

# Wrestler of the Day – June 14: Eric Young

Today we're going to Canada for a former TNA World Champion: Eric Young.

Young started in the Canadian independents in 1998 and eventually earned a spot as a jobber in WWE. Here's a match from Velocity on August 23, 2003. Notice Young's partner.

## FBI vs. Eric Young/Bobby Roode

The FBI are Chuck Palumbo and Johnny Stamboli. Johnny and Roode get things going with the jobber getting run over. A crucifix gets two for Roode and he brings in Young to work on the arm. Stamboli easily powers him into the corner and brings in Palumbo for some shoulders to the ribs. A hard slam drops Young and a buckle bomb has him rolling around in pain. The double teaming begins as Young is taking quite a beating. Palumbo gets two off a clothesline and we hit the chinlock. Eric finally avoids a charge and tags in Roode as everything breaks down. Chuck superkicks Roode in the back of the head for the pin.

**Rating:** D. Just a squash here but it's always interesting to see these future names doing nothing in a match like this. Roode and Young looked decent but it was clear they were far from being ready to do much of anything. In other words, they were perfect for TNA at the time, especially since TNA was only a bit over a year old.

Young and Roode would team again as part of Team Canada in TNA. Here they are in the first match ever on Impact on June 4, 2004.

## Team Canada vs. Amazing Red/Sonjay Dutt/Hector Garza

Team Canada is Petey Williams, Eric Young and Bobby Roode. Another very different idea from this point is the time limit on screen. Non-title matches only have ten minute time limits and title matches get thirty minutes. If the match goes to a time limit draw, a judge will decide the winner. The Canadians all bail to the floor to start and there's the triple dive. We start in the ring with Eric Young (with BIG bushy hair) getting beaten up by Amazing Red until the Canadians take Eric out.

Roode pounds away on Red as the power member of the Canadians, getting two off an elbow. There's also an ESPN style bottom line, running down results of recent TNA PPVs. Petey gets two off a middle rope bulldog and Coach Scott D'Amore gets in a cheap shot of his own. Back to Roode for a nice suplex before knocking Dutt and Garza out to the floor.

Red comes back with a simultaneous headscissors to Roode and DDT to Young, allowing for the hot tag to Garza. Roode takes him down with a tilt-a-whirl powerbomb as everything breaks down. Red gets two on Roode off a springboard hurricanrana but Petey snaps off the Canadian Destroyer to take Red out. Roode's Razor's Edge is countered into a hurricanrana by Dutt, setting up a corkscrew moonsault from Dutt for the pin.

**Rating:** C. This was fine for an opener with most of the guys busting out all of their dives. It's the standard formula of throwing some fast paced guys out there to open up a show and it still works as well as anything else. It's always fun to see how big starts like Roode got their starts as he looked good here.

The pair would continue to team together and have a change to win their second World Tag Team Titles at Turning Point 2004.

Tag Titles: Ron Killings/BG James vs. Eric Young/Bobby Roode

3 Live Kru are the champions. They won the titles from the Canadians a month ago, making this a rematch. Young and BG get

things going with Young being rammed into all of the buckles. Young tries to steal BG's gyrating punches so the Kru hits their version of What's Up. Here's Roode to face Truth. Truth is a replacement for Konnan who is injured so this is under the Freebird Rule.

Truth hits his usual not-WWE stuff and gets two off a spinning kick. The Canadians double team Truth with a double backbreaker for two. They take over with Roode bringing Young back in. Young stomps on Truth in the corner but Truth won't even sell it at all. He pulls himself up and hits a missile dropkick. No tag as it's back to Roode. They try their own What's Up but Truth escapes and makes the tag.

James knocks Roode to the outside and punches Young down. Roode comes back in and James gets two on him off a forearm. Young goes up but Truth hits the ax kick. Roode hits his spinebuster on James for a VERY close two. Roode sets for maybe a spear but the Kru hits a Hart Attack with a side kick instead of a clothesline. James loads up the pumphandle but Johnny Devine runs in and hits James in the back with a hockey stick so the Canadians can get the titles.

**Rating:** C-. Not terrible here and it was ok enough for an opener. It wasn't particularly good and I didn't care who won by the end. That's a running problem for this era of TNA: the matches and feuds aren't really compelling as they're trying desperately to keep a show on and fill in three hours. There's some ok stuff in here though so it's certainly not a failure or anything.

Young would stay in Team Canada but switch over to teaming with Petey Williams. They would challenge for the titles at Slammiversary 2005.

Tag Titles: Team Canada vs. The Naturals

It's Eric Young/Petey Williams vs. Chase Stevens/Andy Douglas respectively. The Naturals are defending and I still don't

remember which is which. Eric and I think Stevens start things off. Ok so Stevens is the blonde one. Got it. Eric works on the arm to start which goes nowhere. They slap/slug it out and Young goes down. Double tag brings in Douglas and Williams. Williams tries a handstand but Douglas grabs his feet and puts on a modified leglock while Petey is still holding himself up. It's different if nothing else.

Back to the starters with the champions in firm control. Young might have hurt his knee on a leapfrog attempt. When Williams comes in and gets Stevens' attention, Young pops up and sends him to the floor so that A-1, Canada's muscle guy, can get in some shots. It's still Eric vs. Chase but with Stevens in the Tree of Woe, Petey comes in to stand on his crotch and sing O Canada.

Young comes in off the top with a guillotine legdrop for two. Time for the chinlock and Douglas is freaking out waiting for a tag. Petey lures him in and the Canadians get in some double teaming. Some choking and a regular legdrop get two. Eric sends him to the floor so it's time to talk about Jarrett possibly making bail to make the title match tonight. D'Amore and A-1 work over Stevens more on the outside.

The announcers think the Naturals should consider throwing in the towel. Dang those guys quit pretty easily. The match has only been going on for about ten minutes. Stevens gets in some punches but A-1 stops the comeback. Douglas comes around to break that up but there's no one for Stevens to tag. Can I get some wah wah wah music? There's the hot tag a few seconds later and a full nelson backbreaker gets two.

Everything breaks down and Williams puts Douglas in a Sharpshooter. Stevens tries a powerbomb but gets caught in a DDT. Douglas knocks Young to the floor as Stevens and Williams slug it out. Williams gets caught on Douglas' shoulders and a modified (and bad) Doomsday Device gets two. Natural Disaster (elevated Stunner) gets two on Young. Russian legsweep to

Stevens but the Destroyer is countered. D'Amore gets in a hockey stick shot, but JIMMY HART pops in from out of nowhere with the Megaphone. Stevens pops Williams with it and gets the easy pin.

**Rating:** C+. This was formula down to the core and there's nothing wrong with that. All four guys were moving pretty quickly out there and the Canadians did their usual stuff. The Naturals were pretty decent in the ring but they had NOTHING to make you care about them at all which wound up being their downfall.

Team Canada would show signs of dissent and finally split in July 2006. Naturally they fought amongst each other after the breakup, including this match at No Surrender 2006.

### Eric Young vs. A-1

This is fallout from Team Canada breaking up and everything being blamed on Young for no apparent reason other than he was popular. Basic power vs. speed match here which is happening because Young was insanely popular as opposed to now being insane in general. A-1 pounds him down with ease because that's what big men do. I haven't seen much of his stuff but he's one of the most generic big power guys I've ever seen.

Young finally gets a break and fights back, even hitting a top rope elbow which gets two. There's something cool about how moves that have really nothing to do with the size and power of the guy only work for Savage or whoever is using them. Never got that. Anyway, A-1 fights back but can't get a tombstone, which is another example of what I just mentioned. This is one of those matches where stuff is going on but nothing is happening. After some cheating by A-1, Young hits something like the Lethal Injection for the pin.

**Rating:** D+. Just a match for the most part here. Power vs. speed usually works pretty well but this was boring for the most part. A-1 more or less never meant anything at all so I

guess you can call this his career highlight. Let that sink in for a minute. Young would go on to a REALLY long feud with Roode after this that did nothing for either guy. We did get to see Traci in a bikini though so that helped a bit.

Next up was a feud with the now serious Robert Roode, who Young would wind up working for in exchange for sleeping with Roode's valet Traci Brooks. The idea was Young was very popular and Roode wanted the same fan support so he tried to buy it. This led to a match between them at Slammiversary 2007 with Eric's job on the line in exchange for a shot at freedom.

### Robert Roode vs. Eric Young

Roode slaps Young in the head a bit and it fires Young up, making him shout HIT ME AGAIN. Young sends him to the floor and hits a huge dive off the top to take Roode out. Roode takes over quickly and we make Brooks jokes. There's the Hennig neck snap and Roode is in total control. Time for a chinlock and I remember why I hated this heel run by Roode.

Eric counters into an electric chair drop and both guys are down. Discus lariat gets two for Eric. Young is sent to the floor so he pulls Brooks' pants down after dancing with her. Top rope elbow gets two for Eric. Brooks comes in and there's a double Death Valley Driver which gets two on Roode. You know, because a big and impressive spot like that shouldn't end a match. And then Roode whacks Eric in the head with a chair for the pin. Seriously that's it.

**Rating:** C-. The ending KILLS that match. Young was rather popular at this point and having him lose after a big spot like that is really pretty stupid. Roode was SO freaking boring as a heel and he never really changed anything about his character, which somehow made him even more boring. Decent match until the ending, but that kills it.

It's a Dusty Finish though. Roode fires Eric but here's Cornette to say hang on a second. The match is restarted and

Roode hits him in the head multiple times. Gail runs out and beats down Brooks. The distraction leads to a rollup pin for Eric.

This one doesn't need much of an explanation. From Bound For Glory 2007.

### Fight For the Right Tournament Stage One: Reverse Battle Royal

Dang it. Ok so this one might just hold the record for most ridiculous TNA concept. This is the beginning of a HUGE #1 contenders tournament. The winner of this match is the #1 seed in said tournament, which he would wind up losing anyway, making this COMPLETELY POINTLESS.

Anyway there are 16 people in this and you start on the floor. The first eight to get into the ring make it to part two. When those eight are in there's a battle royal. When there are two left in the ring, they have a one on one match and the winner is the #1 seed. The other seeds are determined in the order you were eliminated.

Somehow this is slightly less complicated than the previous year's tournament where the winner of the battle royal advanced to the finals and 6 other guys had qualifying matches to set up a triple threat where the winner met the battle royal winner to get a title shot. And people wonder why this company is loathed by so many people.

ANYWAY, the 16 people are Jimmy Rave, Lance Hoyt (Vance Archer), Havok (Johnny Devine), Shark Boy, Petey Williams, Kaz, Alex Shelley, Chris Sabin, Sonjay Dutt, Kip James, BG James, James Storm, Eric Young, Robert Roode, Chris Harris and Junior Fatu (Rikishi, who was there like a week).

Fatu gets in first. This is so stupid. I know there are issues with getting ring time in this company but this is ridiculous. Kaz and Roode are in. Shelley is in fourth. Hoyt accidentally drops Young in and there's Sabin. Hoyt goes in seventh and

Storm just beats Harris in to give us the 8th guy. Let's get this over with. Young puts Storm out seconds in, making him the #8 seed in the tournament. Naturally he would win his first round match as he had to do the least wrestling, making it easier on him. See what I mean by flaws in the system?

Young goes after Rikishi who was supposed to be a huge deal I guess. He chokeslams Roode and stacks up four people in the corner for the splash. Stinkface to Hoyt as this is boring. The Andre treatment takes care of him though. He would make the semi-finals of the tournament and then leave the company.

The Guns go nuts with an insane double submission on Roode and Young. They move Young's legs so he has an Indian Deathlock on Roode before putting a crossface on Roode and an abdominal stretch on Young. It doesn't accomplish anything but it looks awesome. Think of it as a Divas match.

Shelley is gone. Kaz hits his slingshot DDT on Sabin and then dumps him too. We're down to Hoyt, Kaz, Roode and Young. Kaz is out as well. Hoyt like an idiot goes for a moonsault and gets thrown out because he's a freaking idiot. The final two...ok make that three as Sabin is still in there I guess, are Sabin, Roode and Young. And scratch Sabin...who apparently is Sabin as they apparently misspoke earlier. I give up. Roode vs. Young is the final.

Roode is a power guy still here and isn't in a tag team. The tournament sets up Sabin vs. Shelley which is of course good but means nothing compared to them in the X Title final years later. These two had been feuding and were stablemates years ago. And then Young rolls up Roode in a small package to end it. Young would lose to Storm in the first round and Kaz would beat Christian to win the tournament.

**Rating:** F+. This was perhaps the most overdone match in history. Seriously, is it that hard to have a battle royal to determine who the #1 contender is? Couldn't they just have a



tournament with a random draw? Apparently not as they decided to just combine them and throw in a one on one match too. This is what we mean by overbooking. You don't have to do a big complicated thing when a simple thing would work fine and in this case much better. Stupid match and VERY stupid concept.

In December 2007, Scott Hall was scheduled for a six man tag at Turning Point. Hall, being himself, no showed and Samoa Joe was told to explain it to the crowd. He cut a shoot on the company and picked Eric Young as his replacement.

### Angle Alliance vs. Samoa Joe/Kevin Nash/???

The match isn't going to start for a bit. The Alliance is Tomko/AJ (Tag champions) and of course Angle (world champion). AJ as a heel just isn't working at all. It never did and it never will. He's a clueless putz here too so that isn't helping anything. Karen has some sweet legs. Joe comes out last and grabs the mic for the rant heard around the Impact Zone.

He talks about how he was told to come out here because the fans love him and they'll listen to him. Scott Hall no showed this event but he's not going to be here in a surprise or something like that. This got Joe thinking: he could walk out here and have a handicap match, but TNA just gave him a live mic on a PPV. Therefore, he has a few things to say.

There are two types of people in TNA: the diehards who do whatever it takes to entertain the fans every night, and Superstars who come in and do whatever they like. The Superstars screw the wrestlers and the fans who paid to see them, no matter how old they are. TNA is about the Guns, TNA is about Jay Lethal, TNA is about Samoa Joe, TNA is about hard working young guys who want to change wrestling. TNA is about guys doing whatever it takes to entertain the fans while others come in and pad their pensions.

Joe talks to someone in the crowd (presumably Dixie) saying go

ahead and fire me. He went to the back and said who wants to be in a fight tonight. The X Division jumped up and said give me the shot. One guy though stood out to him and that is his partner tonight: Eric Young. This was a weird pick and according to some reports I've read, Joe's immediate answer was Homicide, but since LAX were heels at this point that got shot down. At least that's a valid reason.

Ok so now it's time for the match. AJ vs. Joe gets us going here. Joe hooks a sunset flip but rolls AJ to the side around the ring (that has a name but I can't think of it) and chops away. Joe tags in Eric who just doesn't fit here as he's a comedy character. This didn't result in a major push for him either. Young comes in to fight Angle and he's just Eric Young. That's the problem here: there's nothing significant about him but he's just kind of there.

Off to Nash vs. Tomko and the one with hair takes him down with his usual big strikes. Young gets a Thesz Press on Styles, followed by a wheelbarrow suplex for two. Angle grabs Eric's arm and pulls it across the ropes to try to give the match a story. AJ tries a superplex but gets caught in a gordbuster off the top. Double tag brings in Nash and Angle but everything breaks down quickly.

Eric's dive is caught by the tag champs so Joe dives onto all three of them to take them out. Ankle lock to Nash and Joe smiles. He eventually breaks it up with a superkick and tags himself in to beat on Tomko. Powerslam gets two. There's a Jackknife to Angle as the parade of finishers begins. AJ hits the forearm on Nash and double teaming abounds. The MuscleBuster ends Tomko.

**Rating:** D. What a mess this was, and somehow having Hall in there would have made it even worse. Young had no point of being in there and it was almost a shoot with everyone being thrown off by Joe's promo. The match was going to be bad no matter what, but this was really weak and a horrible PPV main

event.

After a stupid feud with James Storm over who could drink more beer, Young became a superhero named Super Eric. This led to a trio with Shark Boy and Curry Man, who teamed together at No Surrender 2008.

### Rock N Rave Infection/Christy Hemme vs. Prince Justice Brotherhood

The Brotherhood is Super Eric (Young in a bad superhero gimmick), Stone Cold Shark Boy and Curry Man in one of the dumbest gimmicks even by TNA standards. The Infection is a bad rock band gimmick that played Guitar Hero controllers and had the smoking hot Christy Hemme as their manager. Eric vs. Rave to start with Eric taking over.

Eric gets a plancha to the floor which gets two back in the ring. Lance Rock comes in which gets his team nowhere so it's off to Shark Boy. Thesz Press takes down Rock again as the good guys are dominating. Shark Boy is the same Steve Austin parody that was on Impact the other night. Over to Curry Man who gets a pop for no apparent reason other than a potential lack of oxygen in the arena.

Curry Man tags in Christy and we're in a comedy match officially. He shoves her off and then realizes where his head was so he offers to go back into it again. Funny spot. Off to Shark Boy and Rave. Back drop sends Shark Boy (I refused to refer to him as Sharky like West and Tenay keep doing) to the floor as momentum changes.

Jawbreaker almost gets Shark Boy a tag but Rock N Rave get something close to a 3D but into a knee instead of a cutter. Christy comes in and is dropped onto Shark Boy by Rock. Cold tag to Curry Man (I thought he was hot and spicy?) who gets a flying hip to Rock. He and Hemme dance a bit and she gets kissed. Rollup gets two but Rock drills Curry so that Christy can hit the Flying Firecrotch Guillotine (don't ask) for two.

Chummer (Stunner) to Christy and a double Death Valley Driver to the guys from Curry Man end this.

**Rating:** C+. Basic fast paced and fun match to start us off here which is often times the best idea to open a show. Christy was the only good thing about the Infection as she looked great as the groupie. This was just here for comedy and to warm the crowd up and it did that rather well. Good opener.

Young would defeat Sheik Abdul Bashir for the title in late 2008 but the finish was questionable, leading to a rematch at Final Resolution.

#### X-Division Title: Eric Young vs. Sheik Abdul Bashir

Naturally the referee that interfered in the last match is the referee here. It's Shane Sewell, that guy that got a brief push for no apparent reason. The fans are all for Eric as this is evil foreigner vs. not so evil foreigner. Thesz Press by Young lets him get in some punches. Young to the floor as I have a feeling the highlights of this match are over already.

Bashir puts on a surfboard hold to waste a lot more time. This is going absolutely nowhere at all and everyone knows it. Young nips up and hammers away and starts a rather generic comeback. Top rope elbow hits for two. Young goes up for a moonsault and misses by literally three and a half feet. That was awful in every sense of the word. Young goes for a sunset flip, the referee kicks Bashir's arms when he grabs the ropes, match over thank goodness.

**Rating:** D-. The match was ok I suppose but at the same time it could not have been less interesting. No need at all to have the title be vacant here when they could have had the title change here. The wrestling was boring beyond belief too and the whole thing just did not work whatsoever. Boring match all the way through and I couldn't wait for it to end.

Not that it matters as this was overturned as well. Young

would pin Bashir again at the next Impact but the title was in a tournament because TNA. Anyway, we'll jump ahead to Bound For Glory 2009 where Young was starting to become more serious and had a Legends Title shot. Eric was the leader of the World Elite stable at this point, which was a group of guys from other countries that weren't getting the respect they deserved. This didn't go very far as you might have guessed.

### Legends Title: Kevin Nash vs. Eric Young vs. Hernandez

Nash has the title here if I forgot to mention that. Hernandez went from being the hottest thing in the world to this. In a year the Legends Title went from Legends to Global to TV. Hernandez, still in the khaki shorts here, beats up both guys to start us off. BIG shoulder block puts Young on the floor. This is basically Hernandez beats up two guys until we get to the conflict between the heels match.

Solid heat on Young. Match is far from that though. And there's the issue between the heels as Young insists it was just instinct. Hernandez hits a pretty weak missile dropkick to Nash as this is just a boring match. It's not really horrible but it's just totally not interesting at all. Big dive by Super Mex to try to make this more interesting. This has zero flow to it at all and it's hurting badly. Young hits a big elbow on Hernandez and pulls Nash's straps down. He sets for the Jackknife and Young rams Hernandez's head into Nash's balls for the pin. Pay no attention to Nash's shoulder being WAY up.

**Rating:** D-. Not a bad match exactly but just not interesting at all. This was a weird one as they were trying but the styles just totally did not mesh. Like I said it's not horrible but it's just there. No flow or story being told really and while the ending was somewhat creative it just never amounted to anything and didn't work at all.

Young would join the Band and win the Tag Team Titles under

the Freebird Rule...until Scott Hall got arrested again, meaning the titles were stripped because the other two members couldn't defend them for some reason. After ANOTHER comedy angle with the bisexual Orlando Jordan, Young would get a TV Title shot on the May 26, 2011 episode of Impact.

TV Title: Eric Young vs. Gunner

Young has the title itself because Gunner stole back the wrong belt last week. I guess the whole "one is black and one is red" thing is too hard to keep track of. They reenact the Fingerpoke of Doom but Young rolls him up for the pin and the title at 32 seconds. Whatever man, whatever.

After losing the title to Robbie E., Young would hook up with ODB and challenge for the Knockouts Tag Team Titles on Impact, March 8, 2012.

Knockout Tag Titles: Eric Young/ODB vs. Gail Kim/Madison Rayne

Eric starts with Gail but ODB tags herself in. Gail runs and is promptly clotheslined. Off to Madison who looks great in red. The champs work over ODB with some double teaming. Madison takes a clothesline to the ribs which was supposed to be a spear I think. Either way it allows the double tag and Eric locks up with the referee. Eric puts both girls in an airplane spin and ODB clotheslines them both down. There go Eric's pants and Madison hits Eric with a title, knocking him onto Gail for the pin and the titles at 5:48.

**Rating:** D. I hate this angle. I've made that quite clear over the past few months and I don't think it really requires a lot of explanation. Eric Young and ODB are supposed to be funny but they aren't. It's the most forced comedy I've seen in a very long time. It's like taking the ingredients of a cake and putting them on a table and calling it a cake. It doesn't quite work.

While holding the titles, Young would take a leave of absence

to host a fishing show on Animal Planet. He would return as a surprise partner at Lockdown 2013.

### Lethal Lockdown

TNA: Sting, Magnus, Samoa Joe, Eric Young, James Storm

Aces and 8's: Mr. Anderson, D-Von, Doc, Mike Knux, Garrett Bischoff

This has some interesting rules. Two men (Anderson and Magnus) start things off and fight for three minutes. After those three minutes, Aces and 8's (they won a series of matches on Thursday) get a man advantage for two minutes. Then TNA sends in its second man to even it up for two minutes. Aces and 8's then get another advantage for two more minutes. They alternate until everyone is in and then it's one fall to a finish.

Magnus pounds Anderson down in the corner to start before hitting a clothesline. Anderson sends him into the cage though to take over as we have less than a minute before someone else comes in. Off to a chinlock by Anderson to kill the time until Knux makes it 2-1. Also remember that the match can't end until all ten men are in the match. A sidewalk slam and legdrop floor Magnus as this is one sided so far.

Samoa Joe is in to tie things up and TNA takes over for a bit. The former tag champions continue to work well together by taking the bikers apart. Anderson and Knux are beaten down until Garrett Bischoff comes in to make it 3-2. The fans tell Garrett that he can't wrestle as Magnus and Joe beat him up as well. Anderson and Knux finally get up and save their partner as Eric Young is in to make it 3-3. Oh wait he has to strip first.

As is the case with every other period, the team with the latest man in takes over. D-Von is in to make it 4-3 Aces and 8's and the numbers game takes over for the bikers again. Joe fights back with some palm shots to Anderson in the corner but

D-Von knocks him down again to take over. The fans want Sting but they get James Storm instead. Storm cleans house with Closing Times and Last Calls but they don't mean much at this point.

House continues to be cleaned until Doc is in to round out Aces and 8's. Doc takes over for Team TNA with his power stuff and the match slows down a lot. Here's Sting with two garbage cans full of weapons to finalize things, meaning it's now one fall to a finish. Team TNA takes over with a bunch of weapon shots as I guess there's no roof this year for a change. It's all Team TNA at this point as the match slows down a bit. Garrett Bischoff gets worn out by Joe via a trashcan.

Sting holds Anderson for Young but Young almost hits Sting by mistake. The break lets the bikers take over with Doc chokeslamming Young. Magnus and Storm come back to take over, sending Garrett running to the top of the cage. They chase after him, resulting in I think Doc and Knux making the save. Joe powerbombs ALL FIVE GUYS down in a big Tower of Doom before putting Anderson in an STF but Doc makes the save. TNA takes over again with Sting hitting the Death Drop on Knox, but he doesn't cover. Instead he sends Young to the top of the cage for an elbow drop for the pin at 26:27.

**Rating:** B. The problem of the ring being too small to hold ten guys still exists, but as someone with a bad fear of heights I'm very glad to see them not have the roof on the cage. It's a risk they just don't need to take and the Tower of Doom spot was more than able to make up for it. Very solid match here but Aces and 8's continue to fall further into the abyss.

The return wouldn't mean much as Young would go and film more fishing. While he was around briefly, the Knockouts Tag Team Titles were finally stripped and retired as they hadn't been defended on TV in about a year. Young would then hook up with Joseph Park to prove that Park was Abyss. Here's a match from that period, on November 7, 2013's Impact.



## Bad Influence vs. Eric Young/Joseph Park

Eric gets double teamed to start but sends Bad Influence into each other. Park comes in for some work on the arm but it's back to Young for an Ultimo Dragon headstand in the corner. Kaz is sent to the floor for a suicide dive from Eric and a cross body back inside gets two. Young is sent to the corner for a Flair Flip plus some strutting on the apron, only to have Kaz knock him out to the floor. Back inside and Bad Influence lays him out with Daniels getting two off a clothesline to the back of the head.

A Kaz distraction prevents the referee from seeing the hot tag to Park but Young ducks a clothesline, sending Bad Influence into each other again. Now the hot tag brings in Park and there's a Boston Crab on Kaz. Daniels makes the save but everything breaks down. Daniels whips Young knees first into the steps before picking up the bell ringer's hammer. That goes nowhere so he picks up the Appletini to blind Park, allowing Kaz to crucifix him for the pin at 4:38.

**Rating:** D. Just a match here for the most part with nothing significant happening at all. We've seen these teams fight several times now and nothing has really been accomplished as a result. The only interesting thing here is the difference in comedy. Young and Park have hammered their jokes so far into the ground that they haven't been funny for months. Bad Influence on the other hand at least keeps their comedy moving, which keeps them feeling much fresher. It's a nice breather.

Then Eric Young was a main event guy, and would be in a gauntlet match on April 10, 2014's Impact for a future World Title shot.

## Gauntlet Match

It's basically a ten man Royal Rumble. James Storm is #1 and Gunner is #2 and of course the brawl is on in the aisle. They

get inside with Gunner avoiding a middle rope ax handle and taking him into the corner for a stomping. Storm is in even more trouble until Bobby Roode comes in at #3 to give him a breather. Beer Money reunites for a bit but Gunner shrugs off the ten rams into the top turnbuckle. Bully Ray is #4 and cleans house as you would expect him to. A double suplex has no effect though and he clotheslines Beer Money down.

Gunner and Ray load up What's Up to Storm but Roode makes the save Ethan Carter III comes in at #5 to give the heels an advantage. Ray shrugs everything off and chops away but Roode punches him down in the corner. No one has been eliminated yet. Carter and Roode try to toss Ray until Bobby Lashley is in at #6. The big man cleans house and hammers on all the heels until Gunner, Ray and Bobby have a three way standoff. That goes nowhere and they keep beating up the villains.

Abyss is #7 and cleans house but Ray tries to toss him. Magnus comes out for commentary as we take a break. Back with Sanada having entered and Eric Young entering at I believe #9. No eliminations yet. Everyone fights against the ropes and teases a few eliminations but no one is really close. Willow is #10 and we get a showdown with Carter. A Twisting Stunner has Carter in trouble as Spud wheelchairs down to ringside, only to pop up and pull Willow down for the elimination.

Abyss chokeslams Sanada and throws him out but walks into a spear from Lashley. Roode throws the bald Bobby out though, only to get tossed by Ray. We're down to Ray, Gunner, Storm, Carter, Abyss and Young. Ray is about to go off on Carter but Roode trips him up, allowing Carter to throw him out and get us down to five. Storm nails a superkick to Gunner and easily throws him out.

The three heels team up on Young but he skins the cat and eliminates Carter on the way back in. Abyss lays him out again though and the double teaming continues. Eric trips both of them up though and actually hits the top rope elbow on Abyss.

Storm takes him right back down with the Backstabber though, followed by an Orton Elevated DDT. The Last Call misses though and Young throws him out. Abyss hits Shock Treatment on Eric but can't get him out. Young fights back with some right hands and an ax handle, followed by a clothesline for the win and title shot at 26:21.

**Rating:** D+. ERIC YOUNG? This is the guy they're giving a title match to? Not Gunner, Ray, Joe, or ANYONE ELSE??? They have like five PPVs a year and the guy who was doing a Dr. Frankenstein gimmick earlier in the year is getting one of the main event slots? He's more bearable when he's serious but my goodness this matches my head hurt.

Eric calls out MVP post match. The boss comes out after a break and Eric says he does a great job. Young isn't a doctor but since this is live TV, anything can happen. What MVP just saw was Eric earning a title shot. This is live TV though and Eric is feeling crazy. He wants his title shot TONIGHT. MVP asks if he's sure and says it's on. Magnus says that's fine because everything abides by his rules. MVP says there are no Magnus Rules in effect, meaning the title changes hands on a countout or DQ and Abyss is banned from ringside. If anyone interferes, they're fired on the spot.

From later in the night.

### TNA World Title: Eric Young vs. Magnus

Eh why not. It worked at Wrestlemania XXX. Young scores with a quick dropkick and flips over the corner before strutting down the apron. Apparently Young has a bad arm coming into this to really hammer in the similarities. Magnus avoids a charge into the corner and sends Eric out to the floor with a big running knee. Back in and Eric sends Magnus to the floor, only to get nailed as he tries a suicide dive.

Magnus sends him into the steps and we take a break. Back with the champion getting two off a gutwrench suplex and we hit a

sleeper on Young. Eric is quickly out of the hold but gets caught in a camel clutch to work on the back as well as the bad arm. Young powers up into an electric chair and both guys are down. Back up and some forearms and a clothesline drop Magnus. The arm seems fine at the moment. Eric tries a wheelbarrow slam into a neckbreaker but mostly drops Magnus on the way down.

The top rope elbow gets two and Magnus nails the Michinoku Driver for the same. He brings the belt into the ring but the referee takes it away. Young loads up a Death Valley Driver but gets hit low for two. Magnus is livid and gets caught in a crucifix for two. Eric comes back with a piledriver for the pin and the title at 13:05.

**Rating:** C. Eric Young is the TNA World Champion. Yes it's a blatant ripoff of Daniel Bryan on Sunday, but Eric Young hasn't earned the spot like Bryan has. He's a comedy guy that has kept a job for a long time. That doesn't mean he should be the World Champion. I'm assuming this doesn't make it past Sacrifice, but I've only been able to tolerate Young for this many years. Having him as World Champion is too far for me.

As you can see, Eric Young hasn't exactly been the most serious wrestler in the world over his career, which is why the title reign at the end didn't work for me. There's nothing wrong with being a comedy guy, but I would have liked to see him do something different every now and then. I don't mind Young when he's serious, but six weeks of being serious isn't enough of a time to become World Champion. His reign wasn't bad though so it wasn't a disaster.

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