

Ninja Warrior

Written by Jeff

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There's a new passion & obsession in my life. Yeah, yeah, my wife is pregnant, but I'll deal with that later. I'm talking about *Ninja Warrior*. It's a show from Japan, which presents the ultimate obstacle course. *Sasuke* -- as it's known in Japan -- began in 1997. The event consists of 4 stages of increasingly difficult challenges.

In the US, *Ninja Warrior* airs on the G4 channel. Unfortunately, there is a delay between when it takes place, and when it airs here. Some of you might already be familiar with G4. I wasn't, and just recently started getting the channel. Originally, G4's main focus was pretty much only video games. But as the channel has gotten more popular, it now shows movies & many different types of shows. Some of it's other popular programs are *Attack of the Show!*, *X-Play*,

Movies That Don't Suck

,
Web Soup

and

Unbeatable Banzuke

(which is somewhat similar to *Ninja Warrior*, but focuses on competitors with specific skills). It's a very original & unique channel. I'm really glad I get it now. More than anything I've mentioned so far, the best reason to tune in to G4, is Olivia Munn. She is a goddess, with nerdy attributes to match. If you don't know who I'm talking about, you need to Google her. You'll thank me later.

Okay, back to *Ninja Warrior*. Most competitions begin with 100 competitors. The first stage is the longest, and focuses on balance and agility. The second stage is the shortest, and focuses on speed. The intensity and difficulty really gets turned up in the third stage. Very few have completed this stage. Competitors need incredible back & grip strength, and very strong muscle endurance. The fourth -- and final -- stage is more simplified, but it's the hardest. It has evolved over the years, but basically it's a straight-up rope climb with a very short time limit. Through the first 24 competitions, of the over 5,000 attempts, there have only been 3 men to defeat all four stages: Kazuhiko Akiyama (4th), Makoto Nagano (17th) and Yuuji Urushihara (24th).

If this sounds interesting, you should definitely start checking it out. Just this week they started replaying the competitions from the very beginning. They are currently showing the 4th competition. If you've never seen it before, watch the video below for a little taste. It's a quick little special on five *Ninja Warrior* All-Stars: Makoto Nagano, Toshihiro Takeda, Shingo Yamamoto, Bunpei Shiratori and Katsumi Yamada (Kazuhiko Akiyama is also an All-Star, but he isn't shown in this clip).

http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=roKWk5FzmgE{loadposition mod_53}