

Against All Odds 2010 – TNA Holds a Tournament? NO WAY DUDE!

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Location: Impact Zone, Orlando, Florida

Commentators: Tazz, Mike Tenay

Well we're a month and a half into the Hogan regime and things are looking better from a wrestling perspective but from a ratings perspective not so much. Anyway, tonight we have Joe vs. Styles and a one night tournament for the title shot at Lockdown, which isn't for another two months but whatever. I fail to see where the card game aspect comes from also but whatever, The tournament is intriguing looking so let's get to it.

Here are the brackets.

Pope

Desmond Wolfe

Hernandez

Matt Morgan

Kurt Angle

Mr. Anderson

Abyss

Mick Foley

We open with Flair storming in and he's ticked because Bischoff is the referee. Ok then. Flair stumbles over his words a lot. Does anyone buy Flair as a 60 year old man being physically intimidating?

The opening video is about the tournament and how winning it is the ultimate prize. I thought that would be the world title but whatever. Oh and we hear about the world title match too. For the life of me, why are they making Styles into a Flair clone? He's the best in the world, so let's change it up right? That makes LOADS of sense.

The music sounds like bad lounge music.

8 Card Stud Quarterfinals: Desmond Wolfe vs. D'Angelo Dinero

Sweet goodness Chelsea looks great. Good night though, shut up Tenay and West. Wolfe is a guy I like more and more every time I see him. Pope...I just don't get it. He's a wrestling Slick and somehow that's a gimmick? Wait...Tenay just asked which young stud will break through. Angle, Abyss and Foley are all former world champions, Hernandez has been around forever and everyone knows Kennedy.

I get the idea of what he's saying but it's still kind of dumb. The people are behind Pope, but at the same time how serious can you take the Impact Zone fans? They're starting out fast paced here which I like pretty well. Wolfe's nipples are really close together. NICE DDT on Pope. Pope has a unique style of striking which is reminding me of Sting, which is a compliment.

A top rope cross body gets two. The big lariat misses and Pope gets a rollup for two. And then we get a very contrived ending on the levels of the 619 as Pope hits the dumbest finisher in the company at the moment with the double knee to the back of the conveniently placed opponent for the pin.

Rating: B. Not bad at all and a very solid opener. They went out there and had a fast paced match. I would have had Wolfe go further, but if they wanted Pope to go over strong, I can't argue with how they did it as it was a completely clean win.

Flair yells at Bischoff again. He declares himself the

wrestling god. Oh dang it they're channeling JBL. That can't be good. You can smell Flair vs. Hogan and Hogan going over from here.

JB is (back thank goodness. Not a huge fan of his but he's not Bubba so he's great by comparison) with Morgan and Hernandez who says they fight tonight but they're still champions no matter what. Hernandez being that much shorter is funny for some reason.

8 Card Stud Quarterfinals: Hernandez vs. Matt Morgan

Not wild in the slightest about them having these two go at it so soon but I get the point again. Something I need to make clear: any company is going to get a lot of points for just having a direction and an idea that is clear. I likely won't agree with it, but if something has a point that makes something resembling sense a lot of the time I'll just go with it. This is one of those times. Don't agree with it, but it's passable.

Tazz thinks both guys want to win. Oh year that's such great analysis. Winner gets Pope. Hernandez goes for a cross body and they botch the living heck out of it as Morgan tries to catch him but it fails completely. They're being really tentative here which makes sense from a storyline perspective but at the same time it makes for some boring wrestling. Taz and Tenay are REALLY annoying. They finally crank it up a bit but not that much really.

We do get a 25-30 second delayed vertical suplex. That's rather impressive. Uh oh Hernandez might be hurt. So Morgan goes for the shoulder and uses the tights to get the win. TNA...why are you trying to mess with things that are like your mother: NOT SOMETHING THAT YOU SHOULD BE MESSINGWITH! Yep they're teasing tension between the two.

Rating: C-. This was too slow for my taste. It wasn't bad at all but just not that good. I HATED the ending as these two

simply do not need tension yet. I don't like them as a team but it's still stupid nonetheless. Morgan should have won though.

We recap Angle recently which is kind of odd but whatever. Ok this has gone on for about three minutes now. Angle apologizes to Hogan for....no apparent reason. Oh ok it's for helping him Thursday. He also calls out Anderson, who is his first round opponent.

8 Card Stud Quarterfinals: Mr. Anderson vs. Kurt Angle

He misses the mic. "That was intentional." I chuckled. Kennedy is another guy that has found something that works and has RAN with it. Sometimes that's the best thing to do and it worked here. For some reason his music starts up again after his promo and plays for like 3 seconds before Angle's starts up. Whatever. Angle is another interesting case as he's proof that a reputation can be a character.

The screen behind him says The Greatest Wrestler In The World. What more do you need to know about him? They start rather quickly which is a perk. Angle hits the post with his shoulder which I don't think was his initial idea. Anderson gets the dog tag that Angle wears and cuts him open with it really bad. Oh man he's bleeding nice and hard.

I love that release belly to belly that Angle uses. Take note Scott Steiner: there are other moves than that and a bad chinlock. There goes the buckle pad thanks to the heel here. Naturally the Angle Slam doesn't work. Has that gotten anyone in forever? Angle GOES OLYMPIC but it doesn't work. After being rammed into the buckle, Angle gets pinned by the Mic Check. Uh, yeah. Anderson spits on the dog tag afterwards.

Rating: C-. It's certainly not bad, but this felt like it was just a total crash course of a match. They flew through it and it felt like it was about 3 minutes long when it was closer to ten or so. That's not good, but like I said this certainly

wasn't bad at all.

Bischoff is with Foley and Abyss and if they don't fight then the mask comes off. The fans are chanting Angle which is amusing for some reason. Also there's no reason that Abyss should freak over the mask coming off when he took it off on his own months ago. It's now a No DQ match. To clarify something FTS was wondering about, I'm ok with this as it makes sense from Bischoff's perspective. It follows the story and I don't need a scorecard to keep track of what's going on. That makes up for the inconsistencies. I don't like it, but it makes something close to sense so I'll let it go.

8 Card Stud Quarterfinals: Abyss vs. Mick Foley

Remember this is No DQ. Foley's music isn't bad and Abyss' is at least easily recognizable. Eric made him get rid of the flannel. Naturally Tenay argues over what material it is. The fans of course want to see the bat used for no apparent reason. Foley slaps Abyss. Only Foley could slap a monster and get away with it. We hit the floor and I like the mats they have.

They're really thick which I have no problem with. Foley busts out a chair and takes over. The fans aren't sure what to do here as is often the case with two faces fighting. It's thumbtacks time. Abyss keeps going against the hardcore stuff here as he chokeslams Foley but makes sure it's not in the tacks. The fans still want the bat. And Abyss steals the sock from Foley's pants, prompting a USE THE SOCK chant. Ok then.

Foley takes the referee down and gets his sock. Well that works I guess. The Claw goes onto Abyss but it only gets two. Foley comes at him with the bat and walks into the Black Hole Slam onto the tacks for the pin. He freaks because he hurt Foley.

Rating: B. This is a very different kind of match as it's more about thinking and storytelling than action. Now the smart

thing is that they took a guy like Foley who is as good at in ring psychology and character development as anyone in history and let him do this as it worked really well for me. This was a situation where it wasn't about the wrestling but it really worked which is incredible rare.

Pope

Morgan

Anderson

Abyss

No reason for those names. Just a writing exercise I thought I'd try.

The Nasty Boys are with Christy and apparently Nastys vs. 3D is 15 years in the making. The Dudleys (the famous pairing that is) haven't been around that long but whatever. The Nastys say they're here to prove something or other. Whatever. Knobbs can't say the name of their opponents. It's a number and a letter. We recap the feud which was ok if nothing else. Again, yes they Nastys have feuded with a lot of great teams. How many have they actually beaten?

Nasty Boys vs. Team 3D

So now people are being asked to pay to see the Nasty Boys. Good to know. That lounge music is REALLY annoying. No one in TNA has ever taken it to Team 3D like the Nastys? REALLY? Sags looks slimmer and nearly in shape. Knobbs...not so much. 3D runs them off and I guess they're the faces? It's been 2 minutes so they might have turned since then.

We get to a regular tag match with Sags vs. Bubba. Both guys have pants with their team name on it. Is that in case they get lost? Sign in the front row: pipe down nerds. That's rather funny. The fans want to sit down and eat. What else could they want tables for? This hasn't been as bad as I expected, but it's nothing compared to the Nasty Boys doing

science experiments like they did in 1995.

You have to see that clip if you don't know what I'm talking about. SuperBrawl 1995, opening of the tape. Go find it as it's just bizarre. Oh look: Brooke Hogan is here. It has nothing to do with the show or the match, but it needs to be noted: Brooke Hogan is indeed HERE. The Nastys take over now.

Taz says lifting Knobbs is like lifting a small foreign car. That's rather funny. Sags takes 3D and JIMMY FREAKING HART makes the save. Are you kidding me??? His helmet is slammed into Bubba for the pin. Love that voice.

Rating: C-. I'm very surprised as this wasn't terrible by any means. It wasn't particularly good but it was far from bad. I do not get the point in the Nasty Boys being on TV but having Hart there is never a bad thing.

Joe and Bischoff talk about the world title match.

8 Card Stud Semi-Finals: D'Angelo Dinero vs. Matt Morgan

Again I ask: what is a street pope? I don't get it. Pope does the Bret Hart glasses thing which works. They're going big man vs. little man here so that's all well and good. We're on the floor now and not a lot is going on. Oh I almost forgot: this is the feud that made me hate Burke. Back in OVW these two feuded FOREVER and it couldn't have been more boring if their lives depended on it.

It was that feud that made me hate Burke and it's why I have issues about him to this day. Expect a low grade here. Morgan is acting very heelish here and I'm not big on that at all. It's bearhug time so they're not doing themselves any favors at all. Morgan is dominating here and screw that as Pope is making his comeback.

Morgan BLUEPRINTS UP though and takes his head off with a clothesline. So one minute Pope is in survival mode and the

next he's hitting the knees to the back for the pin. Riiiiight. Oh I especially love Morgan being on the corner and looking over his shoulder twice to see when he needs to be ready to sell.

Rating: D+. While I want to fail it because of the people in it, this didn't do it for me. The story and psychology were pretty much non-existent here and the ending was completely unbelievable as in yeah right that was stupid. Yes there's likely some bias in there and it wasn't jumping off the page bad or anything so don't think that's what I'm saying.

Anderson cuts a rather funny promo about how he beat Angle. It's funnier than it sounds. He says his name once, leaves to the left and comes back from the right to say it again. The guy can talk no matter what you think of his in-ring stuff.

8 Card Stud Semi-Finals: Abyss vs. Mr. Anderson

We start with a very long stalling session here which I guess is ok. The crowd is oddly quiet here. Why is Abyss being a former world champion NEVER mentioned? I know it's a different world title but it's just never talked about at all. They'll talk about the WCW and WWE titles whenever it benefits them. Hey, we're on the floor!

Always good to see TNA mixing things up. For some reason I always love dropkicks to the knee. There's just something cool about that. Anderson works on the knee so at least that makes sense. He goes for the mask and when Abyss is trying to fix it, the Mic Check sends Anderson to the finals.

Rating: D. This was really weak to me. The knee stuff led nowhere and the ending did nothing for me. Abyss is in desperate need of credibility. This should have been Foley vs. Kennedy, period.

AJ cuts a very solid promo about being a great worker. Again I ask; WHAT POINT IS THERE TO FLAIR BEING THERE IF HE CAN TALK

THIS WELL??? "But KB, he learned so much from talking to Flair." And I have to see Flair on TV making AJ look like he needs a mentor WHY?

If you want to make him act like Flair then fine but we don't need to see him there every five minutes. Sorry I just completely fail to see what Flair is there for. He's the golden boy and the man in TNA and the best wrestler in the world so he needs a mentor all of a sudden? He's the BEST. How much better can he get?

We recap Joe vs. AJ which needs no recapping but whatever.

Bischoff is coming to the ring. And Hogan is here too. Ok then.

TNA World Title: AJ Styles vs. Samoa Joe

Remember Bischoff is referee here. Why is he referee? No clue but it's TNA so that comes with the territory. I love the total lack of tattoo on his face. AJ has a Flair robe. Shoot me now. Ok the hood on it makes it a lot better than I thought. Why in the world are they making AJ a heel here? Seriously, he's so insanelly over and they make a fortune off his merchandise so let's just throw that away.

He has blonde highlights now too. That's just great. Fans are WAY behind Joe. There is something awesome about the way JB says "From the Isle of Samoa." No idea why but I've always loved that. As soon as the robe came off AJ got about 10x more awesome. AJ simply doesn't need Flair to be a heel. The interesting thing here is that Flair and Eric have legit heat. Some of you might not know why though.

Back in 1998, Flair's son Reid was wrestling in an amateur tournament in North Carolina and Flair was dead set on being there to watch him compete. He gave warning to Bischoff that he would be there and that's all there was to it. The thing is there was a Thunder, not Nitro or a PPV but THUNDER, that

night. Flair, having a thing called common sense, thought that since he was Ric Flair and this was WCW and he gave sufficient warning that he would be able to have a night off.

Bischoff thought otherwise and suspended him. This literally went on for months and the fans reverted back to 1991 and spent the whole show chanting WE WANT FLAIR. So this led to a famous as well as awesome moment where Arn Anderson reformed the Horsemen (adding in Dean Malenko for the first time) and completely unannounced brought out Flair for the first time in about four months in NORTH CAROLINA. What do you think the reaction was?

Naturally Flair gets one of the biggest pops in WCW history and looks like a million bucks and the fans are FREAKING OUT. And of course they had Flair have a heart attack a few weeks later then had Bischoff beat him at Starrcade with a screwjob ending that the fans booed out of the freaking building. How did that company ever make a freaking dime?

The Horsemen were then, you guessed it, fed to the NWO and made to look like jokes while Hogan won the world title from Nash in the Fingerpoke of Doom, because of course having the guy the fans are cheering for like there's no tomorrow being pushed as a serious character can't work so let's just stick with the same stuff that's made us lose the biggest ratings lead in wrestling history while Austin and Vince are destroying us in the ratings right?

ANYWAY, the point is that Bischoff more or less said that Flair was just one of the wrestlers and that carrying the company for as many years as he did was NOTHING in comparison to guys like Hogan and Savage who came in and tanked the company for two years before the one good idea that Bischoff had (read as stole from two Japanese companies that did the same thing years before the NWO was even heard of) made any money before he ran the company into the freaking ground. Flair was disrespected and the fans chanted WE WANT FLAIR very

loudly and Bischoff had to back down and let Flair come back before embarrassing him again.

Oh yeah there's a PPV here. There is something just freaking awesome about the fans chanting JOE'S GONNA KILL YOU. How can that not get into your head? AJ works on the knee. Ok, that's fine if he does it a bit but you have AJ Styles in there. Have him use his stuff, not Flair's as his primary offense. We're on the floor (I know I'm shocked too) and AJ is trying to suplex Joe which fails more than Flair's hair.

I'm glad Joe is in the shorts again. They work better for him. Joe counters a top rope hurricanrana and goes aerial and hits kind of an enziguri to the front of the face. Flair goes after the leg. Never mind that it's the WRONG ONE as AJ had worked on the right leg and Flair went after the left one but whatever. AJ uses an Indian Deathlock and bends back to more or less have his hands like you would for a reverse neckbreaker.

Benoit did that to Booker T once on Thunder and WCW went to a commercial just as he locked it in. Brilliance I tell you, brilliance. There's the figure four that you knew was coming. Love that snap powerslam Joe does. I know I tend to skip around a lot on my reviewing but here's my thought on why I don't just list off play by play: if you wanted that, you could just go watch the match yourself.

Just thought I'd make that clear in case people think I fast forward and just watch pieces of the match. I write out what pops into my head and at times there isn't much. Doesn't mean the match is bad or anything but just nothing strikes me about it. And end of random tangent.

And Bischoff punches Flair. Ok then. Joe hits the Muscle Buster while this is happening and is ticked off that nothing can be done about it. Joe pulls Bischoff back in and walks into the Pele and the Clash for the pin. Flair demands that

Bischoff raise AJ's hand.

Rating: B+. Solid stuff here but it was missing a little something that I just can't place. This is another match that you just can't mess up and they didn't here. Another solid showing here and it was certainly worthy of being the world title match.

We recap the tournament to this point which seems like a way to kill 3 minutes.

Anderson is with the red hot Christy who talks very well again. He's wearing a different shirt here too. I have no idea what he's saying here as Christy is just ridiculously good looking here. The gum is a great touch for Anderson.

Pope is with JB. Ah I get why I hate Pope again: he talks once in awhile. I was liking him a bit earlier and that's all gone now. And it's Hall and X-Pac. TNA security running in to stop them reminds me of a Keystone Cops segment as they're constantly chasing these two around the building trying to stop them from getting into the building. They say something to Hogan and it's whatever. Does anyone care about them at this point?

8 Card Stud Finals: Mr. Anderson vs. D'Angelo Dinero

Pope takes forever getting out there because he got beaten up. Ok then. The referee starts counting and you know he'll be there in time so this is kind of pointless. Yep there he is. Anderson beats on him on the ramp. Even money says they'll brawl on the floor too. Hey they're fighting on the floor! They haven't actually been in the ring yet. AJ and Flair are watching in the back.

This has been ALL Anderson, making the ending a tad obvious. Pope of course is ok after that much of a beating. Most of the match is Anderson beating on Pope and there's your comeback. The DDE gets two and Anderson is in control again. Pope uses

an STO which is Kennedy's finisher in reverse.

Kennedy cuts a promo mid match and stops to hit the Mic Check for two and a pop from the fans. That's...a bit too much from Pope. Anderson misses a Swanton and Pope hits the double knees to the back. He REALLY needs a new finisher.

Rating: B. They kept it simple here and it worked. This was fun. That's the best way to put it I think as it wasn't particularly great or even very good but it was fun. That's all you can ask for here I guess. Either way it worked fine though so all in all this was a good main event.

Overall Rating: B. This was a good show. It put me in mind of Survival of the Fittest that I did from ROH: nothing great but nothing resembling a bad match at all. This was solid and it worked rather well I thought. The whole show was based around the tournament and that's all well and good. My main problem was how all of the tournament matches other than the final were so short.

They averaged about 8 minutes which just isn't long enough for that many matches. That's my only major criticism with the show. Other than that though, I liked this show and while it's no classic or anything, it's good. That's how I would describe it: good. Check it out if you have some time to kill.