



### Cascadia Frontier Wrestling Show #3

*February 21st*

*WOW Hall, Eugene, OR*



After 10 days of rain, the Willamette Valley finally saw reprieve and blue skies. People were out, flowers were starting to bloom and the earliest hint of Spring showed. In Eugene, home to tens of thousands of students, people were getting restless, eager to get out. Known for its sports and hippie culture history, Eugene has nevertheless been a constant presence in the underground music scene.

Much of it has taken place at WOW Hall. Having once hosted Alice in Chains, Black Flag, Fugazi and Nirvana - tonight, the music gives way to wrestling as Cascadia Frontier Wrestling debuts in the historic venue.

With no hallways, the room is packed tighter than Portland and Salem. Many linger just outside, still mere steps from where the ring sits inside the center of the room. This feels even more intimate, almost dangerous and there is no doubt that attendees from the first two shows have traveled even further South to be here. It's loud before the show starts, there is tension in the air. Everything is closer, and the crowd feels more rowdy than they have previously. Word has spread, expectations have been established, most here are ready.

A referee walks to the ring alone. He runs his hands over the ropes, pulls on them on all sides, checks some turnbuckles and chats with a couple of knuckleheads in the crowd. People are crowding the ring, not touching it, but close enough to do so.

Louder than usual, “Doom Town” by Wipers plays over the speakers and the mystery introductory voice booms out of them set in the corner of the room. “Welcome to the third Cascadia Frontier Wrestling show. You won’t forget it.”

1. RULE 1: Stay off the ring.
2. RULE 2: Stay out of the way.
3. RULE 3: No racism. No sexism. No homophobia. Don’t be a fuckhead.
4. RULE 4: Buy drinks. Don’t drink too much.
5. RULE 5: This is Cascadia Frontier Wrestling.

“Get fucking loud”

There is a palpable hum that resonates amongst the crowd before “Holding Out for a Hero” blasts through the speakers once again. People cheer, chanting MAD KURT MAD KURT. And just like that, Kurtis Chapman, destroyed for two weeks straight, pops out from behind the curtain with a shit eating grin on his face. His ribs are taped but he looks like his usual self otherwise, he even claps a few hands on his way down and once in the ring.

Another familiar tune, “Kashmir” by Led Zeppelin blasts through the speakers to rapturous applause. It takes a second, but eventually Rey Cometa comes out from behind the curtain... but he’s on crutches. The cheering stops suddenly as he makes his way to the ring to cut the first “promo” in CFW history.

Cometa takes a microphone handed to him by the referee and the crowd listens as he tells them in broken English and some Spanish that unfortunately the beatings he took over the last two weeks from Valletta and Kamata have messed up his left leg pretty bad and he can’t wrestle tonight. He tried and tried and he even would have disobeyed doctors if he could stand, but he can’t even do that. He apologizes and vows to wrestle in Eugene the next time CFW is here...

He says he’s also brought a replacement, someone many people will know and who has been making his name across the whole of the Estados Unidos and can FLY with the best of them...

Kurt laughs and says audibly “Oh come onnnnnnnn”

The sound of a radio tower and a rocket blasting off comes through loudly before “Rocket” by Def Leppard screams through the speakers and out walks none other than...

Flyin’ Brian Pillman

The crowd cheers, but it’s not thunderous. Brian smiles but there is a seriousness in his eyes. He senses the crowd and the vibe and realizes there is a sense that he’s an outsider. He recognizes it, but doesn’t change his demeanor much. He’s accepted, but he has a lot to prove. He shakes Rey Cometa’s hand and helps him through the ropes, before jogging in place and shaking out his limbs. Kurt approaches with his eyes aglow and offers a handshake. Brian accepts and the two go to their corners.

### **Flyin’ Brian Pillman def. Kurtis Chapman via elevated DDT (4:02)**

The opening minutes are chaotic. Kurt runs his mouth, teases Brian, trolls him and slips through the first handful of Brian’s attempts to grab him. Kurt even lures Brian in at one point, trips him, bails, pops back in, frustrating Pillman. The crowd is with Kurt, having a good time, while Pillman looks lost. That

changes quick as Brian starts tightening things up. A hard arm drag. A vicious dropkick. A series of uppercuts and a front facelock he brings down to the mat, punishing Kurt.

As is usually the case, Kurt finds ways out, frustrates his opponent, but Brian has taken stock of him at this point and remains on the offensive. At one point, Kurt attempts a feint and duck, but Brian anticipates it, kicks Kurt in the gut and jumps off the middle rope with a springboard frouser. The crowd cheers for that. Brian takes it to Kurt to the end, snugging things up without punishing him - showing his strength and domination without cruelty.

The end is quick. Kurt, in a last valiant attempt, charges at Brian, who times his dodge just right, sending Kurt into the ropes. On rebound, Brian hits a beautiful German suplex, drops the bridge and rolls over, holding onto Kurt before grabbing him in a front facelock again, lifting him up and dropping him down in a disgusting DDT. Kurt looks unconscious as the ref counts the 3.

Brian offers a hand and helps him up, clapping him on the back. Kurt smiles before faking a punch at him like a dad would do to his kid and laughing. The crowd eats it up.

Brian leaves to applause that feels earned, he waves to the crowd and mouths "I'll be back"

The crowd wonders when.

### **Erik Hammer def. Gianni Valletta via KO (9:18)**

Word has spread about these two guys by the time they are set to enter. Valletta is booed immediately upon showing himself, the rowdy college kids calling him a "fucking pussy" despite his chain-wielding, wildman look.

Hammer gets cheers and praise after his two brute force matches. He acknowledges the crowd and claps a few hands on the way down, but stares ice cold at the heelish Gianni. As the bell rings, the men circle each other, Hammer feints for some leg takedowns, but Gianni powers or escapes. Repeatedly. In a bout of frustration and master gamesmanship, Hammer shows visible frustration, turning half of his back to Valletta, who then rushes in for a madman attack of his own.

Hammer shuts it down. He times it perfectly, dropping below the tackle and snagging Valletta's legs, dropping him to the mat and like that, he's on him. Elbows to the head, punches to the gut, an attempt at a rolling armbar and he looks like an absolute killer. The two are separated and Valletta changes his approach, looking a bit more serious than he has. He's still clever, still working with cheap shots, but it's just not working.

Every attempt at cleverness and every shortcut taken is met with force and precision. Valletta lands shots, escapes holds, tries to reset or throw Hammer off his game, but Hammer shows his cunning and keeps dragging him back to the mat. This is grappling vs. drunken brawling. The Eugene crowd is a bit different than the past two and start to split. Some of the cheers Hammer was met with at the start are quieter, or there are sounds of indifference, as Hammer works to GRIND down Valletta. He senses this, changes his approach and when he has Gianni in a vulnerable position, locked up in a standing position, he delivers a shoot-type GTR, smashing Valletta's face against his knee, and as he falls, smashes him with an additional elbow to the head.

It's honestly...gross. Valletta is out cold. Hammer is victorious and he smiles at the body at his feet. The crowd is shocked, then cheer. It is here that people realize that Erik Hammer is someone to actually look out for.

### Thunder Sugiyama def. Tor Kamata via dq (referee's reversal) (11:12)

The arrival of two of the more mysterious and gritty wrestlers in CFW quiets the room. Sugiyama enters the match 0-2, having fought incredibly tough both times. Kamata enters 1-1, his insanity and chaos getting both the best AND worst of him.

The crowd knows they are not the TOP dogs, but they sense that the two men have nothing to hold back, no reason not to go as hard as possible and when the bell rings, that's what they do.

They trade strikes without flourish. There is no wasted motion, not in the sense that everything is smooth or that it's impactful, but the fact is that they are connected via fists, feet, choking and more for minutes on end. It's a fight from the beginning, very little wrestling happens. Two wrestlers that drop all pretense of technical wrestling and go at it. Sugiyama targets the arms of Kamata, he gets shots into his belly and he wounds the wildman. Kamata jabs eyes, he kicks knees, he uses pressurized holds that take the breath from Sugiyama.

It's not a good match, and the crowd hardly cheers. It's a car crash they can't look away from. They shout as the men enter their space and lean in as they move away. Both men are bloody, without clear evidence of the cause.

The last couple of minutes grind nearly to a halt. Two men exhausted, still exchanging strikes. The crowd starts to grow disinterested as they nearly fall over themselves. Sugiyama throws a wild right hand and Kamata, in a last ditch effort, blocks it. He thrusts his fingers, like a knife blade into the throat of his opponent which causes him to stagger backward, on wobbly knees. He goes for the throat again with a Tongan Death Grip like move and Sugiyama is barely hanging on. Kamata drops him to the mat as Sugiyama begins to fade. The referee counts to 3.

There's a beat of silence. Then applause. Not FOR Kamata, but for the effort of the men.

Kamata doesn't release the hold. The ref starts yanking at him and Kamata wrenches in his fingers tighter, he sticks out his tongue, he looks crazed. He opens his mouth and attacks Sugiyama's nose. He comes up with a mouth full of blood. Sugiyama looks dead. More refs come out and try to pry him away.

Enter Kintaro Okī, who rushes at Kamata and DROPS him with a huge headbutt, busting him open. Kamata releases his grip and the referee makes a motion of reversing his decision and points at the limp Sugiyama as Kamata is pushed to the back.

Sugiyama starts to stir, completely unaware of what is happening. Okī gets him up onto security's shoulders and he is carried to the back, Okī behind them.

The lights come on for a brief intermission, an opportunity for the college crowd to get tore up.

As people begin to settle, the lights dim again.

"Cold as Ice" blasts through the speakers and Gino Hernandez slinks out to wild boos, followed closely by a completely red, rage-filled "Superstar" Billy Graham. The crowd shouts obscenities, things that don't even make sense. Billy - despite his anger and his inability to be rational is able to ignore them. Gino finds great pleasure in setting them off. Graham gets in the ring, shaking with pent up murderous energy.

Anticipating his opponent, the crowd is elated when "Demon Cleaner" by Kyuss starts up and out steps the young guy with a ton of heart - Bad Dude Tito.

### **Billy Graham def. Bad Dude Tito via diving knee drop (15:45)**

As the two stare each other down on opposite ends of the ring, the boos pick back up for Graham. Gino yells “Oh fuck offfff”.

Graham, breaking slightly, smirks and points at Tito, before motioning that he is going to snap him.

This match has elements from both men’s previous two. Graham is insane on the offensive. Holding everything until the referee counts to 5. Going right up to the line of cheating, occasionally crossing it, but just using his strength to overwhelm Tito. Tito shows his resilience, his fight and his need to prove himself. It’s punches and kicks and hard bodyslams. Tito hits lariats that enrage Graham, Graham kicks Tito a little too low, buckling him over and follows up with a battering in the corner. Tito fights from underneath, throwing himself into Graham with desperation and emotion. He lands shots that wake the crowd up. Graham responds by punishing him for it, grabbing him in a headlock that cuts extra deep into Tito’s windpipe. Graham turns it into a modified bulldog and he drives Tito headfirst into the mat.

The crowd gets angry. Not outright booing, but perhaps mad that Tito is the one receiving the beating.

Tito fights back. Uppercuts, upward thrusts. He gets Graham into the air with a lifting spear-like maneuver before driving him down onto his spine, knocking the wind out of both men. This is two behemoths trying to out-alpha each other. Graham is stronger, but not by much. He’s also more cunning.

Tito has the heart and determination.

After a large forearm to the mush stuns Graham, Tito runs against the ropes full speed, raising his arm as though he is going to take Graham’s head off. Gino Hernandez is there and grabs his foot. Not hard enough that he trips Tito, but Tito’s momentum is halted, and he looks at and kicks at Gino. That’s the only split second that Graham needs, as he clubs Tito in the back of the head, follows up with a quick piledriver and ascends up to the top rope for a kneedrop right into Tito’s face for the 3 count.

Graham stands over Tito afterward, soaking in the negative reaction. It’s unclear if he knows that Gino cheated on his behalf. The ref didn’t see it. Gino hams it up, but Graham just looks at Tito, another person who tested him. He came out victorious and in a show of ultimate disrespect, he spits on Tito. He just looks disgusted and scowls at the crowd before leaving.

Tito comes to and when he realizes there is spit on his face, he wills his body up and looks both embarrassed and pissed. He almost had him. This isn’t done.

### **Negro Casas def. Kintaro Oki via scorpion deathlock (11:57)**

The last two matches have had real gravitas with the crowd on the edge of their seats. This one feels...special. Oki has been phenomenal on the first two shows. Using his strength, his toughness and his headbutts to great success. Casas has shown that he might be the greatest wrestler in the world. The crowd is ready, eager, they stand before the bell even rings.

There is a feeling out process early, not the explosiveness of the last two matches. Oki realizes that Casas is a superior technician, Casas knows that Oki is hard to get down. Oki grinds forward, methodical and unyielding. Oki tries for headbutts and strikes but realizes that Casas is too quick. He works for high-pressure holds, headlocks, grounding him into leglocks, and more. Casas meets him calmly, slipping out of danger, redirecting whatever Oki gives, making Oki work harder than he is really able.

Oki gets tough shots in and a particular headbutt busts Casas' lip, drawing a little bit of blood. Casas maintains his defensive pressure, sneaking in kicks, including one that catches Oki in the throat, knocking him back, gasping for breath.

Around the 9 or 10-minute mark, most in the crowd understand what's happening here. Oki has been incredible and hard-headed up to this point, but Casas is someone that refuses to be cracked. The crowd murmurs as the difference becomes clearer and clearer. Casas isn't rushing. He isn't reacting. He is picking his spots. He's picking Oki apart.

The finish comes clean. After some repeated kicks inside and outside of his legs, some falling leg breakers and more, Oki is struggling to stay up. Casas dives in with a leg scissors hold, bringing Oki to the mat. He traps him, stomps his stomach once, then grabs his legs and executes the fastest scorpion deathlock you've ever seen. Oki winces but isn't scrambling. He knows he's hooked and he can't escape. He taps.

Casas releases immediately. No taunt. A quick nod and he heads to the back. The crowd follows him with their eyes, almost in awe. Someone near the back says, "That guy's on another level." Another says "He's the best I've ever seen".

As we ready for the main event, the crowd is thrilled with what they have seen so far. Every match has delivered and they have let the wrestlers know. Eugene skews younger and louder and they KNOW this has been a special show.

Then "Cold As Ice" announces itself through the speakers once again to loud boos and look who it is...Gino Hernandez, 2 middle fingers up in the air. The crowd is loud and threatening and he laughs at them, pops his jacket collar. No one forgets the rules and no one tries to get at him, but he gives it to them. When Gino enters the ring, Billy Graham comes out from the back to even louder boos. This time, he flexes a little bit - egging them on. He bullies someone out of their seat and takes it, sitting next to the ring.

Someone in crowd yells "FUCK THEM UP, SHIBATA" even before his music hits.

But those guitar sounds from "Takeover" do hit, the crowd holds their breath and Katsuyori Shibata, The Wrestler comes out. Eyes focused at the ring. We have our first rematch.

### **Katsuyori Shibata def. Gino Hernandez via Octopus Hold (16:14)**

Gino works the crowd from the start. Eugene hates him for it. The loudest reaction of the night is before the two men lock up. The crowd chants for Shibata and boos at Gino. Gino laughs, he loves it. His confidence and ego do not waver, despite losing to the man across from him recently.

Shibata ignores everything. He stares, barely flinching.

The match is a harder test for Shibata than Portland. It plays out similarly in exchanges, but Gino is smarter, more clever and knows what he needs to do to survive. He frustrates Shibata, slips away, sneaks in shots and uses his slightly bigger size to actually get Shibata down on the mat, showing true fallibility a few times. In a moment of shock, Gino slips by a big boot / high kick attempt, snags Shibata from behind and delivers a nasty back suplex onto his head. He unfortunately shows his own weakness and gloats for just a second before following up, allowing Shibata to recover a bit.

It's the longest match in CFW history and it is competitive. Despite their hate of Gino, it's a good match, a bit of a stylistic clash - but the crowd recognizes the work and are hooked.

Shibata hits the dropkick to the corner, but Gino fights back. Shibata hits the STO, but Gino fights back. Billy Graham sits, slaps the mat, but doesn't interfere. Having trouble putting him away, Shibata hits a Go 2 Sleep on Gino, but instead of letting him drop to the mat, he holds him, locks on an Octopus Hold and Gino is nearly unconscious. He gets a last gasp of energy, tries to fight it, Shibata locks it in tighter. Graham stands, but doesn't come in.

Suddenly, there is movement in the crowd. There is movement near the edge of the room, toward the entrance. Someone says "Oh shit"

No music. No announcement. A man steps into view. Denim. Boots. ZZ Top T-Shirt. Long blond hair.

It's Stunning Steve Austin.

He doesn't approach the ring. He doesn't gesture.

He watches Shibata.

Shibata notices. He looks at Austin and wrenches the Octopus Hold even more. Graham, hoping there was enough distraction to get involved, starts to get onto the apron, but is too late. Gino yells and taps. Shibata releases him and looks to the entrance.

They lock eyes across the room. Austin turns and leaves.

Shibata stays where he is, breathing hard, expression unreadable. Graham enters the ring and stands up to Shibata, towering over him. Shibata looks up, but ultimately ignores him and leaves.

"Doom Town" starts once again as the ring empties and the crew begins to clean up. People start to head outside. They look emotionally drained like they've been on a long car ride. But they're excited.

"Dude, Pillman AND Austin?"

The voice comes on over the PA when only half the group is still in the room.

"Next Week: Astoria"

**END OF SHOW 3**