

Sunday, April 13, 2008

A Clean Sweep for Cobra Kai at Tuff-N-Uff Vegas!



just as I predicted, **Cobra Kai** pulled a clean sweep at the Tuff-N-Uff amateur Mixed Martial Arts event at The Tropicana Hotel in Vegas. That was not really much of a tough prediction, given their grappling talents.

One surprise, at least for me, was the stand up skills of **Coates Cobb-Adams**. I did not know much about him, but he is apparently a damn fine kick-boxer. He ended his fight early in the first round with a hard, hard spinning back kick that floored his opponent, who stayed down for a long time.

I predicted **Chris Holdsworth** would get either a RNC or an armbar from the top, and I was pretty much on target (too bad I did not have money on that bet!). Chris shot in, took it right to the ground (with a double-leg, I think), mounted, pounded on his opponent till he gave his back, and then worked for a rear naked choke, but then ended up transitioning from back control to a solid arm bar and got the tap very early in the first round. It was like a scene out of an old-school "Gracie Jiu Jitsu in Action" tape. His opponent did not have a chance. Not that he wasn't game - its just that he was up against the Faithful Young Apprentice of the Dark Lord of Jiu Jitsu (that would be Marc Laimon).

Jason Carpenter's win was also most impressive, showing not just great grappling, but also very good stand-up, great ground and pound, and very savvy ring-generalship. At one point when he slammed his opponent in the corner and began a beat down, the ref separated them and restarted them standing, apparently because he thought they were too close to the ropes (really did not make sense to me - what else is the corner for than pinning your man into it so you can tag him with no place to go?).

Well, when they restarted, Jason shot in again, picked his opponent up and slammed him down again in the corner, but then immediately picked him back up, turned, and slammed him down with authority right in the middle of the ring, as if to say to the ref "OK, how bout I put him here this time. Does that work for you?" He dished out some devastating ground control and ground and pound. Jason is more than ready for The Ultimate Fighter.

Jerry Shapiro was not able to fight because he missed some training due to an illness. Too bad. I was really looking forward to that fight as J -Shap is a heck of a scrapper and very, very fast.

Brian Kangas had the closest fight of the night for the Cobra Kai team, with a tough bout against a very game **Don Stoner** from RCJ Machado. Stoner was pretty darn good on the ground, and after a short bit of grappling and scrambling on the canvas they stayed on their feet for most of the rest of the fight, trying their hand at boxing, until the very end of the last round when Kangas took it back to the mat and was able to get Stone's back. He very nearly got the rear naked choke, but Stoner was able to survive the attempts to sink it in. Kangas pulled out the decision, especially with that final taking of the back, but it would have been cool to see him get the tap.

Bill Cooper fought last, against a skilled Xtreme Couture fighter, EdsilavMihoylov. It was clear that Edsilav was no slouch, but he just could not handle the overwhelming, nonstop attack and grappling skill of Bill Cooper, who slammed him hard, took the back, flattened him out on his belly, and sunk in a tight RNC for the win in what had to be maybe 25 seconds into the first round. A very convincing victory rivaled only by the speed of Chris Holdsworth's win.

Big props and congratulations to all the Cobra Kai guys and to their coach, Marc Laimon. I have heard some trash talk on Sherdog and elsewhere about Laimon supposedly not being a good MMA coach just because some of the fighters who have trained with him have lost fights (and some guys

think because he doesn't fight MMA himself that Laimon cant' be a good MMA coach). Well, the performance of his team at Tuff - N- Nuff puts that nonsense to rest. He was a very effective coach with guys who stuck to their game plan. And just as he does at grappling tournaments, he puts 100% into his guys here too.

Some of the other fights were also outstanding, with very impressive skills for guys who are labeled "amateur." Some of them I would put on a par with guys who have appeared on TUF (and several way above the average). The Cobra Kai guys were most consistently of high level, but there were some good fighters from Xtreme Couture, West Coast MMA and LA Boxing (and some not so great, but hey, at least they had the stones to step into the ring, so who am I to judge - these guys were new to the game and still willing to step up, so props to em).


Matthew Contes of LA Boxing showed he knew more than just how to box by out-grappling **Kimo Yadao** of Xtreme Couture and winning by submission. Very impressive!

In the womens' bouts, **Lacey Schuckman** defeated a game **Kaitie Tompkins**, but not until after Tompkins very nearly secured a triangle choke (actually, several triangle chokes). If Kaitie had just a little better jiu jitsu, and knew how to keep that triangle and how to tighten it down, she would have won for sure. Lacey kept picking her up and slamming her down, loosening the triangle choke, and then got out, over and over. Someone needs to teach Kaitie how to hook an arm under a leg to stop the slam while she has a triangle locked in, and how to pull the head down to finish, and also how to use a triangle to sweep. Alas, if only Katie could train at a good jiu jitsu school for six months, then she'd have something.

She also missed a golden opportunity to sweep Lacey when Lacey stood straight up in her guard for long periods of time, with her feet right there, close to Katie, ready to be grabbed. All she would have had to do was grab those feet and push with her knees and over Lacey would have gone. Kaitie also landed in half guard at one point, but did not know how to base out and keep top position and was easily rolled off and reversed. She just needs basic grappling. If she had it, she could have won. Very frustrating to watch as my wife and I, and our kids, were rooting for the less experienced Kaitie (and because she is a Johnny Cash fan like us, judging from her Myspace page music).

The second female fight was very one-sided with a clearly more experienced, better conditioned, and better trained **Jessica Halverson** easily dominating **Amber Molinari** on the feet. Amber was game, came out swinging for the fences, and never gave up, but she lacked stand up technique and was out-boxed and overpowered and finally dropped from some hard punches. Amber has potential, but she needs some solid, no nonsense boxing training and also would of course benefit from some basic takedowns and basic grappling so she has an option of going for the ground. That one was a bit of a mis-match.

There were some other great fights, and some not so great, but for the price of admission, with twenty friggin fights on the card, this was a wonderful show. We'll be back for more!

Posted by Stewart Rhodes at 1:25 AM 

Labels: amateur fighting, Bill Cooper, Christ Holdsworth, cobra kai jiu jitsu, grappling, Marc Laimon, mixed martial arts, mma, Tuff-N-Uff, Xtreme Couture

[Newer Post](#)

[Home](#)

[Older Post](#)

[Subscribe to: Post Comments \(Atom\)](#)