

This episode was made possible by my generous supporters on Patreon. Welcome to my new patrons this week: Ethan Ryan, Nicholas Mata, and Tucker White. You all sound like heroes in some kind of spy thriller!

### Synopsis

Hooray! It looks like they're celebrating the end of the season with fireworks, That was nice of them! No, it's actually celebrating the long-running, completely fictional, Pokemon exclusive holiday known as Hinamatsu-PRINCESS DAY! Misty of course is excited for a day dedicated to her and others of her chromosome mixture, so much so that she apparently left togepi with a babysitter for the weekend (there's actually a reason for togepi's absence, just wait for the trivia)! Jessie of course is also thrilled to have the others to give her special treatment, leading to a fantastic gag that I couldn't have written better if I tried.

So while Misty and Jessie submit their serfs to some retail therapy, the narrator's all "Ah yes! Princess Festival! A beloved annual tradition known only to the inhabitants of this fantasy land!" and then we get an admittedly rather appetising glance at misty's free lunch, of which I would not only recommend adding some dang protein if you want to continue aggressively shopping without passing out, but also point out that it must be a pretty fancy spread if she was able to get those rare berries known as "Apples" and "Bananas" mixed in! They must have some seriously loamy soil in this area!

But let's leave the references to future reality warping to the side for now as misty points out a plot-relevant signpost. Ash is all "what? It's just the world's laziest poster for some movie. Either that or an ad for coffee..." and misty's all "Pan left, ya dunsparce, I meant the sale, not the foreshadowing. Considering our positioning you really should have seen that one first..."

Meanwhile, Jessie's going full teen movie montage and letting the character designer have some fun before buying it all on her figurative daddy's credit card! Actually considering what we find out about her family later he might be her literal daddy too I'M GETTING AHEAD OF MYSELF. Anyway, James is all "now admittedly I come from a background so wealthy I had slowpoke tails for brunch every day, but even I know that you don't spend company credit on high fashion!" "Dat's right, everyone knows you gotta spend it on giant vacuum cleaners in the shape of baseball stadiums!" and jessie's all "Oh hush, I know what I'm doing! Not only am I buying a new wardrobe but I'm also going to buy a ton of presents for the boss! Nothing sweeps a few asset explosions under the rug like a huge sausage, two smaller sausages, four jars each of BBQ sauce and tomato relish, and a boxed assortment of lime and grape jellies!" and James is all "look, no one's denying that, Meat & Cans is the standard "Sorry I destroyed your theme park" gift basket, after all, but doesn't it defeat the purpose if you're buying it with his money?" "he doesn't need to know that..." "YOU CHARGED IT TO THE TEAM ROCKET ACCOUNT!" "THIS IS WHY WE CAN'T HAVE NICE THINGS, JAMES- Oh, a pokemon!"

Yes indeed, a pokemon! Oh and look, it's a new pokemon that's disrupting proceedings somewhat! Oh dear, it's going to be one of those episodes, isn't it, where the new pokemon

steals something from a principle character and the whole episode revolves around the hijinx that ensue trying to get it back (farfetch'd, mankey)? See look, it's taken Jessie's clothes, so now she'll want them back. Geez, why don't they ever just CATCH the dang-

Oh. Well that was refreshing if seemingly pointless. Well I guess we're moving onto the ACTUAL A plot now, as Misty and jessie have an altercation over fabric (I guess maybe that should be called an alteration) and Jessie's all "You wanna throw down balls, sister?" and Misty's all "In the store!?! Maybe we really are cut from the same cloth!" Ugh, I've been watching the dub so much I'm starting to think in puns... So they're about to have a freaking indoor pokemon battle in a busy store on the equivalent of Black friday, most likely killing several people, but luckily the female kingpin over here takes the item in question, stopping the conflict before it really starts Then the intercom is all "Attention shoppers! Don't forget to watch other women compete to win a set of dolls and a selfie with fabio! Wait, why are we announcing this, did we sponsor it or something?" and jessie's all

"You mean the problem that was literally just solved as the clothes went to the other lady?" "exactly." "Bring it ON!"

So the contest to crown the queen of the princesses begins! Holy crap, I just realised having a queen of princesses must be a logistical nightmare... The announcer's all "Welcome ladies, to the contest that proves that one of you lovely ladies in the age range of 10-25 is somehow more of a woman than all the others through an arbitrary criteria set by a small subset of humanity! This one in particular involves being as frigid as a Jynx, as sleep inducing as a Jigglypuff and as forgettable as an oddish! What are your thoughts, Celebrity Clout?" "I am contractually excited! Italia!"

"Now, let's see the ladies in their standard beauty pageant garb that just happens to look like the outfits worn by women on ceremony in a country that we can absolutely say they aren't in, as no outside countries or cultures exist outside of america! Right, Fiorella Cappuccino?" "Italia..." and misty's all "With this sick weave I'll drive the fan artist's crazy! There's no way I can lose!" and the announcer's all "Now let's take a look at our grand prize! For the lovely winner we have mint condition set of pokemon amiibo, usable on all future nintendo games for reasons no one really cares about! Oh, and a photo with Fiorella, who's apparently a big deal." "Italia!"(smile) "He's so ethnic!"

Then misty's and jessie are like "I'll show them all..." and misty's all "relatable backstory?" "you better believe it!" and then the announcer's all "Well girls, you all look very nice but now it's time to get ready to rumble!" and misty's all "wait, we have to fight?" and jessie's all "NOW we're talking!" but the announcer is all "No, as gratifying and fanart-baiting as it would be to see a fistfight between you two in full ceremonial kimonos, the winner of the contest also has to be an accomplished pokemon trainer! I say 'also', but that's literally all there is to it! Right, Fiorella?" "Italia!"(demo) "Yes, this is just a glorified tournament which we call a beauty pageant for the tax credits! Now take your positions!"

So misty's all "Guys, please lend me your pokemon, y'all remember the last time I was in one, I can't strategize types for crap over here!" and ash is all "Well that's what you get for being a gym leader! \*sigh\* fine, but is a selfie with Gigantic Coffee guy really worth all this?" "Oh, Cappuccino can go percolate himself, I have a much purer motive: Spite! My sisters always got everything first, so I can rub this in their face!" then brock's all "Wait, weren't you the gym leader before they were?" "Aw, government funding shmovernment funding, everyone knows DOLLS are where it's at!" and over on the team rocket side James is all "I don't suppose you have a relatable backstory too? Otherwise she's going to wipe the floor with you!" "Of course I do! We were so poor I couldn't get any princess dolls my whole life! She's spiting her sisters! I'm spiting THE WORLD!" "Ooh!" So Jessie has all the pokemon she needs except one, which leads to a particularly awesome scene:

So yeah, the rest is pretty awesome, with some great pokemon WHOA MEOWTH JUST TOTALLY FLIPPED PRIMEAPE OFF! HOW DID THAT GET PAST 4KIDS? Ahem. yes, so the announcer's all "It's been a great showing today with Misty utilising a great team of all types and Jessie... somehow winning with a team of two poison types but who cares when the battles are this exciting! Right, Fiorella?" "italia." (happy) and then Jessie shocks the announcer so much his record starts skipping!

Seriously, what made them think that'd fly?

Well anyway after recovering the announcer's all "It seems Jessie is doomed thanks to Misty using a pikachu who's apparently been IV trained into oblivion on the whole team, but what's this? Lickitung has the ultimate counter to a strong personality! Awkwardness! Unbelievable! Pikachu feels so embarrassed he's withdrawn! This is more engaging than Fiorella's last three girlfriends!" "Italia Italia!" (peace sign). But then Misty's all

Wait, Staryu? Misty, you have a Starmie! It's objectively more powerful! You even said you were going to use starmie earlier, remember?

Mind you, it is true starmie doesn't exactly have the best track record...

Well, it's a moot point as of course Psyduck appears and... actually makes himself immediately useful rather than halting the plot like he normally does! Yeah, it appears it's so oblivious it's immune to lickitung's awkward attack! Wow! The best part is, this is apparently just like a movie in the pokemon world that I actually really want to see now!

Then Psyduck does what a psyduck does and violates lickitung's free will, leading lickitung to then violate the laws of physics by launching itself into the air by punching itself in the face. Then Misty wins the dolls, sends them home to crow over her sisters and the narrator's all

“Yep! In order to succeed, you must always remember what’s best in life: To destroy your enemies, to see them blasting off before you, and to hear the lamentation of your sisters!”

### Thoughts

Well, there we go. 52 episodes. The last episode of the season and we certainly ended on... a note.

Well, I’ll talk about that milestone later, for now let’s focus on the show itself. To be honest, my initial feelings on this episode are about the same as they were for A Chansey Operation: I really should like it more than I did.

On paper the concept is fantastic: an episode with tons of battles where some oft-maligned characters get a chance to strut their stuff. Now despite the many problems I’ll bring up I will say that this one delivered on its promising premise much more effectively than A Chansey operation and I do like it more than dislike it... there are some disappointments.

For one thing the animation was almost non-existent here, and that can be a big downside, especially in a freakin’ tournament episode. To give the team their due, they did a good job covering it up, mostly through comedic timing or giving us something interesting to look at, like the montage of Jessie trying on different outfits obscuring the fact that she’s literally sliding in and out of frame or that brilliant back and forth stare between meowth and jessie. So even though the overall effect made it look cheap, I can’t help but admire the shortcuts they took.

For another thing, the story was pretty poor overall. Now, I’m not talking about characterisations, those were great and redeem the episode a lot, but that’s coming up. I’m talking about the plot, which was amazingly bottom-heavy. Looking through the episode, it is just fluffy nonsense all the way up until the tournament, with nothing connecting to the later conflicts other than Jessie catching lickitung. Think about it: if we opened with “It’s princess day! Hey look, a girls only pokemon tournament! I want those dolls! I also want those dolls! Grr!” absolutely NOTHING would have been lost. Heck they didn’t even need to have a contrived reason for jessie to catch a lickitung, she could have just stolen one before the tournament, there’s even precedent for that, remember hitmonlee?

This is a shame as the egregious padding means we have less time to spend on the battles and characters, and this is compounded by the fact that what little we did get was surprisingly good! Not only were we able to get another good look at what makes Misty tick, but the information we get informs her character even more up to this point. This moment in particular is amazing:

It’s so short but says so much about why Misty acts the way she does, why she’s outspoken and brash despite her sometimes feminine interests. It even helps the viewer understand why she’s so obsessive about getting her bike back, it was HER bike. Being the runt with four spotlight-stealing sisters would lead anyone to be possessive of what’s truly hers.

Now here's where I go on a little tangent and inform you of what you may have already guessed, that this episode actually takes place BEFORE misty acquired Togepi. Now think about this. Think about this episode and all the other misty-centric episodes up to that point. Not only was it completely in character (if still rude) for her to want to see Togepi first, but it's also understandable why she cooled down as a character after it chose her. It was a unique thing SHE was the first to receive, and that paid attention only to her. Gaining Togepi was pretty much the culmination of her arc, and this episode was pretty much paving the way for that. This, understandably if unfortunately, explained why she got a lot less interesting as the series went on. What made her fun and interesting for many viewers was seeing her metaphorically fight against what others expected of her, and her internal conflict of wanting her own unique mark in the world separate from her sisters supported her scrappiness beautifully. But with Togepi... she achieved it, and now that she's complete, she doesn't need to assert herself as much. This led to her becoming a mother figure who got annoyed at Psyduck and supported Ash, but there was nothing left to fight for, which is a shame as it didn't have to be that way. She could have refocused her efforts on to being the greatest water trainer, and had another overarching motive through the season of slowly help Psyduck reach it's potential but nope! Psyduck remains the same until misty leaves. I still love misty, but I think with this episode, I'm starting to see where things started to go a little down hill with her.

Phew! Sorry, probably should've put that at the end of my thoughts, but the segue was so good I had to go for it. So yes, the character moments were awesome, the humour was fantastic in places and the latter half certainly wasn't boring, even if an uneven plot and bottom tier animation held it back. You know what? I actually like this one more than I thought. I'll give it a solid B.

Oh and one last thing. Decent writing involving strained family relationships? Yep! It's Junki Takegami again! It's crazy! You may be my favourite writer so far, Takegami-san, but for pete's sake, sort out your family issues!

Trivia

Funnily enough, Lickitung was the only pokemon we ever SEE team rocket catch in the original series, all the way up to when the animation went digital in Hoenn. Arbok, Weezing, Magikarp and Growlie were all gifts, Victreebel was caught offscreen and Wobbuffet was traded (for Lickitung). I guess it kind of shows how bad team rocket are as criminals that they couldn't even steal any.

When the announcer in the tournament does this bizarre comparison of the ideal woman to three different pokemon, here:

In Japanese he's referring to a famous Japanese proverb about being ladylike: "stand like a Chinese Peony, Sit like a tree peony, Walk like a lily." still kind of weird that they chose those

three pokémon to match up to those flowers, but hey, as dogasu said in his comparison, I'm just glad they didn't give him blackface when he turned into a jynx!

Speaking of happenings in the booth, Fiorella Cappucino here was named Takuya in the original Japanese. This is significant because the character was based on Himura Takuya from the insanely popular mega boy band, SMAP. They've disbanded now but they were consistently popular from their creation in 1988 all the way up to LAST YEAR. Yeah, I can see why they chose him as a model.

The doll sets are based on a special item, I suppose you could call them toys, in Japan called Hina dolls, which usually represent famous dynasties. A three tiered set like the pokémon one on the show would easily cost several hundred American dollars and the seven tiered sets Misty's sistys had would be worth at least A THOUSAND US EACH. And Misty just got the hand-me-downs, it's no wonder she has a complex! On a side note, it's quite clever that the top two pokémon in the prize set, the king and queen if you will, are Pikachu and Clefairy. Why is this clever? Well, Pikachu is obviously the mascot today, but it was originally going to be Clefairy! There's even a manga where Clefairy takes centre stage, so I think this was a good shout out.

Now, I don't normally comment on this but there were A LOT of paint edits in this episode to remove Japanese text, like WAY MORE than there normally is. This is so bizarre to me as what, they're trying to hide Japanese culture? GEE! GOOD LUCK WITH THAT IN THIS EPISODE! It's even weirder that they seem to want to get rid of foreign culture but still made Fiorella Italian. It's incredible the lengths they went to in this episode, but since I don't have time to go through them all I'll just leave a link to dogasu's list of them in the description.

This is actually probably the reason why the timeline is so screwed up here, too. Let me explain in the simplest possible terms why Jessie caught Lickitung in this episode and Misty doesn't have Togepi. Originally, this episode was set to air before those two episodes, obviously. It was also going to coincide with the Hinamatsuri festival in Japan, a real holiday celebrating girls everywhere. However, if you recall, there was a certain... incident that stalled production somewhat. Yep, because of the Porygon incident, or The Pokémon Shock, as it's called in Japan, production was delayed by four months. This of course pushed the airdate of this episode well past Hinamatsuri. So, to match it up with the holiday, they held onto this episode so it would air on the correct date. But that would be too easy wouldn't it? "Wait", you may say, but on my DVD and as I remember it, we didn't get this one till way later! Well, as far as I could gather, the main reason for that is that 4Kids had to do so many edits to this one they had to hold it back until it was finished. There! If you want a more in-depth and brain-breaking account of it, dogasu did an excellent breakdown of it that I'll put in the description too.

This is also why this is the last episode of the season too. It's a little confusing but basically for US broadcast purposes the dub seasons were divided into 52 episodes each. The problem is Princess vs. Princess is only the 52nd episode in the original Japanese, NOT the dub as explained above! What'll I do? I had to keep the episodes synced up with Bulbapedia so that my

episodes matched theirs but the whole point of the series was to do the whole DUB first season in one year! Welp, I guess there's not much choice left, is there? I'M GOING TO HAVE TO FINISH THE INDIGO LEAGUE!

Yep, this episode marks the one year anniversary of Suede's Pokemon Journey, where I promised to do one episode a week for a year to match up with the first dub season (even if it didn't quite work out that way), not to mention the 30th anniversary of me! It's amazing looking back just how much the format has EVOLVED (hah!) since the first episode. I mean, I didn't even do synopses for the first few episodes, isn't that insane looking at it now? Thank my patrons for that, they were the ones who suggested it! Real talk though, this started off as an experiment I wasn't sure I'd be able to follow through with, as I had failed to produce consistent content since pretty much all the way back in the Suburban Knights era. I tried so many different ways to work my art around my schedule, from vlogs to full reviews to interactive thinkpiece vlogs... but nothing was able to stick until now. This format stuck, and I wouldn't have been able to do so without my amazing fans and patrons both. My long-suffering fans who encouraged me to try this and my patrons who allowed me to continue it. If my patreon hadn't gotten to the level it did by about halfway through the year, I would have had to stop. Now those who had to stop supporting me as patrons for monetary reasons, do NOT feel guilty, as I wouldn't have been on the street or anything, but I'm just saying there's a real chance the name Suede would have had to be retired. I'm still only able to do this part time, but with the help of all you generous and supportive fans, whether by the EQUALLY IMPORTANT means of viewership, word-of-mouth, or patreon if you can afford it, I know that one day, maybe not soon but one day, I'll be able to make enough to see you all at conventions and live the dream of doing what I love to support my family full time.

But enough of that, I did it! One full year, no breaks, 52 episodes! I even presented myself with an award for it! So what's next? Well as you heard before, I'm going to finish the indigo league, but NOT JUST YET. First there's something I need to take care of. First, I need to review Holiday Hi-Jynx and snow way out. That's going to start next week. After that, well, I did promise my patrons I'd do Journey videos of Pokemon origins if I hit \$500, so that's what I'm going to do! After that, THEN it's back to the indigo league until the Japanese season's done! After that? Well, I have some ideas, but honestly, who knows...

#### Bulbapedia

One thing I DO know, though, is that this series would be utter crap without the amazing wealth of knowledge Bulbapedia gives me for free, and the trivia section would be almost always pathetic without the tireless work of Dogasu on his site, dogasu's backpack. No jokes today, it's the year mark. For serious, you guys. Thank you. Here's to another year!

#### Patrons

No jokes for the patrons either, as without you guys, suede would absolutely not be what it is today without you.

Jon  
Joelle Young  
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Adam Zajdel  
Grant Gangle  
Colleen French  
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Here's hoping I have my work cut out for me coming up with more gags for even more of you in the future!

And so, Suede leaves the festival in high spirits, ready to take on all obstacles. He's feeling rather festive, actually, and wonders if this world also participates in holiday cheer...