

By Bryan Alvarez

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We're looking for your thoughts on UFC 128, including a thumbs up, thumbs down or thumbs in the middle plus best and worst fight to dave@wrestlingobserver.com.

One of the biggest news stories in the history of MMA, the Zuffa purchase of Strikeforce, is one of our lead stories in this coming week's issue of the Wrestling Observer Newsletter. We look at the sale from every angle, from the fans, fighters, business, television and even antitrust.

We also look at the catastrophes in Japan and how they have affected pro wrestling and MMA going forward, including what happened with the wrestlers already in Japan.

We also look at Jeff Hardy and Victory Road, and why TNA management should be answering questions about the debacle, as well as full coverage of the event.

We also have a story about ramifications of what could be the biggest news story in sports that is not an MMA story or a pro wrestling story, but where UFC in particular fits into this story.

We look at the sale of Strikeforce, how this affects the top fighters, is this a monopoly, philosophical differences with UFC and Strikeforce, how this impacts the Strikeforce roster both good and bad, how the sale appears to have gone down and why it happened at this time, who else wanted it, differences in many Strikeforce contracts with UFC contracts, a look at the roster, the situation with titles, questions regarding overexposure, what happened to WWE when it made plans similar to what UFC is making, and what U.S. company did do something similar and the results they achieved. We also look at the situation with the likes of Frank Shamrock, Josh Barnett, Paul Daley, Gina Carano, thoughts on the future of women's fighting, the videotape library and more.

The issue will be up on the site today. A back issue from early 1994 will be up on the site later this week. Between the Observer and Figure Four Weekly, we have about 14 issues put up every month and dozens of new audio shows for web site subscribers including coverage after the shows of every major pro wrestling and MMA event.

You can also order print copies of the Observer with details below.

We also look at TNA's Lockdown, worked shoots, and a rundown of Victory Road with star ratings and poll results.

We also have notes on the next two times Rock will be appearing live on Raw. We've got updates on WrestleMania ticket sales, changes in the card, comparing this year's show with last year, announcing at WrestleMania, injuries, new major WWE officer being sought after, regulation of WWE, update on Chris Jericho's non-wrestling schedule, update on plans for Sin Cara and what new Hall of Famer in WWE is going on the road soon. We also look at a new WWE movie project, next MSG show, next tour of Japan as well as business notes from all the WWE house shows this past week as well as in-ring highlights of all the shows.

We also look at the future of the major Japanese MMA companies and UFC going into Japan.

We also have a feature on the first season of the new version of Tough Enough, including the entire roster, including background, which includes indie wrestlers, a model, Miss USA, a former MMA fighter in UFC, Strikeforce and Bellator as well as who is considered the male favorite and the name will surprise people.

We've got ratings of all the national shows including how every segment on Raw and Impact did. This week's Raw numbers are very interesting, because there are clear major successes and also clear major failures. We look at what was what, including Snooki, The Miz, The Rock, Jim Ross and what segment failed and if the announcing played into the failure. WE also look at a show with the most unique ratings pattern ever which shows what live vs. tape means for MMA.

We also have our usual weekly features with results of the major arena shows from around the world, and the major TV show rundowns and reviews.

The Wrestling Observer ranges from 25,000 to 40,000 words covering pro wrestling and MMA all over the world.

Each issue has coverage and analysis of all the major news, plus every issue breaks major news stories before the Internet sites and has the most complete look at the business as a whole anywhere. The Observer is now in its 28th year of being the leading insider pro wrestling publication in the world. The biggest and most influential names in the pro wrestling industry as well as the MMA industry, from bookers, to promoters to Hall of Fame wrestlers and fighters to the biggest current names, both on camera, and behind the scenes, along with thousands of readers in all 50 states and 30 countries subscribe. Many have subscribed as long as 20 years or more straight. They get the most detailed and inside coverage of what is going on all over the world and an accuracy from having the most inside sources that can't be found on the web. Everyone from Wall Street to the major offices to the TV networks in U.S. and Japan turn to the Observer for what is going on in the business. If you are a new subscriber ordering 24 or more issues, you can get one free classic issue of your choice sent to you today. With a 40 issue subscription, you can get two free classic issues sent to you today. Just send your Visa or Master Card order with your name, address, phone number, Visa or Master Card number and an expiration date to dave@wrestlingobserver.com or you can order

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-- As of yesterday, the plan was for HHH vs. Taker to go on last at Mania, with no career vs. streak stipulations or anything like that.

-- We were told there could be a change to a main card match over the next few days. Obviously, after Smackdown people are speculating that Christian could be added to the Edge vs. Del Rio World title match.

-- Superstars will likely become an Internet-only/overseas show after its run on WGN ends in April.

-- Dana White at the post-fight press conference last night said UFC 128 was probably Mirko Crocop's last fight, and that he didn't think he'd get much argument about that from Mirko.

-- Jon Jones vs. Rashad Evans is next up for the UFC Light Heavyweight title, though no date has been set. Evans, who had been a friend and training partner of Jones, has left team Jackson and Dana White said he was 100% on board for this fight. Bones isn't as happy about it as Rashad is, but he's going to take the fight.

-- Urijah Faber vs. Dominick Cruz is also next for the 135-pound title, also at a date yet to be determined. It's not confirmed, but most figure those two will be coaching the next season of Ultimate Fighter, which is focused on 135- and 145-pounders.

-- And in a complete about-face from a month ago, Dana said that GSP vs. Anderson Silva was not in the works, that he hadn't talked to anybody about it, and that it was still just "a fantasy fight". This is a 180 from the post-Silva vs. Vitor Belfort show where he flat-out said afterwards that if St. Pierre beat Jake Shields then it was going to be GSP vs. Silva at 185. My guess is that GSP doesn't want to make the move, as he's really been down on the idea in

interviews of late.

-- Yuji Nagata beat Shinsuke Nakamura to win the New Japan Cup today.

-- Mickie James suffered what is believed to be a minor shoulder injury this weekend.

-- The Miz will be on "Conan" this coming Wednesday at 11 pm Eastern on TBS. He'll be the first wrestler on the show since it started back on November 8th. Thanks to Kevin.

-- The Fight Network will be airing the 2005 edition of TNA 'Lockdown' today at 5pm EST headlined by A.J. Styles Vs Abyss. The Fight Network will be airing a new edition of 'Lockdown' each Sunday at 5pm EST leading into the 2011 show. The 2006 'Lockdown' will air next Sunday.

-- Mark writes: *Have not seen it mentioned yet that Raw after Wrestlemania on April 4th is going to go head to head with the championship game of the NCAA men's basketball tournament, which can't help the Tough Enough and Raw ratings that night* .

-- Mike Mooneyham looks at the Jeff Hardy situation [here](#) .

-- New York Times on MMA and New York regulation: [A Debate Rages On in Words, Not Punches](#)

-- There is an interview [here](#) with Sean Grande, voice of the Boston Celtics, in which he talks about his love for wrestling. I mean, "entertainments".

-- Cbsfan on CMLL and AAA on Galavision next weekend: *As best I can figure, and it's not like anyone has issued a press release, CMLL will air on Sundays, in the current lucha de vuelta slot. It'll probably be the main show from televisa, but on a big delay. They were using clips from early February in the commercial. AAA will just reduce from airing three times a weekend to two. They should be okay. Weird bit is CMLL will be airing more hours of TV in the US than WWE. Much much smaller networks than usa and syfy, of course.*

-- Bret The Hitman Hart coming to Staten Island, NY on April 16th, for an Autograph signing. Contact Debbie at 973 985 9925 or debbiegetznj@aol.com for more info