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MA Kick and WBC Japan held a big card earlier today headlined by the huge featherweight showdown between current WBC Japan champ Yosuke Morii and MA Kick champion and undefeated Hiroki Akimoto, as well as three other WBC Japan title fights and a superfight for MA Kick Flyweight champ Yuuji Uwasawa.

In the night's main event, Hiroki Akimoto remained undefeated in his pro career with a unanimous decision over Yosuke Morii on scores of 49-48, 49-47 and 50-47 to capture Morii's WBC Japan Featherweight title. Akimoto got the better of Morii throughout the first three rounds, landing more often, harder and cleaner than his opponent. However, in the 4th, Morii had Akimoto in trouble with a big left hook, but in the final round Akimoto came back strong and sealed his victory. Akimoto (16-0-0, 8 KO) has his consecutive (T)KO win streak snapped, but I'm sure he doesn't mind as he now has a claim as the #1 Featherweight in Japan with Genji Umeno effectively gone, fighting in Thailand and K-1. As a former K-1 Koshien finalist and now with this win over Morii, Akimoto could find himself a player in K-1 next year with the planned division expansion, but until then I'd like to see him fight Heihachi Nakajima or somebody of a similar caliber. Morii (20-4-2, 9 KO) once again fails in his quest for divisional supremacy, losing a one-sided decision to Genji Umeno in their fight last year. However, Morii is still a clear #2 behind Akimoto, holding wins this year over Heihachi Nakajima and Hiroki Nagashima. I expect Morii to continue to run through the division until a rematch with Akimoto or Umeno presents itself.

In the co-main event, WBC and WPMF Japan Flyweight champion Ryuji Kato made the first defense of his WBC Japan title with a majority decision over WPMF Japan Super Flyweight champion Kiminori Matsuzaki on scores of 49-49 and 49-48(x2). Kato was originally set to face Hiroyuki Yamano, though for a reason unknown to me, he was replaced by Matsuzaki, who Kato had recently called out because of Matsuzaki's recent win over Kato's teammate, Takuma Ito. Kato (19-3-1, 9 KO) has won two in a row after losing two in a row for the first time in his career, most recently defeating K-1 competitor Shuichi Wentz for the WPMF Japan Flyweight title. With wins over Yuki, Naoki Otsuki, Wentz, Sazanami Satsuma and now Matsuzaki, Kato has arguably the best resume at Flyweight and if it weren't for a majority decision loss to Yuuji Uwasawa, Kato would hands down be the top guy at the weight. A rematch with Uwasawa would be a great next fight for Kato, however after the fight Kato stated he wanted to fight internationally, naming Romie Adanza specifically. Matsuzaki came into this fight 14 years older than his opponent and with a 4-1 record in his last 5 fights, including wins over Hiroyuki Yamano and Takuma Ito, but has now lost two in a row. At 37, Matsuzaki didn't really show any signs of slowing down and has actually seemed to hit the best stride in his career despite back to back

losses, both of which were close majority decisions. A fight with J-Network champion Kentaro Kimura could be in his near future.

At Welterweight, WBC Japan champ Yuya Yamato dominated Daiki Watabe en route to a 5th round TKO via cut to defend his WBC Japan title for the first time. Yamato (15-7-0, 10 KO) had a bit of speculation around his performance coming into this fight as he was obliterated by a Yuta Kubo headkick in his last fight, but he had little trouble with Watabe here, dropping him in the second round and offensively smothering him. With his natural fighting weight around 66kg, Yamato is somewhat stuck between two divisions and, because of this, doesn't have a lot of top tier competition to fight at his weight. That being said, WPMF Japan Welterweight champion T-98, should he successfully defend his title at the end of the month, would be a great, competitive matchup for Yamato at a weight he is comfortable fighting at. Watabe (13-9-1, 9 KO) came into this fight on a 2 fight winstreak, but just wasn't on the same level as Yamato.

In the final WBC Japan title fight, Takuma Ito was just too much for J-Network champ Kentaro Kimura and scored a 4th round TKO via corner stoppage to win the vacant WBC Japan Bantamweight title. Ito (14-3-1, 7 KO) had been struggling greatly as of late, losing three in a row to Kiminori Matsuzaki, TO-MA and Takashi Ohno, all of which were title fights, after starting his career 12-0-1. However, he bounced back with a win in June and now scores a big win here. I'd like to see him rematch Takashi Ohno for the MA Kick title in his next fight. Kimura was riding a 5-fight win streak into this fight which included winning the J-Network Bantamweight tournament, but came up short here. As previously stated, I'd like to see him defend his J-Network title against Kiminori Matsuzaki should Matsuzaki want to move up to Bantamweight.

Finally, MA Kick Flyweight champ Yuji Uwasawa took an easy win over Nagata Haryi on scores of 30-26 and 30-28(x2). Uwasawa would have liked to have been fighting Ryuji Kato on this card, but a loss to Hiroyuki Yamano in a #1 contender's bout earlier this year denied him of that chance. This win snaps a 2-fight losing streak for Uwasawa which included that loss to Yamano and a loss to Shuichi Wentz.

Quick results after the break

WBC Japan Featherweight Title Fight: Hiroki Akimoto def. Yosuke Morii (c) by 5th round Unanimous Decision (49-48, 49-47, 50-47)

WBC Japan Flyweight Title Fight: Ryuji Kato (c) def. Kiminori Matsuzaki by 5th round Majority Decision (49-49, 49-48, 49-48)

WBC Japan Welterweight Title Fight: Yuya Yamato (c) def. Daiki Watabe by 5th round TKO (cut) at 1:43

Vacant WBC Japan Bantamweight Title Fight: Takuma Ito def. Kentaro Kimura by 4th round TKO (corner stoppage) at 2:39

52.5kg Fight: Yuuji Uwasawa def. Nagata Haryi by 3rd round Unanimous Decision (30-28, 30-28, 30-26)

61kg Fight: Hachimaki def. Satoru Hasimoto by 3rd round Unanimous Decision (30-25, 30-25, 30-25)

61kg Fight: MIDORI def. Toshima Masuda by 2nd round KO at 1:10

51kg Fight: Satoshi Katashima def. Yasuto Furuta by 3rd round Unanimous Decision (30-26, 30-26, 29-27)

61kg Fight: AK2 def. Takuya Sugimoto by 3rd round Unanimous Decision (29-28, 29-28, 29-28)

54kg Fight: Shusaku Shirai def. Kawashima Shogo by 3rd round Unanimous Decision (30-28, 30-28, 30-28)

57kg Fight: Kouji Miyazoto def. Shokyo Matsunaga by Must Decision after a 3rd round Majority Draw (30-29, 29-29, 29-29)