

ECW on TNN – December 24, 1999: Hang On. This One Is Going By Fast.

ECW on TNN

Date: December 24, 1999

Location: Municipal Auditorium, Nashville, Tennessee

Attendance: 2,500

Commentators: Joey Styles, Joel Gertner

For once we've got a huge show here with Awesome defending the world title against Masato Tanaka. I remember hearing about this match back in 1999 and being furious that I had to go to my family's Christmas party instead of being able to watch the title match. I got to see a few minutes here and there but I've never seen it all the way through. Let's get to it.

Joel and Joey welcome us to the show until Cyrus interrupts them. Cyrus runs down Joel and Joel finally snaps back, saying there's no ECW office to be fed up with him. Cyrus drops the bomb (I guess?) that he works for TNN, which freaks Joel out. We're told that next week, Tanaka gets his shot. Judge Jeff Jones, Mike Awesome's manager, comes out and says that if Spike Dudley wants a title shot, he needs to come and ask for it.

This brings out Spike as well as Awesome with the champion escaping the Acid Drop and laying out Spike with a huge clothesline. Awesome launches Spike over the top with Spike's leg landing on the barricade. Tanaka "catches" him and then jumps the rail to fight Awesome right now. People from the back come out to break it up including Heyman, but Cyrus says let the match happen tonight. Heyman is cool with that and we have a main event for later.

Intro sequence.

ECW World Title: Mike Awesome vs. Masato Tanaka

This is joined in progress and Tanaka is in workout pants. Tanaka sends him to the floor and into the barricade followed by a chair to the head. These two were rivals in Japan with Tanaka being the guy that beat Awesome far more than anyone else. Awesome is defending and already beat Tanaka at two straight PPVs. They head into the crowd with the champion taking over.

That doesn't seem to interest them that much so it's time to head back to ringside. A top rope clothesline gets two for Awesome and the annoying fans already want tables. A sitout powerbomb gets two as well for Awesome and the fans get their wish. Tanaka takes a huge running Awesome Bomb off the apron through said table, as Wrestling Law #1 (if you set the table, you go through it) doesn't apply in ECW.

We take a break and come back with the Awesome Splash getting two. Awesome brings in another table and about ten people are watching from the aisle. Tanaka escapes another powerbomb and hits a release German through the table followed by a tornado DDT onto a chair for two. A top rope elbow with a chair gets two for Tanaka as well. Awesome crushes Tanaka's head with a chair but Tanaka gets up. Two more chairs to the head won't put him down but a third finally does.

A running powerbomb gets two for Awesome as we're firmly into the "what does it take to win this" mode. We take another break and come back with Tanaka hitting a tornado DDT off the top through a table for two. The fans are starting to lose it on these kickouts. Tanaka hits the Roaring Elbow (a discus elbow smash to the face) for the pin and the title out of nowhere.

Rating: C. This rating depends on how you look at it. It was exciting, but it was completely ridiculous. The biggest problem of all: Awesome can stand up through all of those huge moves with all of those weapons, but an elbow to the face is enough to knock him out? How exactly does that

work? These matches are well received, and while they're exciting, they destroy the limits of what it means to be realistic and that brings them down a lot.

Awesome puts the belt on Tanaka and then beats him up, followed by a powerbomb over the ropes and through a table on the floor.

Awesome is furious post break and goes after Cyrus, who blames Paulie.

Super Crazy vs. Ikuto Hidaka

Before the match, we cut to the back and see Corino, Jack Victory and Rhyno leaving a locker room after apparently destroying Axl Rotten and Balls Mahoney with a chair. It's a feeling out process to start with with Crazy going to the floor. Back in and it's time for gymnastics. They both avoid everything the other person throws before they both hit armdrags and nip up at the same time for a standoff.

Hidaka ducks a kick and a headscissors sends Crazy to the outside. A HUGE flip dive takes crazy out again and Hidaka is in control. Crazy whips him into the barricade and fires off some kicks before we head back inside. A springboard missile dropkick puts Hidaka down and a moonsault gets two for Crazy. Crazy hooks a surfboard and then a dragon sleeper to keep Hidaka in trouble.

Hidaka is sent to the floor again but comes back in with a springboard missile dropkick to the knee. There's a leg lock but Hidaka lets it go way too fast. West Coast Pop gets two for Hidaka and he counters a powerbomb into a tornado DDT for two more. He goes up again but misses his flip attack, allowing Crazy to hit a sitout powerbomb for the pin. Why did referees in ECW count so fast?

Rating: C+. This is one of those matches that was exciting but it had nothing as far as storytelling or flow to it other than that 15 seconds

of leg work that Hidaka did. I've never head of Hidaka other than him in ECW, which is odd as he had the high flying ability that indy companies love.

House show/merchandise ads.

Mike Awesome yells at Lou E. Dangerously who was literally a Heyman imitator. Lou: "I'm not him! LOOK! I HAVE HAIR!" Awesome yells at his manager for taking too much credit for Awesome's success.

Tag Titles: Raven/Tommy Dreamer vs. Da Baldies

Before the match we get comments from the Impact Players who are ready for Guilty As Charged and their title shot. Storm: "Now put that in your Y2J and smoke it." We come back to the arena to see the Players running in to beat down Raven while Dreamer is in the crowd for some reason. There's no match here as the Players beat up Raven and cuff him up in a crucifixion position at the entrance. Raven gets caned and busted open as the Players pose to end the show.

Overall Rating: C-. This is one of those shows that feels like it's charging by as fast as it can and hopes that you can't tell what's on it but it hopes that you like the streaks of color you see. The two matches that actually happened were fast paced and entertaining, but they certainly weren't good from a quality standpoint at all. We'll have a rematch for the title next week anyway and guess what happens there.

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