

MR. GANNOSUKE~! is back! MR. GANNESUKKE~! is a guy Dean made up in his head~! We heart GENICHIRO TENRYU~! YUJI KITO~! has a weird career path~! The HART FOUNDATION~! will be here~! RYAN UPIN~! IRON MIKE SHARPE~! TOSHIYUKI SAKUDA~! Too much CRUSH~! According to CAGEMATCH~! this is DVDVR #176~!

~!~

HIYA~!

Welcome to the Death Valley Driver Video Review Issue #176

So... umm.... yeah.... We wrote A LOT. When I started compiling this we had over 40,000 words and it wasn't finished yet. So for my sanity (and the server's sanity) there is no Singles Going Steady in this issue. Instead - they are replaced by the greatest that is Genichiro Tenryu. (You will understand more as you read on.)

Onward and Upwards. Oh Dean....

~!~

GUTS WORLD WRESTLING - 1/28/2016

(by DEAN RASMUSSEN)

(Note from Rippa - Dean spent the entire review writing "Mr. Gannesukke" instead of "Mr. Gannosuke". Normally I would have just left it in and mocked Dean but I am sure in like a month I will need to find Gannosuke reviews and not be able to figure out why I can't find any.)

I am developing an affinity for GUTS World Pro Wrestling. The main reason is that I have been a Mr. Gannosuke fan for 20 years now- but also because the top of the cards tend to be anachronistically un-indie in their style and form. I mean, it is a Japanese indie so there is plenty of suck to go around- but it doesn't infuriate me like Dragon Gate or DDT is wont to do. Whole fuckin' card!

JOJI OTANI vs. TOSHIYUKI SAKUDA

Joji Otani is mysterious to Cagematch.net so I will assume that he is a GUTS World trainee. Searching the Guts World results page, I can guess that he has been wrestling since last March and he is totally defeated- like many of us, but only in the ring for Joji. Sukuda is a Big Japan rookie of whom I have watched the wrestling stylings just this last week in a Big Japan young lions card that popped up. He was vaguely memorable in a tag match. LET US NOW WATCH HIM SHINE! SHINE ON, YOU CRAZY TOSHIYUKI SAKUDA! Joji wears tiny pink pants and is about the size of the largest omelet I've ever ate at Golden Corral. Sakuda works the arm and Joji reverses it. Sakuda works the knee. Pat O'Connor would approve of the scientific basis of the beginning of this match. Then he would join us in falling asleep because it is the opening match between two rookies and they aren't going to do much more. Sakuda is promising for a tiny fella who will be beaten to death by the Strong Stylists in Big Japan for a while. He is actually effective in conveying intensity when wrenching Joji's knee, in a perfectly fine collection of knee-based spindling. Joji is all excited and fun- firing back with chops to set up his Missile dropkick nearfall. Joji laterally suplexes Sakuda to take you right back to 1976, and procures a wee Boston Crab for a minute. They run the ropes to set up Sakuda hitting a Spear! Sakuda runs from corner to corner and drives his shoulder into Joji's stomach. Sakuda is chunky but hits an athletic hurty-looking standing moonsault for

two to lead into the youngsters beating each other in the respective chests. Sakuda has decided that his offense will be based on his shoulders - as he cuts of Joji's peppy foray into coming off ropes by driving his shoulder into Joji's stomach - like another wrestler would kick them in the stomach. Let's hear it for Sakuda - for trying to separate himself from the others, as he contemplates Yuji Okabayashi and Kohei Sato beating him to death for 10 more years. Here's to you and GOOD LUCK! I'll be watchin'! It's gonna hurt! A lot! Sakuda sinks in the half crab and drags Joji to the middle and Joji taps out immediately. Come on, Joji. Where is your fuckin' fighting spirit? They have the indie handshake, which is strange because Joji basically pussied out in this match and should scurry to the back and drive home crying like a big baby. One can assume, because Joji towers over him, that Sakuda is- wow! Cagematch says 5'1". Man, Hama is sooooo going to be landing on him on so many BJW undercard tag matches. Bulk up, little fella!

MICHIO KAGEYAMA vs. RYOUYA AKIBA

Ryouya Akiba is a 32 year old freelancer whose cagematch.net mugshot seems to insinuate that the only reason he is on this card is that he is obviously the GUTS World speed-dealer. (Note from Rippa - Said mugshot is no longer there. I blame Dean.) Or maybe he lets Guts Ishijima borrow his tow truck on his nights off. Either way, you and I are excited to see his karate-based stylings. Michio Kageyama is unknown to the Cagematch but has been pocking the GUTS World undercard since 2013. Akiba is truly scrawny and Michio towers over him and outweighs him by 60ish pounds. Can Karate close the size gap? Well a dropkick can! Akiba does really elaborate kicks- like he is a lizard trying to make his enemy think that is larger than he actually is. Being MugaGUTS, he quickly procures a chinlock and Michio Kageyama powers out to begin kicking and bodyslamming him for a early nearfall. After a few cursory kicks to the back, Kageyama starts working the arm and then starts pounding on him in the corner. Wee Akiba does these shitty forearms and Kageyama just answers with kicks to the chest and stomping on his back, topping it off with a half crab. They do the half crab finish from the last match - but Akiba is scrawny but not a big giant pussy, so he makes the ropes. Akiba counters a suplex into his own suplex and the KARATE KICKS BEGIN! Awwwww, they begin to look like shit. Akiba is all spunky like a face should be and Kageyama is all heelish and Second Match Dick-like as you would want, thus Akiba has the crowd behind him and he is totes lovable! - but man does his offense look hilariously non-hurtful. He does hit a missile dropkick for the nearfall! Kageyama fights off being shot into the ropes and drives Akiba's shoulder into the mat, floating over to clamp on the Rings of Saturn for the win. And I have watched the two opening matches on a GUTS World card. I will always have that and NOBODY else not in the Shin-Kiba 1st Ring in Tokyo on January 28th, 2016 can say that. I am 2 blessed 2 B stressed.

MANAMI KANDA vs. DRAKE MORIMATSU

Allright, I remember Drake Morimatsu from late 90's JPW or maybe J'd? I'll check. It won't seem as long because I'll stop typing right now and the gap in time will be filled by you reading this after I start typing again! Oh man, she was in FMW and J'd. She's been wrestling 26 years and is 45 years old. I'm sure there is a very disturbing independent movie to be made about the reasons why she has only wrestled 5 times between 1999 and 2014. Whatever the reasons, she has been pretty active the last two years. Kanda is 21, was trained by TAKA Michinoku and her first match was in the promotion SECRET BASE tagging with Space Galaxy Warrior Andros. Man, I gotta watch some Secret Base. This is her 60th match since debut in June 2014. Ohhh man, let's watch this. Kanda is a bigger though very much a not taller gal so maybe this will awesome. Drake has a baseball bat. They lock-up and all I can think about is that Drake was

trained by Tarzan Goto. And I'm wondering how she didn't get roped into being on any of the new FMW cards. This your basic old bigger mean lady against younger less mean less bigger lady styled match. Neither are really laying it in or using their matronly pudge to any interesting advantage, so I can't pay too much attention to this. Drake does a standing stomach claw and that is the pinnacle of this match to this point. Kanda does look impressive charging into the corner. She also misses a splash off the second rope that her girth would have forced the viewer to contemplate the carnage of the impact- thus the advantage of your girther wrestlers. Drake cheats by whacking her with a bat and they brawl through the crowd a bit- leading up to some chairshots of a very third match magnitude, which leads up to some perfectly fine lariats. Drake goes up for a Northern Lights Suplex and her skull gets crushed by her own unwieldiness- but I have to respect her desire to be a pro and try a few things a lady her age and size should probably avoid. This is really feeling like a match you would see at the county fair. Not the state fair. Drake hits clothelines for two and Michinoku Driver for the win and YES! I have now watched the first three matches of a GUTS World card. Kanda could evolve into something fun.

GUTS ISHIJIMA/ MR. GANNOSUKE vs. TARO YAMADA/ TATSUHIKO YOSHINO

Halfway there, bitch! Taro Yamada is (according to the delightful and thorough cagematch.net) from the 666 Promotion. He also wrestles in Pro Wrestling Secret Base, HEAT UP, and was actually pulverized by Daisuke Sekimoto on a Big Japan card last year (the show was hilariously or possibly cruelly nicknamed "You'll Never Find a Rainbow If You Are Looking Down"). Yoshino was in a match in Big Japan that I reviewed why! just last week here (Rippa again - keep scrolling) This is the second time I've seen Guts Ishijima and he still as mysterious as the last time I saw him. He is still pretty much exclusive property of GUTS World so I still assume he owns the ring and the promotion (or is Mr. Gannosuke's hair stylist or something.) Anyway, Gannosuke is fucking awesome so let it roll. Taro Yamada is not attractive. One can only hope that ladies go for his plastic/leather goth apparel and spunky fighting spirit. Hey, Kageyama is part of the Gannosuke/Ishijima stable (thus explaining the nise-Gannosuke appearance- or the possibility that he is the actual bastard son of Mr. Gannosuke. Talk about great independent film ideas.) Anyway, Gannosuke and Yoshino start off the proceedings with headlocks, armdrags, armbars- what you would expect from the upper echelon of this greasier version of MUGA. Yamada and then Yoshino do a lot of really fast tagteam moves to take down the lurching fatman that is Guts Ishijima- as Guts resembles Japan's Premiere Tor Johnson Impersonator. Except not quite as agile as Tor Johnson. He will smack you really hard so I'm not really complaining- and when he and Gannosuke double shoulderblock Yamada, Yamada looks like has been hit by a truck. They throw him to the floor and Kageyama lays it in on Yamada in direct opposition to his stiffness level two matches prior. After he is thrown back into the ring, Gannosuke switches into the Dradition and sinks in a head scissors. Guts tags in and does nice headbutts while stumbling around the ring like a total galoot. Gannosuke tags in and applies a sleeper that Yamada jawbreakers out of only to have it reversed into a Gannosuke head scissors. Guts tags in and beats on him some more until Yamada does a really slick Ric Flair spin over the turnbuckle to hit a missile dropkick off the ropes to make the hot tag. Yoshino gets in a few kicks and a DDT to set-up a Half Crab (your GUTS World opening submission hold of the night.) Gannosuke hits the ropes and gets in a 1998 FMW-level Gannosuke Dangerous Backdrop and you and I weep the tears of remembrance. Guts tags in a really hurty corner lariat and then takes a rana like a fat who man who didn't just stumble all over the ring prior like a rhinoceros that was just feeling the effect of a tranquilizer dart. Yamada tags in and does a Sabu Inside moonsault for two. Luckily, Yamada tries a not-really-all-that-tricky Lucha roll-up and Guts is REALLY feeling the rhino tranquilizer as he fails to achieve the Forward Roll. Jillion stars. He

does redeem himself by just fucking KILLING Yamada with a lariat. SO yeah, Taro Yamada- not good-lookin' but will lean into your lariat like a fucking CHAMP. He is beaten into my heart. JEEZEUS FRICKIN JIMINY. Gannosuke decides that no one gets to have a more hellish lariat than he and he proceeds to just fucking annihilate Yoshino. Yoshino was already beaten into my heart. Now he skyrocketing into my Skeezy Indie Top Ten. They Superbomb Yoshino for two and then Gannosuke Released Thunder Fire Powerbombs him until Yamada makes the save and they go on offense with a double dropkick and QUEBRADA~! by Yamada to set-up the Yoshino Falcon Arrow. As GUTS World really does lose all MUGA-ness as the match starts to wind up. But I can't complain because I could watch Gannosuke suplex people all day and they are doing all FMW finishers, to my delight. Yamada kinda barrel rolls into Guts on the floor, hitting him in the lower mid-section- which is odd because if there was ever a human mattress to land on, Guts' giant flabbiness would be the wrestling landing Quilt-a-pedic of choice. This allows Yoshino and Gannosuke to fly all over the ring until Gannosuke rolls up Yoshino in that roll-up thing that Miguel Perez Jr used to always use. This match was PROBABLY not a legit match of the year, but there is just so much to love in this- both good (Gannosuke, a lot of Yamada and Yoshino) and bad (as in hilarious, as in Guts Ishijima trying to do lucha libre moves.) I am glad I watched it.

KENICHIRO ARAI/SHOTA vs. KEIZO MATSUDA/ YUJI KITO

Having consulted Cagematch.net, I see that Keizo Matsuda was in IWA Restart, the promotion that brought us all the fabulous Asian Cougar bumpfests back in the day. He is currently full-time GUTS World but does have two undercard tag team victories in Big Japan a few years ago. His American equivalent would be Ace Darling - if Ace Darling was an upper mid-carder in Pro Wrestling Ohio or something. Kito has had the oddest career of anyone on the card- having been wrestling 19 years, but only logging in 152 matches. Your average Japanese indie wrestler would have that many matches in 2 or 3 years. Looking for answers, I ran a translation off his geocities.jp page and it says:

- YUJI IWA Introduction (June 4, 1996) Was also there that day-to-day with the aim debut of painful practice from this day Tsuitemawaru directly to tour received an introductory test was or return the curry I ate for lunch on the subsequent ring at Korakuen Hall
- YUJI debut (March 10, 1997) Chiba spectacular debut TV magazine newspaper such as the 23 companies in Sato Takashitaru opponent in Tateyama civic center is more of a game to visit the interviewed would have been narrowly defeated stand to bear in the near future IWA everyone was content to think
- YUJI overseas expedition (July 14, 2000)Amepuro I wanted to do what Tennessee Kentucky Mississippi take off in the United States - in the go on a spree of violence take the BZW Heavy belt but English is reluctantly return home in the visa of relationship around Nampa became finally success rate was poor to speak English in not good enough (; _ ;

- YUJI now Return home after your expected to ask for the coming YUJI KITO every day to go to Hello Work while Akekure to practice today who feel the anxiety in the future while referred to as a rip in the future take the nickname of moped broken brakes go on a spree of violence become a heel!!!!!!!!!!

This card is filled with true indie mystery and intrigue. I mean, being indie wrestling, you are allowed to let your mind go anywhere. If this were New Japan, you would assume he had a ten year foray into Shooto and was a regular on Inoki Genome. Here, it's the indies- it could have been insurance fraud over an injury in a warehouse; he could have gotten a job in an office that paid pretty well and he didn't feel like hunting down bookings on the weekends or maybe his girlfriend wanted him to finally grow-up; Hell, he was wrestling in Tennessee, Kentucky and Mississippi in the 90's, he could have moved back to Tupelo because he wanted to be there for the daughter he fathered with the stripper Billy Joe Travis introduced him to. It's a thousand more independent movie ideas.

Meanwhile Kenichiro Arai is your Japanese equivalent to Scrap-Iron Adam Pierce, a good worker who every kind of wrestling fan has vaguely heard of and you put the belt on him a lot because of that. Last I saw Arai, he was in Pro Wrestling HEAT UP trying unsuccessfully to procure the vaunted HEAT UP Universal title. So yeah, the GWC Tag Title he is defending here not even close to being the sketchiest title he has fought over. Shota has a legit 215 matches in Okinawa Pro in 2010. What the fuck? Stuff happens in this world. It's like the first time you find out how many matches All Star Wrestling runs in a year in the UK. Just because you don't find out about it on the internet doesn't mean that it doesn't happen. So Shota had 63 more matches in 2010 than Yuji Kito had in 17 years. Let's get all these freaks to wrestle each other because GUTS World! Arai and Shota both wrestle in coveralls- a fashion idea that I truly adore. It works really well for those of us who grew up and still dwell in the lower middle class- because the guys in your life you avoid getting in fist fights with most are those who frequently wear coveralls.

Pre-match all four scuffle over the belts before they are taken from the ring- until Matsuda and Kito lariat the champs before the bell rings. Shota and Kito work headlocks and armbars for a few minutes- with interesting variations and spirited reversals. Guts WORLD is so odd and wonderful. Shota adds an armdrag to the armbar section to up the Ricky Steamboat factor. Shota adds a fucking FISTDROP to up the Lawler factor. Arai adds a wristlock into a keylock and back to an armbar to add to the Bockwinkle factor. Kito makes the ropes to end the odd ode to every 70's wrestler ever and Shota punches him in the stomach twice to up the Greg Valentine factor. And they start to run the ropes but Matsuda grabs Shota at the ropes and catches a forearm to the face as Shota ducks, allowing a quick roll-up. This is really a celebration of basic tagteam wrestling. Matsuda drags Shota out of the ring from ringside and body slams him twice to set up the psychology of the match being the total destruction of Shota's back. Matsuda tags in and bodyslams and then Surfboards Shota's back. Kito sinks in the Walls of Jericho and this is very very GUTS World deeply psychological and old school so far. Shota tries to fireback but Kito distracts the ref and Matsuda crushes Shota's tender man marbles with a headbutt and this is now total Southern tag match. Matsuda does the DBS Endless Powerslam and goes for a instant La de a Caballo because SHOTA'S BACK MUST DIE!! Kito and Matsuda are a really fun heel tag team. They punch Arai on the apron and double team drag Shota back to the evil side of the ring and continue working of the back to sustain the Anderson Brothers factor. This is fucking great, in a "no indie ever does this right, but look

at this" kind of way. Shota gets a hope spot and Matsuda shoulderblocks him to the ground. He gets a forearm in to hit a second rope missile dropkick (if that is allowed to be called that. I am a rebel.) Kito comes over and pounds on his back and drags him back to the center- but he enzuguri's to HOT TAG! Arai is a strange house-afire- using wileyness to avoid the powerhouse offense of Matsuda. The house of fire smolders out as Arai misses a toprope fistdrop and Matsuda hits a double Luger-level clothesline. Kito does a Fisherman suplex and Arai spins and spins and spins into a Kito Octopus Hold. Then some perfectly fine Kito punches in corner and Arai is now crawling for the hot tag. They do the super Southern unnoticed tag to set up Shota's flying crossbody on an unsuspecting Kito, to allow the Big Bossman Second running sit spot to up the Ray Traylor factor. Shota hits the Russian Leg Sweep and to then do four consecutive ref bumps. Then it gets even it gets superdopier with the ref bump, a very long and goobery set-up of Kito hitting Shota with the belt, Matsuda throwing the belt to Arai, Kito knocking Shota's head into the belt as Shota is trying to figure out if Arai hit him with the belt to allow Kito to School Boy Shota with a handfull of tights for the win and THE BELTS! This was perfect in form for a Southern tag match but none of these guys really have any kind of offence worth mentioning- THUS all the goodwill they garner by upholding the standards of a quality tag match- even by a slenderest of threads- is all lost because the ending is kinda retarded and so very crappily executed. They did so much right in this match, but it just doesn't survive the end.

AMIGO SUZUKI/ MASAO ORIHARA/ RYAN UPIN vs DAISUKE/ KAZUHIKO MATSUZAKI/ MASKED MYSTERY

Amigo, Orihara and Upin are the Tonpachi Machine Guns but the Tonpachi Machine Guns without Takeshi Ono is quite the Mongo Four Horsemen but we will soldier on. According to Cagematch.net, Ryan Upin was born in Peking and knows Kung Fu! He is also 37 years old. And this is the first time I will have seen him. Amigo Suzuki is one of those Ultimo Dragon trainees that has overrun Japanese indies these last 15 years. I've seen him a hundred times (or more than likely fast forwarded over him a hundred times) but cannot recall anything about him- which is probably good. I would LIKE to go into this as non-judgmentally as possible, thank you. Kazuhiko Matsuzaki is possibly the owner of GUTS World, but he is definitely exclusively GUTS World Pro, though he was part of a six man team with KAMIKAZE and frickin' Masayoshi Motegi that won an undercard match in Big Japan in 2010. He will always have that. I'm guessing that Big Japan and the probably 80 buck pay-out is the Japanese indie equivalent of Wrestlemania to most of the folks on this card. Either way, I know I've seen him as Shunme Matsuzaki because I recall mixing up his name up with Shuji Ishikawa's name, right after I first saw Ishikawa beat the fucking life out of somebody- so I remember being disappointed that he wasn't who I thought he was. But that was my problem not his, and I will not hold my own befuddlement against him- A NEW START! FOR ME! AND KAZUHIKO MATSUZAKI! Daisuke is your three time GUTS World champion and he has had really good matches with Yoshino and Mr Gannesukke that I've seen, but I don't know him in this kind of setting. Daisuke beat rookie Kazuki Kikuta on a Big Japan opening match and was part of the winning team of the twenty man falls count any where match just last November! Two wins in Big Japan in one day! He is the king of the Big Japan undercards OUTSIDERS~! Six days prior to this, he was in one of those horrendous New FMW tornado street fights. I assume it went something like this:

Onita: Hey man. Bear Fukuda has to close Saturday night so he can't make the match. Can you fill in?

Daisuke: I don't know, man. I'd have to catch like four buses to get there. Sheila has the car and she n Tiffany are going to the movies.

Onita: You can't just drop her off.

Daisuke: Fuck no, man. I don't go near that Tiffany bitch. You remember last time...

Onita: Oh yeah. What the fuck is that girl's damage?

Daisuke: No shit.

Onita: Why does Sheila even talk to her?

Daisuke: She's best friends with Sheila's cousin or some shit. But yeah, fuck that bitch.

Onita: Hey, actually, let me call Takaya Shibayama. He's picking up HASEGAWA in his tow truck and is driving right past your street. I'll have him pick you up.

Daisuke: Okay. But Soosh, I'm the fucking three time GUTS World heavyweight champion. I'm not riding bitch and I get to be on your team.

Onita: You got it. Thanks Sook.

Daisuke: It'll kick fuckin ass.

Orihara isn't as methy and repulsive looking as he looked in his heyday. I'm guessing he started a auto detailing business or something. Oh who oh who is the Masked Mystery? They just start tornado match brawling all over the place. Kazuhiko Matsuzaki is very much not anything having to do with Shuji Ishikawa in any way. My disappointment returns but now it is after we had WIPED THE SLATE CLEAN! They keep double teaming Daisuke as this morphs into a regular tag match. These Tonpachi Macine Guns are a far more ring-worm-y and grimy version of the Tonpachi Machine Guns but they do have a certain charm- as they hit their fairly elaborate triple team spots pretty well. Masked Mystery CLEANS HOUSE~! with like 15 consecutive body slams. He doesn't tower over anyone and is of perfectly fine build, so I don't know why he is the VADER of the face tag team. GUTS World Pro Wrestling, by the third day of the review of this card, it is better to stop asking so many questions and plow forward to the end. AMIRIGHT? AMIRIGHT?!?! I think the break out 37 year old in this match is Ryan Upin. He's scrawny and seedy and makes really great creepy faces when he is feeling the surge of heelishness wash over him as he springboards off Amigo's back onto the face of Masked Mystery! Then they take it to the floor and they go up into the bleachers, and you finally get to see that GUTS World had a pretty turn out for this little foray into grappling. The brawling itself is pretty shitty. Nobody bleeds or goes through a table or flies through a section of empty chairs or takes the good-lookin technico and takes him right up to the pretty girls who are in love with him and punches him dead in the face like LA Park would do. But it doesn't last all that long and they return to a straight up 6 man. The TMGs do evil heel triple teams after the ref is distracted but they really don't do anything particularly violent or memorably evil. Masked Mystery TRANSFORMS from the Vader of the faces to the Ricky Morton of the faces, as he accepts the heel triple team lowgrade beatdown. Ryan Upin is the only one whose section fills him with evil delight. He is the keeper as he is a weasly little bastard that you really want to punch in the face. He also bumps like a KING for Matsuzaki's scotch-laden 70's offence. Upin is at his pinnacle when relishing the pain as he rakes Daisuke's eyes. Daisuke is the best face, rolling around the ring and being all righteously

enraged and fired up! They drag Amigo to the corner and he will pay the price! Masked Mystery does a particularly nasty kneedrop but the rest of the face team offense is a series sleepers. This isn't really the Rock n Roll Xpress. Daisuke starts beating on Amigo and has some really nice offense and sells out for the missed Frog Splash to get the evil back in the driver's seat. Amigo is on my good side now because his first move on offense is the Ron Simmons' Catapult Of The Throat To The Bottom Rope. Daisuke sells it like his throat has been catapulted into the bottom rope. Orihara tags in and lariat's Daisuke into Strong Style mode- as each lariat fills him with rage and FIGHTING SPIRIT! Orihara, being Orihara, kicks him directly in the testicles and we all weep at the EVIL and the HILARITY. But mostly the EVIL! This sets up the Orihara Falcon Arrow and the Orihara Tombstone to allow Upin to fly off the toprope with a knee and then the Amigo lands the toprope headbutt. BUT Daisuke shows the world that you can stomp his balls, you can falcon arrow his neck, you can tombstone his neck, you can kick him with your shin from the toprope, you can drop your head onto his shoulder from and top rope and he will still find the fighting spirit to kick out at two! Orihara sets Daisuke up on the top turnbuckle and rakes his eyes because Orihara is awesome and a dick. Matsuzaki rescues Daisuke and Daisuke lands a toprope Missile Dropkick for the nearfall. Daisuke hits a Falcon Arrow- the second of the match! Two weeks ago in 2016! Masked Mystery drops his shin across Orihara's face from the top turnbuckle and Orihara sells it like he is Dracula and the shin is sunlight. Daisuke takes too much time getting his Fighting Spirit fired up enough to finally kill Orihara with his Roaring Elbow, THUS allowing Upin to grab his ankles from the floor when he hits the ropes and drag him to the floor. Amigo goes for the mystery mask! The ref looks perplexed! Daisuke comes back in the ring, now TASTING HIS OWN BLOOD! YES! WE HAVE BLOOD! Daisuke hits a running elbow and struggles to the top turnbuckle only to be swarmed by EVIL and allowing Orihara to hit a TRULY nasty Spider Suplex into a LEGIT IN-RING ORIHARA MOONSAULT! For the win. I love Daisuke because he is such a righteous, fired-up babyface who truly hates cheaters like these Tonpachi punks, but Orihara was the star of this. His ease of performing evil is unmatched here. Upin as his creepy little toady makes this a fun version of the Tonpachi Machine Guns. You probably don't want to actually spend any of your time watching this match but you will probably want to watch Orihara versus Daisuke if they get around to doing that. And Ryan Upin is awesome.

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WWE IN YOUR HOUSE: A COLD DAY IN HELL (May 11, 1997)

(by PHIL RIPPA)

We have pay for play policy here at the Death Valley Driver Video Review. Generously donate to keep our little dingy afloat and we will review something of your choosing. For the second time, Dolfan gave us some wonderful, hard earned US currency (some of you may recall my review of WrestleMania XX (DVDVR #173) – that was his doing.) He dips back into the WWF PPV back catalog with the request of one of the In Your House mini-PPVs. I knocked this out in one sitting while reconciling with the fact that I have become a wrestling writing whore.

This event took place on May 11, 1997 which as the fates would have was one of the Top 5 most important moments in my life as I graduated from American University with my amazingly worthless degree in Communications (Print Journalism concentration). So as I celebrated a family meal in Georgetown, contemplating that I had no job and would probably be forever alone, 90 miles to the South this was taking place in Dean's backyard.

This event took place in that middle space after WrestleMania 13 and SummerSlam 97. It was during that time when basically everything was built around Steve Austin and Bret Hart with Undertaker rotating in and out of it since he was champ. And because of this – everything else sucks.

FLASH FUNK vs. HUNTER HEARST HELMSLEY

Oh 2 Cold Scorpio. How I wished you had gone to WCW instead of the WWF. (How I also wish you didn't love drugs.) Between Funk high stepping (and wrestling) in those ridiculous knee high boots (which let's be honest were 20 years ahead of their time. I mean Naomi wrestling in them today would be amazing.) and the early days of Chyna, prepare yourself for lots of subtle racism from Jim Ross ("Funk has 6 kids at home he has to feed!") and not so subtle misogyny from Jerry Lawler (in regards to Chyna "Boxers or Briefs?"). This is a perfectly acceptable match done with the express purpose of getting Chyna over (well HHH too but the main focus was Chyna). My man Scorpio still manages to bust out some stuff that makes you dream of the days of when the man could step to school with the kids. At one point he does a middle rope transition dive to the floor that I was sitting going "Quick! Someone send the tape to Aero Star so he can steal it!" Still, poor poor Funk has to look like a dope as first he takes a comically long time climbing to the top rope just so he can take a quasi belly to back suplex to set up the Pedigree. Then Chyna then crotches him on the top rope, clearly so there won't be a seventh kid to feed. Right JR?

Oh I should mention now that the running theme for the show is that the Hart Foundation bought five front seats from a scalper and it was just a matter of time before they showed up. And by "five front seats" I mean five folding chairs that the event staff didn't even feel assed to set-up yet.

MANKIND vs. ROCKY MAIVIA

Turns out – based on my own recollection and the internet confirms – is the first Rock/Foley match. Here Blue Chipper Rocky Maivia is starting to sow the seeds of his heel turn (he had just dropped the IC title to Owen Hart weeks earlier and then gets snarky with Todd Pettengill in a pre-match interview. Of course – being snarky to Todd Pettengill is a face move to me.

Very basic match which was a lot of "Hey Rocky knows how to do this move!". The lone highlight is Maivia giving Mankind the move that would become the Rock Bottom on the metal ramp way. The entire match is based on giving Maivia a lot since he ends up dropping the fall. And in that sense – it is perfect for Mankind as he is still in that period of time where he could bump big and make everything the other guy does look deadly. Finish comes with Rocky doing the crossbody off the top rope which Mankind rolls through on and applies the Mandible Claw for the submission. I will never watch this again but it wasn't offensive or anything. Heck – it might be the best part during those early overpushed Polynesian days of the Rock.

AHMED JOHNSON vs. NATION OF DOMINATION – Gauntlet Match

Someone in their infinite wisdom – decided to book Ahmed Johnson is basically three matches. The gimmick of the match is that if Ahmed can beat Crush and then Savio Vega and then Faarooq – the Nation of Domination will disband. These were the giant membership Nation of Domination days where it was like the size of the Bullet Club after Wrestle Kingdom 9 complete with JC Ice and Wolfie D rapping to the ring.

Before the match begins – Gorilla Monsoon ambles down and demands all of the Nation of Domination leave the ring side area. Of course, since Gorilla is terrible at his job, they only relocate to the top of the stage (right outside the House).

Ahmed vs. Crush is a crime against your eyes. It goes over five minutes which feels like 15. Ahmed is blown up within two. The portion against Savio is better but that is just because Savio just decides to get himself DQed by waffling Ahmed multiple times with a chair. Why not have Crush do the same thing to?

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Faarooq strolls on down because Ahmed will be easy pickings and our long national nightmare (clocking in at over 10 minutes now) will be over. Oh you so crazy. Because there is still plenty of time for Ahmed to inexplicably Hulk up, hit the Pearl River Plunge and then sorta kinda injury himself. (Think the ridiculous way Sasha Banks knocked herself out on her own sunset flip.) Anyway – Faarooq kicks out at two and then hits the Dominator for the win. Maybe a few less ear rings and a few more jumping jacks there Tony.

KEN SHAMROCK vs. VADER – No Holds Barred (Win by Submission or Knockout)

After lamenting what a waste Flash Funk was in the WWE, this show doubles down by also having Vader on it who is not only a bigger favorite of my all time over 2 Cold Scorpio (who I love dearly) but also had a much more frustrating WWF career (and this is coming from someone – the only one – who enjoyed Vader’s time working for Vince McMahon.)

This impending disaster is thanks to the WWF suddenly being all LET’S HOP ON THE MMA TRAIN! THE UFC IS OUR FRIEND PROMOTE THEIR PPV!!! WWF BABY!!! That means putting in Ken Shamrock in the ring with the only person who could quasi reasonably do a work shoot in Vader. So – yes it is as much of a train wreck as you would expect it to be for 75% of the time. The arbitrarily use rope breaks and Vader goes to the outside A LOT. If you ever wondered what a Larry Zbysko UFC fight might look like – wonder no more. It would have also helped if they had established at some point in the proceeding weeks that Vader knew submissions. But hey – it was more important to have Vader and Mankind keep jumping Shamrock. Though, Shamrock is as dumb as a bag of rocks so he keeps putting himself in situations to get jump. I can’t really fault Vader for taking advantage of opportunities put in front of him.

Anyway – out of nowhere the match suddenly becomes hella fun as Shamrock takes an INSANE bump to the floor. (It was kinda like Vader gave him a front face suplex over the top rope but honestly it was more Vader seeing how far he could chuck Shamrock.) Then Vader just starts blasting the hell out of Shamrock and I no longer am upset by watching this. And then in the awesome yet comical stupid part – they use a missed Vader moonsault as a transition... well it SHOULD have been a missed moonsault by Shamrock is slow and takes all of Vader’s weight on his head. Vader then ANNIHALATES Shamrock with a clothesline which was aces and then Shamrock is magically healed and turns it into the ankle lock for the win and that wasn’t aces.

UNDERTAKER vs. STEVE AUSTIN – WWF HEAVYWEIGHT TITLE

Hey! The Hart Foundation finally shows up. I am shocked – SHOCKED! – by this development. Of course – just to make sure everything still looks stupid, they come in via the normal wrestler entrance and lollygag down to their seats. So apparently – the scalpers also sold them backstage passes.

At the time – this match was probably magical – but the ravages of time (and my own biases) have not been kind to it. This is Teardrop Taker which might be the worst of all the Taker's. And he and Austin decide that since they really don't have much of a reason to hate each other – they are just going to work over each other's knees. I am not certain if they know the rules of the previous match no longer apply.

The big build of the match is to Austin hitting the Stunner but Brian Pillman runs over and rings the timekeeper's bell (pretty good security Richmond Coliseum). So Austin gets his visual pin while Earl Hebner yells at Pillman. We then trade blatant low blows right in front of the ref – all done just so Earl Fucking Hebner can get his shine because GOD FUCKING FORBID EARL HEBNER ISN'T MADE TO LOOK GOOD IN THE MAIN EVENT OF A GOD DAMN FUCKING WRESTLING PPV!!!! Grr... Austin and Taker do multiple reverses on the Tombstone before Taker hits a nasty version to which my wife goes "I am surprised Austin didn't break his neck." To which my only response could be "Well...." (And side tangent – Austin did no one any fucking favors for how low his fucking head used to be on the Tombstone. It is one thing when Owen did it but Taker is WAY taller than Owen and yet Austin still manages to have his bald dome below his knees. Way to lower the margin of error.)

Hart Foundation hits the ring. Austin knocks Bret Hart out of his wheelchair and uses his crutch to hit people and those one of the better Monday Night Raws that they tricked people into paying PPV prices for ends.

Man... not only am I a wrestling writing whore. I am a cheap one at that.

~!~

BIG JAPAN PRO WRESTLING (1/24/2016)

(by DEAN RASMUSSEN)

ATSUSHI AOKI/ DAISUKE SEKIMOTO vs DAICHI HASHIMOTO/ KAZUKI HASHIMOTO

This is the new thing Big Japan is doing these days- taking three guys you know and inserting a third guy you vaguely know about but you aren't really sure. I know I've seen Aoki wrestle before in NOAH but I have no earthly idea who he is if you just put the name up there. Ah NOAH, how I have skipped over so much of you. As I gaze at Aoki's cagematch.net profile, I note that he has wrestled all over the world and in every major promotion in Japan- including 30ish matches in New Japan, 300 in All Japan and 700 in NOAH- but this his first year ever to wrestle in Big Japan. I assume this is from the eternal collapse of All Japan. Daichi Hashimoto moves one pound closer to Total Shinya every week, and I must say that it is very thrilling to watch. For those new to the world of Japanese wrestling, Kazuki Hashimoto and Daisuke Sekimoto are Big Japan Strong Style guys who will beat the living dogshit out of you. I am excited. Let's watch. Pre-match Aoki and Sekimoto talk about things and then I wonder if Cagematch.net could develop a way to cross-reference wrestlers, because Sekimoto wrestles 170 times a year, for any promotion on earth that will provide his guarantee, transportation and a raw deli platter- so the odds are good that if this tag team has 4,000ish matches between them, they had to have carpooled together to one of those Real Japan cards at some point and maybe, just maybe, became friends. But actually, if they were friends, it seems like Sekimoto would hook him up with more BJPW gigs, as Big Japan draws actual people while All Japan draws whoever is still working overtime at the particular warehouse they are running that day. But I really digress. Aoki and Kazuki Hashimoto start off the proceedings punching

each other in the face. Man, don't tell me I have back and watch 3,000 Atsushi Aoki matches. Aoki does a fun stunned face when you elbow him in the face. After 15 seconds in with Daichi Hashimoto, he kind of stumbles into his corner with a "I'm too old for this stuff" face and Sekimoto tags in and Aoki rolls out the ring to the floor (possibly to get in his car and go home. Which would be hilarious. ((But he doesn't really- Dean after watching the whole match.))) Sekimoto and Daichi trade armbars and wristlocks and sleepers and shoulderblocks as they build up to the Strong Style aspects of the match- which would naturally lead to a Greco-Roman fingerlock into both of them beating the hell out of each other. Sekimoto succumbs to the beating and thus takes full brunt and fury of Team Yamato in all of its majestic kickiness. Aoki stands on the apron watching the leather fly, saying, "Better you than me. I got 13 matches in 13 garages next week." Aoki tags and slaps Kazuki a few times and hits a DDT and tags out. I'm digging the cameo aspect of Aoki's part in this. "Hey man, you work here I'm just visiting. I'm not gonna get all up your business." Sekimoto and Kazuki pulverize each other with chops and forearms and they get progressively more spectacular until Kazuki lands a lariat and tags in Daichi to give Sekimoto the full measure of his manly offense. Aoki is on the apron, "I'm right here for you, buddy" as Daichi kicks Sekimoto's Adam's Apple out of the back of his neck. After several more assorted kicks, Sekimoto tries to TRANSITION to offence with an Argentinian backbreak but Daichi counters into a sleeper that causes Daisuke Sekimoto to FEEL the VIBRATIONS of the Spirit of Nelson Royal as he hits the picture perfect Atomic Drop. Daichi Hashimoto feels the GLOW of POSSESSION as the spirit of Dick Murdock takes over and he does the "OW! MY HINEY!" fit on the mat. It's pretty great and a fabulously strange foray out of Strong Style. Aoki clocks in and gets in a really nice one footed dropkick and then does the same as Daichi is sitting up on the mat. Daichi counters a suplex attempt with a DDT and tags in Kazuki who kicks Aoki in the face and then brainbusts the visitor. Double Hashimotos then take turns kicking him until Sekimoto makes the save with a Spear and truly monstrous EXPLOIDER Suplex. Aoki tries to seal the deal by hitting as much as he can on Kazuki- Missile Dropkick, a QUALITY Dangerous Backdrop. Kazuki fires back with kicks and Aoki does the old man headbutt after a kick to Kazuki Hashimoto's face. Kazuki then fucking lays a kick directly and deeply into Aoki's teeth and then hits a TOTAL Daisuke Ikeda-level Death Valley Bomb to just fucking crush Aoki for the win. Jesus, Aoki takes a break from Akebono landing on him and SUWAMA lariating his skull into the forklift over there just to take the nastiest finisher in Big Japan Strong Style history. Aoki, you are my new boy. Yeah, you should watch this.

HIDEYOSHI KAMITANI/ KOHEI SATO/ SHUJI ISHIKAWA vs HIDEKI SUZUKI/ SEIYA SANADA/ YOSHIHISA UTO

When I first saw the line-up for this match I thought to myself, "Why are doing the Japanese equivalent of the SST and the Samoan Savage against the Ding-Dongs and Lee Scott? I'm against it. I'm just confused" Then I started watching the match and realized that Hideki Suzuki is that Wrestle-1 guy who is actually the ZERO-1 champ- thus the reason he and Kohei Sato are in the same match. But yeah, wee Sanada and Uto the Rookie are there to be beaten to a pulp. Which I can get behind. This ain't no Sunday school. Sanada has a fancy outfit, like he should one of those ROH tagteams that wrestle for the New Japan Junior Tag Titles and who bounce off the second rope for every move. Kamitani tries to SHOWBOAT the Big Japan Strong tag title to deflect from the fact that the Twin Towers really do tower over everybody else in the ring. He also seems delighted that he isn't receiving end of a Kohei Sato ass-beating. Uto, not so lucky. Sanada and Kamitani start the match- and one would assume that Sanada will try to WRESTLE wrestle Kamitani for as long as possible, staying away from Kohei Sat and Shuji Ishikawa and thus feeding his teammates to the alligators so he can live longer and wake the next day with far

less wiggly teeth. Suzuki is the Z-1 champ from W-1 so he and Sato go all Shoot Style in this Strong Style-branded match, with Suzuki trying to procure as many Volk Han-isms as he can. Sato fights out them and they do the shoot style lounging kneebars routine. Sato stomps the ham string and they officially start beating on each other until Suzuki hilariously tags in Uto. Uto visually conveys "What... what WHAT?" as Kohei Sato welcomes him to the world by laughing at his headbutts and front chancellorys him to tag Shuji Ishikawa- Japan's Greatest Living Crowbar. Uto does a few seconds of attempted armwringing- as if to say, "YEAH! That'll work! We'll do an armwringer and that way he w..." Ishikawa crushes his face with a forearm. Uto tries to put on his big boy pant and FIRES BACK! Ishikawa crushes his face with a forearm. Kamitani tags in and Uto takes a far more reasonable Big Japan Strong Style ass-beating. Then Kohei Sato tags back in and Uto's desperate forays into FIGHTING SPIRIT are met with indifferent crushing kicks to the chest. And then Ishikawa tags in and mercifully merely rips Uto vertebra apart slightly with a half crab. Kamitani hits him with several dozen shoulders in the corner to set-up a JUDO FLIP for two! Uto has the hilarious look on his face of a man arguing with a lady at the DMV as Kohei Sato tags in and Uto tries to somehow kill the giant grizzly bear with his switches of chops to he chest. Kohei the grizzly doesn't die, but he does begin the just fucking endless assbeating that Uto contines to absorb. Kamitani comes off the toprope to accentuate the Inverted Falcon Arrow that Kohei lands; and Kamitani has the look on his face of absolute glee of being on the Twins Towers tagteam and getting to just throw in little things after they have fucking destroyed an opponent. It's like being the placekicker for 1985 Bears. Uto kicks out and Kohei is amazed at the rookie's toughness/stupidity. Suzuki tags in after Uto gets in a forearm and it's back to a regular wrestling match. Jesus. Ishikawa just fucking CRUSHES Suzuki's face with a forearm to set up a wad of Twin Towers power moves until Suzuki dropkicks to tag in Sanada who picks up on the dropkick theme by hitting a lot of dropkicks on Ishikawa. It's as if to say, "I'm 32 and a veteran. They can't just beat me to a pulp because I'm 150 pounds! MY OFFENSE! IT SUCKS! SO WHAT!?" Sanada goes for a German and they spin around until Sanada procures the Octopus hold- then everybody gets Held By The Octopus! Sanada does the hilarious thing of remembering that this is a Strong Style so he just tries to trade forearms with Shuji Ishikawa. You laugh. I laugh. Everyone laughs. Except Sanada. Sanada gets crushed by a forearm. But he does trade a couple and gets in a dropkick to the knee that he probably should have opened with. Kamitani tags and decides that he should prove his worth by mauling the fresh guy like the Towers mauled Uto, starting with a RW Hawk Shoulder block off the top rope. Sanada fights off the Dangerous Backdrop and hits a rana to allow him to tag UTO~! So I think we all know where this is heading. Uto hits a high knee and leg drop and then a really good brainbuster for two. They triple team Kamitani with Suzuki hitting a sweet backbreaker to set up Uto's Guillotine Legdrop! Not the awesome onee with a forward flip but still a Guillotine for two. Then an ACTUAL Lariat for two! Kamitani hits a shoulderblock after ducking a second lariat. The Twin Towers come in a beat the fuck out of Uto for a minute to set-up Kamitani's Nodowa. KAmitani does the magnificent EVEREST Backdrop for the win! Your big winner... UTO! For the sweet batch of finishers at the end. And Sanada for not coming off as a wuss and for instigating a "trading of elbows to the face" section with a guy who will knock all your teeth out. Postmatch, Shuji Ishikawa and Hideki Suzuki call each other pussies and I'm a-hoping they settle it in a Z-1 ring that is captured and uploaded to the internet. Very fun. You should watch.

YUJI OKABAYASHI vs. RYOTA HAMA

(Trivial excuses you can skip over, if you wanna. I was going to review this Monday but we had a bit of snow so I was actually home annoying my wife and children! "Hey kids, let's listen to punk rock from

1980! You won't hate it all! I loved it when my grandma forced me to watch Lawrence Welk! You are the only people under the age of 45 who have now listened to the entire first Jim Carroll Band record! You don't have to thank me! I AM AWESOME DAD!" And then my home laptop crapped out and I didn't want to write it on a Nook or Kindle because it's hard enough to read this when I have full access to a keyboard. So here we are.)

Hama in Big Japan has been a giant wad of fat fun. Having a big fat guy in your Strong Style Division makes your need for "Strong" to be more developed in your style. Hama is a real heavyweight- being that he weights 451 pounds (according to cagematch.net) That's a legit MANLY wad of fat and as we say in the Rasmussen Household, "You can't fake fat." And Hama is really good at thundering down upon lesser-density beings and crushing them unmercifully. All of his offense looks good because every time he lands on someone you notice that he is GIGANTICALLY fat. The king of Big Japan Strong Style Division is my fave wrestler, Yuji Okabayashi. The story of the match is so simple and thus so beautiful- is Okabayashi strong enough to have the offense to hurt this really fat monster? And is Okabayashi tough enough to get back up after being continually being splatter by be-nakeded ass cheeks of this giant ball of FAT? Luckily, they don't cute with it. This is just Hama fucking killing Okabayashi and Okabayashi showing his supreme fighting spirit and desire to keep the belt and firing back with his own hellish, ungodly offense and whatnot. So yeah, I love the fuck out of this match. Let's delve deeper by going to the tape. Hama has really thick black puka beads. I assume he did some surfing before clocking in over 300 pounds. I refuse to research this assumption. He also has giants boobs! Okabayashi has the look of a man who has come to grips with the fact that the fat guy in front of him is going smash his fat into him and onto him a lot. They lock up and Hama has the subtle facial expressions of "you gotta be kidding, little man". And breaks clean AS A WARNING! They do it again but Yuji Okabayashi chops across the chest AND. IT. IS. ON. Hama is pissed and is enraged as he overpowers the champ while in a Greco-Roman knucklelock. Yuji kicks him in the breadbasket to escape the knucklelock and goes back to Shoulder Blocks- that starts to look like a crazy man trying to lariat a giant block of Golden Corral customers. Hama is very fat; there is no give. I'm sure Hama was crying real big boy tears on the inside- because, sure, its easy to no-sell some chops, but Yuji Okabatashi is fucking laying them in, but Hama has to stand there and NOT go, "HOLY FUCK, MY CHEST! I'M DYING!!" until he can actually sell them later in the match when Okabayashi gets him off his feet. There is a logic to the Fatman match and that is rule #1. Yuji tries a lariat and loses. The price you pay is whole bunch of fatness behind an elbow drop crushing you. Man, Hama does not give a shit. You get the full measure of his girthiness when he hits an Elbow Drop. It can do nothing else but suck. Hama loses chicks to the likes of these pretty boys of the Strong Style Division. He probably loses the crazy, daddy-issues chicks to the death match guys. FEEL HIS PSYCHOSEXUAL REVENGE IN EVERY ELBOW DROP, FAUNTLEROY. Yuji sells it with one eye closed, like Hama transferred a stroke to him. He looks over to his second, Sekimoto, and says, "Do you smell toast?" Okabayashi is the best. Hama hits the fatboy headbutts and the unstoppable clubbing forearms and then stands with full be-fatness on the Okabayashi giblets. Yuji makes a face like he should have focused on crunchers more when training for this. Hama throws him into the corner and crushes him with his butt a few times, as Okabayashi tries to chop to escape! But his normal offense where he crushes the chests of assorted Hideyoshi Kamitanis and Yoshihisa Utos of the Big Japan universe falls on deaf gigantic boobs. Hama answers by running and rolling over on him- making one watch in morbid fascination as to if Okabayashi's liver will fly out from the side of his stomach. Okabayashi tries more ineffectual chops and Hama response with contempt- as he lands a Alabama Jaw Jacker on Yuji, butt cheeks akimbo as he works his way back to tottering vertical base. Yuji gets to his feet with a "heh, beats

my pair of 3's" expression right before doing the thing that we used to laugh about when people tried to powerbomb Billy Kidman in every match! Hey! World! Don't try to sunset flip a man with the density of a quasar! Splatty flabby stinky collapsing on the face of Okabayashi later and we get to the point where Okabayashi figures out that he needs to really put the strong into the strong style and change tactics. Think of the failed Sunset Flip as a stinky stanky end of the first half and the adjustments are made at half time. Yuji makes a great face like he just inhaled a rendering plant through his nose. Hama has a face that says, "fuck this punk" and he goes for the win with a splash that Yuji starts the second half by rolling out of the way of! Hama is really gigantically fat- but the fat bites both ways! Yuji musters his fighting spirit, erases the horrible smell from his mind, and crushes Hama with a lariat in corner (as the first rule of the Fatman match was been satisfied. The fat man has hit the mat and thus must now sell.) Three lariats into the corner later and Yuji is bouncing Hama's blubber around like a soccer ball! He goes for the pin and gets two, but it starts to sink in that he HAS to get Hama off his feet. His first idea is probably not his best idea- as he tries to Argentinianly break the back of a guy bigger than a industrial refrigerator. He also cannot body slam him, but he does get him up enough to get him off his feet before landing underneath him. Thus allowing our fat man to pay homage to Rikishi and hike up his tiny pants, do a little butt cheek dance, and crush all that is godly out of the face of a fellow human being. Hama DDTs for the glamour pose win- but Yuji kicks out! Yuji chops in defiance but Hama crushes him with giant ham-like forearms and crushes his skull with headbutts before hitting the AWESOME World's Fattest Crossbody in the history wrestling! Flab smashes Okabayashi to the mat for like the SIXTH time in this match. Yuji kicks out again and you don't doubt the psychology because you saw a really fat man crush him with fatness. That's a fucking SHOOT. All you can do is buy it. Thus the superiority of fat guys wrestling. And he crushes him again and AGAIN just to seal it. But Yuji fights out and gets clubbingly forearmed to the floor. Hama goes up for the most hellish avalanche that Japan wrestling can muster at this moment, but Yuji charges into the side of beef that Hama calls his giant ass and lariats it and Powerbombs Hama off the second rope! Okabayashi seeing that he only has one chance left, hits two Frogsplashes for the win after getting Hama over for Brainbuster and finally getting effectiveness out of his lariats. This is how you do a fat man match. It also helps to have a really athletic fatman, and Hama is game athletic fat man. I hope he hangs around Big Japan as their Strong Style monster for a while. I could see a future of fun matches.

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PRO WRESTLING HEAT UP (1/7/2016)

(by DEAN RASMUSSEN)

My new motivation: I typed out the matches so I might as well review them. Plus, I need some less great wrestling to even me out. I assume this will even the crap out of me. I am fascinated by Pro Wrestling Heat Up- mostly because I haven't watched enough of it to go, "P'ffffff! Not that shit again!" But YOU know that I have been wrong before. Let us explore the slimy underbelly of the slimy world of Japanese Indie Wrestling.

HIROSHI KONDO/ HIROSHI WATANABE vs FUMINORI ABE/ MASA TAKANASHI

Maaaaaaan, you want indie? YOU! I'm talking to YOU! You want indie? Well, this here is indie. Of these four guys, only Masa Takanashi has a cagematch.net profile. Do you know how nigh impossible that is? That's like finding an unbroken electronic device in my house. This is like finding three unbroken devices

with original cords attach to them. Hell, it would be easier to find a virgin at Radford University! (HA! We kid the slatternly ladies of Radford! FUN!) Takanashi is an Ultimo Dragon trainee because a UD trainee is as much a part of Japanese Indie Wrestling as the ropes and the ring and the 15 dollar pictures with Goro Tsurumi. I use Cagematch AGAINST ITSELF! and search for Kondo's name in the results and he has been wrestling for Heat Up since May 2014- so if you add up the opening matches in Union Pro, GUTS World, Freedoms, Asuka Project and Style-E matches, he's probably got a hundred matches under his belt. C'mon, ya German psychos! Get this man a profile! Mostly, so I can see which of these guys he is. I hope he is the shleppy bald guy who looks like he started working out at a gym where Kenichiro Arai worked out and eventually he ended up here, hopefully because of a fixed horse race wager gone awry. "You wrestle for 6 months for me for free or we take your pinky!" Takanashi looks like the second replacement rhythm guitar player for Church of Misery, except scrawnier. This match itself is really fun, actually. They don't do anything amazing or awesome but they hit everything well and you don't think that these were put on the card because their uncle owns the ring. Though I'm sure there is an indie story here somewhere. Takanashi is actually got some pretty nasty looking offense, in that he will lay it in, in a first match level that makes one wonder if he would be fun getting the hell beaten out of himself on a Big Japan strong style undercard tag match. He is really great at getting you to hate his smug little face five minutes after you see him for the first time ever, and that is rare and good in wrestling. I could see Kazuki Hashimoto getting fed up with him and slaughtering him with kicks to everyone in Japan's delight. Scrawny bald man is also fun as he gets in the Offence Of The Damned, posing in babyface glory before Abe and Takanashi beat him to death. Baldness does a sweet backbreaker hope spot and THEN HITS A FUCKING EVEREST GERMAN SUPLEX FOR THE WIN! So far, Pro Wrestling Heat Up is HEATING UP up my interest in watch more HEAT UP matches! Finest WCW Main Event opening match in the history of Japanese Indie Wrestling!

GENERAL TY YAMADA/ SUPER TAKESHIMA MACHINE 1/ SUPER TAKESHIMA MACHINE 2 vs MUSHUKO NO SEIKO/ MUSHUKU NO SEIKO/PSYCHO

This is odd in the most Dean Reviews Wrestling In Cycles kind of way. General Ty Yamada is Taro Yamada who will two weeks from this match be in a Indie-Fantastic match in GUTS World tagging with Yoshino against Mr Gannesukke and hilarious lummoX GUTS Ishijima. I reviewed it here: <http://deathvalleydr...suhiko-yoshino/> Relive the magic. Super Takeshima Machine 1 is Kenji Takeshima (cagematch.net) and the cagematch.net career feature shows that he is your usual indie shmoe until you notice the BattlARTS symbol and the fricking FU-TEN symbol. He was beaten to death by Masahi Takeda and Masato Shibata while tagging with Mohammed motherfucking Yone last May. So two components of this goofball indie match seem to have the makings of a good GUTS World tag title run. PSYCHO is also Gabaiji-Chan- the old man gimmick, which is amusing to you. The Seikos are doing a disfunctional married couple gimmick, it appears. PSYCHO is trying to keep the female Sekiko from going on a murder rampage through the crowd by tying a rope to her waist. The possibility that she is a tiny Japanese Lady Moondog is too intriguing to really entertain. She is unleashed and she attacks Takeshima and a tornado street fight breaks out. Yamada and PSYCHO have a perfectly fine 1997 IWA-Restart indie juniors match for a few moments while everything gets sorted out at ringside. Machine 2 picks up on the theme doing well-executed junior hvywt-isms as they settle into a regular 6 person match. The wee Moondog Girl tags in and really fucking lays it in on Machine 2- who has to force himself to not sell this because she is a tiny girl, but I assume little tears are being absorbed by his mask as he weeps like a baby. She does adorable and violent things while trying to get some offense in. The Heat Up crowd of drug dealers,

Yakuza hangers-on and the generally unemployable back her spunky energetic offense all the way and so will you. Machine 2 is freaked out from receiving the babyface armdrags and hiptosses so much that he bails from the ring. His partners come over to him and huddle up and spin around in a circle to confuse the ref! Though none of the three are dressed alike. That's some idiocy I can get behind. Then it degenerates to comedy without violence, and I can't stomach that in my Pro Wrestling. They were so close...

CHANGO vs AMIGO SUZUKI: Amigo Suzuki again! The GUTS World cross-over continues. Here he is up against fellow Ultimo Dragon trainee, CHANGO. Looking at CHANGO's cagematch.net career profile, I realize that I truly never watched a single Diamond Ring undercard. And I'm assuming he is definitely buying the house brand when goes grocery shopping if he is basing his career on the Style-E, GUTS World, and Secret Base checks that he is cashing. This is ladder match because indie wrestling is nothing if not retarded. There is no belt hanging down and the ladder is a 6 foot painters ladder. I guess in the Mathematics Of Wrestling, one ladder shot = 3 chair shots. Now that I think I grasp the ground rules, let's see if I will hate this or totally despise this, as I fucking hate ladder matches just out of general principle. They ignore the ladder early and have a perfectly acceptable mid-grade junior heavyweight match, with Lucha approximations that echo their TORYUMON background, but with the closed ladder now propped up in the corner to enhance the moves off the second rope- so that is good variation on the theme. Then they put ladder in the middle of the ring and do the unique thing of treating it like exploding barbed-wire, as Amigo fights out of hip toss onto the ladder and then fights out of a rana onto the ladder. Okay, I'm not hating this yet. And I commend them on another interesting variation on a trite and cliched concept. How long can it go on? Let's watch! Nobody establishes the dangerousness of the metal thing in the ring anymore so I dig that they try that here. CHANGO punches Amigo in the stomach a few times and finally snapmares him into the ladder which has laid on the ground and opened up like an "L". CHANGO tries slam the top (vertical section) of the ladder onto Amigo who is laying on horizontal section, but Amigo pushes back with his legs. Amigo is pushing back against CHANGO who is standing on the vertical part of the ladder, so Amigo is also driving his own back into the steps of the ladder that he laying on (which is another deathmatch idea- I falcon arrow you onto a barbed wire board because it will hurt me but it will hurt you more. Here in reverse, this will hurt my back but not as much as it would if I were not pushing back against you trying slam the section onto me), until he kicks high and fast enough to drive CHANGO off the top of the ladder and through the ropes. Okay, I'm still in this- as this is the third variation. Amigo lays the ladder out across the ring so that is now an extension ladder and no longer a step ladder. This is the first time that I have seen a ladder match where the really take into account the adjustable properties of the ladder. I have one at home that can go from Extension ladder (for cleaning gutters) to step ladder (for other people in my house to paint walls) to a step ladder (for when my tiny grandchildren will be needed to change a light bulb for me when I am too old and gigantic to leave my recliner). Let us together DREAM of the third variation. Yes, the dream.... Okay, they really threw every possible idea they had at this match as CHANGO twists the ladder around as Amigo is standing on it, catching Amigo's leg between the steps and causes the longest distance single leg takedown in the history of ladder matches. CHANGO then folds it back up to guillotine Amigo in the middle of it. CHANGO gets an assist by PSYCHO at ringside and they throw Amigo back in and CHANGO tries to procure the Camel Clutch and they do some wrestling away from the ladder (which is now in the Step Ladder position). Amigo drop toeholds across the ladder (step ladder position, folded up on the mat next to the ropes) to TRANSITION to offense to lead into a Three Amigos with the last suplex into the ladder (step ladder position, closed, standing against turnbuckle). Amigo wears the ladder like he

has GIANT ARMS! but CHANGO catches him and slams the base of the ladder to drive Amigo's chin into the step. They then stand in the middle of the ring it becomes a Strong Style Contest Of Manly Forearms. Chango holds up the ladder to his own chest to charge Amigo, but Amigo lariats over the ladder as they keep running at each other, finally winning- as FLESH beats STEEL! Amigo set up the ladder (step ladder position. Closed) across the corner top turnbuckle and hoists CHANGO to the top, with CHANGO's legs stuck between the steps, like he is wearing ladder pants. Amigo then hits a brainbuster where CHANGO's legs hit the mat while they are in the ladder, and that looked pretty great. Amigo puts the ladder across the second turnbuckle in the corner (step ladder position. Flat like a platform.) and hits a quebradora to set powerbombing CHANGO into the ladder, but CHANGO fights out and starts slamming the ladder into Amigo. CHANGO sets up the ladder (Standing Open Step Ladder position) and hits a Frog Splash FOR THE WIN! Ladder matches are like three way dances and handicap matches- inherently shitty. This is also shitty, but they try so hard to make it not shitty. There is an old saying down here in the South, "You can't polish a turd." But if you could, it would look like this ladder match. But it's really just too much of an uphill battle. We have to appreciate the effort, and I do. It sucks at a very high level.

KOTARO NASU/ SHINYA ISHIDA vs DAISUKE KANEHIRA/ KOJI IWAMOTO

Man, Kotaro Nasu is the indy-est guy in Japan. See [here](#). This year he has already wrestled in K-Dojo, this the beloved Heat-up and the super-skuzzy new FMW. Last year, it was K-Dojo, the super-skuzzy new FMW, DDT, Tenryu Project, frickin TOKYO GURENTAI!, the Asuka Project, STYLE-E, Kyushu Pro, fucking PRO WRESTLING SECRET BASE, Real Japan, Fu-Ten, REINA (which I thought was for girls!), INOKI GENOME!, Michinoku Pro and ZERO-1. Strangely, he hasn't wrestled in GUTS World in two years. He did get kicked in the face by Kazuki Hashimoto in Big Japan in 2013. He was a half of the Apache Pro Tag Champions in 2012. He's so indie, Steve Albini should record his promos. Meanwhile, SHINYA ISHIDA is so indie that he is bereft of a profile at Cagematch.net. He has been on almost every Heat-Up card since their second show on 2/16/2013, but just started capitalizing his names since February of 2014- because you will go crazy if you ask questions by this point. Koji Iwamoto has wrestled only 74 matches in 4 years- which is always odd for a Japanese guy. Ah, I was assuming he was a DNA guy but he was part of the even more confusing DDT subgroup, Basara. Kanehira has been wrestling in Heat-Up since February of 2014, possibly causing ISHIDA to break his caplocks. Enough of these chumps' back story. Let's see if they know how to make YOU give a crud about them in the ring. ISHIDA looks like ANOTHER bass-player for Church of Misery. Maybe Japanese goth guys just look like Japanese death metal bass players. Kanehira looks the best standing there- my favorite eternal saying from good egg Tim Noel. Kanehira and ISHIDA do some low-grade brawling round ringside and Nasu punches people hardest of the four but none of these guys are making me glad they didn't switch this with the first match. Nasu will lay it in and does look like he has just 300 matches under his belt- a couple matches in frickin' Fu-Ten. ISHIDA and Iwamoto mill about, hitting each as if they needed to save it up for the big TOKYO GURENTAI at the fishmonger warehouse later that week, or something, so you do all this weak looking stuff inches from the eyes of your paying customers. Hopefully, this heats up as we keep going. ISHIDA lays in a pretty good kick to the corner that Iwamoto leans into. They fiddle around a bit and THEN Nasu and Iwamoto start actually beating the life out of each other, so I hope this is one of those bad first impression dealies. ISHIDA ups his game with a really nice POWERDRIVER~! and is all aggressive and nasty with a rear naked choke into and out of a headlock and tries to make his punches look good. Iwamoto hits a dragonscrew and Nasu is into this now and makes it look fabulous spinning to the ground in agony. Kanehira tags in and it go twice fast and it is all dynamic and fun- one of the few matches that excite me

when they move away from brawling. Kanehira hits a swanky Brainbuster and maybe he is the one to watch out of these three. ISHIDA is perfectly fine in a third tier Dragon Gate kind of way. Kanehira has really good offense even with the little stuff- like a knee to the stomach, which looks far more painful than ISHIDA's far more elaborate offense. Kanehira makes an indie Falcon Arrow look good. He should wrestle more. Iwamoto does a Cattle Mutilation and this a cavalcade of 90s finishers. ISHIDA makes a tag out of DDT and Nasu brings a shoot style thing to the match and they double team Iwamoto with Nasu kicking him impressively in the throat. Kanehira tags in and hits fucking awesome judo flip. Fuck it, watch this for Kanehira. He is a tiny clinic on making yourself look good by making little things look good. Iwamoto hits some nice stuff but is cut off by ISHIDA and allows Nasu to hit a gigantic Backdrop Driver. Iwamoto and Nasu really beat the shit out of each other for some nearfalls and it is all a very good finish to an inconsistent match. Nasu finally kicks Iwamoto in the head enough to win. You could live without seeing this, though there is a lot of potential for future wrestling watachability. Postmatch, Masked Mystery attacks everyone and ties up Kanehira and carries him off. The reason for this? I could not possibly tell you. Then other people kick other people. Yeah, I know! It is so Heat Up-esque.

I was going to conveniently forget to review the main event of the Pro Wrestling Heat Up card I have been writing about for four days, but I manned up and stopped being a fucking pussy. FUCK IT! EVERYTHING REVIEWED IN ORDER! GRRR!

KAZUHIRO TAMURA vs KENICHIRO ARAI

The main event! Looking at his cagematch.net career page, one notes that Kenichiro Arai averages 70ish matches a year the last couple of years, but he's already wrestled 13 times this year- THUS this match is a part of the Kenichiro Arai career resurgence. I always liked him, as he was the no nonsense counter to a lot of the annoying nonsense that is Dragon Gate, back when I used to watch a lot of Dragon Gate. Meanwhile, Kazuhiro Tamura is the (SPOILER!) OWNER of Pro Wrestling Heat-Up. Looking at his career, I see that he started in STYLE-E and that he started in STYLE-E in 2004. How fucking long has STYLE-E been around, and if so, why did I not know about it until like 5 months ago? Ah, STYLE-E became inactive 2012. Pro Wrestling Heat-Up started in 2013. I am just guessing that Tamura owned STYLE-E- especially when one notices that the final main event for STYLE-E in 2012 was this very pairing. Anyway, Tamura was trained by Minoru Tanaka and Tanaka's lovely wife Yumi Fukawa- with an assist from Takao Omori. He is also teeny- 5'3" and 154 pounds. Can he wrestle? Let's see. Arai comes to ringside with the Murderer's Row of Japanese Indie shmoees whose matches I just reviewed but I no longer recognize. I think that one is ISHIDA. Probably. Arai is 5'9" so he towers over Tamura by a full head. Tamura is also stumpy and is even more stumpier after Arai hits a fucking BEAUTIFUL SURPRISE JUMPING PILEDRIVER before the bell rings. Arai posts him and Tamura leans into it like a champ. At ringside, that sleazy looking guy from the first or second match punches Tamura in the head while the guy that I first thought looked like the replacement bass-player for Church of Misery threatens to hit him in the head with a briefcase. (See prior reviews of this card. I DARE YOU!) Anyhoos, they throw wee Tamura into the ring and Arai does some low-grade stomping and also a clunky swinging neckbreaker so this isn't really rocketing up my match of the year list. Or even Match Of This Card list. Tamura catches Arai as Arai comes off the ropes and kicks him in the chest, so he does have nice kicks when he isn't being stomped on or CRAVATED~! by Arai. The CRAVATE~! here is pretty fucking magnificent and makes up for the pretty shitty offense by Arai past the piledriver. Then Arai procures the abdominal stretch and you THEN REALIZE that THIS is gonna go LONG. Indie long. They trade chops and kicks and Tamura has a perfectly fine offense and will lean into an assbeating so I'm guessing he started his own federation to never have

to wrestling on a Big Japan undercard or end up in Wrestle-1 in a Hama squash. Because he would be perfect for both of those things. Meanwhile, this really heats up as they start kicking each other in the face; Tamura hits a nice lariat. They do this thing where Tamura teases a tope but Arai grabs Wee Moondog Girl and hold her in front of himself. Tamura is a GENTLEMAN and doesn't tope through her to get to our Heat Up champion. The second time Arai uses her as a hostage, Wee Moondog Girl remembers that she is psychotically violent and starts beating on Arai, thus allowing Arai to be as crushed as much as a teeny tiny Tamura can crush someone with a tope suicida. They take it back to the ring and Tamura missile dropkicks in and then does a really nice series of arm submissions until Arai hits the ropes. Tamura kicks Arai really hard to the arm and now we have a story! The story: working on the arm to set-up an arm submission! The EVIL random punks from the undercard that are in Arai's Most Price Effective Stable climb the three turnbuckles where Arai isn't and Tamura is looking at all three with trepidation. Arai does the awesome thing of pushing the ref into Tamura's back, thus a surprised Tamura spin kicks the ref and allows the undercard to rush Tamura and beat a shit out of him. One would assume that Tamura told them that they were being paid in leftover chili dogs AFTER the match. They quadruple team Tamura and I remember that the guy with the mohawk is PSYCHO! Nasu and Iwamoto run in to make a save and I reviewed their match last night so I haven't forgotten them yet. Unless I have. The ref is back and they get back to a wrestling match, as they fight at the top turnbuckle which is actually pretty great- in that Tamura lays in his stumpy forearms until Arai RETURNS TO THE CRAVATE~! to control Tamura and land the fabulous Toprope Brainbuster With A Roll-up For Two. Tamura fights out of Arai finishing piledriver and finagles it into a Gorey Driver and they are all stumbly and broken. Tamura kicks Arai in the head as Arai tries to sit up and maybe I love this match. Arai crawls over and escapes to the floor where Tamura comes out to get him, THUS Arai gets to the ring first and gets in a bunch of roll-ups and thus does feel like a main event even if it is Pro Wrestling Heat Up. Tamura then does flamboyantly spinning DDT-like Fujiwara Armbar and then hits fucking NASTY toprope kneedrop to Arai's shoulder. Tamura spins like an alligator into a cross arm breaker and we have NEW TINY OWNER/CHAMPION! I can tell you that you should watch this and tell how pretty good this was but I really can't imagine anyone else watching it. But you should. Tamura is a not afraid to get beaten into your heart. Plus you could fit like 15 of him into a mini-van! You can't do that with Vince McMahon or Dixie Carter! HEAT UP! YES! HEAT UP!

~!~

DDT "DNA 13" (1/8/2016)

(by DEAN RASMUSSEN)

DNA is to DDT what NXT is to WWE. Except my son doesn't watch fifteen hours of DDT and NXT a week. Sometimes, these are really good. Other times not so much. This one does not have the actually perfectly fine Tigger Bed Scene, so this is totally for the furthering of the art of reviewing of pro wrestling. As "DNA" is to wrestling reviews what "drummer's solo record" is to music reviews.

DAI SUZUKI vs DAICHI KAZATO

It doesn't seem fair to expect much from a DNA opening match, but DDT itself posted this to the internet and decided this was a fair representation of the DNA roster. Plus I have reviewed the opening matches from GUTS World and Pro Wrestling Heat Up recently, and I don't remember either of those matches making me want to drive my mini-van off a bridge- so bring it, you punks. I'm taking the time

to watch you; you put in the effort to make me give a shit about you and your stupid burgeoning wrestling career. Checking the cagematch.net, Kazato has been wrestling for five years and wrestled for Pro Wrestling Heat Up five times last year. Shooter boy Kotaru Nasu beat on him for 15 minutes in September of last year, the last time Kazato made the PWHU scene. He was trained by Omori. This was his 98th match, which is kinda low for a fifth year guy. My guess is that he is now running a warehouse, after being forklift boy for three years- thus eating into to wrestling time. Dai Suzuki is a DDT rookie and this was his 27 match. This will be his year to get stomped to death by Kamitani and Hama in a Big Japan opening match, one would think. Pre-match they hug so I am already losing my love for this, the opening DNA match. They do some headlocks and wrist locks and they scream a lot. They trade lowgrade forearms and Kazato hits a mid-grade European uppercut. Kazato does a lot of pin attempts and hits a couple of Better Than Brian Lee elbow drops. Suzuki tries to chop back to offence but becomes victim of a very nice half crab. Suzuki simpers a lot before hitting the ropes. Suzuki climbs Kazato erotically from the floor into body slam position but Kazato sandbags him and uses a forearm to drive him to the mat. Kazato taunts his lack of fighting spirit. Suzuki lays the forearms in a bit, though they still suck- all to procure the AIRPLANE SPIN! I wasn't expecting that. Kazato hits a dropkick to TRANSITION~! back to offense, allowing him to enzuigiri and then hit a missile dropkick off the top. Suzuki catches a kick to the face but fires back with an oh so very rookie lariat and sinks in an Octopus Hold for a few seconds. Kazato hits a really average enzuigiri and then hits a lariat and a move that I didn't know the name of. THEN my son informs me that it was a Bray Wyatt's Sister Abigail. So there you go. Let us count the reasons I am glad to have seen this match:

- 1.) Airplane Spin
- 2.) Got to use a Brian Lee Had The Shittiest Elbow Drops joke.
- 3.) Me n my son bond over him knowing something about wrestling that I didn't.

So there you go. I can't imagine any reason for you, the gentle reader, to watch this match.

KOUKI IWASAKI vs MIZUKI WATASE

Cagematch.net says Kouki Iwasaki was trained by Kenichi Yamamoto of RINGS Network and Golden Cups fame so he must be shooty and whatnot. He was smart enough to tag with Yuji Okabayshi in his foray into Big Japan undercard matches in his initial year of wrestling last year, though Kamitani proly slapped him around a bit. Mizuki Watase was trained by that undercard guy that wears the YES t-shirt, Yasu Urano. Watase has had 15 matches, all in DDT, but the fella that trained him was beaten to death last year in a Big Japan undercard against one of my dream tag teams- Yuji Okabayashi and Yuji Hino. Experiencing the receiving end of Double Yuji is enough to pass on to your protege knowledge he should possess, so I have suddenly high hopes for this match. This is actually really fun. They beat each other up pretty good early and Watase shows his Yamamoto roots buy being a complete dick to Iwasake, throwing him over the top rope and suplexing him on the floor. Iwasaki sells it like a big baby, so maybe I'm digging him already at match number 12. Watase throws him into the ring and stomps on him like a little bitch. Iwasaki responds with rookie forearms that the just-past-rookie-status Watase answers with a headbutt of rookie hatred! I await the wedgie and the Texas Chili Bowl. Watase stands there and allows Iwasaki to show some fighting spirit before snap-maring him and kicking him in the back. Then a body slam and more stomping to allow Watase to throw several shoulders into the corner and also allowing him to make the I Do Not Approve Of This Rookie's Lack Of Fighting Spirit look that enrages Iwasaki who says, "Fuck you, dude. You started like LAST WEEK" and lays in some more spirited

forearms. Watase kicks him in the chest and goes for a pin, though he has more respect for the youth now. We have the perfunctory 2016 Half Crab- which I think I have seen in every match I've watched this year. For neither good nor bad. Iwasaki lays in some more forearms before missing a dropkick and taking same knees to the chest. Iwasaki says, "Fuck this, I tagged with Yuji Okabayashi once, I am awesome" and comes off the ropes to kill Watase with a... NO! Iwasaki hits the dropkick he missed earlier and he is AFLAME with fightingness! He hits Watase with a running forearm to the corner and then hits a series of running forearms that lead to a 2 count and a missile dropkick! Will the rookie beat the second year guy?!? An overly complex DDT! For Two! A Dragon Sleeper! Watase powers out into a suplex! Several roll-ups and Iwasaki is on fire! Unfortunately, Iwasaki steps into a Butterfly Suplex and then a legit Walls of Jericho and we see the end of a spirited little affair. Only watch this if you want to say three years from now, "Wow, Mizuki Watase has come really far since the first time I saw in some undercard indie match against that rookie that wrestles as a woman in DDT now."

GUANCHULO/ SHUNMA KATSUMATA vs YASO URANO/ SHIORI ASAH

Guanchulo is Chilean so I see that just about everybody we were digging in those stiff as fudge matches from Chile a few years ago have all developed actual careers in Japan. I might start crying as my chest fills with pride. We also used drive to Carolina to see all the OMEGA guys before they all became big stars. But yeah, Guanchulo has already wrestled 12 times this year according to the cagematch.net so lets hear it for scanning the globe for wrestlers to develop. Yasu Urano I've already blathered on about in a recent review. He wears a Yes t-shirt in solidarity with the Prog Rock nerds who get beaten up by the popular kids in high school; he should go the extra mile and wear a Tarkus t-shirt. Shiori Asahi is the guy who had the Memphis styled match with Yuji Hino that I reviewed, if you follow these things, and why wouldn't you? I'm fucking fascinating. So once again, he is 38 years old. Shunma Katsumata I've seen before but I didn't really pay enough attention to remember if I hated him or was just wasn't paying enough attention to figure out if I liked him. He was trained by HIS OPPONENT! Urano is the Jaguar Yokota of DDT! Urano picks his nose when his former student and Chilean offer their hands in sportsmanship. Guanchulo pulls his hand back makes a SHOOT~! facial expression of "What the fuck is your problem?". He spends a little time looking confused, like he ordered something off a menu he didn't speak the language of. SO the Chilean and the rookie are all spunky and the veterans are all sullen and broken, the way it should be. Asahi and Guanchulo do some perfectly fine chain wrestling early and tag out to let STUDENT wrestle MASTER! They do a lot of stuff really fast and Urano doesn't do the usual "I taught you everything you know but not everything I know" schtick and just kinda wrestles like he is just another wrestler- as if the general public doesn't know their SECRET RELATIONSHIP! Guanchulo and Shunma do lots of spunky dropkick based tagteam moves and they are a fun NWA US Tag title contender. Asahi tags in and a double team move goes wrong and Urano lariats him accidentally and Asahi does the great thing he did in the Yuji Hino match- wrestle like he REALLY hates wrestling but can't stop taking bookings for some secret horrifying reason. I really dig it. He did it with ass-stomper Hino but is now doing it with mere rookies. "Okay, your gimmick is that you are stuck in a dead-end job and that job is Indie undercard wrestler." They should do a match countdown where he has to win enough matches to pay his tuition for his on-line Phoenix University air conditioner repair certification. And thus he escapes this horrible business that has trapped him for 13 years. One must love when the art of pro wrestling sloshes into its viewers horrendous reality. Guanchulo chinlocks Asahi so Asahi can truly project his hatred for the pain inserted into his neck and inserted into his soul. Shunma tags in and dropkicks Asahi and he sells it like, "FUCK! This again!" And then another soul-devouring chinlock right

before the two youngsters, brimming with life and energy- runs at him whimsically on piggy back and bash into him in the corner. Asahi makes the greatest face, as if he is saying "WHAT FUCKING LEVEL OF HELL AM I IN?" Asahi is a truly our existential role model and you pray for him and his hatred of his life and all the people in it. They suplex him while on piggy back and Asahi kicks out because FUCK IT! WHAT ELSE IS HE GOING TO FUCKING DO? THIS IS ALL HE HAS. NO JOY. NO HAPPINESS. JUST THIS FUCKING WRESTLING MATCH. Guanchulo runs around him like he is one of those soccer playing airplane guys, all the while the despair on Asahi's face is like a fucking Bergman trilogy about God's hatred of man. It's like Asahi could just get up and get in his car and drive away but where would he go? He is wrestler. He hates wrestling. A manchild runs around him pretending to be an airplane while he is spiraling into the ground. Asahi throws forearms to the stomach but also forearms to the hope, forearms to the joy, forearms to the youth. Fuck these assholes, if he can't have it, nobody will- WELCOME TO THE FUCKING WALL THAT IS LIFE! He does his Cobra strike and almost makes the tag- a tag to allow Urano to destroy this hell that his owner partner has created to torment Asahi here at his lowest moment. But the Chilean punk grabs Asahi's leg and denies him whatever dignity he has left. Asahi remembers a move from when he was younger, where he would push his opponent into the air with his legs and kick him in the face on the way down. So he makes the tag. Finally, relief from the horror of this hell he has created from his life of one wrong decision after another. But of course, the referee didn't see the tag so God, youth and the state are out to crush him. And they are succeeding. Shunma runs in as Urano squabbles with the ref and they double team the husk of a man that is Asahi. Asahi does a standing switch and escapes a lariat and tags Urano as he watches the ref watch the tag. Urano slaughterizes the youth and Atomic Drops Guanchulo and is about to go for the pin- but instead decides that Asahi got off too easy by just getting the shit kicked out himself by boys half his age. So he tags Asahi's shoulder as he is looking away sitting on the apron in absolute existential terror. Asahi makes the awesome face, a face that says, "What the FUCK? Even YOU are against me?" He goes in and is completely confused. Guanchulo takes advantage and dropkicks him and they Toprope Diamond Cut Asahi and Urano blows the finish and then it completely falls apart. Like this match was destined to. Urano crushes Asahi's balls pretending to hold the ropes for him. Asahi charges at his erstwhile partner and flails unsuccessfully and we leave him at his absolute lowest ebb. BILLION JILLION STARS.

SHUJI ISHIKAWA/ ZEUS vs KAZUSADA HIGUCHI/ SUGURU MIYATAKE

I think I've seen maybe four Zeus matches in my life. I am going to the cagematch.net to look at his profile and see what there is to this tattooed man who may be on steroids or maybe really really really works out a lot. 5'11" and 231, he is a big fella for the lesser Japanese feds. Last year, he lost a match as a member of a mob that lost to Aja Kong in DDT. I guarantee you that I don't want to see that. Maybe Higuchi and Miyatake have less generic of a profile. Higuchi is a 27 year old rookie who is a former sumo wrestler though he doesn't look very rotund or long-haired. He wrestled amatch in Big Japan last year, but not against anybody who would beat him to the point of running scared back to the basho or anything. Jesus Christ, Miyatake is a 24 year old rookie who was not afraid to wrestle against fucking MURAKAMI and MINORU SUZUKI in Tokyo Gurentai in one match. He also wrestled Takayama a few months before that. So Miyatake is someone I haven't seen yet but who is already beaten to my heart. That's odd that this will be his 111th match and fucking Shuji Ishikawa will the THIRD stiffest guy he has ever been in the ring with, fourth if you count Takayama back when he was healthy. So this is shaping up to be more fun than I was planning on. Higuchi is 6'1" and thus Ishikawa only slightly towers over him. Higuchi looks good trading shoulder blocks with Ishikawa and is good exerting his size. Big Japan should

steal/borrow this guy for their Strong Style division. My hero Miyatake taunts Zeus before they even lock up by doing body building poses, so they have a pose down and a large contingent of DDT's core audience quickly masturbates furiously. Miyatake is less thick, tall and sturdy as his partner so Zeus gets off some power moves and tags in Ishikawa to stomp on him a bit. Miyatake fires back and looks fine- but he takes Ishikawa's offense like Curt Hennig in 1987 and thus show us his strength. He trades chops with Zeus and also sells them to make Zeus look like a true ass-beater. They beat on him a while, and he fires back enough for the crowd to get behind his babyfacedness as he struggles to escape the punishment of the veterans. He gets in a nice shoulderblock on Zeus and tags out, allowing Higuchi to be a really fun house of fire. DDT really needs to grab these guys, Guanchulo and Katsumata from the match prior to this one, Ryuichi Sekine and Saburo Inematsu plus Kazumi Kikuta and Toshiyuki Sakuda from the Big Japan match I reviewed from 2/18 and create a NWA US tag title division- something they haven't tried in the Japanese indies since Ikuto Hidaka and Minoru Fujita were the finest Rock and Roll Express to be in Japan in the late 90s. It would be fun. It's already making undercard matches that one would usually glaze over while watching, but instead actually being really fun. Imagine my delight at a match like this, where it has a guy I really dig, like Ishikawa here, and the match becomes a Southern tag match; instead of just a sadistic thrill of Zeus and Ishikawa beating the life out of two rookies. So Higuchi on offense is really fun because he stays aflame as he chops Zeus into the corner and brings a corner lariat like a BIG BOY! Zeus is awesome putting him over by reversing a snap suplex but immediately tagging out and hitting the floor to sell the damage. Yea Zeus! I like you because of that! Shuji Ishikawa crushes Higuchi in the corner while Miyatake scoffs at him- "MIRAKAMI! Fuckin MIRAKAMI!" Ishikawa does a running knee to the stomach. Miyatake says to himself, "Okay, yeah that looked like it hurt." Higuchi sells the knee to the stomach like Shuji Ishikawa ran full speed into your stomach with his knee. Ishikawa goes for the powerbomb but Higuchi powers out. Miyatake seems to puss out on the tag- which is awesome and understandable. Ishikawa responds by kicking Higuchi really hard in stomach. Higuchi and Ishikawa trade chops and forearms in the center of the ring and Big Japan REALLY needs to steal this guy. He does not look or wrestle like a rookie and he can bring the stiffness. Plus he has a nice dropkick. Miyatake finally opts to tag in after Higuchi gets Ishikawa off his feet, but Ishikawa responds by hitting Miyatake in the face harder than I think even Mirakami or Minoru Suzuki hit him in the face. It is some nastiness. Miyatake hits a really nice elbow flying off the second rope and they DOUBLE TEAM! Flying Elbows and Lariats in the corner to set up Higuchi's Overhand Powerbomb into a Miyatake frog splash! Miyatake hits the ropes to do another roaring elbow but Ishikawa knees him in the stomach to tag in Zeus who crushes him with a lariat in the corner and released belly-to-belly to set up the stereo, complete-wedgie chokeslam for the... Higuchi with the save! Ishikawa crushes Higuchi with a lariat sending him over the top rope. Miyatake gets some nearfalls but Zeus hits a manly lariat that would have finished it if Higuchi didn't make another save. As Zeus hits the chokeslam for the win, I note that this was really fucking good. Postmatch, Zeus offers his hand IN FRIENDSHIP! Miyatake seals his fate as a Wrestler That Dean Loves by smacking Zeus in the face. Zeus smiles. You smile. I smile. Wrestling has made us happy for a moment.

KOTA UMEDA vs KONOSUKE TAKESHITA

Man, remind me never to stretch reviewing a DNA card over several weeks. Maybe remind me to never review an entire DNA card. Whatever we do, me the writer and you the reader, please bear in mind that now that I have reached the final match of a card of a promotion I really don't care all that much about- and they ran a card fucking YESTERDAY so I will be tempted to make mistake number three, I will try to

not make this is the reviewing equivalent of the last few seasons of That 70's Show. Man, this match is like 20 minutes long. Oh what to do. I'll just keep writing, and that will get me rolling, and by the end we will have pro wrestling reviewing magic! Takeshita has a profile here (K. Takeshita) and it appears that he was in Big Japan last year (sorta) in a tag match I must have seen and possibly reviewed- tagging with Sekimoto against Kamitani and frickin Shigehiro Irie, so he is acquainted with laying it in at some point in his three years of wrestling. I'm assuming he was trained by Yes t-shirt boy. Umeda was trained by Kenichi Yamamoto who trained Iwasaki from up yonder (No need to read this: I've reviewed Iwasaki twice and though being trained by Yamamoto is an odd and interesting fact to those of us who actually watched UWFi and the New Japan invasion and RINGS Network and all of that, I COMPLETELY forgot that Iwasaki was trained by Yamamoto by the time I got to this card's review, which is both hilarious but also far more sad to everyone involved from every possible angle.) So yeah, cagematch.com lets us know that these two have taken an ass beating at some point in their burgeoning career, but can they translate this into YOU giving enough of a fuck for YOU to take the extra step and watch this match? Whatever, I gotta review this motherfucker so I'm already watching it, so you do what you always do- whatever you want. Wish me luck that this doesn't suck. Your main event! It seems like it's been three weeks. I was a little scared because these young guys in DNA tend to look alike, like WWE midcard guys, or teenage boys talking to my daughters. Takeshita noses ahead into my heart by writing his name on his pants. Umeda has the boss purple velvet pants. I'm at a loss. Coolness or convenience? I declare a tie and we will go with Who Throws Better Punches. They begin with matwork that they did while I wrote about pondering which had more useful pants to ME. They start kicking each other so let me start paying more attention. Actually, going back a bit, the pre-Kicking Each Other section is pretty good for a couple of young guys working a wristlock. Umeda works the knee too and elbow drives into it, so he wins with that. Ueda kicks are flourishing and dick-like, so I like that and leads him back to working the knee and he stomps the knee and then kicks the knee when Takeshita fires back with closed fist punches to the chest, which is another nice touch. Ueda kicks are getting nastier as we go along and I love his focus, he must break the knee, he must destroy the knee, with kicks and then back to the kneebar, THUS we have some bit of the wrestling psychology that makes the wrestling watchable. Takeshita sells the knee in the corner while fighting off Umeda with kicks to the face, only to collapse when Umeda sweeps the leg yet again. Umeda goes for a pin and Takeshita starts bringing the chops to respond to the knee spindling and it isn't Kawada vs Hashimoto or anything, but it is perfectly fine, as the transition to offense works within the wee framework they have established. Takeshita does the Walls Of Takeshita after Umeda fights off Takeshita's grasp by slugging him in the knee a few times. Umeda sells the back as Takeshita takes a moment to sell the knee and we get back to both of them chopping each other for a while, so this is good. I got no beef. NO BEEF! They sell some portions of this small in comparison match like Misawa versus Jumbo Tsuruta in 1992- laying around like they just traded Tiger Driver 91s and running boots to the face- but here it is a missile dropkick after five minutes of working the knee. A fool would complain. Umeda hits a nice dropkick and they sell it and then Umeda hits a missile dropkick and running kick to the chest and this is all exciting and stuff. Takeshita brainbusters to offense and goes up top and hits a missile dropkick, selling the leg as he goes up. So yeah, I got no qualms with this match. Takeshita goes for a pin but Umeda counters into an ankle lock that he turns into a kneebar and THEN. WE REALIZE. he was trained by Yamamoto obviously. Takeshita hits the ropes and sells the knee waaaaay past the point anyone else experience level would sell it. I love this because it is the polar opposite of two guys going as fast as they can to get all of their stuff in. Umeda hits a RINGS Network/Kingdom/UWFi-level Beautiful Tope Con Hilo! He earns those fauncy paunts with his fauncy

high-flying! He returns to his nasty shootstyle roots by kicking Takeshita a whole lot and it is a whole lot of fun. He does the Shibata running dropkick to the face in the corner and I guess all Shibata moves are now considered quasi-shootstyle- as I now add that rule to the Yamazaki Shootstyle Trumps Pro Style rule. Takeshita kicks Umeda in the face before taking more kicks to the chest and Umeda goes back to the kneebar. I dig Takeshita when he goes total strong style. He'll run and kick you right in the face. They trade finishers and roll-ups until Takeshita crushes him with a very nice short lariat after Umeda fights off the EVEREST~! German. Takeshita hits a long lariat and fucking beautiful brainbuster to set up the EVEREST~! SUPLEX~! HOLD~! for the win! That was good. I dug the set up of Umeda using shootstyle to break down Takeshita and Takeshita using traditional pro style chops and forearms to buy enough time to recover from the well-sold knee damage and then hit a series of pro style finishers to bury the shootstyle guy. They both didn't lay it in consistently, or ever to the point that you would forget about Ishii versus Shibata or anything, but it was at level I will accept- and I have seen unacceptable levels at these little DNA soirees, and even in the main events. So that wasn't nearly as unbearable as I thought it was going to be. Which is what I say every time I watch a whole DDT card, usually. Good for me.

~!~

BIG JAPAN PRO WRESTLING- 2/18/2016

(by DEAN RASMUSSEN)

RYUICHI SEKINE/ SABURO INEMATSU vs KAZUMI KIKUTA/TOSHIYUKI SAKUDA

Man, I have reviewed a lot Sakuda matches as of late. He is the 5'1" guy who does the shoulder-based offense. According to cagematch.net, Kikuta is a rookie with 91 matches under his belt- and he appears to get kicked in the face a lot by Team Yamato. The other two guys are DDT/K-Dojo guys whom I have ignored completely my entire life. Actually, I think I've seen Sekine because he has the back of man who has made a living in the Big Japan death match circuit. Either way, Kikuta is having none of Sekine's bullshit and doesn't break clean. He kicks the veteran around a bit until Sekine punches him in the stomach and kicks him in the back. SO this is kinda of battle of the new guard versus the old guard of opening card major Japanese indie tag teams. I back their play 100%. Kikuta tags out and Kikuta is fun. Inematsu and wee Sakuda trade chops and Sakuda is small but he brings it. I love how Sakuda ducks a lariat by running straight past it without ducking at all. He "ducks" two lariats and uses his golden shoulders to plow into our K-Dojo veteran, hitting the teeniest spear in all of Japan. Inematsu forearms and enzugiris to offense and they beat on Sakuda because Sakuda is sooo perfect for a face in peril. Kikuta is great on the apron, being enraged and being taunted by Inematsu. Sekine is great at cutting off the ring and being a bullying dick to little Sakuda- and YOU as a fellow human being who knows right from wrong, are totally behind Sakuda's comeback and our hearts collectively sink when Inematsu cuts him off with a forearm to the face. Sekine does a really great standing camel clutch and poor little Sakuda has the crowd behind him when he finally gets his legs up and stops Sekine from crushing him in the corner. Sakuda makes the hot tag and Kikuta is fucking awesome with the dropkicks and then the Shibata dropkicks into the corner. This match is really fun. They should start a NWA US tag title division in Big Japan. Kikuta kicks and stomps Sekine all over the ring until Sekine catches his leg mid-kick and bodyslams Kikuta to allow Inematsu to get in some lowgrade heel offense. Kikuta kicks him fucking DEAD IN THE THROAT to tag in wee Sakuda and this match is awesome. Sakuda works to his strength- his shoulders, his ass. Flying Sentons to the corner, shoulders to the corner, clubbing forearms! Inematsu hits him with a fucking POLISH HAMMER and tag in Sekine to finish him off! He goes for Styles

Clash maybe, but teeny Sakuda does a very slow rana to escape! Sekine takes a Sakuda running shoulder to the stomach and a truly nasty Kikuta kick to the face- Sakuda with the standing moonsault- could this be it!?! The crowd is stoked. You are stoked. Inematsu ruins our buzz by making the save. Kikuta and Inematsu take it to the floor and Sakuda hits the Belly to Belly for two and then goes up top for the SabuSault! Right on Sekines raised knees. Sekine hits the Rolling Fireman's Carry Slam but Kikuta makes the save! Sekine sinks in the Boston Crab variation, as I he does not actually do the Styles Clash that I thought he did earlier. And Sakuda loses. And we all weep. Though that was way more fun than we deserved.

YUJI OKABAYASHI/ ATSUSHI MARUYAMA vs DAICHI HASHIMOTO/ SHINOBU

Man, say what you will about Atsushi Maruyama (You say, "Who?") but if one looks at his cagematch.net profile, one will note that he averages about 150 matches a year. One must also take into account that he seems to frequent the periphery of Japanese indies so there are probably ten or twenty matches that are at county fairs or used car dealership parking lots- as I notice that sometimes HASEGAWA will wrestle in some just horrendously horrible FMW match that doesn't show up on the cagematch FMW results page. He also doesn't wear a mask anymore and they just have pictures of him be-masked. I didn't realize has been full-time Big Japan for the last two years but I'm not psychotic completist as I was in my youth, also he does 50 Michinoku Pro shows a year. He's already wrestled 25 this year. He is the James Brown of Japanese wrestling, if James Brown wasn't the godfather of soul but was an obscure kinda bland Japanese pro wrestler. Shinobu I dig. He is feisty and will take a beating and is a perfectly fine high flyer when need be. He averages 50 matches a year so he is a pussy- match-per-year-wise compared to the road warrior that is Maruyama. Okabayashi and Hashimoto will kick your teeth out for MY pleasure. And I find it pleasing. Maruyama and Shinobu start off with your headlocks and head scissors so we see the lighting and we wait on the thunder. Shinobu tags out and Daichi and Maruyama do the same thing but a little more shoot stylish since now we have ZERO-1 in the mix. Maruyama tags out and Okabayashi tries to bring the thunder but Daichi jumps out of the way, like I would. Daichi Hashimoto is getting more towards his dad's level of girthiness every time I see him, but as for now, he shouldn't be trying to get into a Greco-Roman knucklelock with Yuji Okabayashi, but it a lot less preposterous now than it would have a year ago at this time. They trade chops for kicks and Hash catches him right on the chin and it looks legit as Okabayashi goes down and doesn't get back up for a minute. Maruyama tags in while they apply the smelling salts to Okabayashi. Shinobu tags in and decides to fill the stiffness void by bringing the ass beat to Maruyama- who will take an assbeating like a champ. He spin-kicks Shinobu and chinlocks Shinobu until Yuji can remember his middle name. "It's.....BILLY!" and he charges in and fucking destroys Shinobu and settles it all down with a Boston Crab. Shinobu hits the ropes and hits a brainbuster and tags out to Hash who opts to keep kicking Okabayashi in the face, including a truly dickish spin kick to the face- to the point that Maruyama just comes into the ring to kick Hash to keep him off the befuddled Okabayashi. Shinobu clears the ring and hits an Asai moonsault on both. Yuji gets back in the ring and Hash fucking crushes his skull with a running knee to the face and a missile dropkick. At this point I'm assuming that Okabayashi is out of it but since he is a Japanese pro wrestler so he acts like nothing is wrong. Maruyama tags in and takes a lot of kicks to the chest and the crowd is excited for his struggle to make the tag. Yuji is still out of it so he hits more dangerous than usual power moves- including a totally unprotected power slam/brainbuster/something. Concussions bring out his inner moondog. Shinobu hits his own missile dropkick but Yuji powerslams to transition and Argentinianly breaks Shinobu's back until Hash makes the save. Okabayashi just fucking

slaughters Shinobu with a lariat but unfortunately for Shinobu, Shinobu's gimmick is that you slaughter him ten times over and he doesn't give up, so we have another minute for him to fight out of a powerbomb via cross-armbreaker (using the aforementioned Yamazaki Shootstyle Counters Pro Style rule)that Okabayashi powers into another powerbomb THAT HE TURNS INTO ANOTHER CROSS-ARMBREAKER! FOR THE WIN! Weird. Okay, so Okabayashi was selling the knockout to make putting over Shinobu make sense? Possibly? Or was he legit knocked out? Or both? Mysterious.

KOHEI SATO/ SHUJI ISHIKAWA vs HIDEYOSHI KAMITANI/ RYOTA HAMA

Jiminy, the Big Japan tag title scene is fun. Mostly because Hama is really fat and splatty and Hideyoshi Kamitani is really fun to watch in this, his first push. The Twin Towers put the belts on the map, one massive ass beating at a time. Here they can frolic in the division they created. Kohei Sato tries to move the fatness of Hama and fails and it angers him. Hama knocks Sato to the ground with his fatness, forcing despondent Ishikawa to tag in and try to do something with the giant pile of tag champion that they cannot move. One of my favorite things about Hama is that when charges at the opponent to shoulder block them with immovable density, he makes the face that the Stay Puft Marshmallow Man makes when he catches on fire at the end of Ghostbusters. Go watch, you will be enchanted. After knocking Ishikawa to the mat, he tags out to Kamitani and Hama has the expression that says, "I've done about all I can with these two. Destroy them, boy." Kamitani starts in with the shoulder to the stomach in the corner and goes for the bodyslam. Ishikawa remembers that he TOWERS over opponents and kicks Kamitani in the stomach and tags in Kohei Sato to deal with this far more reasonable amount of humanity. Kamitani looks panicked as he lays in chops to Sato's chest. Kohei Sato has the look on his face, "This guy: pulverizable" and proceeds to pulverize Kamitani with kicks all over the back and adds forearms to the head. Ishikawa stomps on him some more, cutting off Kamitani when he tries to escape with chops, tagging out to have Kohei visit his special brand of horror to the non-obese tag champion. Kamitani finally shoulderblocks and Hawk shoulderblocks to offense and makes the tag, allowing a giant smokehouse of peanut-fed hams to catch afire and bash Kohei Sato in the face with giant nearly nude buttocks! Sato's face hits the mat and he wants to cry. Hama suplexes him but misses the flabalanche! Sato does the full Ricky Morton forward roll tag and YOU and I both pop like monkeys at the GLORY of PROFESSIONAL WRESTLING! Hama and Ishikawa just smash each other's faces with forearms and you remember why you love both of these tag teams. Ishikawa sees a weakness and delivers the headbutt! He hits the ropes to finish Hama with a lariat but Hama recovers and hits the hurtiest highest-caloric flying crossbody in the history of Mexico! Ishikawa lays on the mat grief-stricken, Sato thinks to himself as he stands on the apron, "Whatever! HIS NAKED ASS TOUCHED MY FACE!" The Twin Towers try to recover some semblance of their prior reality before the onslaught of so much fat. Hama rolls over like a giant keg of Golden Coral Chocolate Fountain Sauce and tags Kamitani in. Kamitani tries to add to the horror with a very nice Vertical Suplex on Shuji Ishikawa but falls for the trap of trading chops with a Twin Tower and loses and pays the price of having Sato tag in and also kick the fuck out of him. Kamitani, being a fiery babyface, gets fired up and gets Sato off his feet and tags in Hama who does an elaborate dance to allow Hama to roll on top of Sato to allow Kamitani to get the pin, all but for the save by Ishikawa. Sato says to himself, "I'm getting to old for this shit!" Hama hits the floor to give Ishikawa what for, leaving Kamitani alone with the monstrous Kohei Sato! Ishikawa gets to the ring and does the AWESOME Rainmaker Substituting A Headbutt For A Short Lariat to Allow Sato to annihilate Kamitani with a released German but opts to keep beating the hell out of the junior member thus allowing Hama to get back to the ring and make a save. They drive Hama out of the ring and Kohei Sato hits a running

forearm to the face into a Sato I HATE YOU Piledriver FOR THE WIN! I guess that was non-title. It really sets up a rematch because everybody in the match would want some measure of revenge- Hama for not being able to save Kamitani at the end, Sato and Ishikawa for being the victims of Hama's offense without really getting anything in on him and Kamitani to show that he isn't just glad to be there, but can pull his own weight. So yeah, they get a lot in 13 minutes.

HIDEKI SUZUKI/ YOSHIHISA UTO vs DAISUKE SEKIMOTO/ SEIYA SANADA

I would feel weird doing a review of a match without mentioning cagematch.net (Dolph Ziggler wrestled 180 times last year!). This would be Uto's 97th match. Starting out your career with Big Japan will get you to match 100 very quickly. I would like a list of American wrestlers who haven't wrestled 100 matches who have started wrestling schools. I tend to think that it would be depressingly long list. Sanada keeps showing up in any match Hideki Suzuki is in- actually the other Uto match I reviewed had Suzuki, Uto and Sanada as a three man tagteam. (You love re-reading DEAN!) I assume they are a package deal- as I guess to get some-how-possibly-legit-draw (????) Suzuki, you have to take the perfectly fine but Bland As The Idea Of NOAH Seiya Sanada. One can only assume at some point Sanada will wear zebra make-up and start focusing on how great his booty is. Uto The Rookie and BrotherBrutiZodiacDisciple start off with nothing much, so Sanada tags in someone exciting- and Uto front facelocks Sekimoto so folks can watch Sekimoto and Suzuki wrestle, and THUS drive the idea of Uto and Sanada trading headlocks from their minds. I'm guessing this is just to show Suzuki vs Sekimoto in the ring together before they have a couple of legit singles matches in the upcoming Strong Climb Tournament, as I will create any premise to think more about the Strong Climb. Please note the Strong Climb Tournament from 2012 is what renewed my interest in pro wrestling. I was really about ready to move on with my life because the guys that got me completely hooked on wrestling in 1995 were all dead or had become suicidal family murderers. So I was wearing down and just about ready to start playing video games or rotisserie baseball or something. Then Alan Irish-guy hipped me to the Big Japan Strong Style division and it was like the first time I ever saw GAEA- it was something I could get into from the ground floor because of the youth and potential and the style of wrestling is what I look for in my professional wrestling. It then developed into a full-fledged style that I could follow. So if you think I like non-death match Big Japan too much, remember that to me the Strong Style division is the only thing that kept me from hanging out at One Eyed Jacques, playing Magic The Gathering two nights a week (to supplement my shameful other five nights of crying- alone and divorced in my mother's basement. ((CONFESSION: My mother's house doesn't have a basement. It does have a shed. ALSO: One Eyed Jacques is a gaming store in Carytown in Richmond, VA. My mother lives in Chesapeake, thus I would have to driver four hours twice a week to play Magic the Gathering, but I don't really have the energy to research a gaming store in the greater Hampton Roads area. ALSO, I'm not sure guys still play Magic the Gathering. There. I lied to you a lot in one sentence. HA! SUCK IT!))) But I think that's probably good to nearly swear off something you love, because now it's like being a new fan. Hideki Suzuki and Kohei Sato are a lot alike, other than just both being Zero-1. Both bring a bunch of shoot style to the strong style, sort of like how Hisakatsu Ooya brought really polished pro style to FMW garbage league pro style. Both Suzuki and Sato work well in Big Japan strong style but you can tell both are IN the style but not OF the style. Every promotion needs that. Why was ECW so great?- because you had alllll of the ECW Cactus Jack-based style- but then you had Terry Funk who could also wrestle that style but brought a bunch of other things to the style. It keeps you from having everything look like a Pitbulls vs Eliminators match. Anyhoos, Sekimoto and Suzuki are wrestling- Suzuki towering over Sekimoto. Sekimoto notes that a

headlock is a very counter-tallness move, as Suzuki then does a 70's headscissors to allow Sekimoto to channel his inner Dory Funk to try to escape it as 70's a way as possible. Suzuki fights it off and does cool little things to make the head scissors more painful- the twisting, the squeezing. Sekimoto finally bridges and squirms to escape to procure a leg lock that Suzuki counters into a Quarter Nelson. LOOK AT THAT! THAT'S Fuckin MUGA, BITCH! Suzuki is going to be fun in the Strong Climb. Osamu Nishimura will sell his manhood short for not having been there that day! Sekimoto is shorter but stronger so he uses power to counter the Quarter Nelson into his own Quarter Nelson, but Suzuki is a cagier wrestler and reverses it back. Sekimoto must expend a lot of energy to escape or reverse the hold and this is quality old school psychology- though one would expect it for a match going three times longer than the 12:41 this goes. They go through it again and Sekimoto says "Hey! Forget that noise!" and seizes up Suzuki's arm with his armpit and takes him over for a Released Armpit Suplex 2016. And they go back to a Vertical Base and one wonders if Gordon Solie is in heaven right now saying, "That's how you do it." Suzuki tags in Uto and Sekimoto remembers that he is all about beating the shit out of people so they decide to begin beating the shit out of each other. This is a tiny sliver of a match that delivers very quickly on a lot of things I love in the modern wrestling. Man, Uno is going to be fun in the Climb- though he only will win two matches. He will fucking laying it in. Suzuki tags back in and then HE starts laying it in. Sekimoto tags in Sanada and we get a bunch of dropkicks! Wee Hoo! Then a Senada Octopus Hold. Senada tags out and I like the fact that he has stayed out of the way for the bulk of this tiny match. Okay, maybe Sekimoto has found his Buzz Sawyer to his Tommy Rich with his time in the ring with Suzuki because Sekimoto sinks in the Argentinian Backbreaker and Suzuki uses his skill to counteract the power of Sekimoto by slithering into a sleeper hold and the counter wrestling versus the power wrestling could be the coolest twist on the Strong Style in a while. The fact that Sekimoto counters with an Atomic Drop is soooooo fucking old school and awesome. Suzuki counters a lariat and Sekimoto counters the counter and then Suzuki counters AGAIN with a STANDING SWITCH~! to hit the German suplex! Sekimoto hits his German and a lariat and they both tag out, as if to say, "You rubes have to watch the Strong Climb for the rest!" Suzuki and Uno double team Sanada until wily Sanada uses his comical arsenal of junior moves to get to offense and starts trading forearms with Uno- "I am more than just... dropkicks," Sanada snarled with venom. "I do a wide variety of wrestling moves because I'm a PROFESSIONAL. Not everyone wants two bruisers in their little pants, wailing on each other. Some people like the grace and refinement of high-flying- as it is truly the ART in the art of professional wrestling. But know also, young man- I can throwdown with anyone- especially a rookie punk like YOU!" Uno stomps him in the face and hits a nice Diamond Cutter for two and they both hit some finishers and lariats and whatnot until Sanada finishes off the rookie with a Dragon Sleeper. "SEE! You weren't counting on THAT! A Dragon Sleeper- created by motherfucking. Tatsumi. Fujinami. Bitch. Now tap out and do not soil my lovely pants with your sweating." I dub this a Top 20 Under 15 Minute match of the Year!

~!~

WRESTLER OF THE ISSUE: GENICHIRO TENRYU

~!~

The original plan for this issue was to do an All-Tenryu edition in honor of Tenryu's retirement match. That was such an amazing idea... in theory. There is an inherent flaw when you realize that you are reviewing matches from the same man at the same time and shifting through the GAZILLION matches of his we already reviewed. Plus - links would be taken down as quick as we watched them. So after three

months of inaction - the call was made to just let the spirit move us and thus here is the stuff we wrote about Tenryu before realizing what a terrible idea it was.

JUMBO TSURUTA/ GREAT KABUKI VS GENICHIRO TENRYU/ ASHYURA HARA- 8/1987

(by DEAN RASMUSSEN)

This is the my first review of the all-Tenryu DVDVR and I picked this one because I figured folks would really beat the fudge out of each other and that get me moving along to every other Tenryu match. This was the beginning of the WAR-style Tenryu, when stiffness and hatred overcame the urge to wrestle a more conventional 70s style match and THUS that could be a big mountain of guys beating each others teeth out of each other's heads. They are kind enough to wait until the flower ladies clear the ring before trying to fucking strangle each other. One forgets the majesty...majesty.... MAAAAJ-jest-TEEEEE of late period Jumbo Tsuruta's lariat and it is on full display in retaliation for Hara having the NERVE to be pissed off at Kabuki for misting Tenryu before the bell. Then they just starting the shit out of each other- as Jumbo beats on Hara like Hara was selling weed to his son- and THEN Kawada and Samson Fuyuki ECW their way onto the match and this is already fucking awesome. Jumbo high knees Kawada- mostly for having awesome tiger print tights and for not sharing. Jumbo starts talking shit and saying, "Get Heyman out here and makes this a six-man!" to set-up Jumbo and Tenryu LIVING THE FUCKING HATE into each other and it is awesome. Jumbo talks even more shit to Tenryu, trying to get the crowd to start a "Tenryu is big fucking pussy!" chant. Then they really just start fucking killing each other. Tenryu Swinging Neckbreaks to comically tries to start some kind of Les Thatcher vs Danny Hodge style 1970s match by procuring a keylock and headscissor thing that Kabuki instantly stomps apart- because Kabuki wrestled in Texas and he knows how keeps the fucking mayhem going. Fuyuki and Kawada start going at it and Kawada throws some hilariously un-Kawada-like 1/8th legit strikes and Fuyuki REBUKES him with a SHOTGUN LARIAT~! So Kabuki starts chopping on Kawada and counters with a preposterously awkward spinning elbow- and we must recall that before Kawada was awesome, Kawada was kinda crappy. Hara and Kabuki take it the ring and it's like 1978 Ford LTD racing a 1979 Dodge Aspen in it's "Man, do I remember the fuck out of some 1970s"-ness. Jumbo tags in to set up the part where Hara tags out and Tenryu and crew beat the shit out of Jumbo! But Kawada tags in and Jumbo mauls him and they opt to stomp the fuck out Kawada, as Kawada immediately tries to race up the card to spare himself any other episodes like this where he would be any part of the creation of the prototype of a Tatsuyoshi Kikuchi 1991 six man tag match. He side suplexes Kibuki and Kibuki then says, "Oh fuck this shit. I'll'm not showing Kikucki how to take a WAR-sized assbeating from Tenryu and tags Fuyuki in to take infinitely better looking offense from Kawada. Kawada gets stomped in the head by Jumbo so Jumbo can tag in and FINALLY Kikuchi the fuck out of somebody. Kawada dodges a Giant High Knee in the corner and tags to let Hara and Tenryu pound on Jumbo for a while so he can tag back in and crush Jumbo with a very Kawada-like 2/4ths legit lariat. Kawada then loses all possible cool points by hitting a very high school gym/county fair wrestling-level SPINNING SAVATE CRESCENT KICK! Then he mounts the top rope and misses a hilariously shitty toprope dropkick. Jumbo High Knees and then crushes Kawada with a Dangerous Backdrop for the win. Tenryu and HARA could give a fuck and just keep beating on everyone. So fucking great.

GENICHIRO TENRYU/SHIRO KOSHINAKA vs. BRIAN ADAMS/NWO STING – New Japan 9/23/98 (IWGP Tag Team Championship)

(by PHIL RIPPA)

One of my favorite things about Tenryu was that because he worked everywhere and anyone every match you see you can think “Oh yeah – he worked NWO Sting. That seems totally normal.” I spent far too long pinpointing exactly when this match took place and lamenting the fact that I have to watch it twice because I wrote a review but can’t find where I saved it and I have no memory of what I wrote. I am sure I bemoaned having to watch Brian Adams. This time is worse because it is the second Adams watch this issue I’m reviewing (and also the third Adams match in the last three months I have watched – my time is precious people.)

I enjoy Tenryu stiffing the fuck out of NWO Sting. I enjoy Tenryu stiffing the fuck out of Adams and him trying to no sell it. The rest not so much. It’s a lot of it’s a lot of trying to make the NWO B-Team look good while Adam tries not to hurt his elbow doing press slams (He really should get a refund on the performance enhancing drugs he took.)

Koshinaka is just happy to be there and be half of the tag champs... again. He clearly was New Japan’s “when it doubt put him in a tag team” guy. As an old man who still wants to believe he is in his mid-20s, I appreciate Koshinaka refusing to accept that he is now a light heavyweight inside a old man pudgyweight body. That still doesn’t stop him from spamming whatever button delivered the hip attack. (Though Sting catching a top rope hip attack and turning it into a belly to back suplex was cool.)

The champs retain though it is weird since your boy NWO Sting kicks out of the fall-away elbow only to immediately get pinned by a lariat. This was a match.

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GENICHIRO TENRYU/GEORGE TAKANO vs. KING HAKU/RANDY SAVAGE – SWS (May 23, 1991)

(by PHIL RIPPA)

We all have matches that we know are not good but they entertain the hell out of us. This match might be #1 on my list of those Good Bad Matches. There is no flow to it at all – it is just four guys beating the fuck out of each other in turns, trying their best to no sell everything.

The crowd is thrilled to see Savage and they are really into Haku when he starts Hakuing up at various times. Tenryu is Tenryu and the crowd wants nothing more than to see him and Savage go at it (Savage puts on a clinic in how to tease the eventual conflict. Takano is in full on IT SURE IS SWELL TO BE HERE IN THE RING WITH YOU FELLAS!!!! Mode.

So you watch the match and if you can take pleasure from guys throwing bombs at each other just for the sake of throwing bombs at each other than great. You are rewarded when we move into angle time. Haku and Tenryu have been laying waste to each other on the times when they are in the ring together. Somehow this leads to Haku stomping Tenryu down in the corner. And when I say stomping I mean bare footed Haku busts Tenryu open from somewhere on his head. Now we are cooking. Tenryu is bloody and groggy. He gets the tag and Takano is all JIMMINY JILLIKERS!!! I WILL DEFEND YOUR HONOR PA!!! Well Hot Tag Takano is going to work, Tenryu walks around ring side, grabs a chair and just PLASTERS

Haku with multiple chair shots. Stay with me because it gets really really sports entertaining but in the amazing way.

Takano tags Tenryu in and finally – FINALLY – it is Savage vs. Tenryu time. The crowd is amped... and an enraged Haku just runs over Savage on his way to jumping Tenryu. We have officially hit Pier Six brawl time. On the outside – Haku grabs a “Yay this is totally gimmicked but gimmicked in a Japan kinda way which means not really at all” bottle and cracks Tenryu over the head. Even more blood.

Savage is now pissed that Haku ran him over (and possibly that he waffled Tenryu with the bottle. Who knows with these two – I mean Haku is legit crazy but it isn’t like Savage couldn’t match him.) Lots and lots of fillabustering between the two complete with a Haku pie-face of Savage. Savage drops the elbow and eventually – almost begrudgingly – pins Tenryu and then goes back to jaw-jacking with Haku. Haku has enough and thrust kicks Savage and the powder keg is officially lit. Savage and Takano are beating on Haku. Fucking Yoshiaki Yatsu appears out of nowhere to save Haku. Tenryu zombie rises and just goes on a bloody rampage before collapsing again. Two Trillion Stars. God – this should be how they break up Ambrose and Reigns.

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GENICHIRO TENRYU/DICK SLATER vs STAN HANSEN/ UMANOSUKE UEDA - 6/1982

(by DEAN RASMUSSEN)

Hey look, I'm writing again! Yeah! Aren't you excited! I know I am! I have always worked in waves. Sometimes I get in a groove and write for like three months straight- almost every day, devouring matches, immersing myself with minutae of idiot tiny puroresu indie wrestlers and dead-end Joshi 3 year olds. I then get all confused as to why I ever stop. Why do I ever stop writing when I can take an hour a day and write about the inner workings of a GUTS match. I'll just write and write and write and...and....and....and then. Completely stop. I'll just stop for no reason that I can think of and not watch wrestling for like 8 months. It's happened for longer than that if I can find other wrestling related things to avoid actually writing about wrestling- like the internet match of the year thread when it first started. It took forever to realize that I could integrate those matches into reviews. Like a year and a half. This round isn't that drastic and I feel the urge rising so I'm happier because the only thing worse than forcing yourself to write about wrestling is forcing yourself to not write about wrestling. At least when you wrtiting about wrestling, you get a sense of accomplishment every day. When you are not writing about wrestling, you are just sitting around, creating reasons not to write about wrestling. I've gone to pretty drastic links to create excuses for myself. Fathered four kids, joined a metal band at age 48, joined the choir at my wife's church- a church where she actually hates 90% of the people that go there. After feeling the urge a few weeks ago and getting one Tenryu review out of the way, I feel the surge approaching so I have to do really drastic shit to tone the surging enthusiasm down- so I can continue dicking around at work between working and then doing absolutely nothing at home except talking bullshit to my sons until they fall asleep- THUS allowing me to do nothing from nine o'clock to eleven o'clock because who can write about wrestling after all that tiresome parenting. Of course, a lot of it is forcing them to tell me what they did all day, making them listen to music on youtube that I- for some reason- think that it is important for them to hear ("This is the Tampa Red version of "It Hurt Me Too". The core of this song is that he is love with a woman who is too weak to leave a man who doesn't love her, while IRONICALLY, the singer is too weak to stop loving a a woman who doesn't love him. And he

still gets all tore up inside because her man treats her bad. But he doesn't realize that noone is writing a song about how when she hurts the singer, it doesn't hurt anybody else too. Blues is about LEVELS!! Listen to this Son house song..." Meanwhile, they are just waiting to play Fallout Four.) and ordering them to get me drinks or ice cream sandwiches. The TRUE time I know that I am at the edge of not writing but crossing over into writing is when I totally try to crush any desire to ever watch wrestling ever again by listening to shoot interviews on youtube. Goddam, I think Abe Jacobs was right. Breaking kayfabe was the worst thing that ever happened to wrestling because man, if I hear Jim Cornett DESTROY~! some ROH guy for some locker room/backstage transgression or endure another 2 hour re-hashing of the Monday Night wars, I think I might actually take all my VHS tapes down from the attic and set them on fire. So anyway, after listening to a pretty interesting SHOOT~! with Stone Cold talking to Scott Hall, which was actually really cool to hear Hall talk about going to Puerto Rico in the 80s just so he could study their method for running angles, I kept listening to all these Ric Flair interviews, some of which were pretty revealing- as he seemed to have been a true fuck-up before Verne Gagne literally forced him to finish his training and become a wrestler. But Flair also talked on more than one occasion about how preposterously tough Dick Slater was. He tells the story of Slater wanting a try-out and Bob Roop was the guy who would beat the desire out of you if you were so bold as to want to enter the business and Roop would possibly cripple you forever, mentally if not physically. So of course, Dick Slater left Bob Roop unconscious in a pool of his own blood as Slater was a total fucking bad ass from the word go. The other Slater story he told was about Slater and Tenryu facing Hansen and Brodie the first time Slater ever wrestled in Japan and the story was that they told Brodie and Hansen to go easy on Slater because nobody in Japan realized that Slater didn't take any shit from anybody and the whole thing turned into one of those things where things got a bit heated. So of course I can't find that match but I'm going to scour the internet for as many Tenryu/ Slater matches I can find. And hey! Here we go with the first one.

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GENICHIRO TENRYU vs. MIKE SHARPE – GEORGIA CHAMPIONSHIP WRESTLING (April 26, 1980)

(by PHIL RIPPA)

Mike Sharpe has a clean pinfall victory over Genichiro Tenryu. I say that now as that is a lede that should not and cannot be buried. I am not shocked by Tenryu wrestling in Georgia in 1980 because I have grown to expect that he has seen more parts of this country than I have. Nor am I shocked that there is video of this match as I am probably the last person to watch it as I don't worship at the altar of Gordon Solie. I am shocked that after about four minutes of plastering each other – the man who would be "Iron" Mike wins with a piledriver. Yes. Yes. You can tell me all you want about how Sharpe was fairly new to the area and he was getting groomed for things (as seen by his post-match promo where he calls out Austin Idol and "Russians" (I am assuming he meant the tag team and not Leonid Brezhnev).) And obviously Tenryu was the early years of his career but even when looking at his match results from his time working in Georgia or working for Crockett – Mike Sharpe pins Genichiro Tenryu stands out. I really wish this hadn't been at the end of the hour as I would have loved to have seen at least five more minutes. This might have been the simplest hoss battle ever but it was fun as fuck. RIP Iron Mike.

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GENICHIRO TENRYU/GIANT BABA vs. ROGER KIRBY/STEVE REGAL – AWA (March 11, 1984)

(by PHIL RIPPA)

There is no more disheartening of a feeling as a wrestling fan as that moment you see the name “Steve Regal” and then realize it is the shitty “Mr. Electricity” version. (Mental Note: Figure out the bigger difference in talent two guys with the same name.) This was during that period when Jumbo Tsuruta was AWA Champ and Baba would be on the tours too to make sure Verne Gagne didn’t butt fuck Jumbo (or, ya know, as part of the deal to make Jumbo champ. I like my theory better though.) Tenryu clearly was brought along because Mom & Dad insisting on taking the family vacation to fucking Green Bay , Wisconsin. The match is what it is - which is Kirby and Regal bouncing around for the visitors, Baba lumbering around and a bunch of cut-aways to disinterested fans. So many confused Cheeseheads. I wonder if Tenryu got to tour Lambeau.