Written by Sam Sattler
Monday, 04 June 2012 13:40 -

The RISE 88 supercard took place yesterday at the Tokyo Dome City Hall, with 4 current RISE champions competing and a host of other top talents within the company.

The night's main event saw promotional 60kg champ Kosuke Komiyama defend his title for the first time with a 4th round knockout of Motochika Hanada at 2:53. Hanada gave Komiyama a good challenge in the early stages of the fight, but as it progressed into the second round Komiyama took control, ultimately dropping Hanada in the 4th and causing his corner to throw in the towel. Komiyama (18-2-0, 11 KO) is now on a 7 fight winstreak and can probably lay claim to being the best fighter around the weight in Japan not fighting in Krush. With wins over Kan Itabashi and Sergio Wielzen, it's hard to argue against Komiyama's standing simply because he doesn't fight in Krush. However, I would like to see him make the jump over and fight whoever holds the Krush 60kg title at the time, or possibly take a fight against Naoki Ishikawa or a top foreigner, as RISE has not been shy about looking for talent outside of the promotion. The loss isn't that bad for Hanada (12-2-1, 4 KO) who is still pretty good.

In the co-main event, promotional Heavyweight champ Makoto Uehara knocked out UFC veteran Crafton "Blaze" Wallace at 2:27 into the 2nd round. Uehara was able to hurt Wallace to the body in the second round and use his heavy hands to drop him twice, both times with right hooks, prompting the referee to stop the fight. Uehara (13-4-0, 9 KO) was originally supposed to take on Ray Sefo, but Sefo pulled out, citing a lingering eye injury that had not recovered from his previous fight against Mirko CroCop. Uehara was coming off of a quick KO of Won Jingan back at RISE 87 and this likely sets him up for a title fight with Kengo Shimizu for either Uehara's Heavyweight title or an inaugural 90kg title. Wallace was a journeyman MMA fighter at Middleweight with no big wins, while his losses came to the likes of Nate Marquardt, Martin Kampmann and Patrick Cote.

In a 64kg superfight, 63kg champion Yuki was unable to defeat surging prospect and RISE Korea Welterweight champ Sun Hyun Lee, though the fight was close with Lee taking a majority decision on scores of 28-28, 29-28 and 28-27. Lee first got his name out with a one-sided beatdown of Kizaemon Saiga, then lost a razor-thin extension round decision to Koya Urabe in the opening round of the Krush 63kg tourney. He won the RISE Korea title last year in a 4-man one-night tournament and lost a close decision to RISE 65kg champ Koji Yoshimoto at RISE 85,

though the fight would have been a draw had Lee made weight. A good fight to make would be between Lee and K-1 veteran Lim Chi Bin, who recently dropped down to 65kg. Yuki (31-14-1, 23 KO) may not be in the division's elite, but he is certainly in the upper tier and is a damn tough out for any of the top guys at the weight. He was coming off of an incredible comeback win that saw him score two downs in the 5th over title challenger Yuto Watanabe back at RISE 87. He could find himself defending his title again against Hiroshi Mizumachi in the near future.

In the last superfight featuring a current RISE champion, 55kg champ KENJI continued his mean streak with a 3rd round KO of WAKO European Bantamweight champ Franck Gross. KENJI landed a huge left head kick in the 3rd round that put Gross out and forced the referee to stop the bout before starting a count. KENJI (21-4-0, 13 KO) has won 11 of his last 12 and without a deep talent pool, RISE has exhausted all options for him outside of bringing over foreign competition. They could potentially go out and get Ryuya Kusakabe to challenge for the title, but an ideal world would see him in Krush against Nobuchika Terado, Kusakabe or current Krush champ Shota Takiya. Gross now drops to 21-5-1 (3 KO).

In a bit of an upset, Team Souwer's Henri van Opstal scored a KO of Hinata at 19 seconds into the 3rd round. The two seemed to have been even for the first two rounds, but van Opstal scored a huge right high kick that sent Hinata down and while he tried to get back up, he was unable to do so. This is a big win for van Opstal and is a good bounce back from a loss to Hafid el Boustati at It's Showtime 55 in January. Hinata (22-12-1, 7 KO) is now 0-2 against Team Souwer and has not fared so well against non-Asian competition since his upsets of Mike Zambidis and Artur Kyshenko, being choked out in under a minute by Souwer, shut out by Giorgio Petrosyan, blown out of the water by Andy Ristie and now KO'd by van Opstal.

In the last "big" fight of the event, Erika Kamimura earned a second shot at RISE -48kg Queen RENA, defeating Seo Hee Ham for the second time by unanimous decision on scores of 30-28 and 29-27(x2). The fight does not appear to have been as action-packed as their first, but it seems like Kamimura stung Ham a couple times. Kamimura (25-2-0, 13 KO) earns a rematch with RENA for the RISE belt, though it is hard to say when that fight would take place as Shootboxing is currently holding first round fights for a 53.5kg Girls S-Cup and, according to their schedule, is planning on holding the tournament in August. Ham (6-2-0, 1 KO) wasn't as successful as she was in their first fight, likely due to difference of rulesets, but she has nothing to hang her head about. She is one of the top female fighters in women's kickboxing and MMA, but never quite broke through into the division's elite, with her MMA losses coming to legends Miku Matsumoto, Yuka Tsuji and Megumi Fujii and a pair of losses to Fujii student and prodigy Ayaka Hamasaki and now her only two kickboxing losses against Kamimura.

More analysis and quick results after the break

In an exhibition, Ayaman Director, the leader of a nightlife entertainment group named Ayaman Japan, made her kickboxing debut against RENA's sister MIO. She came out in black leather and with tattoos all over her body while the two other prominent members of the group served as ring card girls. I doubt this is the start of a kickboxing career, but it was a fun stunt that helps out both sides.

In a 90kg tilt, top ranked heavyweight Kengo Shimizu stopped #2 ranked Raoumaru with a kick to the body at 1:42 in the second round. Shimizu will likely get a shot at Heavyweight champ Makoto Uehara, though I have no idea if that will come at Heavyweight or for an inaugural 90kg title. Raoumaru was coming in off of a win over Eduardo Sakomoto at RISE 87 and while he was still a bit flabby, he physically looked much better than he has in recent fights and although he lost this fight, the drop to 90kg could benefit him a lot.

In what was likely a 65kg title eliminator, Yukihiro Komiya needed an extension round to edge out #1 ranked Yusuke Sugawara by unanimous decision, getting a 10-9 scorecard from all 3 judges. This was only Komiya's (28-10-0, 6 KO) second fight at 65kg in his career and it is a pretty good win over a tough opponent and also snaps a 2 fight losing streak. Considering he was ranked #1 at 70kg and Sugawara was #1 at 65kg, it is very likely that he has a date with 65kg champ Koji Yoshimoto in the near future. Sugawara (22-15-2, 7 KO) was 2-4 in his last 6 heading into this fight, but he has been fighting tough competition and has been very competitive in each of his losses. While he could find himself winning a promotional title again, he is a tough gatekeeper and is a good litmus test at 65kg. I'd like to see a 3rd fight with Shunsuke Oishi or even a matchup against Sun Hyun Lee.

In what was likely a 63kg title eliminator, #1 ranked Hiroshi Mizumachi took a majority decision over #4 ranked Naoki on scores of 29-28, 29-29 and 30-29. Mizumachi was set to face Yuki before an injury forced him out of the bout and although this is his first win since 2008, he seems likely to take on Yuki for the title sometime in the future. Naoki made a name for himself earlier this year with an upset of HIROYA at Big Bang 8, but takes a step back with a loss here.

In a 65kg fight, Silver Wolf's Yasuomi Soda bounced back from his first career loss with a knockout of Korean Kim Dong-soo at 2:29 of the 3rd round. Soda got the first blemish on his record back at RISE 86 in a challenge for Koji Yoshimoto's title and this is a solid win over the Korean who is probably best known for being on the wrong end of a beatdown at the hands of

Kem Sitsongpeenong in Thai Fight.

In the semifinals of the RISE Featherweight tournament, favorite Ryo Pegasus and Ittao advanced with unanimous decision wins over Yuta Sashikubi and Masayuki Isabashi, respectively, both on scores of 29-28(x3). Ittao wasn't much of a name heading into this while Ryo Pegasus had made a few waves in Japan and Ittao already has an upset win in the tournament, taking out J-Network Featherweight champ Masato Sato, so a win over Ryo Pegasus in the finals would do wonders for his career.

Finally, in a 55kg bout, RISE Super Bantamweight tournament finalist Dyki got back on the winning track with an extension round split decision over J-Network Super Bantamweight champ Hiroaki Mizuhara on scores of 10-9(x2) and 9-10. Dyki was coming in riding a 2-fight losing streak, losing to KENJI in the tournament final and to Ryuma Tobe in his first fight after. Mizuhara drops to 1-1-1 on the year, but should be fighting Taisuke Degai at an It's Showtime Japan event.

I recommend looking at the event pictures at gbring . There are some really good ones from the event.

RISE 60kg Title Fight: Kosuke Komiyama (c) def. Motochika Hanada by 4th round TKO (towel) at 2:53

Heavyweight Fight: Makoto Uehara def. Crafton Wallace by 2nd round TKO (referee stoppage) at 2:27

64kg Fight: Sun Hyun Lee def. Yuki by 3rd round Majority Decision (28-28, 29-28, 28-27)

55kg Fight: KENJI def. Franck Gross by 3rd round KO (left high kick) at 0:29

70kg Fight: Henri van Opstal def. Hinata by 3rd round KO (right high kick) at 0:19

48kg Fight: Erika Kamimura def. Seo Hee Ham by 3rd round Unanimous Decision (29-27, 29-27, 30-28)

90kg Fight: Kengo Shimizu def. Raoumaru by 1st round KO (right body kick) at 1:42

65kg Fight: Yukihiro Komiya def. Yusuke Sugawara by ext. round Unanimous Decision (10-9, 10-9, 10-9) after a 3rd round Majority Draw (29-28, 29-29, 28-28)

63kg Fight: Hiroshi Mizumachi def. Naoki by 3rd round Majority Decision (29-28, 29-29, 30-29)

65kg Fight: Yasuomi Soda def. Dong-soo Kim by 3rd round TKO (referee stoppage) at 2:29

RISE Featherweight Tournament Semifinal: Ryo Pegasus def. Yuta Sashikubi by 3rd round Unanimous Decision (29-28, 29-28, 29-28)

RISE Featherweight Tournament Semifinal: Ittao def. Masayuki Isabashi by 3rd round Unanimous Decision (29-28, 29-28, 29-28)

55kg Fight: Dyki def. Hiroaki Mizuhara by ext. round Split Decision (10-9, 9-10, 10-9) after a 3rd round Split Draw (29-28, 28-29, 29-29)