Written by Sam Sattler
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Over the past year, Japan's 55kg division has began to heat up with the emergence of Ryuya Kusakabe, Shota Takiya and KENJI, brother of Yuta Kubo and now it appears that there is another rising star in the Super Bantamweight division and it is 25 year old Seiya Rokukawa. At DEEP*KICK 10 earlier this week, Rokukawa asserted his dominance in the promotion's first 55kg tournament, scoring consecutive knockout wins over Yuki Kyotani and Yukinobu Nakatsukasa in the semis and finals, respectively. The wins move Rokukawa to 8-0-0, 6 KO and is his second tournament win of his young career as he won the RISE Rising Rookies Cup last year at 55kg, scoring knockouts in the semifinals and finals of that tournament as well. Despite only having 8 pro fights, at 25, Rokukawa is older than the elite fighters in the division, but luckily RISE has one of the better 55kg divisions in Japan. If his power carries into the upper levels of the division, then potential matchups with Ryuya Kusakabe, Shota Takiya and Nobuchika Terado should be all the more entertaining.

Also on this card were a pair of retirement bouts. First, Yasushi Nobuhiro whose exhibition bout was against 2010 K-1 MAX Japan Tournament champion Yuichiro "Jienotsu" Nagashima. Nagashima still looked to be a bit heavy, but in shape so he may be on the path back to being a legitimate kickboxer. The other retirement exhibition was for the first NJKF Atomweight "BONITA BOXEO" champion taking on current WPMF Japan Women's Atomweight champion Little Tiger. {jcomments on}