

A close-up, high-angle shot of a thick, circular brass ring. The ring has a weathered, golden-brown patina with some darker, oxidized areas. The interior of the ring is a deep black, creating a stark contrast with the metallic rim. Centered within this black void, the words "BRASS RING" are stacked above "ROUNDUP" in a bold, white, serif typeface. The text is slightly arched to follow the curve of the ring's interior.

BRASS RING ROUNDUP

May 16th, 2018

[We fade into a black screen with the AWA logo splashed across a starry field. A barrage of lasers flash in from all sides of the screen, etching along the borders of the letters, illuminating the plain white text into glowing and glittering gold. A deep voiceover begins. The words "American Wrestling Alliance" come up one by one at the bottom of the screen.]

"The recognized symbol of excellence in professional wrestling."

[Back to black for a moment...

...and then as we hear the opening notes of a highly edited version of "Countin' Up" by Rico Nasty for just a bit before we fade up on a studio setup - almost like a news desk with four people set up along a long desk, stacks of papers in front of them and a large TV monitor hanging behind them. The welcoming graphic says we're watching the "Brass Ring Roundup on Hulu."

The camera cuts to the host of the show, the man notorious as one of wrestling's resident scoopsters - Sweet Lou Blackwell - dressed in a black polo with the AWA logo stitched in white on the breast as he grins at the camera.]

SLB: Excitement is in the air! Anticipation for all things AWA continues to grow as we are now just days away from the kickoff to summer for the AWA, Memorial Day Mayhem, heading your way LIVE on Pay Per View from Dodger Stadium in Los Angeles - May 28th can't get here fast enough. Plus, we've got the first event in the Showtime summer tour coming up this weekend... and on top of all of that, we've got what we're here to talk about out today. Sixteen of the hottest newcomers on the market heading to town with the grandest of prizes - a contract with the AWA. This right here is the Brass Ring Roundup... and I'm your host for this special Breaking News edition.

[Blackwell spreads his arms.]

SLB: And as you can see, I'm flying solo tonight. The panel will be back with me next time when we start to preview the tournament matches... but tonight, it's just me, kiddos, as I make it official! Who is facing whom in the first round of this highly-anticipated tournament! And we know that even though the tournament doesn't start this weekend in Reseda, the Brass Ring participants WILL be in action on Showtime!

[We get a graphic showing the eight man tag participants.]

SLB: We've got the eight man tag with the men - Elijah Wilde, Will Robinson, Adrian Kirk, and Bodhi Li taking on Armani Avery, Gabriel Cordova, Danny King, and Rodrick Storm... that should be a hot one in the American Legion Hall!

[And the graphic shifts to show the Battle Royal combatants.]

SLB: And how about the stakes in this one? An eight woman Battle Royal with the winner moving on to take a coveted spot in the annual Memorial Day Mayhem Rumble with the other 29 women battling it out for the chance to challenge the Women's World Champion later this summer at Girls To The Front!

[The graphics fade.]

SLB: So, we'll be hearing from some of the competitors that'll be in action on Saturday night throughout this one... in fact, let's do that right now! One of eight women who will be competing in that Battle Royal - hoping to live up to her family name - "Diamond" Lily Driscoll!

[We cut to a wrestling ring at the Combat Corner, evidenced by the CCW logo on the apron. Standing beside it is "Diamond" Lily Driscoll, who is dressed in a black T-shirt with a diamond across the front, white shorts and sneakers. She leans against the apron, a smirk on her face.]

LD: Last time I talked to you about narratives... all the narratives surrounding all the competitors in the Brass Ring tournament. And while I came up with a narrative for everyone, it turns out it was somebody else who picked the narrative for me.

[She scoffs.]

LD: So thank you, Veronica Westerly, for coming up with one... that there just might be somebody, somewhere, in the AWA front office has it out for me, has it out for my family, and there just might be somebody in the Brass Ring tournament who would be willing to take me out to win favor with that front office.

[The smirk on her face is gone for a moment.]

LD: Well, if you think I'm going to let anybody just take me out for good, my response is two back-to-back letters in the alphabet, N-O!

[After another moment, the smirk comes back and she gives a slight laugh.]

LD: No, I'm not going to let that happen to me! My brother may have taken the money and run, but anybody who thinks they're going to use me as the reason to settle those grudges, I'll promise you that I'll take on anyone you want, face down anything you throw at me and prove not only that I can beat anyone they put against me, overcome anything you put in my way, but make anyone who holds grudges against my brother to think twice before they dare use that against me!

[A pause for effect, then Driscoll chuckles.]

LD: But now it looks like I have somebody else to thank... so thank you, Juan Vasquez, for giving me even more motivation to show up anyone in the front office who wants to hold me back or take me out.

Because what better way would there be to show them up by not just outlasting seven other Brass Ring competitors in a Battle Royal, but by outlasting 29 other women to earn a shot at the Women's World Title at Girls to the Front!

[Now that smirk becomes an all-knowing grin.]

LD: Oh, wouldn't that set the front office into a frenzy, knowing that they have another Driscoll who not only could walk out with the Brass Ring, but could walk with one of the top titles in the AWA... and that title happens to be the most prestigious women's title in the world today!

[Driscoll pauses for a moment, smiling at the thought of what she said, then the smile is gone, replaced by a serious look.]

LD: So I hope I keep hearing the talk about how the front office doesn't want me to go far, because all that's going to do is give me added motivation to show everyone that, while I may be unhappy that my brother isn't along for the ride, I'm still a Driscoll and that means I expect to be no less than the best in wrestling!

And for anyone who thinks they're going to make a name for themselves by taking me out, by making sure that the Driscoll family name is never heard from again in AWA...

[And the smirk returns to her face.]

LD: I'd like to see you try.

[We cut back to Sweet Lou in the studio.]

SLB: Lily Driscoll looking to show the entire wrestling world that diamonds shine brightest when under pressure... and the pressure will be on this weekend in Reseda to get the big win and move on to the Rumble in Los Angeles. But who will Ms. Driscoll find herself facing in the tournament?

[He grins, pointing to the camera.]

SLB: Let's find out!

[A graphic appears showing "Diamond" Lily Driscoll on one side of the screen...

...and after a moment soundtracked with some tension-filled music...]

SLB: Felicia Love! The smallest woman in the tournament draws a shot at "Diamond" Lily Driscoll! The first match in the Women's Brass Ring tournament is official! Now, let's switch gears over to the men's side of the tournament and find out the first match in this one!

[Cut to a new graphic showing Armani Avery on one side...

...and after a moment, he's joined by Bodhi Li!]

SLB: Oho! You talk about a clash of styles! It'll be the high flying athleticism of Armani Avery against the brute force of Bodhi Li! That'll be a hot one for sure.

[The graphic fades.]

SLB: Sticking with the men's side of the tournament, let's go ahead and hear from another participant - he's big, he's tough, he's athletic... one of the hottest free agents in wrestling... "The Iron Kraken" himself... Rodrick Storm.

[We fade from Blackwell to a black screen where - after a few moments of silence - we hear a voice.]

"After weeks of wondering, the AWA faithful are finally going to witness the unveiling of the Brass Ring Tournament brackets. Tonight, they will finally see who the first victim of the "Iron Kraken" will be.

[Slowly, all fades in from black and standing before an AWA banner is an individual attired in a black boots, blue jeans, and a plain white t-shirt. Even as simply as he is attired, Rodrick Storm is an imposing mass of human flesh who stands at six feet nine inches tall and weighs nearly two hundred and ninety pounds.]

RS: I've made it very clear that it doesn't matter who stands opposite me in this tournament. Elijah Wilde, Will Robinson, Adrian Kirk, and Bodhi Li... you four will understand firsthand why it doesn't matter to me at the American Legion Hall on the nineteenth.

You see, you all...

[Rodrick pauses briefly.]

RS: ...will be the first four victims of the "Iron Kraken" in an AWA ring. In the American Legion Hall, it will be Showtime... showtime for me! The AWA fans will finally see the ability that I possess, the ability that has made an entire nation look upon me in awe. The ability to cause absolute pain...

[Storm begins to rub his hands together as an evil grin begins to form upon his lips.]

RS: Pain that brings with it the destruction of heroes. Pain that would cause the hearts of a nation to break...

[The Iron Kraken once again pauses and just stares into the camera for a long moment.]

RS: As their hearts break, they've watched in shock and fear. As the souls of their favorites leave their bodies night after night one by one, tears would run down their faces as I stood in the center of the ring... hand raised in victory.

But on the nineteenth... tears won't be shed for you.

Armani Avery, Gabriel Cordova, Danny King, you three will be on the side of the victorious but make sure you witness the destruction cause like those four men - at some point you will be standing opposite the "Iron Kraken" and when you do... tears won't be shed for you either.

For, you see, on the nineteenth and in the Brass Ring Tournament, you seven will be nothing more than mere footnotes to my ascension.

For you see, no one knows your names and they never will.

[Without warning, his hand engulfs the camera lens causing all to fade to a shaky black...

...before coming back up to Sweet Lou who shudders.]

SLB: Brrr. I would NOT want to be standing across the ring from the Iron Kraken whether it's this weekend in Reseda or in the weeks to come in the Brass Ring Tournament. But right now, let's find out exactly who WILL stand across from Rodrick Storm in the first round of this tournament...

[The graphic comes up showing the Iron Kraken on one side...]

SLB: ...who will it be?

[...and then finally...]

SLB: Whoa ho! A long-standing member of the Combat Corner Wrestling locker room and a man who is NO stranger to the American Legion Hall or the independent scene of Southern California, Gabriel Cordova!

[Blackwell grins as the graphic fades.]

SLB: Which brings us back to the Women's Tournament... we know Driscoll meets Love but who else? Who else has drawn the toughest of opponents? Let's take a look!

[The graphic comes up again, this time showing the single mom fighting for her family, Riley Bennett...]

SLB: Riley Bennett looking for a better life as part of this tournament...

[...and then the screen fills up.]

SLB: ...will take on Isabella Liriano! The second-generation Puerto Rican sensation! What a pairing that is! The fans will be split between those two no doubt and on their feet cheering on their favorite. Let's take a look at the last two on the Women's side of the tournament!

[The graphic shifts to show Big Boss Shinza...]

SLB: Straight out of Japan, it's Big Boss Shinza taking on...

[...and then completes.]

SLB: ...Jo Jo Washington! What a unique showdown that'll be! And that means our final first round match will see another superstar from Japan, the mysterious AKANE, taking on the biggest woman in the tournament and another woman who is no stranger to fans in the American Legion Hall, Catalina Lopez!

[A full screen graphic comes up showing all four matches in the first round of the Women's Brass Ring Tournament!]

SLB: And there's your first round right there, fans. Bennett and Liriano, Shinza and Washington, Driscoll and Love, AKANE and Lopez... and in a little bit of breaking news, we've also learned that this unique tournament just got a little bit more unique as after the first round, the deck will be shuffled again and we'll get new matchups to make these competitors really have to show their ability to adapt.

[The graphic fades.]

SLB: So, let's talk about the men's tournament. Storm and Cordova, Avery and Li... and now, let's hear from one of the other men who will be competing... Elijah Wilde!

[The now familiar whirl of a camcorder being turned on is heard as we open to Elijah Wilde standing outside the American Legion Hall in Reseda, CA. He's actually standing in the middle of the street, oblivious to his surroundings. The setting sun casts long shadows as he sneers into the lens.]

EW: Look where I am.

[He gestures to the building behind him.]

EW: The American Legion Hall in Reseda, California!

[He doesn't exactly sound thrilled about that.]

EW: You know, I've wrestled here more times than I can count. I didn't even need to look up directions, I've been here so many times, I can get here by memory alone. This place... this absolute hellhole, this... dump... it's practically home to me.

[He turns the camcorder slightly to point at the CVS across the street.]

EW: You see that CVS across the street? Yeah. I used to walk in there after every show, buy bandages, buy ointment, buy whatever I could to fix my bloody, broken body. That parking lot... if I don't eat another half cooked hot dog from some street vendor for the rest of my life, it'll be too soon. I've got so many damn memories of this place...

...and now, the AWA wants to drag me back to this godforsaken rathole!?!]

[He scoffs and paces around, almost laughing in disbelief.]

EW: This is a joke, right? The biggest wrestling company in the world, and they actually choose this giant sweatbox for a show? Are you kidding me?

Unbelievable.

[He looks directly into the camcorder, the anger rising in his voice.]

EW: Fine. Whatever. You bought into the hype. This is the supposed "Mecca of West Coast independent wrestling".

[He rolls his eyes.]

EW: But you want to bring me back here? Then I'll do what I always did in this place. I'll spill blood. Mine or someone else's... it never mattered. I'll commit acts of

violence that will leave your stomachs turning. And I'll steal the show like I always did.

Hell, who knows... maybe I'll even drop that doofus Gabriel Cordova on his dumb head just for old times' sake.

[That thought actually brings a smile to his face.]

EW: That right there would be the highlight of my night and it wouldn't even be close. You wanna talk about talent, AWA? You wanna talk about opportunity? Fine. I'll burn it down in Reseda, just like I always did.

[He shrugs nonchalantly, still filming himself.]

EW: So enjoy the show, or don't. I really don't care.

[And with that, the recording abruptly cuts off...

...and we fade back up to Sweet Lou.]

SLB: Well... uhh... I'm sure the fans of Reseda this weekend will welcome Elijah Wilde back with open arms... and very... VERY... loud voices. But who will welcome Mr. Wilde to the Brass Ring Tournament in the very first round? Let's take a look.

[We get a graphic showing Wilde on one side...]

SLB: ...oho!

[...and the graphic fills the screen.]

SLB: It's the stuff of Internet fanboy dreams! Your eyes do not deceive you - it's Elijah Wilde going one on one with Will Robinson! Get your star ratings ready because that one will blow the roof off whatever venue it lands in! Which means our final first round matchup will see former GFC Heavyweight Champion Danny King taking on this man... the Crusherweight... Adrian Kirk!

[Cut to the inside of a pub. It's not exactly the most active pub in the world at the moment, with a couple of people here and there mostly keeping to themselves. We focus on a table near the back of a pub where Adrian Kirk sits alone. He's dressed in black dress clothes with the sleeves of his shirt rolled up his forearms. Despite being in a pub, Kirk doesn't appear to be drinking. He's actually sitting there reading a paper, occasionally glancing up to survey the room. He notes the camera and nods...]

AK: Well, well. Here we are another week closer to the Brass Ring tournament, and another week closer to my absolute crushing victory.

[Kirk puts down the paper and smirks a bit]

AK: I liked the sound of that last time, so I'm keeping it for a while.

It was rather nice to see who the other participants in the tournament are, and to get an idea of what I'm up against. I saw some familiar faces from CCW have signed up... I do prefer a party when there's people I know there, know what I mean? Even when that party is going to involve the lot of us beating the stuffing out of each other.

Do I have any thoughts about facing them? Well, honestly, I'm looking forward to smacking Robinson around a bit just on principle. Something about enthusiastic optimism makes me want to throw elbows.

That beach bum Li and I have a bit of a history trading some leather. He can fight alright, but he's no Crusherweight, is he? I don't mind another chance at putting him through the ringer and sending him back to his surfer buddies with a few new scars.

How about that big bloke that fancies himself a Kraken? Oh, I REALLY hope we meet in the ring. He's got these plans of walking in and taking the whole tournament, which is ridiculous considering that's what I'm going to do. I do like fighting guys like Storm, though. It's so much more satisfying when a big guy like that can't get back up.

[Kirk smiles at the thought and sits back slightly. The smile slowly fades...]

AK: But before we get there, we've got this big tag match to deal with...

... I'm not fond of tag matches, if I'm going to be honest.

I'm coming into this tournament to dominate. I wasn't expecting to have to work with one half of the participants against the other. I don't like the idea of having to team with someone that I may have to destroy in the first round.

At the end of the day, it's a fight, though, and I'm on board. To my opponents, free up your calendar for the week after because you're going to need time to recover from the Adrian Kirk experience... and to my teammates? Stay out of my way. You'll be getting no pats on the shoulder or high fives from me. I'll be there to get to work, and if you somehow get in the way of that, well, I'll have to get some work in on you, won't I?

[Kirk picks the paper up off the table and folds it up]

AK: All in all, this tag match will be a warm up for the big event, and you know what that is, right? That's right, my absolute crushing victory. Now...

[Kirk tucks the paper under his arm and stands up...]

AK: I'm going to head out of here... No action to speak of. Not even a single loudmouth to pick on.

[Kirk looks around]

AK: It's like people don't go to bars looking for scraps any more. Shame, really.

[Kirk shrugs and walks out of the shot. Fade to black...]

...and then back to Sweet Lou in the studio.]

SLB: Well, if it's a scrap that Adrian Kirk is looking for, it's a scrap he'll find in Reseda this weekend... and DEFINITELY when he goes one-on-one with the former GFC Heavyweight Champion Danny King in the first round of the 2018 Brass Ring Tournament! Fans, sixteen of the best in the world looking for their shot to climb the ladder and stake out their spot as a member of the AWA locker room! It's the Brass Ring Tournament and it'll be happening on Showtime ALL! SUMMER! LONG! We'll be back on Brass Ring Roundup in the days following Memorial Day Mayhem when we'll be announcing which matches we'll be seeing on Showtime in Boyle Heights as well as having our full panel back in action to preview all the action we're likely to see in this tournament! For Brass Ring Roundup, I'm Sweet Lou Blackwell and so long everybody!

[Fade to black.]

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ROUND ONE: Riley Bennett vs Isabella Liriano
ROUND ONE: Big Boss Shinza vs Jo Jo Washington
ROUND ONE: Lily Driscoll vs Felicia Love
ROUND ONE: AKANE vs Catalina Lopez

ROUND ONE: Elijah Wilde vs Will Robinson
ROUND ONE: Danny King vs Adrian Kirk
ROUND ONE: Rodrick Storm vs Gabriel Cordova
ROUND ONE: Armani Avery vs Bodhi Li