looking around at the cheering fans, nodding his head...]

"Maybe you don't want to do it! Maybe you think your MOMMY wouldn't approve!"

[Harper's gaze goes cold at the mention of his mother.]

"Maybe you don't think your MOMMY would want it!"

[The younger Next Gen member glares at Stephens]

"But I think maybe you don't know what your mommy wants at all, kid..."

[Stephens jerks a thumb at himself.]

"But I know... I know EXACTLY what your MOMMY would want!"

[And that thinly-veiled innuendo does the ring as Harper winds up, swinging a big right hand that Stephens is anticipating, ducking down, sliding the arm up between the legs for a schoolboy...

...but Harper is ready for it, spinning out, twisting the arm, and dragging Stephens down in a La Majistral cradle!]

GM: HARPER REVERSES! ONNNNNNNNE! TWOOOOOOOOOO! THRE-

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

[Stephens, just barely getting out in time, scrambles up, trying to get there before Harper does...

...but gets greeted with a fierce European uppercut, lifting Stephens off his feet, dumping him down on the canvas where he promptly rolls out to the floor!]

GM: Ohhh! What a shot by Daniel Harper! And Harper was ready for all of Stephens' mind games there, Bucky.

BW: He saw it against the Lights Out Express, no doubt. He knew it might be coming... and he was ready for it.

[With Stephens down on the ringside mats, Harper stands over him.]

"Stop shouting so much, private! You're stealing oxygen from the rest of humanity!"

[Stephens' eyes flash.]

GM: Haha! Harper giving Charlie Stephens - the former Army private - an old drill sergeant insult and that didn't sit well with Stephens for sure.

[Stephens pops to his feet, shouting at Harper.]

GM: Stephens is telling Harper to come out there on the floor and tell him that to his face!

[Harper starts to exit the ring to oblige...

...but pauses, taking a couple of deep breaths as he steps back, shaking his head, and waving for Stephens to get back in the ring.]

GM: Now, how about that, Bucky? Young Daniel Harper has always had a bit of reputation for a hot head... but here in the Stampede Cup Finals... one of the biggest matches in Harper's life, he seems to be holding those emotions in check.

BW: For now, Gordo. For now.

[Harper steps to mid-ring, waving Stephens in. A fuming Stephens paces around ringside, grabbing at his head, glaring occasionally up at the waiting Harper..

...and as the referee's count gets to six, Stephens scrambles up on the apron.]

GM: Stephens on the apron and- here comes Harper now!

[Stephens leans back, shaking his head, waving Harper back as the young man tries to get his hands on one-half of the tag team champions.]

BW: Not so fast. The referee steps in, telling Harper to stay back...

[Stephens slips through the ropes, pointing a threatening finger at Harper who advances again, moving past the official this time as the two men tie up in the middle.]

GM: Stephens and Harper locking up and- ohh! Stephens immediately goes to the eyes!

[Harper staggers back, wiping at his eyes as Stephens guides him to the neutral corner, grabbing him by the hair and SMASHES Harper's head into the top turnbuckle!]

GM: Headfirst to the corner..

[Pinning Harper back in the corner, Stephens slams his elbow back under the chin once... twice... three times...]

GM: Stephens laying in some hard shots on one-half of the World Tag Team Champions... and here we go now... whips him across...

[Harper smashes into the neutral corner, hooking his arms over the top rope...]

GM: Harper hits the buckles - here comes Stephens!

[But as Stephens approaches, Harper swings his legs up, catching Stephens under the chin!]

GM: OHHH! HARPER CAUGHT HIM ON THE WAY IN!

[Stephens staggers back towards mid-ring as Harper rushes in on him...

...and Stephens ducks down as Harper jumps up, dragging Stephens down in a sunset flip!]

GM: SUNSET FLIP! SUNSET FLIP! ONNNNNNNNE! TWOOOOOOOO!

[Stephens clashes his heels together on Harper's ears, breaking up the pin!]

GM: Two count only... a footrace to get to their feet first...

[Harper and Stephens get there at about the same time, both swinging as they do...]

GM: Forearm shot by Harper... and Stephens returns the favor!

[The two keep throwing forearms as quickly as they can, often striking at the exact same time...

...and Stephens steps back, driving a boot into the gut of Harper. He grabs the arm, looking for an Irish whip...]

GM: Irish whi- reversed!

[The reversal sends Stephens into the ropes, bouncing back out into a Harper back elbow under the chin that takes Stephens off his feet where he promptly rolls under the ropes and out to the floor again!]

GM: Down goes Stephens and out goes Stephens now as well!

[Stephens lands on his feet on the floor, rubbing at his jaw, looking up at Harper...

...who again stays inside the ring, shaking his head.]

GM: And again, Harper's not going to follow him out there. Showing amazing restraint as he refuses to go where Charlie Stephens wants him to go.

[Stephens again glares up at Harper, shaking his head as he takes a walk around the ringside area...]

GM: Stephens out on the floor, going for a little stroll...

[The former US Army Private stops short, turning up and shouting "COME ON, YOU COWARD! GET OUT HERE AND FIGHT, HARPER!"]

GM: Stephens bellowing at Harper, challenging him to a fight on the floor... but again, Harper refusing and I'm impressed by the maturity of this young man right now to stay in there and focus on the matter at hand.

[The referee continues to count as Stephens finally pulls himself up on the apron...]



GM: Stephens up on the apron now...

[Stephens grabs the top rope, shouting at the referee... shouting at Daniel Harper...

...who surges forward, grabbing the top rope, and YANKS Stephens over the top rope, sending him flipping through the air before crashing down on the canvas to cheers from the crowd!]

GM: AND HARPER BRINGS HIM IN THE HARD WAY!

[Harper pumps his arms, celebrating the big offensive move as Stephens rolls to all fours, trying to crawl across the ring to where his partner is waiting...]

GM: Stephens trying to get out of there, trying to make that tag...

[But Harper approaches from the blind side, snatching a handful of tights, dragging Stephens off the mat and into a side waistlock...]

GM: Waistlock... and DROPS HIM DOWN with a back suplex! Right on the back of the head and neck!

[Hooking the legs, Harper rolls back into a pin attempt, getting a two count before Stephens kicks out.]

GM: Two count only off the suplex... we're passed the ten minute mark in this one. Remember, no time limit at all. They can go as long as they need to go to get to the winner of this one.

[Pulling Stephens back to his feet, Harper whips him to the ropes, twisting to catch him under his arm on the rebound, lifting him up...

...and DROPS him across the knee in a backbreaker!]

GM: OHHHH!

[He slides Stephens off the knee onto his shoulders, rolling back into a cradle... and again scores a two count!]

GM: Another two count - this one for the backbreaker!

[Harper sits up on the mat, grimacing a bit before he gets to his feet, backing to the corner. He hops up on the middle rope, measuring Stephens who is down on the mat...

...which is when Joe Flint comes striding down the apron, shouting up at Harper, distracting him from completely his next attack!]

GM: I think Harper was looking for that elbowdrop... but now he's got his eyes on Joe Flint! Flint's shouting at Harper.. they're trading words here and-

[A dazed Stephens pushes up to his knee, lunging forward to grab the front of Harper's tights...

...and YANKS him off the midbuckle, sending him crashing facefirst down to the canvas!]

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

GM: Stephens takes advantage of the distraction and uses that leverage from the tights, pulling Harper right off the apron! Harper goes down HARD facefirst on the mat!

[Stephens forces his way back to his feet, wobbling over to the corner where he reaches out and slaps the offered hand.]

GM: The tag has been made! In comes Joe Flint now!

[Flint comes in quickly, wasting no time in dragging a stunned Harper off the mat, spinning him right into his waiting arms...]

GM: Flint scoops him up... and slams him down hard!

[Taking aim, Flint raises his arm up, dropping an elbow down into the ribcage... and another... and a third!]

GM: Elbow after elbow... some 280 pounds down into the ribs!

[Flint flattens out into a lateral press!]

GM: Flint with the cover now... and another two count for the Soldiers of Fortune there, trying to find a way to get Harper and Somers down for a three count. The Stampede Cup on the line. The million dollars on the line. The right to call yourself the best tag team on the planet on the line.

[Flint pushes up to his knees, pausing there to drive his fist down into the ribs over and over again, Harper cringing and trying to cover up to protect himself as much as possible.]

GM: And now you see the veteran, Joe Flint, targeting the ribs of Daniel Harper after that hard fall off the ropes. Flint and Stephens certainly know how to target a body part...

BW: Ask Shadoo Rage.

GM: ...and they're going after the ribs of the man who is one-half of the World Tag Team Champions.

[Flint gets to his feet, hauling Harper up alongside him...]

GM: Big whip coming up... sends Harper HARD into the buckles...

[The Duke charges in after him, swinging knee up into the ribcage.]

GM: Running knee right to the breadbasket! Knocking the wind right out of Daniel Harper!

[Holding the top rope, Flint swings his knee up into the gut over and over again, leaving Harper gasping for air in the corner...]

GM: Look out here... Flint muscling Harper up, holding him across his chest...

[Flint marches out to mid-ring, dropping down and JAMMING the ribs of Harper into his bent knee!]

GM: Ohh! A modified version of the backbreaker there - aimed more at the ribs than the back... and that's going to do even more damage to Daniel Harper as Flint covers!

[Another two count follows before Harper lifts the shoulder, breaking the pin. Flint nods his head, climbing to his feet, taking a breather of his own as he paces around the ring slowly, waiting for Harper to get up on his own...]

GM: Flint taking his time in there... no wasted movement. As we've said, these two teams have been through a lot here tonight. They may be coming off about a 30 minute break during our World Title match but after the night they've had, that may not be enough to come in anywhere near full strength.

[A weary Harper pushes up off the mat, shoving himself to all fours...

...which is when Flint runs right back in, delivering a big kick to the ribcage!]

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

GM: Flint boots him RIGHT in the ribs and if Harper's ribs were hurting before, they're likely to be in agony right about now, fans.

[Flint stands over Harper, watching him roll around in pain on the mat.]

GM: Captain Joe Flint... ohhh! Another hard kick to the ribs by Flint! Looking to inflict maximum punishment... cause maximum damage as these two teams battle it out for the Stampede Cup. Looking to join the ranks of teams like the Lynch Brothers, like the Blonde Bombers, like Violence Unlimited and Air Strike.

BW: But only one of 'em can do it, Gordo.

GM: That's right... and right now, the Soldiers of Fortune think it's going to be them as Flint-

[Harper - on all fours - makes a sudden surge towards his waiting corner when Flint spins around and boots him in the ribs a third time, cutting him off before he can even get close.]

GM: Ohhh! Another brutal kick to the ribs!

BW: Kid's gonna be coughing up blood soon, Gordo.

GM: I certainly hope not. That would be a sign of potential internal injuries and I don't think anyone wants that.

[Flint drags Harper back to his feet again, whipping him into the ropes...

...and BURIES a right hand into his midsection on the rebound, sending Harper stumbling forward, dropping to his knees cradling his gut.]

GM: Good grief... what a right hand there... and there's a tag to Charlie Stephens now...

[Stephens comes in, joining his partner in pulling Harper to his feet, whipping him across the ring...]

GM: Double whip by the Soldiers... and a DOUBLE right hand to the body!

[Harper stumbles past, still on his feet for the moment...

...until Stephens and Flint each grab a handful of hair, yanking Harper backwards and throwing him down to the canvas!]

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

GM: A hard fall down to the mat for Harper... and the referee's letting Flint have it for the hair pull as he steps out to the apron, leaving Charlie Stephens in there with Daniel Harper...

BW: Stephens isn't wasting any time, Gordo... right up on the middle rope...

[Stephens takes aim, standing tall...

...and then leaps off, DRIVING the point of his elbow down into the injured ribcage!]

GM: Ohhh!

[Harper sits up off the mat, clutching at his ribs... and gets knocked right back down thanks to a Stephens right hand!]

GM: Stephens across, hooks the leg for one! He gets two! He gets- no! Two count only!

BW: The Soldiers are just chipping away at them, Gordo. Just slowly breaking them down until that two count gets a little longer and a little longer...

GM: We are past the fifteen minute mark in this one, fans, as two of the best teams in the world battle it out in the middle of Mosaic Stadium to wrap one of the biggest events in company history - the Battle of Saskatchewan. We've seen title matches, grudge matches, historic companies brought back to life for one night - and of course, the epic Stampede Cup tournament... a tournament that many have called the best Stampede Cup yet. And at the end of it all, it's these two teams battling it out for tag team supremacy.

[Back in the corner, Stephens boosts himself up on the middle rope again...]

GM: He's gonna do it again, fans!

[Stephens stands tall, leaping off...

...but instead of driving in his elbow, he drops his knee down into the ribs, causing Harper to howl in pain as he sits up on the mat, only to be shoved back down into another lateral press!]

GM: The kneedrop finds the mark - is this enough? The referee down to count.

[The official slaps the mat once... twice... but that's all as Harper lifts his shoulder again. Howie Somers cheers loudly, slapping his hand down on the top turnbuckle as the Canadian crowd roars for the kickout.]

GM: And there's no doubt in this one who the fans are behind. The team of Next Gen has won the hearts of fans all over the world and here in Regina is no different. But can Harper and Somers who've battled so hard this year against the likes of Hunter and Williams? Can they keep that momentum going and somehow walk out of Mosaic Stadium as not only the World Tag Team Champions but also the 2017 Stampede Cup champions?

[Stephens climbs back to his feet, admonishing the official for what he thinks is a slow count before a shout from Flint gets him back on task.]

GM: The Captain keeping Private Stephens in line here as Stephens pulls Harper back to his feet... big whip to the Soldiers' corner... and there's the tag, bringing Flint back in...

[As Flint steps in, he gives a gesture to Stephens who nods...]

BW: Now that's a top level tag team, Gordo. Flint didn't even have to tell Stephens what he wanted to do... just a little wave and Stephens understood. That's the kind of communication and instincts you need to be a top tag team in this sport and that's comin' from a guy who has managed some of the best.

[Flint and Stephens each grab an arm, yanking Harper out of the corner a bit...

...and then HURL him back in, sending a jolt down his spine on impact!]

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

GM: And a little bit of insult to injury to the Lights Out Express as the Soldiers of Fortune borrow one of their signature maneuvers right there.

BW: How many times have we see Strong and Anderson use it? Always simple, always effective and it's got Harper in a real bad way in a real bad position inside this ring.

GM: Flint dragging him out now, big scoop... and a big slam!

BW: And some people might think something like that only hurts the back but a fall like that on the mat really shakes your whole core. Your back, your ribs, your chest. That'll do even more damage to the ribcage of Daniel Harper, Gordo.

GM: Flint picks him up... we know like he likes bunches of bodyslams... scoops him up and SLAMS him down a second time!

[Flint holds up a finger to the crowd, shouting "ONE MORE TIME!" to jeers from the Canadian faithful as he drags Harper up again, lifts him into his powerful arms and throws him down with impact!]

GM: Three big slams in the middle... and another cover by Flint...

[Harper kicks out at two and change this time... a little longer than the last kickout.]

BW: And that's what I'm talking about, Gordo. Harper's still out at two... but it took a little longer this time... just a little bit... but it tells the Soldiers that what they're doing is working and they just need to keep on keepin' on.

GM: Flint back on his feet... telling Harper to get up... Harper trying to get off the mat...

[But Flint uses a grip on the wrist to bring Harper the rest of the way up, whipping him to the ropes...

...and the rebounding Harper gets lifted up into a bearhug by Captain Joe!]

GM: Ohhh! And that's a bearhug locked in by Joe Flint!

BW: Flint's got a couple of inches on Harper and about fifty pounds so he just lifted him right up off the mat, hanging him there as he squeezes and pops those injured ribs, daddy!

GM: Flint's got this hold sunk in, really putting the squeeze on... and we've talked about it before, Bucky. The experts of this hold wait for their victim to take a breath before they tighten it up.

BW: That's right. Not a lot of submissions on a bearhug in this day and age because there are so many well-known counters for it... but if you use it right, you can really steal the air out of someone's lungs... really wear them down... and I'm guessing that's what Joe Flint is looking for right now.

GM: The squeeze is on... Harper trying to get his feet down on the mat at least... that'll take away some of the leverage and alleviate some of the pressure.

[Harper pushes back on Flint's chin, trying to make it awkward to keep the hold on...

...but Flint squeezes a little harder, causing Harper's arms to flop down at his sides.]

GM: Harper was looking for a way out but Flint cut that off in a hurry... but Harper does at least get the feet down...

[Flint tries to ragdoll Harper a bit but their similar heights doesn't allow for much of it.]

GM: Harper's gotta find a way out of this hold so he can get to that corner and bring his partner into the match. Daniel Harper's been in this ring all alone for far too long for a match of this importance, fans.

[Harper again tries to push the chin back but Flint cranks up again, bringing the arms down...]

GM: Flint again avoiding Harper's attempts to force his way out and-

[The crowd cheers as Harper smashes a fist into the side of Flint's head!]

GM: Big right hand by Harper!

[Harper winds up, landing a second!]

GM: He's trying to punch his way out of this, fans!

[He lands a third, causing Flint's grip to slacken...

...which gives Harper the room to spread his arms wide and CLAP them together on the ears of Flint, breaking the hold!]

GM: And that gets him loose! Harper's loose and-

[The young man dashes to the ropes, looking to land one big hit so he can get to his partner...

...but Flint catches him on the rebound, lifting him up, twisting around...]

"THUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUD!"

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

GM: SPINEBUSTER! SPINEBUSTER BY FLINT!

[Flint dives across, rolling into a side press with the leg.]

GM: ONNNNNNNNNE! TWOOOOOOOOOOOOO! THR-

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

GM: And Harper gets the shoulder up in time!

[Flint grimaces as he stares at the official.]

GM: And now it's Joe Flint giving referee Davis Warren a hard time. The count looked good to me... and Warren is explaining how close it was.

[The Duke slowly gets to his feet, still glaring at Davis Warren as he leans down to pull Harper off the mat by the hair, tugging him into a front facelock...]

GM: Flint hooks him up, slinging that arm over his shoulders...

[Flint lifts Harper into the air, pauses halfway up...

...and DROPS him facefirst on the canvas as he falls to his knees in a gourdbuster!]

GM: He calls it the Bunker Buster and right DOWN on the ribs goes Daniel Harper again!

[Flint flips Harper onto his back, diving across him again.]

GM: ONNNNNNNNNE! TWOOOOOOOOOOOOO! THR-

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

GM: Another near fall right there for the Soldiers - so close to victory at this point, they've gotta be able to taste it.

BW: What does a million dollars taste like? Good food, expensive booze, and gold digging companionship?

GM: I don't think I'm gonna touch that one. Flint back on his feet now... and another tag is made. The Soldiers make the exchange once more... and now Flint steps out as Stephens pulls Harper up off the mat... right up onto the shoulders...

[Stephens steps out to the middle of the ring, looking out on the fans concerned with how the match is going for the World Tag Team Champions...

...and shoves Harper up and over, bringing him crashing down across a bent knee!]

GM: OHHH! GUTBUSTER!

[Harper cries out, down on all fours as Stephens slides him off the knee, wrapping him up in a La Majistral cradle!]

GM: We've got one! We've got two! We've got thr- no! No! Harper's out at two again!

[The crowd roars for the kickout as a concerned Somers buries his face in his hands, shouting "COME ON, DANNY!"]

GM: Daniel Harper's in a lot of trouble in this one and his partner, Howie Somers, knows it, fans. Somers imploring his partner to get to that corner and make the tag... and Harper's trying to do exactly that!

[As Stephens argues with the official again, Harper starts crawling across the ring, dragging himself towards a waiting Howie Somers who shoves his arm as far out as he can...]

GM: Harper's trying to get to the corner - trying to get to his partner!

[But Stephens gets alerted by Flint to the situation, running across the ring to STOMP down on Harper's lower back, putting him back down on the canvas...

...which is when Stephens grabs the ankle, dragging Harper back across the ring near the Soldiers' corner.]

GM: Stephens pulls Harper back - much to the dismay of Howie Somers...

[Stephens reaches out, slapping Flint's offered hand.]

GM: There's the tag... and it looks like another doubleteam on the way from the Soldiers of Fortune, fans!

[Each man grabs an arm on Harper, whipping him across the ring...]

GM: Harper off the far side...

[The Soldiers each lift Harper by a leg...

...and DUMP him facefirst on the canvas!]

GM: FLAPJACK! FLAPJACK BY THE SOLDIERS!

[Flint covers with a loud "COUNT IT!" but Davis Warren waits for Stephens to exit before he drops to his knees...]

GM: ONNNNNNNNNNNNE! TWOOOOOOOOOOOO! THREEEEEEEE-

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

GM: AND AGAIN! AGAIN, THE SHOULDER IS UP IN TIME! OHHHH MY!

[Somers is pacing the apron nervously across the ring as the crowd buzzes for the near fall. Joe Flint stays on the situation, dragging Harper up off the mat by the arm that he uses to whip him into the neutral corner...]

GM: Harper hits the corner hard... here comes Flint!

[...but at the last moment, Harper dives out of the way and Flint SLASM chestfirst into the corner, falling back onto the mat as Harper crawls on his knees towards his corner!]

GM: HARPER AVOIDS THE CHARGE! HARPER ON THE MOVE! HARPER LOOKING FOR THE TAG!

[But as Harper gets closer to his corner, Charlie Stephens ducks through the ropes, looking to intervene...]

GM: Stephens is in but- yes! The referee cuts him off! Davis Warren caught him coming in and he's trying to get him-

[The crowd ERUPTS as Daniel Harper throws himself into a tag!]

GM: There's the tag by Harper! In comes big Howie Somers!

[Somers comes rushing into the ring, drilling a rising Joe Flint with a right hand... and another... and another...

...but the referee whips around, shouting at Somers, pointing back to the apron!]



GM: What the-?!

BW: He didn't see the tag! Davis Warren didn't see the tag!

[The crowd jeers loudly as Somers and Warren argue the legitimacy of the tag that everyone just saw Somers and Harper make moments ago!]

GM: The referee is trying to get Somers out of the ring and- HEY!

[The jeers get louder as Charlie Stephens slides in behind the referee's back, grabbing Harper by the ankle and dragging him all the way back across the ring over near the Soldiers' corner.]

GM: Stephens tosses Harper back into the corner... look at this now!

[And somehow the jeers get even LOUDER as Stephens and Flint batter the ribs of Daniel Harper in the corner, not even attempting to act like they made a tag.]

GM: They're all over Harper, damn it! This isn't right at all!

[A few more moments pass before the referee turns around, charging in and forcing Stephens to step out to the apron...

...where he promptly slaps Joe Flint's hand, tagging himself back in.]

GM: There's the tag... Stephens is legally now...

[Each grab an arm, pulling him slightly out of the corner.. and THROWS him back into the buckles again!]

GM: Right back into that ol' Lights Out Express maneuver... and Harper can barely stand at this point, fans. He's just hanging onto the ropes, trying to stay on his feet as the Soldiers of Fortune are just completely physically dominating him right now.

[Flint steps out as the legal man snatches Harper in a front facelock, pulling him out of the Soldiers' corner...]

GM: Stephens hooks him... suplex on the way perhaps...

[But the attempt at a suplex backfires as Harper floats over, landing on his feet!]

GM: Harper slips out... waistlock!

[But instead of going backwards with a German Suplex, Harper rushes forward, crashing into the turnbuckles...]

GM: Ohh! Harper drives him to the corner... rolls back!

[The crowd ROARS as Harper rolls Stephens up in a rolling reverse cradle, trying to steal the win...]

GM: ONNNNNNNNNE! TWOOOOOOOOOOOO! THREEEEEEEEE-

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

GM: And it's Stephens who kicks out this time, saving the match for the Soldiers of Fortune!

[Falling out of the pin attempt, Harper starts crawling across the ring again, trying to get within reach of his World Tag Team Champion partner...]

GM: Harper's trying to get to the corner! Harper's trying to get to the corner!

[...but a recovering Stephens races across, diving to his knees to smash a double axehandle down across the lower back of Daniel Harper to jeers from the sold out Mosaic Stadium crowd!]

GM: Stephens lowers the boom on Harper, breaking off any attempt at making that tag again...

[Stephens gets to his feet, shaking his head at a disappointed Somers before he drags Harper back across the ring again, slapping Joe Flint's hand.]

GM: And yet another exchange made by the Soldiers... in comes Joe Flint.

[But Stephens doesn't vacate the ring this time, dropping to his back and raising both his knees as the referee starts a count for the doubleteam...]

GM: What's this now? Flint grabs Harper, front facelock...

BW: Oh, they're REALLY gonna finish him off now, Gordo! A Bunker Buster on Stephens' knees!

GM: If they hit this, it might be enough to finish off Next Gen!

[Flint pulls him into position, lifting him up into the air...

...but a wriggling and flailing Harper settles back down on his feet...]

GM: Harper blocks and-

[...and SNAPS Flint over with a suplex onto Stephens' raised knees!]

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

GM: WHAT A REVERSAL! WHAT A REVERSAL BY DANIEL HARPER!

[The crowd is ROARING for Harper as Somers shouts "NOW! NOW! NOW!" while sticking out his hand...]

GM: THIS MIGHT HIS CHANCE! THIS MIGHT BE HIS OPENING!

[Stephens gets to his feet, trying to intervene but the referee cuts him off, forcing him back...]

GM: Stephens trying to get involved but the referee won't allow it! Harper's crawling... Flint's down... he's hurt! Stephens is being put out by the referee!

[Stephens quickly goes out to the apron, dropping to the floor, sprinting around the ring...]

GM: Hurry, Daniel! Hurry up, kid!

[Stephens gets closer, looking to stop the tag from the outside...]

GM: STEPHENS ON THE MOVE AND-

[The crowd ERUPTS as a lunging Harper slaps his partner's waiting hand... finally.]

GM: TAG! TAG!

[Somers pumps his arms in enthusiasm before stepping through the ropes...

...and running right over a rising Joe Flint with a big stampeding clothesline!]

GM: CLOTHESLINE DROPS FLINT!

[Somers pumps that arm again as he turns around and spots an incoming Charlie Stephens...]

GM: ANOTHER CLOTHESLI- OHHHH! ALL THE WAY OVER TO THE FLOOR GOES STEPHENS!

[Somers spins back towards the rising Flint, lifting him up and slamming him down on the canvas...]

GM: The 265 pounder on the move... to the ropes... BIG LEAP!

[...and he CRUSHES Flint underneath a 265 pound splash!]

GM: BIG SPLASH BY SOMERS!

[Somers pops up, not even going for a pin as he pumps his arms wildly again to the roar of the Canadian crowd!]

GM: HOWIE SOMERS IS PUMPED! THESE FANS ARE RIGHT THERE WITH HIM!

[The Boston native circles the ring, pulling Flint back to his feet and promptly whipping him into the neutral corner...]

GM: Somers comes rushing in after him, lowering the shoulder! OHHHH! BIG TACKLE IN THE CORNER!

[Holding the middle rope, Somers lays in a second tackle... and a third... and a fourth which actually lifts Flint off the mat before he settles back down!]

GM: Somers grabs the arm, shoots him back the other way!

[Flint smashes into the buckles, staggering out towards a waiting Somers who lifts the 280 pounder into the air, twisting around...]

"THUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUD!"

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

GM: POWERSLAM! POWERSLAM!

[Somers stays on him this time, hooking a leg...]

GM: ONNNNNNNNNNNNE! TWOOOOOOOOOOOOOO! TH-

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

GM: FLINT GETS THE SHOULDER UP THIS TIME!

[Somers gets to his feet, looking out on the roaring crowd...

...and suddenly swings around and DROPS Charlie Stephens who was back on the apron off it with a right hand!]

GM: OH YEAH! HE DROPS STEPHENS AS WELL!

[Somers stands near the ropes, laying the badmouth on the downed Stephens as the fans roar their approval...

...and then their warning at Joe Flint approaching, hands raised over his head!]

GM: DOUBLE AXEHANDLE FROM BEHI-

[But Somers whips around, burying a right hand into the midsection to cut him off!]

GM: NO! SOMERS CATCHES HIM DOWNSTAIRS!

[Grabbing the arm, Somers fires him into the corner, running right in behind him...]

GM: 265 POUND AVALANCHE IN THE CORNER!

[Somers backs to the middle of the ring as Flint staggers out towards him...]

GM: HIIIIIIIGH BACK BODY DROP BY SOMERS!

[Flint CRASHES down on the canvas, arching his back on impact as Somers paces the ring again, looking for someone else to hit...

...and when he finds Charlie Stephens on the apron, he grabs the top rope, giving it a yank and bringing Stephens over in a flip down onto the canvas!]

GM: Somers brings Stephens back in the hard way... pulling him up now...

[Grabbing Flint as well, Somers CRASHES their heads together to a big cheer!]

GM: DOUBLE NOGGIN KNOCKER BY ONE-HALF OF THE WORLD TAG TEAM CHAMPIONS!

[Somers grabs the dazed Flint by the arm, whipping him back into the corner...

...then grabs Stephens and fires him in after him, stacking them up in the corner.]

GM: Somers has got `em both in the corner... HERE HE COMES!

[Lowering the shoulder, Somers SLAMS it into Stephens' midsection, smashing both Soldiers against the turnbuckles! As Somers backs off, Stephens staggers out...

...and gets FLATTENED with a standing clothesline that sends him rolling from the ring to the floor!]

GM: Stephens is down and out again... and Somers drags Flint over to his corner... tag!

[Harper steps through the ropes, shaking the cobwebs as Somers buries a right hand in Flint's midsection, doubling him up before he slams a double axehandle down across the back... and Harper adds one of his own...

...then Somers...

...then Harper...

...then Somers...

...then Harper, driving Flint down onto all fours...

...then Somers...

...then Harper!]

GM: They're pounding Flint down into the mat!

[And with a final barrage of blows from both men simultaneously, Flint flattens out on the mat as the crowd ROARS for the World Tag Team Champions!]

GM: FLINT'S DOWN AND THIS CROWD IS LOVIN' IT!

[Stephens comes staggering back in, looking to attack from the blind side...

...but a double hiptoss sends Stephens flying through the air, crashing down on top of his own partner in a makeshift senton!]

GM: OHHH MY!

[Somers steps back, directing traffic for a moment as each man grabs a Soldier, pulling them to their feet...]

BW: The referee needs to get some control of this, Gordo. We're past the thirty minute mark in this one... but right now, the referee's got no control over these four men and it's a bad situation!

GM: We've got Flint in one corner... Stephens in the other...

[A double whip sends the Soldiers crashing into each other, staggering back to their respective attackers.]

GM: Big crash in the middle... and another big slam by Somers on Flint!

[Harper scoops up Stephens, slamming him alongside Flint on the mat!]

GM: Side by side and...

[The crowd ROARS as Somers lifts his own partner up from behind, flipping him over and SLAMS him down on top of both men facefirst!]

GM: WHAT A MOVE BY THE CHAMPS! SOMERS DUCKS OUT, HARPER ON TOP!

[A two count follows before the Soldiers kick out in tandem, rolling Harper off of them!]

GM: Harper's looking for the tag - he's not recovered yet from what he went through earlier...

[Somers tags back in, joining his partner in a double whip on Flint...]

GM: DOUBLE CLOTHESLINE ON THE CAPTAIN!

[A double whip on Stephens sends him to the ropes as well...

...where Harper and Somers shove him skyward, dropping him chestfirst on the prone Flint!]

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

GM: ASSISTED BIG SPLASH BY STEPHENS ON HIS OWN PARTNER!

[Stephens again rolls from the ring, leaving the champions in the ring with Joe Flint. Somers pulls him up, again directing traffic as he slaps Harper's hand...]

GM: Another tag! Could the end be near for the Soldiers of Fortune here?!

[Somers lifts Flint up, lowering him down across his knee as Harper hops up on the middle rope, taking aim as the crowd ROARS!]

GM: Harper on the second rope! We've seen this before!

[Harper leaps off, dropping an elbow that snaps Flint off the bent knee and down to the canvas!]

GM: OHHHH! HE NEARLY DECAPITATED HIM RIGHT THERE!

[Somers rolls out as Harper dives across...]

GM: ONNNNNNNNNNNNNNE! TWOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOO! THREEEEEEEEEEEEEEEE-

"OHOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOO!"

GM: FLINT KICKS OUT! GOOD GRIEF!

BW: How in the world did he kick out of that, Gordo?!

GM: I have no idea! Sheer will to win, I'd imagine! The Soldiers want this just as badly as Next Gen does... perhaps even more!

[Somers extends his hand to tag back in but Harper shakes him off, pulling Flint back to his feet. He grabs the arm, whipping him to the turnbuckles...]

GM: Flint hits the buckles and-

[...but the Captain pops back out, swinging for the fences on the still-dazed Harper!]

"OHOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOO!"

GM: HOWITZER! HOWITZER OUT OF NOWHERE!

[Flint wearily throws an arm weakly across the chest, applying a sloppy pin cover.]

GM: ONNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNE! TWOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOO! THREEEEEEEEEEEEEEEE-

"OHOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOO!"

[Somers clutches at his chest after watching his partner just BARELY get his shoulder off the canvas to save the match for his team!]

GM: HOW CLOSE WAS THAT, FANS?! HOW CLOSE WAS THAT?!

BW: The Soldiers were a flash of a second away from winning this thing, daddy!

GM: And now Joe Flint's gotta find a way to take advantage of this! Joe Flint landed that big Howitzer clothesline and now he's gotta find a way to end it!

BW: And Harper staying in that ring may have been a HUGE mistake, Gordo!

GM: You could be right about that.

[Flint pushes up to his feet, obviously tired as he does. He falls back into the ropes, breathing heavily as he watches Harper roll over onto his chest, trying to get back up as well...]

GM: Both teams look to be exhausted at this point... some thirty minute plus into this battle but after an entire weekend of warfare! Who can do it? Who has enough left to come out on top?

[Flint slowly approaches Harper as the young champion gets up to a knee, reaching out to grab the arm...]

GM: Wait a second!

BW: Here we go!

[The crowd buzzes as Flint yanks Harper to his feet, snaking the other arm in behind the neck...]

GM: THE PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE! THAT COBRA CLUTCH IS LOCKED IN!

BW: This is it, Gordo! This is how they beat Martinez and Carver!

GM: Except there's no Javier Castillo out here this time! If the Soldiers are gonna win, they gotta do it on their own merits! They gotta beat the World Tag Team Champions!

[Harper is being yanked back and forth, his arms and legs flailing about as Flint tries to crimp the neck, cutting off the flow of blood to the brain...]

GM: The Pledge is locked in and Harper's trying to fight it! Harper's gotta fight it!

[Flint swings Harper around, facing the corner...

...which is when Harper somehow manages to drag his body towards the corner close enough to leap up, kicking off the buckles, rolling through into a pinning predicament!]

GM: ONNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNNE! TWOOOOOOOOOOOOOOO!  
THREEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEE-

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

GM: STEPHENS! STEPHENS IN FOR THE SAVE!

[The crowd ROARS their displeasure for Stephens' diving save as he gets to his feet, laying the badmouth on Harper..

...which is when Howie Somers comes charging in, drilling Stephens with a running right hand that sends him flying through the air, crashing down on the canvas!]

GM: OH MY! WHAT A SHOT BY SOMERS!

[The referee steps in, ordering Somers to exit as Somers shouts down at a shocked Stephens with the Canadian crowd roaring for the attack!]

GM: Again, the referee seems to be losing control of this one! We've got Stephens AND Somers in there but Harper and Flint are the legal men!

[Somers reluctantly steps back out to the apron, protesting angrily to the official who turns back to the action...]

GM: Somers on the apron, Stephens on the floor...

[Flint pulls the dazed and weary Harper to his feet, looking to lock his Cobra Clutch back on...]

GM: Flint looking for the Pledge once more... Harper spins out and- OHHH!

[He DRILLS Flint with a European uppercut that snaps Flint's head back, falling in slow motion to the canvas as Harper twists around, falling back the other way...]

GM: TAG!

[Somers comes in quickly, pumping his arms as he does...]

GM: Somers is in! He's pulling Flint back up...

[A big whip sends Flint crashing back to the buckles. Somers backs to the corner as a weary Harper grabs him by the arm...]

GM: Harper whips his partner and- OHHH! BIG TACKLE IN THE CORNER!

[Somers pulls Flint from the corner, slamming him down to the mat near the ropes...]

GM: Somers steps out on the apron! He's the legal man! Harper inside the ring!

[Both men grab the top rope, ready to deliver the slingshot splash...]

GM: They're gonna do it! They're gonna do it here!

[...but the Mosaic Stadium crowd ERUPTS in jeers as Charlie Stephens grabs Somers' ankle from out on the apron!]

GM: He's got the ankle! Stephens has got the ankle - that miserable, conniving little-

[Somers is frantically shaking his leg, trying to kick Stephens off...]

GM: Somers is trying to shake free! He's trying to get that little gnat off him!

[...and finally does, kicking Stephens back a couple of feet!]

GM: SOMERS IS LOOSE! HARPER PULLS THE ROPES!

[Harper catapults Somers over the ropes, his 265 pound frame sailing down towards the prone Flint...]

...when Stephens YANKS his partner clear, causing Somers to CRASH chestfirst down on the canvas!]

GM: OHHH! STEPHENS PULLS FLINT OUT! HE PULLS HIM CLEAR!

[Harper buries his face in his hands, being forced out of the ring by the official as Stephens shoves Flint back in, throwing him on top of Somers!]

GM: ONNNNNNNNNNNNNE! TWOOOOOOOOOOOO! THREEEEEEEEEEEEEEE-



“OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!”

GM: AND HARPER WITH A DIVING SAVE! HE RETURNS THE FAVOR FROM WHEN STEPHENS DID IT BEFORE!

[Stephens throws a fit at the sight of this, jumping up on the apron, waving his arms wildly. Harper points a threatening hand at him before retreating to his corner, ducking through the ropes...]

GM: Somers and Flint are legal now! Both men are down after that missed splash and the near fall! But it's gonna be Joe Flint who is the first to his feet...

[Flint pulls Somers up, rearing back and DRILLING him between the eyes with a right hand... and another... and another...]

GM: Somers may be out on his feet after those haymakers, fans! Flint's dragging him to the middle of the ring...

[Grabbing the arm, Flint whips Somers across the ring to the far side...]

GM: HOWITZER- DUCKED BY SOMERS!

[...and as Somers hits the near ropes...]

GM: Was that a tag?! Did Harper make the blind tag?!

[...but the rebounding Somers hurdles over Flint on the drop down, running to the other side...]

GM: Flint back up and- Somers slams on the brakes!

[Somers grabs the ropes, preventing the rebound...

...and tiredly grins at Flint as Harper slides in behind the Duke, leaping up and scoring with a dropkick that sends him flying towards Somers who grabs him around the torso, lifting him up!]

GM: WAIT A SECOND! WAIT A SECOND!

[Harper nods at the ROARING crowd!]

BW: They can't do this!

GM: They're looking for the Soldiers' own finisher! They're looking for the Second Amendment - formerly the Patriot Missile!

[And at this sight, Stephens REALLY loses it, screaming and shouting. He comes through the ropes to intervene...]

“OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!”

[...and gets DRILLED with a Harper right hand that sends him spilling over the ropes to the apron!]

GM: OH! Stephens gets clocked!

BW: He landed on the apron though! He landed on... what's he doing?!

[The crowd is watching Harper lean against the ropes, measuring up what could be a match-ending strike, roaring their support for the World Tag Team Champions as

Stephens grabs hold of the Don't Tread On Me flag adorning one of their flagpoles, ripping it off...]

GM: Stephens is- he just threw that flag in the ring!

BW: Why?!

GM: I don't know!

[Harper looks confused at Stephens but ignores him as he bounces back against the ropes as Davis Warren goes to kick the flag out of the ring so no one slips on it.]

GM: Harper to the far side... here comes the clothesli-

"WHAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAACK!"

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

GM: WHAT THE HELL?!

[The crowd ERUPTS in shock as Charlie Stephens SLAMS the wooden flagpole on the back of Harper's head, cracking the flagpole in HALF on impact! Harper falls forward, collapsing on the canvas as Stephens throws down the flagpole, ducking through the ropes...

...and THROWS himself at the back of Somers' knee with a clip just as the official turns around!]

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

GM: HE CLIPPED HIM! STEPHENS WAFFLED HARPER AND HE JUST CLIPPED SOMERS!

[Somers falls to the mat, grabbing his knee in pain as Stephens spins around, pulling up Harper, throwing him to Flint who lifts him up in the bearhug...]

GM: Wait, wait, wait!

[Stephens charges the ropes, bouncing back off with momentum...]

GM: NO!

[...and leaps up into the air, DRIVING his arm into the collarbone of the barely-conscious Harper, dragging him down to the canvas!]

BW: SECOND AMENDMENT!

[Stephens rolls out, watching as Flint drops down onto Harper, wrapping up his legs...]

GM: YOU'VE GOTTA BE KIDDING ME!

BW: ONNNNNNNNNNNNNE! TWOOOOOOOOOOOO! THREEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEE!

"DING! DING! DING!"

[The crowd ROARS with a mix of shock... dismay... disdain... take your pick as Joe Flint wearily rolls off of Harper...

...and nearly gets tackled to the mat by Charlie Stephens who rushes in, falling to his knees as he embraces his partner!]

GM: I... after all this, that's how it ends? With Charlie Stephens and that damn flagpole?!

BW: It ends with the Soldiers of Fortune as the 2017 Stampede Cup Champions, daddy!

GM: But how did they win it, Bucky? How?!

BW: It doesn't matter, Gordo! It doesn't matter one bit!

GM: Well, it matters to me.

[Stephens practically drags his partner to his feet, still embracing as Rebecca Ortiz makes it official, shouting over the VERY hostile Canadian crowd.]

RO: Ladies and gentlemen... your winners...

...and 2017 STAMPEDE CUP CHAMMMMPIONNNNNSSSSS...

[Ortiz takes a deep breath for higher volume.]

RO: THE SOLDIERS OF FORRRRRRTUNNNNNNNNNE!

[Stephens pumps a fist as Flint stands at a weary attention, soaking up the jeers of the crowd with a proud smile on his face.]

GM: It's official, I suppose. It didn't go down the way I wanted it to... it didn't end the way many of us wanted to I'd imagine... but Joe Flint and Charlie Stephens - the Soldiers of Fortune - are the 2017 Stampede Cup Champions!

[Flint nods his head at the jeering crowd, still standing at attention as Stephens reaches over the ropes, pulling the American flag into hand.]

GM: Oh, come on. Do we really need these two out here rubbing this in the face of our great Canadian fans?

[Stephens takes up a spot behind Flint, waving the flag back and forth as the crowd pours down hostile boos on the duo.]

GM: Stephens with the flag... and don't look now but here comes the Cup, fans.

[The camera cuts from the ring, showing a group of AWA officials and stagehands wheeling the glittering Stampede Cup down the aisle towards the ring. The cup is large and silver with a heavy wooden base holding it. It's gotta be a few feet in height. Back in the ring, Stephens is gleefully jumping up and down at the sight of the Cup, rubbing his hands together as it approaches.]

GM: You can see the Cup on the way down the aisle as the Soldiers of Fortune join the line of teams who have held it. Teams like Violence Unlimited... like Air Strike... like the Blonde Bombers... like the Lynches...

[Flint moves over towards the ropes, draping an arm over his partner's shoulders as we see Howie Somers sitting on the canvas in the background in a similar pose with his partner as they sit on the mat.]

GM: What a heartbreaking loss this must be for the champions.

BW: Harper got hit so hard with that flagpole, he may not even know where he is, daddy. He may think he's back home in the States.

GM: Sadly, I'm sure he knows exactly where he is... sitting on the mat after losing in the Finals of the Stampede Cup tournament. It was a heck of a run for Next Gen - there's no taking away from that. And of course, they're still the World Tag Team Champions so there's taking away from that either.

BW: Why are we talking about Next Gen?! Talk about the winners! Talk about the Soldiers of Fortune!

[The stagehands lift the large Stampede Cup trophy over the ropes, setting it down on the canvas next to Stephens and Flint who embrace again. AWA backstage official Adam Rogers climbs in with it, holding a microphone.]

AR: Gentlemen, on behalf of the American Wrestling Alliance... Mooselips Beer.. and Tourism Saskatchewan... I present to you both the 2017 Stampede Cup trophy...

[Stephens applauds loudly as Flint grins.]

AR: ...and I declare you - the Soldiers of Fortune - the winners of the tournament... the trophy... and the one million dollars!

[Flint lets loose an excited "WOOOO!" at the sound of that.]

AR: Congratulations, gentlemen.

[Rogers offers a handshake to both Stephens and Flint - both of whom somewhat surprisingly accept. With a nod, Flint and Stephens each grab a side of the trophy, lifting it up into the air, holding it high as the Canadian fans continue to jeer.]

GM: There it is, fans. Like it or not, the Soldiers of Fortune are your 2017 Stampede Cup winners, holding the trophy high...

[Stephens and Flint turn, showing the trophy to another side of the ring.]

GM: The fans here in Canada certainly fall into the "not like it". column and it's hard to blame them. The Soldiers defeated the Canadian superheroes - the Prophets of Rage - in the second round. There was the controversy in the Semifinals - the so-called Saskatchewan Screwjob. And now this? The Soldiers of Fortune are a hell of a team but their path to glory is paved in chicanery and shenanigans! Their path to-

[Suddenly, Stephens and Flint turn again and...]

[illegible]

[...DRIVE the heavy wooden base of the trophy into the skull of a kneeling Howie Somers!]

GM: WHAT THE HELL?!

BW: Oh, they're not done, Gordo!

[They quickly put the trophy down as Stephens leaps atop Somers, pounding him with closed fists - an action that quickly reveals blood streaming down the forehead of Somers!]

GM: They busted Somers open with that trophy!

[Harper tries to quickly get up off the mat but Flint rushes him, dropping him with the Howitzer lariat!]

GM: OHHH!

[Grabbing the top rope, Flint starts stomping the head of Harper as Stephens continues to pound Somers into a bloody mess!]

GM: COME ON! ENOUGH IS ENOUGH!

[Stephens peels off of Somers, revealing the bloodied Next Gen powerhouse down on the canvas. He marches over to the corner, reaching over and grabbing the other flagpole...]

GM: Stephens has got the flag! He's got the- Flint's pulling Harper up now! This is ridiculous!

[Flint grabs Harper, pulling his arms back behind him as Harper tiredly tries to fight his way free...]

"CRAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAACK!"

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!"

[...and Stephens SLAMS the wooden flagpole over the head, cracking it as Harper dead man falls alongside his bloodied partner on the canvas.]

GM: Down goes Harper as well! Somebody stop this, damn it!

[A smirking Stephens retrieves the fallen American flag off the mat, waving it by the splintered flagpole as the Canadian crowd jeers loudly...]

...and then slowly lowers it so that it covers the faces and torsos of the downed Next Gen.]

GM: Disgusting. Absolutely disgusting.

[Stephens and Flint stand together, snapping to attention, saluting the flag that lies over their fallen foes...]

GM: This is... I'm out of here. Bucky, if you've got any sense, you'd go with me. What a disgrace these two are. For the people of Canada, I sincerely apologize and you can be damn sure that a whole lot of others in this company do as well. These two don't represent a lot of us - I promise you that. I promise you that.

[Flint and Stephens stay in their salute, ignoring the jeering Canadian fans... or perhaps relishing in it and their victory in the 2017 Stampede Cup tournament...]

...as we fade to black.]