

Impact Wrestling – March 21, 2013: The Bully Ray Story

Impact Wrestling

Date: March 21, 2013

Location: Sears Center Arena, Chicago, Illinois

Commentators: Mike Tenay, Tazz, Todd Keneley

After last week's dominance by Aces and 8's, tonight should be about both redemption for TNA and setting up the first challenger for Ray and the title. Unfortunately this isn't live so the reactions won't be as crisp. The main thing here though is that Aces and 8's is looking a lot better all of a sudden and hopefully they can keep that going tonight. Let's get to it.

We open with a fast paced Aces and 8's recap before we hear from Bully Ray. Tonight he's going to explain how he did what he did over the last nine months to get where we are today.

Here's Hulk on one crutch now to open the show. He talks about being around forever but never having been fooled like this before. Last week he sent the whole roster (as in like five or six guys) to fight the Aces and 8's and it was a massacre (not really). Now Hulk realizes that it's a war and he needs warriors. He calls out the four men that led the charge last week, which are Samoa Joe, Jeff Hardy, Magnus and Kurt Angle.

Hulk talks about needing the world title back and asks Jeff if he's ready to get it back. Jeff says he's ready but wants to prove it in a four way match tonight. Hogan says that's a great idea and books the match for the shot at Ray for the main event tonight.

We hear about Plan A from Bully Ray: win the Bound For Glory Series and win the world title at Bound For Glory. Aces and 8's were created for

shock and awe and debuted the night the Series started. Week after week the people started asking who was behind the Aces and 8's, which is when Roode started thinking it was Storm, so Aces and 8's made him into a scapegoat. Then Ray called Roode again to have Roode cost Storm the BFG Series again. That night Hogan locked down the building, but it didn't matter because Ray lost the BFG Series final to Jeff Hardy. Therefore, Ray needed a new plan.

Tag Titles: Bobby Roode/Austin Aries vs. Hernandez/Chavo Guerrero

Roode and Aries are defending. Roode and Chavo get things going with Bobby pounding on Chavo's head and neck for early control. Off to Hernandez who uses the power game to take over before getting caught in the heel corner with some cheating. Aries chops him in the chest before bringing Roode back in, only to be double suplexed by SuperMex. Back to Chavo who dropkicks both champions to the floor as we take a break.

Back with Chavo still in trouble at the hands of both tag champions. He finally comes back with a tornado DDT though, allowing the hot tag to Hernandez. A HUGE gorilla press puts Roode down and there's a big dive off the ramp and over the top rope to take out both Aries and Roode at the same time. The challengers load up a powerbomb/top rope something combination but Aries makes the save. Chavo comes back with Three Amigos on Austin but as he loads up the Frog Splash, Christopher Daniels comes down and shoves him off the top, allowing Aries to roll up Guerrero for the pin at 11:57.

Rating: C+. Chavo and Hernandez are fine in the ring but there is no reason to care about them at all. They have no charisma, no reason to care about them and nothing of note to make them stand out. The champions are fine in the ring but much better on the microphones, but unfortunately we didn't get any promos here.

We get a video on what the X Division means. Tonight the X Division Evolution begins, meaning there will be a reemphasis on the high flying

and all title defenses will be three way matches.

Kenny King is fine with the new rules and plugs TNA's sponsor in a promo.

X-Division Title: Kenny King vs. Sonjay Dutt vs. Zema Ion

Apparently if you don't get pinned or submit, you can be in the next title match. Also there's a 230lb weight limit now. Dutt takes both guys down to start and all three head to the floor. The champion runs up the apron and dives down to take out Dutt with a flip attack. Ion and King head inside and there's a running splash in the corner to Zema. Dutt is knocked off the apron but comes back in when both guys are down.

The Hindu Press is broken up by King but Ion takes the champion down with a tornado DDT. Dutt flips into the ring with a sweet hurricanrana to send Ion to the floor. Sonjay runs up to the corner and after slipping a bit, takes out both other guys with a moonsault. He hits the moonsault double stomp on Ion but King comes in with a springboard Blockbuster to pin Dutt at 4:53.

Rating: C+. The match was fine but I'm going to get sick of these triple threats in a hurry. At the end of the day it's already the most overdone gimmick match in wrestling to the point where it's almost not even a gimmick anymore. The match was ok but as usual it was sloppy at times.

Brooke Hogan is here to do business and nothing else.

We hear more from Ray about the start of Plan B. He caused Joseph Park to get caught into the Clubhouse which got Hogan inside as well. This set up the tag match at BFG and D-Von was brought in because Hogan turned his back on D-Von. I believe that's because D-Von's contract was allowed to expire. Then Sting started to stand up for Ray and Bully had an opening. Hulk finally shook Ray's hand and it was all over. Ray intentionally got

caught with Brooke and there was nothing Hulk could do at that point.

Sting goes into Hogan's office and Hogan yet again accepts no blame at all despite saying most of this was his fault. Hogan tells Sting to go stand in the rafters for years.

We recap Gail Kim vs. Taryn Terrell with Taryn snapping on Gail at the PPV. Taryn says if she gets fired then so be it because she's reached her breaking point.

Here's Taryn to say she had to retaliate against Gail for everything Gail had done for her. She's ready to accept her consequences so here's Gail. Kim says that Taryn should know better than to mess with her because Gail is the greatest Knockout of all time. She's here to watch Taryn get fired by Brooke Hogan. Brooke fires Taryn before immediately rehiring her as a Knockout, meaning Taryn can get physical. Taryn and Gail fight to the back and here's Bully to stare at Brooke.

Ray holds up his ring finger and says til death do us part so Brooke runs away.

Ray talks about forming the team by bringing in D-Von, Knux, Doc and Garrett. D-Von and Garrett even offered their services to Hogan but got turned down. Garrett was the one that got rid of Eric Bischoff but Hogan brushed him off in a TV Title elimination choice. Brisco joined because Hogan was trained by his father and uncle but Hogan made him beg. Then Anderson joined because after Aces and 8's attacked him, Hogan never checked on him.

Tazz was recruited because he was Hogan's friend and bulletproof because of his contract. D'Lo was in because he was a member of management. Kurt was the first victim because he was a way to get Wes into Gut Check and Brown helped get Brisco onto the roster by being a judge. Then it was time for Ray's title match where Ray made sure everyone was revealed before he won so that the ultimate reveal was the best.

Angle wants to take down Aces and 8's by winning the world title.

Matt Morgan vs. Joseph Park

Park is the hometown boy but gets shoved down with ease. Morgan toys with Park and clotheslines him in the back of the head for good measure. Park avoids a charge in the corner and pounds away, only to be taken down by a discus clothesline. The Carbon Footprint misses though and Morgan crotches himself on the rope. Joseph pounds away and a shoulder block puts Matt down. The middle rope splash misses though and it's the Carbon Footprint for the pin at 5:14.

Rating: D. This was long and boring with Park getting in offense for all of about fifteen seconds. Apparently Morgan is going after Hogan after not being involved with him for months. Park is doing fine in this role but it wouldn't hurt to have him do some more Abyss style stuff to freshen things up a bit.

Hardy says may the best man win tonight.

Here's AJ Styles for an in-ring interview with Mike Tenay. Mike cites his history with AJ before asking about AJ's rumored drug and alcohol use. Tazz cuts them off before we get an answer though and offers AJ a spot on the Aces and 8's roster. This brings out James Storm who wants to know if this is the real AJ Styles.

AJ doesn't even turn to face him as Storm asks him questions. Styles used to be the kind of guy that would tell you what he thought about you. AJ may be a new guy but Storm is the same old Cowboy. Storm isn't happy with getting sucker punched last week and says he's going to punch AJ out. There goes the cowboy hat and the fans chant hug it out. AJ walks away.

Ray talks about Hardy rolling along and winning wrestler of the year. Hogan still didn't trust Ray when Ray saved him or caught him with his

daughter. Ray even saved Brooke but Hogan didn't care. When this didn't work, Ray moved on to Sting. He proposed to Brooke and had Aces and 8's break up the wedding. Ray took a few shots for the team like in Goodfellas. Then Ray got hurt and Brooke convinced Hogan to name him #1 contender, which is exactly what she did. Ray started playing to Hulk's ego which got Hogan into the match where Sting got beaten up while Ray took care of his family.

Jeff Hardy vs. Magnus vs. Kurt Angle vs. Samoa Joe

The winner gets the shot at Bully Ray, presumably at Slammiversary. The fans seem to be behind Joe as he stomps Angle down in the corner. Joe cleans out the ring other than Kurt before hitting the corner enziguri to take him down. A knee drop to the head gets two before Joe sends Kurt to the floor. Joe hits a BIG dive to take out all three guys as we take a break.

Back with Angle pounding away on Magnus but being kneed down by the Brit. Hardy dives on Magnus but gets caught in a suplex for his efforts. Magnus stays on Hardy in the ring as Joe and Angle are down on the floor. The fans chant for Joe and Angle but Hardy starts to clean house. He hits a low dropkick on Magnus and Twisting Stunners on Joe and Angle. Magnus gets the full Twist but Angle breaks up the Swanton attempt. Magnus crotches Jeff but Angle has suplexes for everyone and an ankle lock for Joe. As Joe kicks Angle into Magnus, Hardy hits the Swanton on the Samoan for the pin and title shot at 12:13.

Rating: C. This was just ok. At the end of the day it was pretty clearly going to be Hardy given the amount of hype he's gotten over the course of the show. Magnus getting more TV time is always a good thing as he's a very talented guy, but it isn't his time yet. Joe and Angle were Joe and Angle so the match was good enough but not great.

Hardy celebrates to end the show.

Overall Rating: C+. The show wasn't as good as last week's but the backstory by Ray was a nice touch. While we already knew a lot of that it was cool to see him telling us about it all instead of just saying "I have my reasons and they're none of your business". The big problem for TNA though is that most of their show is dedicated to one story and if you don't like that you're out of luck. Even AJ is being pulled into it and it appears that he'll be the Sting to Ray's Hogan from 1997. Good show but if Aces and 8's doesn't stay at a higher level, they're in BIG trouble.

Results

Bobby Roode/Austin Aries b. Chavo Guerrero/Hernandez – Rollup to Guerrero

Kenny King b. Sonjay Dutt and Zema Ion – Springboard Blockbuster to Dutt

Matt Morgan b. Joseph Park – Carbon Footprint

Jeff Hardy b. Samoa Joe, Magnus and Kurt Angle – Swanton to Joe

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