

Krush.28 Results: Takeru Captures Inaugural 58kg Title

Written by Sam Sattler

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Krush.28 took place earlier this week at Korakuen Hall in Tokyo, headlined by the finals of the 58kg Tournament between Takeru and Nobuchika Terado to crown the first Krush 58kg champion. Also on the card were 60kg champ Hirotaka Urabe against Italy's Antonio Campagna and former 63kg champ Ryuji Kajiwarra against the up and coming Minoru Kimura.

In the main event, Takeru and Nobuchika Terado were even throughout the fight, tagging each other constantly over the course of 3 rounds, but a 1st round knockdown for Takeru was the difference as he won a unanimous decision on scores of 29-27(x3). Terado's biggest weakness over the last few years has been the first round, getting dropped by Ryuya Kusakabe, Shota Takiya and Andy Howson in the opening frame. Takeru exploited that weakness and picked up his 6th straight win and improved to 11-1-0 (7 KO), the sole loss coming on a doctor stoppage due to a broken nose. I fully expect Takeru to stay at this weight as he is only 21 years old and probably wants to avoid fights with 55kg teammates Takumi, Namito Izawa, Norick Kitani and Keisuke Ishida. As for future opponents, we'll have to see if some higher profile 60kg fighters move down. If not, Krush will have to bring in either foreign competition or start taking guys from other organizations. For Terado, there's not a whole lot to say. It's clear that at 32 he is still an elite fighter, but he has been in a lot of wars and they are starting to take their toll. By no means should he retire, but his habit of starting slow and his declining defense will mean he'll struggle to pick up wins against the upper echelon of whatever division he chooses to fight at.

In the co-main event, Krush 60kg champion Hirotaka Urabe pushed his unbeaten streak to 15 with a 3rd round knockout of WAKO Italy Lightweight champion Antonio Campagna. Despite a 11cm height advantage for Campagna, Urabe dominated the fight, pressuring Campagna throughout. Despite his streak, this was by far Urabe's most dominant performance in the past 8 months, as he barely got by Xavier Bastard and SHIGERU, needing extension round cut stoppages to beat them both, and fought Naoki Ishikawa to a draw. This was a very solid win for him after a trio of tough battles and I'd like to see him right back at it in his next outing with either a 4th fight against Ishikawa or a rematch with SHIGERU.

At 64kg, Minoru Kimura produced a big upset by knocking out former Krush 63kg champ Ryuji Kajiwarra at 1:50 of the 3rd round. The 19 year old Kimura, who is known for his fast starts and big power, had a good gameplan for the fight as he was patient in the 1st, then turned it up with combinations in the 2nd and 3rd, dropping Kajiwarra once in each round, the latter of which ended the fight. This is by far the biggest win of Kimura's young career and marks his 4th in a

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row, all of which have come by knockout. With Masaaki Noiri fighting in NJKF and Koya Urabe and Gagny Baradji tied up in the ISKA Lightweight tournament, Minoru Kimura may have just earned himself a shot at 63kg champ Hideaki Yamazaki. And I don't see how Krush can pass up on the opportunity as both fighters have power and aren't afraid to let their hands go. This is a big step back for Kajiwaru who has lost two in a row and three of his last four. After a career-best run from 2010 to 2012 that saw him pick up wins over Koya Urabe, Tetsuya Yamato, Kizaemon Saiga, Naoki Ishikawa and HIROYA, he finds himself in the middle of the pack at Lightweight. At 36, age isn't too much of a concern as his counterpunching style doesn't get him into too many brawls, but it is plausible to think his speed is declining with each subsequent outing. He is still a very talented fighter, but this loss knocks him out of the top 10 in Japan and his age will make an even harder climb back to the top.

At 70kg, Shintaro Matsukura picked up a majority decision win over Yoichi Yamazaki. Matsukura returned to 70kg in this fight after dropping to 67kg to compete in the Krush GP earlier this year where he won his quarterfinal against Makihira Keita, but was completely outclassed by Yuta Kubo.

At 67kg, Yuya Yamamoto and TaCa did what they are best at and put on an entertaining brawl that went to an extension round where TaCa dropped Yamamoto to earn a decision victory. After a poor performance in the 63kg WILDRUSH League, TaCa is now 2-1 at 65kg and 67kg with the sole loss coming to Yuta Kubo. While Yamamoto had been struggling, he showed some of the skill that got him to the K-1 World MAX Semifinals in 2009 earlier this year in the Krush GP, stopping Hitoshi Tsukagoshi and pushing Abdallah Ezbiri to the brink in their semifinal bout. While he's still a game competitor, an on his game Yamamoto would have beaten TaCa quite handily.

Finally in the 55kg WILDRUSH League, league leader Takumi picked up his third win with his first stoppage, knocking out Yuya Suzuki in the first round. Both fighters had 4 points going into the bout, but it was Takumi who took a commanding lead with 7 points in three fights. In the other bout Yuki Masato picked up his first win over Kazuki Okawa with a dominant performance that resulted in a unanimous decision. Both men now have 3 points.

Quick results after the break

58kg Tournament Final: Takeru def. Nobuchika Terado by 3rd round Unanimous Decision (29-27, 29-27, 29-27)

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61kg Fight: Hirotaka Urabe def. Antonio Campagna by 3rd round KO (right cross) at 2:24

64kg Fight: Minoru Kimura def. Ryuji Kajiwarra by 3rd round KO (left hook) at 1:50

70kg Fight: Shintaro Matsukura def. Yoichi Yamazaki by 3rd round Majority Decision (30-29, 30-29, 29-29)

55kg WILDRUSH League Fight: Takumi def. Yuya Suzuki by 1st round KO (right hook) at 2:16

55kg WILDRUSH League Fight: Yuki Masato def. Kazuki Okawa by 3rd round Unanimous Decision (30-26, 30-26, 30-26)

60kg Fight: Katsuya Goto and Yuki Matsuno fought to a 3rd round Split Draw (30-29, 29-30, 29-29)

60kg Fight: Taishi Hiratsuka def. Kodai Nobe by 2nd round KO (spinning backfist) at 2:19

67kg Fight: TaCa def. Yuya Yamamoto by ext. round Unanimous Decision (10-8, 10-8, 10-8) after a 3rd round Majority Draw (30-29, 29-29, 29-29)

60kg Fight: Kizuku and Toshi fought to a 3rd round Majority Draw (29-28, 28-28, 28-28)

70kg Fight: Kenmun def. Taisei Kondo by 3rd round Unanimous Decision (29-28, 29-28, 29-28)

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63kg Fight: Ryotoku Motoyama def. Kotaro by 1st round KO (3 knockdowns) at 1:10