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Ultimate Death Match

Score: **15%**
 Rating: **Not Rated**
 Publisher: **MVD Entertainment Group**
 Region: **1**
 Media: **DVD/1**
 Running Time: **Approx 90 Mins.**
 Genre: **Sports/Independent/Action**
 Audio:

Features:

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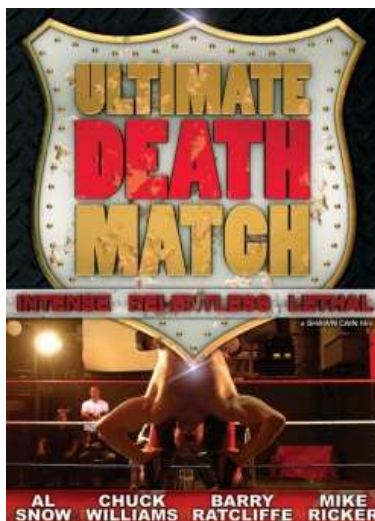
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Oh boy. Where do I begin? **Ultimate Death Match** has got to be the cheapest movie I think I have ever seen. "Independent production" doesn't even begin to describe the quality of film printed onto a disc. To make matters worse, I can't find a single redeemable quality about **Ultimate Death Match** that I would ever recommend to anyone on any level.



Let's start with the setup. **Ultimate Death Match** is a story of an independent wrestling promoter who is being stripped of his license after an unfortunate accident leaves a wrestler dead in the ring. The promoter gets desperate and decides the easiest way to recoup his losses and afford to pay the fines is to host a series of matches online that he calls the **Ultimate Death Match**, where the tournament leaves one man dead after the smoke clears. The human cock-fighting antics raise the suspicion of a few FBI agents whom watch the matches closely to wait patiently for their time to strike.

What ensues is a series of indie matches between no more than 6 wrestlers with "extreme" rules for their matches. "Extreme" is apparently a selling point for **Ultimate Death Match** because the box art on the DVD promises "Extreme violence and nudity!" This claim is an outright lie. There is nothing "extreme" about the violence; in fact, it is rather tame compared to televised matches. The absence of nudity is another disappointment because the titillation of even the smallest amount of nudity would have made **Ultimate Death Match** much more bearable.

As is stands, I can't help but wonder why two big name wrestlers would even bother to lend their likeness and even appear in this terrible excuse for entertainment. The opening scene reveals Kevin Nash, who neither says a single line of dialogue nor is he seen again for the remainder of the longest 90 minutes of my life. Al Snow is the real performer here. He doesn't actually wrestle, mind you, but he commentates the matches and runs the shoot interviews in between bouts. Al Snow is always entertaining when he is in character, but he simply does not pass for an actor. Every line of dialogue, for that matter, feels as if it was given only one take to get it right because they didn't have time in the day for reshoots.

Now I am left in the tough spot between critiquing **Ultimate Death Match** as either a niche, genre film that glorifies the violence and cheese factor OR judging **Ultimate Death Match** for it's appeal to the hardcore wrestling fan. So let's look at both, ok?

In terms of delivering violence, **Ultimate Death Match** fails miserably. No one actually dies, nor is the depiction of violence believable in any sense. The "extreme" rules matches include makeshift weapons that the performers attack each other with, such as steel chains and barbed-wire wrapped crutches, and copious amounts of fake blood to make the damage look "real." At times, it feels like the wrestlers and filmmakers simply stopped trying halfway through and

improvised the rest.

Now, surely, the actual wrestling has to be entertaining right? No. Hell no. There are certain unspoken rules of wrestling that this film simply ignores, such as revealing the "tells" when each wrestler calls for a certain move under their breath or opting to use fake blood instead of the standard practice of "blading" where the wrestler will literally cut their forehead in secret with either a razor or sharp instrument to bleed for effect. Don't worry, the wounds heal quickly and it is a very common practice in the wrestling world. What I simply cannot look past is the absolutely horrendous editing and choreography during each of the matches. At times, it is edited out of sequence, or uses frequent jump cuts to moves that have already happened. What's worse is that the dreaded "botches" (when a performer mistimes a move) are left intact on the final film. At the very least, they could have edited around them to make the match less amateur-ish.

Ultimate Death Match marks a new low for me as a critic. Not only does it receive the lowest score I have ever assigned, it is also the most hurtful because for me personally, I am the perfect candidate to enjoy a product like this. It is very telling of the overall quality of a movie when your ideal demographic is simply bored and disinterested by a sport for which they genuinely show enthusiasm. **Ultimate Death Match** fails on every account and I would honestly rather watch a high-school production of backyard wrestling. At least high school teenagers have a desire to entertain, whereas **Ultimate Death Match** just doesn't care.

-HanChi, GameVortex Communications
AKA Matt Hanchey

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