

WVGCW Report 12/4/2016 - Merriweather Wres Pavilion

We're standing right on the edge of Season 7 now, as we're now aware of all the high-profile matches that will take place at this season's Breakdown, along with their general ordering. While the match isn't technically a full-fledged title match, a match with direct implications for the Co-Op Championship will be the main event, which is the first time for a major event under the VGCW umbrella. With each of the titles having #1 Contenders sorted out and each of the major feuds having matches set and whatnot, these closing shows are more important for Season 8 than anything. Outside of the tag team matches and the main event, it's unlikely that you'll see anyone else on this show in a match unless they slip into an unannounced contest. But that doesn't mean that we can't reckon and postulate about how everyone's doing right now, and how far up or down they're trending.

In the Flowers (or mushrooms, whatever)

Toadette (PR 37 [+7] MR 35 [+7]) vs Jessie (PR 50 [-1] MR 49 [-4]) w/ James

At last, the final member of the Future Four picked up a win on her own. Toadette's been watching her buddies go from strength to strength since the unit went all Time Splitters on us, including perhaps costing the Four the Co-Op Championships. When anyone debuts on any show, they naturally run the gauntlet of all kinds of existing wrestlers to get some kind of sense of their strength as a competitor, and it seems that we've finally hit the starting point for Toadette here. Sure, it's against the "proud" holder of the lowest ELO nadir of all time, but wins are wins. It being a manager match of course meant that the odds were against her, too, even if it didn't mean all that much in the end. The match ended up being pretty straight forward - Toadette just walked out and beat her, as many before her have done to Jessie. Jessie had been gaining some favour as a wrestler not too long ago. For one, she was actually winning matches. Beating up on Videl for a short while and getting close enough to claiming a Casualette Championship match made it seem that, although she wasn't gonna make any big leaps any time soon, she'd gotten over being the wood at the base of the proverbial barrel. Didn't last long if you couldn't tell. The only people under her on the rankings tables right now are either part-time (von Karma), dead (Cammy), or wishing they were either part-time or dead (Tifa).

The Boss (PR 12 [-2] MR 3 [+3]) vs Lynne (PR 32 [-10] MR 39 [-24]) vs Bayonetta (PR 17 [+9] MR 42 [+1])

An eclectic mix these three are. The Boss, fallen from grace, trying to reclaim her spot at the top of the mountain. Lynne, the instant threat, fighting hard to legitimise her name. Bayonetta, unwaveringly consistent, struggling to make that one last step to a championship match once again. At least, that's how they came in. Now, I don't really think Lynne is the same kind of threat as she was at the beginning of her WVGCW career. She blazed through her first three opponents without much trouble, despite the third of those names being Tifa (before she sucked). Since then, she's lost as many times as she won, albeit against much tougher women. So while she won't be able to make some dramatic rise to the top as this generation's dominant competitor, her previous wins will serve to cushion her fall should she go into a tailspin.

This is a rare time where I'm gonna give all of you an insight into the creative process, as although I described Bayonetta as consistent less than a full paragraph ago, in the process of researching a little further I realise that that's a complete lie. Her last win in singles competition was a literal year ago, defeating Chie during that year's anniversary show. This has always been the problem with assessing Bayo, as despite always maintaining a pretty good spot on the PR table, her record suuuuucks. She was batting a .500 before this match, and her combination middling PRank and terrible MRank reflected this. All of her recent successes have come from rehabbing her tag team career with Grunty, which has legitimately gotten to a high level at this point. This win will keep her status and image afloat, but it really does need to be followed up on if anything tangible should come from it. There's potential in her being as always, but I'll be damned if we ever actually see it. Boss didn't win and didn't lose. That's about it.

Also Frightened (of ghosts and cops)

Wright Anything Agency (Ema Skye and Maya Fey) (PR 11 [+3]) vs Jet Set Radio (Cube and Gum) (PR 6 [-3]) - Tornado Tag Flaming Tables

Holy shit someone sure lit a fire under the lawmakers' asses, and it's a damn good sight to see. With this victory over one of the more prominent teams in the tag team division, the team that includes the current Casualette Champion, the WAA ladies have effectively completed their transformation from an anaemic team consisting of desperate losers to a solid pair of promising midcarders. I think I can stop bringing up my lamenting from a few reports ago, partly because I feel their names have finally been brought up enough to excuse their early shortcomings and partly because I don't know how much longer I can pretend to take credit for this until someone notices. This is the real kind of success story I like, they haven't gone over the top with this whole thing by bashing their heads against the brick wall of main eventers until eventually winning one and disingenuously proclaiming their troubles to be over. No, they've put in the time and worked hard at the bottom rungs first, and built up smaller victories to get where they are now. Their work isn't complete just yet, as they have one more tag team match to go through before slipping into Breakdown, but if they can make it past another team who are rising from the mud, it'll be quite the turnaround. Even if they don't quite make it, the good favour they've roused in their singles endeavours should give them some good opportunities next season. Altogether, the two of them are in quite a good spot right now.

Carmen Sandiego (PR 31 [-8] MR 44 [-8]) vs Jill Valentine (PR 11 [+3] MR 13) - KO

When you think about it, after the whole panic in the main event scene was happening, where nobody new was making it big anymore and Jade took it upon herself to (unsuccessfully in my opinion) save us all, a real revolution happened. There is a real new generation of main event talent in WVGCW, and it really all started with Jill here. I'm sure everyone has committed her incredible winning streak to memory, one which only ended at the hands of Lara Croft not too long ago. Ever since she decided to live up to her family name and face full life consequences, she appeared unstoppable, at least until she was stopped by fellow new-gen member and current champ Chie Satonaka. Much like Phoenix Wright's legendary 9-0 run, there's always going to be some doubt present when it all ends,

especially when you look back and realise that some of those names they went through weren't exactly unfavourable situations. Remember that Jill's begins with Shaundi. Certainly, it's how you can get on after losing that really determines who can be considered at an elite level in this business. Sure, losing to Lara was a tough one, but Lara was undoubtedly the most consistent wrestler around at that time. Her second shot at taking down a high-level machine has gone far better, as she took out the two-time WVGWCW Champion Carmen Sandiego. This being her third win over a former champion (even if Cammy's one of them) puts her right in line with some of the other names that come to my mind when I think of this new set of main eventers (Chie, Kitana and in some senses Lara.)

Not much to take away from Carmen this time, as she certainly didn't make it easy for the cops, as usual. A flurry of cutters would've straight-up killed a lesser fighter, but the overall head damage she got off evidently couldn't keep up with the assault from her opponent. She's in a pretty awkward spot in her career right now, losing more often than winning. Last year, she got pinned by both Summoners in separate matches, only scoring a win against the struggling Jinx. Her only being able to win three matches since returning is definitely a little concerning, especially if we're talking about such a unique competitor as Carmen. She really set the standard of dominance when she first came onto the scene, but that star seems to have dwindled since then. It's a shame, really.

Mother Sport

Diet & Exercise (Mama and Wii Fit Trainer) (PR 12 [-4]) vs Double Dash!! (Princess Peach and Princess Daisy) (PR 4 [+2])

Yep, mmhm, I think Double Dash are back. At one point, I had no problem calling them the best team to never hold the Co-Op Championship in WVGWCW. Although the latter part of their initial run turned a little sour, they've come back with a vengeance, and could look to erase that moniker from the annals of history. One of the more tenured teams around, they stand with two wins without reply in their new run, and are one match away from being at least #1 Contenders to the Summoners' titles. No other team has really looked able to challenge them, as they pretty effectively put the screws to Mama and the Trainer in this match. It's no secret that they both do far better as a team than on their own, but the level that they've achieved can't be understated. They currently sit at 10-5, the second best record of all current tag teams, and they've beaten the only team ahead of them (RPGenie). Their opponents still haven't had all that many tag team matches, but our resident /fit/izens have clearly settled into the middle of the pack quite well. 2-3 is exactly what it looks like, neither too bad nor too good. Their match history doesn't really push them in either direction, as their matches include a loss to the then-on fire Bronze Fist and the then-declining Steak Machina. As far as midcard teams go, they're in good company, but I feel like they have a much lesser chance of breaking out of the pack than some of their contemporaries.

Lara Croft (PR 8 [+3] MR 10 [-2]) vs Ayla (PR 15 [-6] MR 30 [-11])

Much like Jill against Carmen before, this can be seen as a test for Lara to see if she can keep her name among the elites in the division. Unlike Jill, Lara's results in the past already place her as one of the more dangerous fighters around, so I consider this more of an unofficial coronation than anything. If you've been keeping track, her record ever since

getting good is now 12-3, still unreal but that third loss has definitely made her appear more vulnerable. Now, taking out multifall matches puts her at 11-0, but that's probably narrowing it down a little more than is necessary. Whatever the case, she too took out her third former WVGWCW Champion now (although she too has beaten Cammy,) against an arguably tougher opponent. Just like how her longer matches have suggested, things got a little scarier as time went on, but on the whole she looked to outclass Ayla for a majority of the match. So often have we seen challengers to a title lose, and for that to be the beginning of the end. Look at Tifa. Fucking look at Tifa. So while Lara bouncing back pretty quickly isn't the most surprising of results, it's still a damn good result for the division as a whole, and it opens up a whole realm of opportunities for her in the early stages of Season 8 without a doubt.

The second of the four... wrestlers who were really good and had dominant streaks in the past (Gotta find a catchier name for these guys. Four Gods? Ehh, that's a little over the top. Bonjwas? Nah, too Korean. Four Dragons/Knights? What the fuck do I look like, a limp-dick genre fiction babby?), Ayla hasn't really stood the test of time as well as the others. She's miles ahead of Chell, sure, but she hasn't been putting out the numbers as well as she used to either. Since losing the title, she's gone 2-3 including this match, the most telling result being her loss to Peacock. Her other matches have been against some pretty good opponents, and she did manage to sweep Aigis in a $\frac{2}{3}$ Falls match, but those aren't the kinds of results that got her on that certain list in the first place. It's tough to really say all that much about her right now, especially since she can't really use her tag team as a fallback right now. Unable to really fall all that far and yet not looking able to rise any further, it's a spell in limbo for history's strongest woman right now.

Terra Branford (PR 22 [-6] MR 32 [-11]) vs Sheena Fujibayashi (PR 10 [+5] MR 8 [-3])

The original terror is back, and it feels like years since I've been able to give an analysis of her current state. I do a lot of reading for these articles, and I don't like to rely on my memory to remember everyone's form and records. Invariably, I'll be wrong, and it's only by really taking a magnifying glass to everyone's past that I can really get the whole picture. It's why I thought Bayonetta was doing so well, and I feel the same can apply here for Terra. Now of course it would be ludicrous for me to go too far; to say that she's trash and has been trash all along. I only mean that of all the wrestlers that have this "air of invincibility," Terra's records end up going against this. She is a very high level competitor, being the only person to beat Ivy at the beginning, clearing out Lightning in the middle and easily dispatching of Bayo very recently are testament to this. But there's a lot of these kinds of losses too, against competitors similar to Sheena. There's the loss to Lucina (too tired to kayface, sorry) in an Iron Woman match, or the loss to Gum most recently (albeit in a ladder match.) Here's a fun fact, Grunty has a recorded win over Terra in a singles match. "But Big Daddy Vid!" I hear you cry, "What are you trying to say you ambling shit?" To be honest, I don't know. So uhh, Terra lost and she probably won't challenge for the title any time soon. Ultimately that's what 90% of what I write boils down to anyway.

On the other hand, Sheena's been doing damn well as of late, as she knocked off her second former WVGWCW Champion (hey, maybe she should go up against Cammy next,) which is only one part of her recent run of good form. Her loss to Poison a couple of shows ago was her first really real loss in quite a long time, and her first singles loss since losing to

Bayonetta a good while ago. Even though she, like many EDBW callups on the women's side, had a slow start, she's put in the same kind of hard work as this new generation of main event talent has. Over a long period of time, she's shown serious consistency against all levels of competition, which sounds to me like a bright new prospect rising through the ranks on her way to the top. The common opinion when she came out for the Casualette tournament was that she was punching way below her weight, which is a good position to be in in my eyes. It makes me wonder what kind of effect their main event match at Breakdown will mean for her and Rydia's careers. We need to start thinking about a life after their Co-Op reign has ended, and the two of them have been building themselves well for a smooth transition to high-level singles competition. But then if they do win against their career rivals, I don't see why they couldn't have the next great Co-Op title reign in the same vein as Shantae, Lucina and Terra. This might be some real memes I'm spouting here in the eyes of you, the viewer, but by judging the relative positions of the members of each team, I don't see any reason to think that the Summoners would be at a disadvantage going up against RPGenie in a straight wrestling match. In fact, if they do end up taking the win at Breakdown, I will happily declare them as the better unit overall, and I would implore everyone else to do the same.