

On This Day: April 24, 2005 – Lockdown 2005: AJ Styles Is Not Human

Lockdown 2005

Date: April 24, 2005

Location: Impact Zone, Orlando, Florida

Attendance: 775

Commentators: Mike Tenay, Don West

This is the first in the series and has my favorite TNA match ever on it. This is a show I've tried to find for a long time so this is a good treat. This was a show that was really weird when you first heard about it as every match is in the cage which was unthinkable when it was first announced. There are 8 matches here and one gets less than 14 minutes so this is a wrestling packed show. The company is still in its infancy here so the angles and a lot of the guys are going to be odd. Let's get to it.

The opening video is a creepy version of Ring Around the Rosey which is supposed to be about the cage. Wouldn't that be Rosey Around the Ring in this case? The narrator talks about what the cage would say if it could talk. Apparently it's more or less a haunted house.

West and Tenay tell us about all the different kind of matches we're having. Yes, we're actually having a TAG TEAM match in a cage. SHOCKING!

We see Nash sitting in the back and having a staff infection which means he's out tonight.

Apollo/Sonny Siaki vs. Chris Candido/Lance Hoyt

Hoyt is Vance Archer. Tenay tries to tell us that all of these

matches are going to be main event matches because they're all in the cage. This isn't a main event match anywhere in the country as Gorilla would not say I guess you would say. Apollo and Siaki are teaming together because they had a match together and are friends now or something. Sounds like a bromance to me.

Candido has been pretending to be hurt lately so no one can trust him. Or they can't trust him because he's a heel. That's always a possibility. Apollo and Hoyt chop it out as the two big guys in this. Apollo gets a jumping back elbow to take him down. The fans chant shut the door for some reason. Candido is helped out of the cage. He had a broken leg and would be dead in four days due to a blood clot. He was 33.

So now it's a handicap match with Hoyt hitting a moonsault for two. That was rather impressive actually. Siaki had a good look. I'm not sure why he never really did anything outside of this company. Siaki does the running Angle suplex on Hoyt as he's in big trouble with the faces just picking him apart now. He misses a clothesline and kind of falls down. A TKO from Apollo sets up a top rope splash from Siaki for the pin.

Rating: D+. This was weak but at the same time it's very hard to grade it fairly given the change they had to make maybe two minutes in. It really was a shame about Candido as he did nothing wrong and still died. I know often times we use the word tragedy loosely but this actually was as it was a pure accident. Anyway, the match isn't very good but given what they had to work with it was ok.

Post match the Naturals, Candido's team, comes out to yell at Hoyt who hurts them for a bit before the numbers catch up with him. I'd assume this is to fill in time due to the match likely having to be cut short. This goes on for a very long time.

Dusty is with Traci and Trinity which is a thing that was

always disturbing. Apparently AMW and Team Canada got into a fight before the show started and nothing of note happens from that. We get the drawing for the first guys from both (three man) teams in Lethal Lockdown and it's Jarrett vs. Waltman to start us off.

Dustin Rhodes talks about his match with Bobby (Robert) Roode which is about Texas vs. Canada. Yes, we get it, Texas has a lot of wrestlers and they're all cowboys. Why are they fighting other than that? Who cares, as it's a 2/3 Falls Prince of Darkness Death Match. The part that should shock no one is that the Prince of Darkness aspect means nothing at all. Roode was the henchman of Team Canada actually which is surprising.

Bobby Roode vs. Dustin Rhodes

That rock version of 0 Canada is kind of awesome. Oh ok apparently if we go to the third fall it's a blindfold match. Why? Who care apparently as we have a gimmick! Roode gets a very fast pin. Or at least we think he did as there's no signal from the referee, no bell, no announcement or anything like that. Thanks for letting us know that guys.

Dustin wants to do Shattered Dreams but is threatened with a DQ. He does it anyway and apparently that's just fine. Perhaps it's because this is a cage match? Top rope suplex to Roode which is saying a lot due to how tall Dustin is. Big powerslam gets two as it's all Dustin at this point. Dustin gets another low blow but the bulldog is blocked and here comes Roode.

Roode does the multiple covers for two and we hit the chinlock. He shifts it into the rear naked choke. How is this really different than what Joe does where it's lethal? It's so weird hearing Roode being talked about as the muscle of the group. Ah apparently it's not a choke but a camel clutch style grip. That explains a few things. Dustin counters with an electric chair and both guys are down.

Dustin sends him into the door and it pops open and knocks out the cameraman. That's rather awesome. Set for the Final Curtain or whatever it's called but Dustin stands around for about 45 seconds which is amazingly enough time for Roode to counter into his clothesline to the back of Dustin's head which gets two because his foot is on the rope. Yes you can get out of a pin in a cage match with your foot on the rope. I give up.

Roode goes for a German off the top but he's no Kurt Angle so Dustin rams his head into the cage and hits the bulldog to tie it up. I hate that move. And now we put on hoods for absolutely no reason at all. Is there ANY explanation for this being added in? Yep this is stupid as they stumble around trying to find each other and they've got nothing.

They finally back into each other so Dustin grabs a headlock but Roode shoves him off. Then they take out the referee as I look for a noose to attach to my neck. D'Amore throws in a chair and then climbs in himself. Roode doesn't get who is there so he cracks his coach with a chair. Dustin gets the chair and cracks Roode with it for the pin. Sweet goodness this was stupid.

Rating: D-. This was stupid before the hoods and then ridiculous once they went on. What in the world was the point to that? Also we get to hear Dustin's stupid banjo/country song twice now. Someone explain the point to this gimmick to me? Can anyone do that? I can't find any explanation for it. Ah Russo was in charge at this point. There's your answer.

Christopher Daniels runs down XXX and Skipper, his partner in that team. Skipper comes up to yell at him and says the time is right. That match is later of course.

Xscape Match: Matt Bentley vs. Sonjay Dutt vs. Chris Sabin vs. Shocker

I miss the HAIL SABIN thing. The idea here is you have to get

rid of two guys by traditional means and then get out of the cage once it's one on one. This isn't for anything apparently. Shocker is a luchador. Sweet goodness they have to tag in this. Does anyone think these things through? Sabin and Dutt give us a gymnastic routine to start which gets a well rounded golf clap.

Dutt was insane to watch. He wasn't particularly good but he was fun to watch. Tenay tries to tell us that this is the tallest cage in wrestling. They've never been to an OVW cage match. That this is taller than the Cell. Dutt and Shocker double team Bentley. He never was very good but he's Shawn Michaels cousin so there you go. Dutt is bleeding from the elbow. Bentley beats him up for a bit. Thankfully the Bentley Bounce isn't part of this match.

More gymnastics from Dutt who brings in Sabin again. This is a spotfest if I've ever seen one. There's no flow or anything to it as they just move from spot to spot. Not saying it's bad mind you, but it's just kind of all over the place. West: the wall of the steel cage is like a wall of steel. Somehow he's still better than Tazz. Shocker comes back in and gets a cradle on Bentley for two.

Bentley gets a reverse Tarantula on Shocker, as in his legs are wrapped around Shocker's head and he's grabbing Shocker's feet while their backs are facing each other. Dutt comes in to put a chinlock on Bentley so Sabin comes in to put a Boston Crab on Dutt. Cool looking spot but it's not like it gets us anywhere as they break it in a few seconds.

Sabin hits a BIG running powerbomb on Dutt but Shocker saves for no apparent reason. Bentley sends Dutt into the cage but Shocker cleans house and hits a corkscrew elbow to get rid of Dutt. Shocker vs. Bentley now with Shocker going up but getting hit by a Northern Lights Suplex off the top for two.

Trinity, the chick there with Bentley, comes up to help him so

Traci comes out to stop her. And so much for that as she gets shoved off and hurts her ankle. Trinity goes to the top of the cage and hits a BIG moonsault off the top to take out all three guys. Traci comes in again and AGAIN gets shoved out. Sabin gets Cradle Shock on Bentley to get us down to one on one.

Ok so now it's an escape match. They both get crotched on the top rope and we're both down. And then they both climb at the same time and fight on top of the cage before both drop down but Shocker hits first. I'd love someone to just jump off the top and run through the door instead of climbing down like that one time. Kind of a weak ending.

Rating: C+. Pretty fun match here but the ending and the tagging hurt it a good deal. That moonsault from Trinity was pretty freaking awesome though and I'm surprised it's not on more highlight reels. It's a shame this wasn't like, for something other than bragging rights I guess. Not bad and I've never gotten why Shocker just kind of left as he was pretty good.

We're told Candido's leg was broken and we see clips of it. Naturally no one knew what would come of this so it's not like they were exploiting it.

We recap Hardy vs. Raven which the idea was Raven wanted to hook up with Hardy or something and Hardy said no because he wrestled for his fans (who never got him anything but three WWE Titles and his job in TNA once he left WWE). Raven didn't like him saying no so he hit him with a garbage can. That sounds like a recipe for a tables match if I've ever heard one.

Jeff Hardy vs. Raven

Tables match here because it needed a gimmick clearly. Hardy doesn't get that apparently and comes out with chairs. TNA supplied the tables I guess since there's at least one in

there when we start. Hardy has been reborn apparently. Wow that happens to him a lot. I love that hole in the cage that TNA uses as it's a really unique look for cage matches. Raven in control here with pretty basic stuff.

Hardy has some red/pink paint on his skin so it looks like he's covered in blood. Raven gets the DDT and puts Hardy against a table in the corner. He misses his shoulder into it though so Jeff hasn't won yet. At least they covered that earlier on. This is getting rather boring rather quickly. Raven is bleeding and it's pretty bad after a bit. Raven goes up for what looks like the Stroke off the top but they just pretty much jump off the top with no contact at all.

Some New York Mets are here. Twist of Fate by Hardy and now it's table time again. He's a rock and roll star now too apparently. Raven is put on the table and Jeff goes all the way up to the top of the cage and takes forever to get there, meaning Raven of course gets out of the way for the big bump. Trinity's was better. We waste a bit of time with Raven taking control and then Jeff fighting back.

Hardy tries to open Raven up a bit more and then hits him in the back. And there's a low blow to take care of that offensive streak. Something TNA didn't get back in the day: long matches don't mean good matches. Jeff does Raven's drop toehold to Raven which he isn't the best at selling. He climbs out for no apparent reason and Raven shoves the door open to crotch Jeff on it.

Apparently when Jeff gets bored he climbs out of cages. It makes as much sense as anything else I suppose. Jeff jumps off as apparently drugs make your balls invulnerable and jumps into a boot. There are pieces of at least four tables in there. Think that's enough? Actually make that six plus two chairs. Raven sets up two double stacks of tables and then climbs up like an idiot. Jeff knocks him onto them and hits a leg drop off the top to "drive" Raven through them but the

lack of room and the high amount of tables made it look like it was in slow motion.

Rating: D. Did ANYONE want to see Raven vs. Jeff in a 15 minute tables match in a cage? Have you ever seen a one fall fifteen minute tables match? Just WAY too long here with Raven being boring for the most part and Jeff just wanting to jump off high things and no sell metal pipes hitting his balls. I fail to see the point here for the most part and this just didn't do it for me in the slightest. What reason was there for this to be a tables match? Someone explain that to me please. I'd like a reason.

We recap the tag title match which is AMW vs. Team Canada. AMW is the original great tag team in TNA and basically this feud has been going on forever because Team Canada wants the titles.

We recap the Hardy vs. Raven match a bit first because they have to clear the ring.

Tag Titles: America's Most Wanted vs. Team Canada

This is a strap match and Team Canada is Petey Williams and Eric Young. AMW made this a strap match earlier today so no one got to hear about it. I wonder if that was intentional. Young is just a generic heel here that was only a bit nuts but not quite. More eccentric than anything else. AMW is James Storm and Chris "Braden Walker" Harris. They were awesome and I want one of their trench coats.

AMW are cage veterans after the EPIC cage match they had with XXX which I'll have to get to soon. Harris and Williams fight on the floor while Young tries to get out but Storm beats the tar out of him up on top. They crotch Young on top and ram his legs into the cage. A-1, the Canadian muscle dude, hits Harris with the belt so he's stuck on the floor. He gets Storm with it too so the champions are in trouble.

With Harris outside the idiot security guard locks the cage. Does no one pay attention in this company? A-1 keeps beating up Harris on the floor which is fine apparently. Young is a daredevil apparently. He's still annoying. The Canadians beat up Storm in the ring as we're just waiting on Harris to make the Superman comeback and get in. Storm is bleeding.

About three fans try to get a let's go cowboy (Storm's nickname at the time) chant going and it's just sad. A-1, back COVERED in acne, sends Harris into the table. Williams and Young get the American flag off the top of the cage and use it to choke Storm before the referee gets it away. Well that was pointless. Storm makes a brief comeback as Harris knocks A-1 into the railing. And so much for that as Young knocks Harris down off the cage and into the railing.

Storm just goes OFF on Young with the strap but walks into a tornado DDT from Williams for two. There's a you f'd up chant about something but it's not really clear what. Harris takes A-1 down again before trying to get in for like the 7th time. FINALLY he gets in and takes out Team Canada with a double clothesline that doesn't hit Young at all but who cares?

This is an actual 2-2 match about ten minutes in. We get it to even or so before the fans chant TURKEY LEGS at something. Williams goes for a Sharpshooter as Young adds an elbow off the top which breaks up the Sharpshooter but only gets two. Young broke up Williams' Sharpshooter if you missed that as it was a bit odd. Canadian Destroyer is broken up by a Harris spear for two.

Death Sentence (Trash Compactor) misses and A-1 slips the flag/hockey stick in through the camera hole and a shot from that to Harris gets two. When that doesn't work A-1 slips some powder to Williams but it's kicked back into his face. He can't see so he low blows Young and hits the Destroyer on him. A Death Sentence to Williams ends this seconds later.

Rating: B-. Pretty good stuff here with AMW being on defense for the vast majority of the time but eventually winning when they, the champions, were united. Also the whole cheating backfiring thing worked very well too with the evil Canadians trying one time too many to cheat and it catching up with them. AMW was awesome but they had no competition which is what caught up with them eventually.

We recap Skipper vs. Daniels. They lost a match at Turning Point (which the video package gets wrong, saying it was in 2002 when it was 2004) meaning they couldn't team together again. This led to a fatal fourway at Destination X where Daniels turned on Skipper and pinning him to get the title, setting this up. The voiceover guy is way too upbeat.

X-Division Title: Christopher Daniels vs. Elix Skipper

Let's see if Daniels can have a match that doesn't bore me to death. I know he's like the king of the Indies or whatever but he just bores me to death for the most part other than when he's fighting Joe or AJ. Feeling out process to start with no one being able to get an advantage. Both finishers are blocked early with a lot of takedowns and nice mat work, especially by Skipper who I've always liked a bit.

Can we do something other than a gymnastics competition? There were four attempts at leapfrogs which no one went under so they were just running and jumping. Daniels chops away but walks into a butterfly suplex to give Skipper something of an advantage. Daniels sends him into the cage to reverse that though as we're almost five minutes in and it's still little more than feeling out.

This works actually as they were talking about how they knew each other so well before the match so the counters and no one being able to get an extended advantage works. Skipper's arm is hurt after going into the cage and we have some psychology coming into play. This goes on for a good while as Daniels

pounds on it with basic moves for a good while.

An armdrag from the middle rope takes down Skipper again and more arm work follows. By that I mean about five minutes straight at this point. A one arm spinebuster gets Skipper some relief. The announcers are talking about Skipper's cage walk being listed as the #1 cage match moment in TNA history. Yes apparently there's a list of cage match moments for a company less than three years old.

Skipper hits a guillotine leg drop off the top to get two. He goes for something that looked like Orton's backbreaker but the shoulder gives out. Best Moonsault Ever gets two so he goes all the way to the top for I'd assume another one but Skipper gets up to crotch him. He teases the cage walk again but Daniels gets down. Skipper is like screw it and jumps off the top to hit Daniels but takes out the referee too for just a bit. He goes for Sudden Death but his shoulder gives out and Angels Wings (a lifting sitout Pedigree) ends it.

Rating: B. Fun stuff here again with basically a mat based and technical match that happened to be in a cage. This of course begs the question of why was this in a cage. There was no point to having this in there as it would have been more or less the same match without it. Then again why am I looking for logic in a company like this? The match was good though with the psychology playing in throughout the whole match which is the best it's going to get.

Dusty lets us know the next guy in the Lethal Lockdown match. There are six total so there won't be a coin toss apparently. In third is....censored, but if you can read lips you can see he says The Outlaw.

We recap Lethal Lockdown which is WarGames light at this point. It's only three on three here with the main feud being DDP vs. Jarrett who is world champion here. They keep censoring the word Outlaw on this which might be a DVD thing

or something. We know who he is already so it's kind of odd. Maybe a copyright thing. The other guys are Sean Waltman (X-Pac) and Nash (injured remember) with Page and Outlaw (censored) and Monty Brown. Outlaw's name is censored again and it's blurred out on the graphic but his face is shown. Very odd indeed.

Lethal Lockdown: Team Page vs. Team Jarrett

You can bring your own weapons and it's five minutes to start. Waltman vs. Jarrett to start. Waltman is in street clothes and brings a trash can. I guess he brought his home with him and sold his gear for crack. Jarrett is in street clothes too. Please do not call this a bunkhouse match. He has his own trash can full of weapons too. They fight in the aisle to start.

They're in the crowd now as the cage sits empty. That's rather unfair to it. I bet it's lonely. They fight in the crowd and there's no camera so we can't see anything. This is already making my head hurt. And now they separate for awhile as the clock for the five minutes continues to count down. On the announce table now with Jarrett getting destroyed. Dang it there's a bullrope and cowbell. WHAT IS WRESTLING'S OBSESSION WITH THOSE STUPID THINGS???

A chair shot misses Jarrett and after three minutes we're finally in the cage. Basic cage offense follows with Waltman in control. Bronco Buster misses and both guys are down with forty seconds left. Waltman takes him down as Kip James (not called Outlaw here) is in third. He's on Team Jarrett and they have a two minute advantage now. What is with the street clothes here?

They spend the vast majority of these two minutes walking around with the occasional stomp coming. DDP comes in and pulls the Singapore cane out like Leonardo pulling out a sword, thereby making him awesome. Things pick up a bit but

we're just killing time here. Monty Brown comes in with DDP controlling for the most part. That's the last heel to come in.

Brown has a bat and of course a shot to the back of Page doesn't injure him severely. Jarrett breaks the cane over the back of Page which he still gets up from. The cameraman decides a shot of Jarrett's legs is more important than whatever the other guys are doing. The final guy is BG James (Road Dogg, who is part of a rap stable with Konnan and R-Truth at this point).

BG hits the referee and we get the showdown between the Outlaws (censored) and it goes nowhere. Bronco Buster to Jarrett. Brown Pounces everyone but Page breaks up the pin. This is more or less just a glorified six man hardcore match. Diamond Cutter to Jarrett gets two as he makes sure to shift over so that Kip can break it up. Waltman and Brown do an awful looking sequence so then they do it again so that Waltman can get the pin.

Rating: D+. Just ok at best here with nothing of note going on. Page's team wins and the feud more or less went nowhere after this. This was more or less absolutely nothing with too few people, nothing special in terms of violence and just dull overall. Waltman won on a victory roll of all things. A violent match won with a victory roll. Let that sink in a bit.

A bit more brawling goes on afterwards and the Outlaws stare at each other a bit.

We recap the main event. Basically Abyss had been a monster jerk and AJ stood up to him. The match is for the #1 contendership and gets Jarrett at Hard Justice. One of the earliest memories I have of TNA is this brawl they had on Impact where Abyss destroyed him.

Abyss vs. AJ Styles

For the few of you that might be wondering, this is my favorite TNA match ever. AJ is YOUNG looking here which is saying a lot as he's still young today but here he looks like he's about 19. He's a two time world champion here though which is never mentioned anymore for no apparent reason. Abyss is listed at 350lbs here again but he's a LOT slimmer looking here.

He still has the chains here which were a nice touch for him. I have no idea why but they are. AJ dives through the door to take down Abyss before he gets in. Abyss tries to whip him into the railing but AJ baseball slides UNDERNEATH the railing and jumps up onto it and hits a rana to take down Abyss. That was freaking awesome and happened inside of five seconds.

All AJ to start as we're still on the floor. Abyss had more or less been unstoppable recently since splitting from his stablemate Alex Shelley (let that sink in for a bit) so this is a major showdown and seeing Abyss reeling is odd to see. Abyss fights him back and whips him into the railing again so this time AJ channels his inner Morrison and double jumps up to a platform into the crowd, spins around and jumps over FIVE ROWS of fans to his the forearm on Abyss. This is one of the most awesome performances I've ever seen and we're maybe three minutes into this.

AJ dives at Abyss on the railing ala Sting but instead of crashing into it clears the railing by a good foot and hits the ground in the crowd. Abyss pounds on him a bit but AJ just kicks the tar out of him to escape for a bit. West talks about Kenny Chesney for absolutely no apparent reason.

They open the door of the cage after about six minutes of brawling. The difference between this and the stupid stuff before: this was INCREDIBLY entertaining and the fans were way into it as opposed to Jarrett and Waltman walking around and occasionally hitting each other with something. AJ and Abyss never stopped moving and the fans were into it because of it.

The difference here: hard work works better than walking around hitting each other with weapons.

AJ punches Abyss HARD but gets the cage door slammed into his arm and then his face where he snaps down to the floor. It looked like he got hit by a bus or something as fast as he hit the ground. Great selling there. AJ is busted open and Abyss pounds away even more. AJ finally in the cage now as Abyss looks under the ring for the bag of tacks. About eight and a half minutes in they're in the cage together.

Abyss chokes him with the chain and we play tug of war. AJ simply will not quit and keeps hammering away to no avail though. With the chain on the top turnbuckle, Abyss launches AJ over his head in kind of a forced leapfrog and his head slams into the chain. The fans think this is awesome and for once they're right. They stop for a bit for the a neck crank and AJ sells it perfectly too.

AJ charges again but Abyss grabs him in a gorilla press and LAUNCHES him up to just let him crash down. He tries it again but AJ counters into a DDT onto the chain. Two punches and an enziguri takes Abyss down as does a headscissors. AJ hits a moonsault press but Abyss just lets him bounce off which was cool looking. AJ sends him into a chair into the corner that Abyss set up and gets a German suplex for two that looked freaking good.

He goes for the Styles Clash but Abyss is way too big for that. Chokeslam is countered into a rollup for two. AJ gets another running start but walks into the Black Hole Slam for a VERY long two. Dang Abyss looks awesome (what am I saying?) when he really uncorks that thing. Yep there are the tacks. Black Hole Slam into them are countered as is a powerbomb.

AJ gets the Styles Clash (ok more like a falling face first slam but we'll give it to him) into the tacks for two. Wow I would have bet on that being the ending. You know if I didn't

know the ending already. Abyss is ROCKED here which was unthinkable until this match. AJ goes to the top of the cage and Abyss can't catch him. His solution: throw the referee at the cage to knock AJ off. That was awesome.

Abyss climbs up as AJ is barely hanging on. He goes up with the chain and might be thinking to hang him as he had on Impact. Yep that's what he's going for. AJ is on the outside and Abyss on the inside and yep he's hanging him. AJ gets the chain off somehow and Abyss grabs the chokeslam. AJ bites his fingers and opens them up too! AJ jumps off the top of the cage and hits a freaking sunset flip powerbomb onto the tacks from the top of the cage to get the pin as Abyss is DEAD.

Rating: A+. OH YES! AJ was absolutely amazing here and it was definitely Abyss' best match ever. This was just a total war for twenty minutes with AJ never stopping and taking it to Abyss much like Flair did back at Starrcade 93 to Vader. There was no gimmick here as it was just a big old fight in a cage with weapons brought in for fun. AJ would get the title the next month...and then lose it to Raven the next month because the world was clamoring for more Raven and less AJ. Uh...sure. He wouldn't get it back for over four years.

Overall Rating: B. If you cut off about an hour of this show (as in three of the first four matches or so) this is an awesome show. The first two matches were pretty bad, the third was decent, Hardy vs. Raven got fifteen minutes which was just ridiculous and then the rest other than maybe Lethal Lockdown was very good. The early days of this company's PPV era were very hit or miss and this one was a hit for the most part but for the most part this worked. Fun show but VERY dragging so I'd recommend a fast forward button here.

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