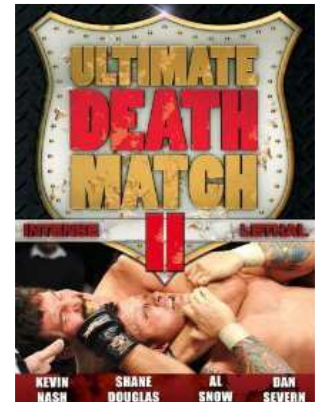


ULTIMATE DEATH MATCH 2

Being a child of the 70's that grew up in England, the word 'wrestling' conjures up memories of ITV's Dickie Davies introducing the likes of Big Daddy and Giant Haystacks on a Saturday afternoon. These guys were real men who ingested pork pies not steroids, and in doing so made the darts players on the rival channel look positively anorexic!

Of course professional wrestling in the USA is a much more glamorous affair with bulging muscles, packed stadiums and more drama than your average soap opera.

So onto real life wrestling promoter Shawn Cain's second outing as film director, Ultimate Death Match 2. Shot as a Grapple-umentary of sorts, the movie picks up where Ultimate Death Match left off. It begins with retired Jimmy Valiant, sweeping a ring, reminiscing about his 1970's glory days as a star in the USWA. A die hard wrestling romantic, he confides in Al Snow (ECW, WWE) his final ambition to "die in the ring in front of all those people".



Jimmy's son, Jake, is an unscrupulous wrestling promoter with an unsavoury product. His pay-per-view online streaming event claims to pay the winner of his macabre tournament \$10 million - while the loser gets... well, the clue is in the title!

As the tournament unfolds, Jake's ambitions of money, infamy and taking back wrestling from the scourge of "Sports Entertainment" are slowly realised. But in the end, will it be Jake that suffers the biggest loss of all???

I guess the best that can be said of this DVD is that it is possible to have a laugh watching something so atrociously bad! I am not a wrestling fan at all but even if I was, surely a better choice of purchase would be a DVD featuring "real" wrestling? The ill-advised slow motion replays show the choreographed kicks from patent boots hilariously being a full couple of feet away from connecting with their targets. This didn't exactly help the realism of an ear being ripped off in a preliminary tussle early on in the film. Basically, there is more real violence at your average Champions League football match (and the acting is better too!).

Grapple fans may be interested to know that the movie features real pro wrestlers in Kid Kash (WWE), Shane "The Franchise" Douglas (ECW, WCW WWF), Raven (ECW NWA, JCW) and UCF veteran Dan Severn.

Regardless of the plethora of heads being 'stamped' on, forearms smashing into faces and the obligatory conveniently placed tables getting shattered, the most creative aspect of the movie is the flamboyant commentary during the bouts. These guys make Richard Keys and Andy Gray sound like women's lib with some of their tongue in cheek sexist drivel. "Kid Kash needs to tell his wife to get out of the ring and go back into the kitchen to bake some cookies with the kids!" This gem is however neutralized when a fighter is kicked in the knackers to the tune of "Big Jim takes a kick to the twins!" And what better way to sum up the concept of UDM than with "...one of these guys is going to win \$10 million tonight. The other will be making a long distance call from the horizontal phone box!" Brilliant!

So while I wasn't overly impressed with the content of the latest entry into the dubious subgenre of Wrestling Horror, it is the title that disappoints me most. Agreed there is a death of sorts within the 90 minute run time, but including the word 'ULTIMATE' is stretching poetic licence further than a spandex leotard over a ripped torso! Maybe it was included so the moronic crowd could indulge in an incessant chant of "UDM! UDM! UDM! UDM!" In order to justify the 'ULTIMATE' tag in the title, surely they should consider arming these testosterone junkies with power tools before allowing them to step onto the canvas. I would pay to watch that. Whether I would pay to watch the planned third instalment, the cunningly titled Ultimate Death Match 3, is rather doubtful!

By Marc Lissenburg

Released by IMDFilms

Region 1 - NTSC

Not Rated

Extras :

see main review

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