

Fairy Tail 203

Chapter 203: Battle of Fairy Tail; Part 1

Earth Land, Ishgar, Kingdom of Fiore, Magnolia.

October 15, x784.

After Laxus announced the Battle of Fairy Tail tournament, the clock was just about to hit one in the afternoon. Meaning, the guild had around seven hours to complete all the preparations as well as the tournament itself, before they would have to put on the Fantasia Parade.

So, all the members of the guild moved quickly to form their teams and rush to the eastern outskirts of Magnolia to get the tournament started as quickly as possible.

By 1:30 pm, all the teams who would be participating, as well as all the members of the guild who would spectate gathered around a large stone stage that had been created with a liberal use of Fried's enchantments.

On top of that, upon arrival, the members of Fairy Tail noticed that quite a few citizens of Magnolia had also shown up to the impromptu event. Apparently, with the guild moving around the town in full force, a lot of people were attracted.

So, upon seeing all the people, Makarov requested Laki to use her magic to create raised seats for all the spectators to watch the battles from. In return, Laki's team would be fighting in the last match of the first round of the tournament.

Agreeing to Makarov's request, Laki created two sets of stands, on opposite sides of the ring, for the spectators, using a spell whose name no one understood.

After that, Makarov explained the purpose of all the members of Fairy Tail gathering and the rules of the tournament, which included Makarov being able to stop the fight when he deemed one side unable to continue and a fighter losing if they were knocked down for a ten count or coming in contact with a surface outside of the ring.

Although not mentioned, the killing or maiming of an opponent was strictly forbidden, as well.

After hearing Makarov's explanation, the townsfolk were quite excited to witness such a tournament.

Meanwhile, the captains of the eight teams that were quickly thrown together for this tournament drew lots to determine the tournament bracket.

After the lots were drawn, the first round of the tournament looked like this:

Match 1:

Team Alzack Vs. Team Natsu

Alzack Connell Natsu Dragneel

Bisca Mulan Gray Fullbuster

Max Alors Erza Scarlet

Mystogan Lucy Heartfilia

Match 2:

Team Shadow Gear Vs Team Steel Threads

Levy McGarden Alfonzo Marcus

Jet Elicia Taylor

Droy Marin Kitagawa

Gajeel Redfox Sun Seto

Match 3:

Thunder God Tribe Vs. Team Seto

Laxus Dreyar Gozaburo Seto

Bickslow Masa

Fried Justine Macao Conbolt

Evergreen Wakaba Mine

Match 4:

Team Strauss Vs. Team Ultear

Mirajane Strauss Ultear Milkovich

Elfman Strauss Meredy

Lisanna Strauss Laki Olietta

Juvia Lockser Cana Alberona

This information, along with a tournament bracket, appeared on a board made of ice that appeared on one side of the ring. Naturally, Ur was responsible for its creation and updating as the tournament went on.

"Now that everyone is up to speed on the rules..." Makarov said, amplifying his voice with his magic power from the side of the ring opposite the tournament bracket. "... let the first match of the first round... Begin!"

With that, the wizards of Team Alzack and Team Natsu took their positions on opposite sides of the ring. Meanwhile, the rest of the teams took seats in the first row of the stands.

"Now, both teams, send up your first fighter." Makarov commanded.

"Oh Yeah! I'm all fired up!" Natsu shouted as he leapt into the ring.

"So, I guess we're not gonna talk it out, huh?" Lucy muttered after Natsu just jumped ahead.

"What did you expect from someone with fire instead of a brain in his head?" Gray asked.

"Gray, your clothes." Lucy replied with a deadpan.

"Damn it, not again!" Gray exclaimed.

"Don't worry about it, Lucy." Erza said with a reassuring smile on her face. "Natsu is strong. So, no matter who they send, he won't go down without a fight."

Meanwhile, on the other side of the ring,

"I guess I'll go first." Max said with a smile. "Honestly, I think Mystogan and I are best suited for fighting one on one while you two are better suited for the team battle."

To that, the other three members of Team Alzack nodded in agreement. Then, Max jumped up into the ring, landing on it at the same time as Natsu.

"Are both fighters ready?" Makarov asked once Natsu and Max were in the ring. Receiving a nod from both fighters, Makarov continued. "Very good. Then... Fight!"

Max, a slim young man of average height with flaxen hair styled in a bowl undercut with two long bangs that both framed and covered the sides of his face, opted to make the first move as Natsu began sprinting forward.

Flaring his magic power, Max crossed his right arm in front of his chest. Then, a massive amount of sand materialized and started spiraling around it. After that, he thrust his hand forward, towards Natsu.

"[Sandstorm Magic: Sand Wave]." Max chanted as the sand revolving around his hand shot forward in the form of a large wave of sand.

Undeterred, Natsu formed his hands into a trumpet before bringing them to his mouth.

"[Fire Dragon's Roar]." Natsu chanted as he blew a stream of fire between his hands.

With great speed, Natsu's flames rushed forward, impacting the wave of sand roughly halfway between himself and Max. Shortly after the collision, a portion of the sand was superheated and turned into molten glass.

Meanwhile, the rest of the sand rushed past Natsu on either side. At the same time, Natsu restarted his dash, increasing his speed by expelling fire from his back that acted as a thruster.

"What the hell?" Max exclaimed in surprise after seeing Natsu's new speed. "How did he get so fast?"

Although he was surprised, Max reacted quickly, condensing more sand around both of his hands. Then he whipped them towards Natsu, sending the sand flying at him.

"[Sandstorm Magic: Sand Blades]." Max chanted as multiple sand slashes flew from his hands towards Natsu.

Natsu, seeing the incoming sand blades, put on a show of acrobatics to avoid all the incoming attacks while losing a minimal amount of momentum. Eventually, Natsu reached Max with his right hand covered in flames.

"Sorry, Max, but it looks like this is my win!" Natsu said excitedly. "[Fire Dragon's Iron Fist]."

"I don't think so, Natsu." Max said while a large amount of sand was generated around Natsu. "[Sandstorm Magic: Sand Rebellion]."

The moment Max's chant ended; the sand that materialized around Natsu began to spin at high speed, subsequently stopping the flame imbued fist before it could reach its target. A moment later, Max gestured with his hands and the spinning mass of sand exploded.

A few moments later, the dust cloud created by the explosion settled. Now, the only thing that could be seen where the spinning mass of sand once stood was Max with a confused expression on his face.

"Did he avoid my attack? Impossible." Max questioned himself while looking around the ring. "Then, where is he? He should at least be injured."

"Up here!" Natsu shouted.

Looking up to the direction of the voice, Max was caught off guard when he saw Natsu falling from the sky with flames blazing around his right foot.

"[Fire Dragon's Talon]." Natsu chanted as he fell with his foot aimed at Max.

"[Sandstorm Magic: Sand Wall]." Max chanted, quickly erecting a defensive wall of sand.

Unfortunately, with the added momentum due to gravity, Natsu's flaming kick was strong enough to cleave straight through Max's sand wall. Then, with no time to cast another spell, Max was forced to defend himself by crossing his arms between himself and Natsu's kick.

Unfortunately, that was far from enough to stop the force behind Natsu's kick. Instead, Max was sent flying backward after his arms slammed into his face. Then, after hitting the ground, he was sent rolling backward toward the edge of the ring.

At the same time, while Max was rolling away, Natsu did not notice the sand that was left over from Max's sand wall had circled around his feet. Then, before he could react, it surged upward while covering his feet and swung toward the ground outside the ring.

"Damn it." Natsu cursed as he channeled his flames into his feet to free himself.

Unfortunately, all that did is turn the sand into glass, restricting his movement even more.

Eventually, Natsu was slammed into the ground outside the ring. Meanwhile, just before Max rolled off the ring himself, a platform made of sand rose from the ground and stopped him from falling off the ring.

"Damn, that was close." Max said while lying on his back, halfway on the ring and halfway on the sand platform.

"Ow.. That hurt." Natsu said after pulling his head out of the ground. Then, he looked around to see where Max was. However, once he noticed that he was outside of the ring, he panicked. "No way! Did I lose? But I wanted to fight some more!"

However, at that moment, Makarov made his ruling on the fight.

"Natsu Dragneel is out of the ring." Makarov said. "Winner by ring out, Max Alors."

With that, the crowd, consisting mostly of regular civilians went wild due to the exciting display of magic. Meanwhile, Max picked himself up and slowly returned to his teammates.

"Come on, Man!" Natsu shouted. "Gimme a rematch! If it weren't for that stupid ring out rule, I wouldn't have lost."

Bang!

"Cut it out, Natsu!" Erza shouted as she appeared behind Natsu and slammed her fist on the top of his head.

"Uh... I don't think he can hear you." Lucy said after looking at Natsu.

"Huh?" Erza exclaimed in confusion after hearing Lucy. Then, when she looked down, she saw Natsu lying on the ground with his eyes spinning. "Oh no, Natsu, are you okay?"

With that, Erza started shaking Natsu violently. Had he been awake, there was no doubt that his motion sickness would have been triggered due to the violent shaking.

"Teams, send your second fighters to the ring." Makarov announced at this moment.

"Erza, I think you should fight in the next match." Gray said, approaching Erza. "We need to win this fight and you're the strongest member of our team. Otherwise, we're out of the tournament."

"*Sigh* You're right." Erza said, calming down quickly. "Take care of Natsu. I'll get us to the third fight of the match."

Nodding in response, Gray picked up Natsu and brought him to where Lucy was standing before dropping him on the ground.

"Seriously, Gray?" Lucy asked in surprise. "That's what you call taking care of him?"

"Eh... He'll be fine." Gray said carelessly.

Meanwhile, Erza jumped into the ring. At the same time, Mystogan, a man of above average height, standing at roughly 6' (183 cm) tall wearing a dark blue cloak, shirt, pants, and bandana with a silver forehead protector, as well as a black mask that covered everything below his eyes and five staves on his back that were held there by a dark green strap wrapped diagonally across his torso. also landed on the ring from Team Alzack's side.

"How did Alzack manage to convince Mystogan to join his team?" Elicia asked curiously from her seat in the front row of the stands.

"More important than that, how did Alzack even find the guy." Alfonzo asked. "I mean, I know I taught him how to use [Magic Power Detection]. But he's usually sleep when Mystogan shows up at the guild. How does he even know his magic power signature?"

In response, Elicia, Marin, and Sun all shook their heads. Not even Marin and Sun knew who Mystogan was until Alfonzo and Elicia explained it to them, as they had also always been asleep when Mystogan showed up at the guild hall.

Team Steel Threads were not the only ones who were wondering how Mystogan ended up joining Team Alzack. As a result, the whispers from all the Fairy Tail wizards could be heard through the tournament venue.

"I wasn't expecting to see you here, Mystogan." Erza said, [Requipping] along sword into her right hand. "You don't usually mingle with the rest of the guild."

"This is the first time the guild has done anything like this or the pageant, so I was interested." Mystogan replied quietly. "And when I saw that Alzack, Bisca, and Max would not be able to participate because they could not find a fourth member, I joined their team because I felt bad for them."

"I see." Erza replied. "Well, I approve of your reasoning. Still, I won't lose. Even if your reason for participating is rather noble."

"We'll see about that." Mystogan said, reaching for one of the staves on his back.

"Both fighters seem to be ready." Makarov said after looking at two of his S-Class wizards in the ring. "Fight!"