

Wrestling Wars Podcast #3

The show gets WAY more streamlined this week as we have our first pay per view preview with a look at Extreme Rules 2015, complete with a little fantasy booking, Dixie Carter's face on chocolates and of course a fire on a life raft. Come check us out as we run down the post Wrestlemania pay per view offering.

<http://mightynorcal.podbean.com/e/wwp-episode-3-extreme-rules-preview-with-kb/>

Also keep in mind that we'll be back with an Extreme Rules fallout show the same night.

Let me know what you think.

KB

Impact Wrestling – April 24, 2015: It Can Be Done

Impact Wrestling

Date: April 24, 2015

Location: Impact Zone, Orlando, Florida

Commentator: Josh Matthews

This is a special episode, focusing on the Knockouts. We'll be seeing new

Knockouts debut, a Knockouts Title match with Taryn Terrell defending against Awesome Kong, a four way for the #1 contendership and an announcement on Mickie James' in ring future. In non-Knockouts news, we have another announcement from Ethan Carter III and Kurt Angle defending the World Title against Eric Young. Let's get to it.

The opening video hypes this up as TKO: A Night of Knockouts.

Here's Angle to call out Eric Young for a talk. Eric comes out in his crazy attire instead of the old version that Kurt wanted to see. Before they fight tonight, Angle wants to know which version he's getting. Young talks about being called crazy all his life but one day last year, that turned into a World Title. The crazy kept going but last week it stopped when Angle turned his back on him to offer Eric a free shot. Eric says he'll fight Angle tonight, but it's going to be the best version of him.

They shake hands but here's Austin Aries, who says he's cashing in tonight so Eric can find something else to do. He tells Angle to go get ready because it's going to be one of the biggest fights of his life. Young doesn't look pleased and will likely be back around for later in the night. Sidebar: what exactly is crazy about Eric Young? He's certainly angry and aggressive, but not crazy.

Taryn Terrell says she's keeping the title.

Gail Kim vs. Angelina Love vs. Brooke vs. Madison Rayne

Madison jumps Brooke in the aisle and it's a big brawl before the bell. We take a very early break and come back with Brooke and Madison fighting over a suplex until Brooke gets sent to the apron, only to snap both Madison and Angelina across the top rope. Gail gets back in it with a double dropkick and a splash to Madison, only to eat Angelina's spinwheel kick to put her down again. Brooke gets knocked to the floor, leaving Madison to get two off a northern lights suplex.

Gail sidesteps a missile dropkick but Brooke intercepts her charge and hammers on Madison in the corner. A middle rope X Factor gets two on Madison and Love gets dropped by a flapjack. We get the big multi-submission spot which has never gotten a fall ever, followed by Brooke

dropping a top rope elbow on Rayne. Gail dropkicks Love down before both good girls cross body each other down. It's time for the parade of finishers and Brooke hits the Teshocker on Madison for the pin at 10:40.

Rating: C. If the Divas got time like this, I might be able to care about them a lot more. I also like that there aren't many perky, happy Knockouts. It helps to have some shades of gray in there and girls with slightly more developed characters. Queen Bee, perky model and serious wrestler aren't in depth characters, but they're miles more defined than Alicia Fox, Layla and Natalya.

The Rising wants a fight with the BDC tonight, one on one. I'm still waiting on an explanation for why the Rising needs to exist.

Eric Young isn't happy.

Micah vs. Kenny King

Rising vs. BDC. MVP says it's going to be one on one but King jumps Micah in a surprise to get things going. The Rising is quickly ejected as Micah fights back and stomps King in the corner. King sends him to the floor for a beating from the BDC and puts on a chinlock, only to miss a spinning kick to the head. A Big Ending puts King down but MVP distracts the referee, allowing Low Ki to grab Micah's foot. King kicks Micah in the head for two but springboards into a Samoan drop to give Micah the pin at 5:00.

Rating: C-. The match was fine but I have no idea why this feud needs to exist. Both teams are pretty generic and they would have been better off just doing MVP vs. Galloway. Not a bad match here but it's a story I don't care about because I haven't been given a reason to care.

The Rising runs in but gets beaten down, including some shots with a pipe.

Post break, Galloway wants Low Ki next week in a steel pipe on a pole.

Jade vs. Laura Dennis

Dennis is better known as indy wrestler Cherry Bomb while Jade is Mia Yim

as one half of the Dollhouse. She and Marti Belle skip to the ring to piano music and dance with each other in the ring. Laura kicks her in the side of the head to start as a Cherry Bomb chant starts up. Jade gets more fired up and pounds Laura in the head for two. Marti hands Jade something that looked like a jawbreaker, which seems to fire Jade up even more as she hits Laura in the head. Marti trips Laura up and gets ejected so she nails the referee and helps with a double team on Laura for the DQ at 4:03.

Rating: D+. Well that was creepy. Dollhouse is definitely something interesting and WAY different than the rest of the Knockouts. It's the kind of different we haven't seen since Winter, but hopefully this doesn't turn into something really stupid. Really effective debut though and I want to see more from this team.

Dollhouse isn't cool with how Christy announces the decision so they beat her up and stick the jawbreaker in her mouth and dropkick her into the steps.

Angle tells Young that he didn't know Aries was going to do that. Young says history keeps repeating itself but Angle offers him the next shot. That's not cool with Young, who threatens to leave. Amazingly enough, Angle doesn't try to stop him. Smart man that Kurt.

Magnus introduces Mickie James for her big announcement. Mickie talks about her history in the ring and how amazing it feels to be in action, but now she has something more important: their son Donovan. She's very grateful for the fans, but as of tonight, she's going home to be a mom. This brings out James Storm, who says people know he loves hot women, fast cars and cold beer. He sees a female version of himself in Mickie and knows she loves to hear those chants.

No one wants to see her go, but Magnus says this was too hard of a decision. James keeps going but Mickie asks him to stop because her decision is made. Storm understands the love she has for her son but these people love Mickie James. He's asking for one more match and actually talks Mickie into it. This was more Cowboy James Storm than Revolution James Storm, which is rather interesting indeed. Magnus looks

annoyed at the decision but forces a smile.

During the break, Magnus says he supports the decision but still doesn't look thrilled. Davey Richards comes up and warns Magnus to stay away from Storm because he's evil. Magnus appreciates the advice.

Davey Richards vs. Manik

In a case of bad editing, Davey is in the ring three seconds after he was shown walking to the ring and Manik gets an entrance. Feeling out process to start with Davey nailing a dropkick but charging into a hurricanrana with Manik going into a cross armbreaker. A snap suplex into a belly to back puts Richards down for two and we hit the chinlock. Manik puts on another armbreaker over the ropes but dives into a kick to the chest. The double stomp misses so Davey throws him into the air for a kick to the chest, setting up Creeping Death for the pin at 5:40.

Rating: C. Well, that was in fact a wrestling match and I'm kind of struggling to come up with anything else to say about it. The X-Division is just filler at the moment and I actually had to think for a second to figure out who has the title right now. Nothing to see here but the match was fine.

Post match the Revolution comes out to beat on Davey but the Hardys make the save, likely setting up a six man.

Ethan Carter says he debuts a new campaign tonight.

Here are Ethan and Tyrus (in a suit and hat, holding balloons) for the announcement. Josh says we've been wondering about this for weeks. I've been wondering about it for maybe an hour and a half as I hadn't heard about it until the beginning of this show. Carter declares himself the next World Champion and brags about beating every member of the Hall of Fame. This brings out Mr. Anderson for some easy political jokes but Tyrus gets in his face. Anderson gives a good speech about the work it takes to win championships but Ethan wants to fight. They start brawling but Carter bails before it gets too bad.

Video on Taryn Terrell wanting to fight Awesome Kong.

Knockouts Title: Awesome Kong vs. Taryn Terrell

Terrell is defending. Before the match, Taryn asks to make this No DQ and Kong has no issue. Kong easily knocks her to the floor and giant swings the champ into the barricade. It's kendo stick time, because those were just laying under the ring in case a No DQ match broke out. Taryn escapes a powerbomb into the steps and avoids a splash back inside.

An ax handle puts Kong down and it's table time, as per the fans' request. As she's setting it up though, here's the Dollhouse. They stand at ringside as Kong puts Taryn on the table for a splash before getting on the apron for some very weak kendo stick shots. Taryn gets up and a triple powerbomb puts Kong through the table for the pin at 5:12.

Rating: D+. Angle instead of a match here but I'm digging the idea of Taryn leading the Dollhouse. It's certainly an interesting idea that they haven't tried before, and the Knockouts division has needed some fresh blood for way too long now. Good idea here and an interesting turn.

Taryn grabs a mic and says everyone told her she couldn't do it. Well now no one can beat her because her friends don't play nice. This is their house: the Dollhouse. Jade and Marti dance around her before giving Kong the jawbreaker.

Aries is coming to the ring and runs into Young as he leaves. Austin apologizes and offers Eric the first shot.

Magnus comes up to the production staff and asks them to follow Mickie while he's working.

TNA World Title: Austin Aries vs. Kurt Angle

Angle is defending but it's 10:56 and Angle's music hasn't even started playing yet. As you probably expect, Eric Young sneaks in and attacks Aries with the briefcase before Kurt appears and piledrives him on the floor. A second piledriver on the steps FINALLY brings Angle out for some shouting. Young sends Angle into the steps to bust him open and goes after the knee, setting up the Figure Four.

The show ends with a preview for next week's Hardcore Justice, which was

April's One Night Only and includes at least one match from the show. That's a new idea and based on the old One Night Only shows, one of the worst possible things they could do.

Overall Rating: B. Other than the Eric Young stuff (more on that later), I really liked this show. The Dollhouse is an interesting idea and a fresh direction for the division and the focus on the Knockouts held up WAY better than I was expecting. As I said earlier, just adding some character to their matches helps it so much and gives you something to cheer for. I also dug the idea of Storm going after the family unit for whatever reason. Him not having the Revolution around him makes him so much more enjoyable too.

As for Young, this was another example of why I don't like him in this spot. In addition to not liking the CRAZY thing (because he isn't acting crazy), there are so many other people who could be in this spot. Storm, Carter, Bram, Aries, even MVP or Galloway would be more interesting opponents for Angle. Young comes off as a guy who is in over his head and is just there to get beaten in the end. Why have average when you could have really good? Anyway, really solid show tonight and a very big surprise.

Results

Brooke b. Gail Kim, Angelina Love and Madison Rayne – Tesshocker to Rayne

Micah b. Kenny King – Samoan drop

Laura Dennis b. Jade via DQ when Marti Belle interfered

Davey Richards b. Manik – Creeping Death

Taryn Terrell b. Awesome Kong – Powerbomb through a table

Remember to follow me on Twitter @kbreviews and pick up my new book of 1998 Pay Per View reviews at Amazon for just \$3.99 at:

<http://www.amazon.com/dp/B00UYAMB8U>

And check out my Amazon author page with wrestling books for under \$4 at:

WWE Survey On New DVDs

WWE does this from time to time. They've sent out a survey asking about potential DVD topics. Here they are with my thoughts on each.

* **20 Years Later: Best of 1996** – Matches and discussion from the best WWE and WCW PPVs as well as historic Nitro, Raw and ECW matches and moments.

Eh I could go for that, as at least it's not yet another rehash of the Monday Night Wars period.

* **Booker T** – Extended WWE Network documentary plus matches, interviews and memories.

The documentary was good so sure why not. Booker deserves a 6 hour set or so.

* **Bruno Sammartino** – Bruno documentary with exclusive material filmed at his home as well as Bruno backstage at Wrestlemanias, plus archival footage and matches.

Take my money now. If they're going to do this they need to do it soon as Bruno is going to be 80 this year. Get this while you still can.

* **Dudley Boyz** – Documentary and match collection.

Fine, though it could easily be expanded to include Edge and Christian and the Hardys.

* **Eric Bischoff** – Similar in vein to the Paul Heyman release, a documentary on the only man who came close to taking WWE down with matches and interviews as well as a documentary on his time in pro wrestling.

I've had my fill of Eric Bischoff in my life and his story is really well documented already.

* **Greatest Rivalries: Eric Bischoff vs. Vince McMahon** – Sitdown interview discussing the Monday Night War interspersed with footage from that era.

LET

IT

DIE!

* **Greatest Rivalries: Tommy Dreamer vs. Raven** – Dreamer and Raven discuss their feud with Joey Styles, interspersed with complete matches, clips and interviews.

I could see this one but it's not my cup of hot chocolate.

* **How to Become a Self-Made Millionaire with JBL** – Following a day in the life of JBL, focusing on his life and how he made his fortune, including personal wealth tips.

That's a bit outlier and I'm not sure how big the audience would be, especially given how big a market there are of these things already. This sounds more like a book.

* **Hulk Hogan: Immortal** – Hulk Hogan documentary and matches presented, built around the story of a Hogan bronze statue being created and released.

How many Hogan documentaries do we need? That statue thing sounds like a 20 minute special, not a feature attraction.

* **Lex Luger** – documentary on life and career of former WCW World champion.

Zero issue here as Luger actually has some good stuff and doesn't get a lot of attention.

* **OMG! ECW's Top 50 Craziest Moments** – A countdown of the craziest moments in Extreme Championship Wrestling and WWE ECW's collective history.

Again, not my thing but there's certainly a market for it.

* **Roman Reigns** – Documentary and match collection, built around Reigns heading into his first Wrestlemania.

Are you kidding? Win a title first.

* **The Sheamus Experience** – Sheamus interview as he tours Ireland plus matches, interviews and memories.

I could go for this but it wouldn't be on the top of my pile.

* **Stone Cold** – One Man Show with Steve Austin.

This exists?

* **True Story of Tribute to the Troops** – Documentary on creation and execution of the annual WWE event for the United States military plus matches and memories from different events.

If it's the original stuff the fine but the new glorified house shows need to just end already.

* **WWE Divas** – documentary looking at the past, present and future of women's wrestling in WWE.

There's some good stuff in there, but I don't need to hear about Sunny, Sable, Trish and Lita again.

Dana White Says Ronda Rousey Will Not Have A Match In WWE

Wow that's.....pretty much the least surprising thing I've heard in a long time. I'd have loved to see Rousey in a WWE ring (or anywhere for that matter), but this was a long shot at best so I'm not at all surprised.

You Should Buy My E-Books

Really you should. I've been told they're quite good. Granted I was talking to myself but it was in fact said. I have quite the selection to pick from and all are available on Amazon Prime:

- [1. History of ECW Pay Per Views](#)
- [2. History of Starrcade](#)
- [3. History of the WWE Championship](#)
- [4. History of the Royal Rumble](#)
- [5. Only On Pay Per View 1998 \(Every pay per view from WWF and WCW in 1998\)](#)
- [6. History of Saturday Night's Main Event](#)
- [7. History of In Your House](#)
- [8. Complete Monday Nitro Volume I – 1995/1996](#)
- [9. History of Clash of the Champions](#)
- [10. History of Summerslam](#)
- [11. Complete Monday Nitro Volume II – 1997](#)
- [12. History of Survivor Series](#)
- [13. Complete 1998 Monday Night Raw](#)
- [14. Complete 2001 Monday Night Raw](#)

All of them run over 200 pages and many break 400. That's not bad for under \$4 each. Check them out as I've yet to hear someone who doesn't at least like them a little bit. They're

all e-books and can be read on pretty much any device and you can find free apps to read them on for almost any device [here](#).

KB

Reviewing the Review – Monday Night Raw: April 20, 2015

With just six days to go until Extreme Rules, WWE has a long way to go to get me interested in the show. It isn't likely helping that they're just back from the big European tour and are likely to be jetlagged half to death. The big story is likely to be more build between Rollins and Orton, who are loading up for a pretty lackluster title match. Oh and Kane because of reasons I don't understand.

Orton opened the show in a cage, promising to hurt Seth this Sunday and take the title. Rollins and the Stooges came out and told him to get this out of his system now because it won't work on Sunday. This sounds appealing to Randy, who promises RK0's all night.

I really, really didn't care for this segment as it's more of the old standard walking you through everything they're doing that night instead of doing anything that feels organic or natural. Why do they have to tell us everything they're going to do instead of SHOWING US everything they want to do? Just have Orton start RK0ing everyone backstage and let the fans go "oh that was cool" instead of sitting around waiting for it. Not a fan here but this story isn't exactly one that inspires intellectual stimulation.

Ambrose and Harper had a quick non-match to set up their street fight on Sunday. These two could have an entertaining brawl if they're allowed to

just go nuts.

The Prime Time Players continued their recent awesome run by scaring the daylights out of Rollins and the Stooges, who are terrified of Orton attacking them. HHH popped up and laughed off their worries, as well as mentioned Kane because that's the big story around here.

New Day, now fully heel, cheated to earn a title shot on Sunday over the Lucha Dragons via countout. Notice that they didn't just have the Dragons get pinned here to kill their momentum. Instead, the faces (or faceless ones actually) lose because the heels cheated, keeping them strong and making the heels look like cheaters. That's common sense booking and hopefully something that we see more often.

Orton came out and RK0'ed Kingston (with a botch as Kofi wasn't ready to be thrown into the air, which looked really bad. He's done) and Woods. This would be more of the theme that they made VERY CLEAR earlier in the night in case you were too stupid to figure out that Orton is RK0ing everyone he can on a path to Rollins. That's a bit too complicated for wrestling fans I suppose.

Fandango beat Curtis Axel in the weekly filler.

HHH announced the return of Tough Enough and most people didn't seem to care. Could it be because outside of John Morrison, the most successful winner had a career highlight of eliminating Undertaker from the Royal Rumble and having the most amazing eyebrows in the history of wrestling?

Anyway the REAL story here was Kane coming out and tried to quit his job as Director of Operations because he's tired of Rollins disrespecting him. Rollins came out and argued a lot as this story just won't die already. HHH made them shake hands after Kane said the Rollins was just in the right place at the right time and anyone could have been made champion in his place. They kept arguing after a break and Rollins vs. Ziggler was made for later tonight.

Then the Bellas decided they were good now and Nikki shouted COME ON BRIE about 100 times to show off her new found goodness as Brie lost to Naomi. This would be the polar opposite of the "here's what we're going to do"

booking as instead of showing you every step, they're just at the end already without any real reason.

Think about it. The Bellas went from being full on villains to halfway down the spectrum in a week and for what? Mainly because WWE screwed up and turned almost the entire Divas division heel. I know I get on the Bellas quite a bit (which I still say they deserve a huge amount of) but the direction of their characters and sudden drastic changes to their characters have been some of the most jarring and worst ideas I have ever seen in wrestling. That being said, they don't do themselves any favors with their average at best matches and BRIE MODE/COME ON BRIE!

Randy Orton RK0ed Heath Slater into his salad. See, THIS is the kind of surprise moment they should have been going with all night instead of telling us the idea.

Roman Reigns wanted Big Show but got Bo Dallas. Superman Punches, spears and Reigns saying Bo-lieve that abounded in a fun little segment.

Sheamus massacred Zack Ryder until Dolph Ziggler came in for the save. This was fine to get the point across.

Cena issued the open challenge and had a horrible match with Kane to retain the title. Here's a sign of Cena's greatness: he has bad matches with Kane and Big Show, but name someone else he doesn't bring up to a higher level. If there are only two people in his career where it doesn't work, he's roughly 100 steps above most other talent. Rusev would attack Cena later in the night to set up the title match Sunday.

Bray Wyatt talked about how his new target can't lift his way out of this one. That makes me think Ryback, which could be a nice surprise or a disaster, though they've been treating Ryback like a monster again, which is certainly a good thing.

Miz beat Mizdow in less than three minutes when Summer Rae turned on Mizdow in one of the most obvious heel turns this side of Big Show turn #1894. So to recap, Mizdow takes forever to turn on Miz, loses the battle royal to Big Show after getting really close, then loses two out of the three matches to Miz. Why do I even bother getting behind someone when

their big goal is to build someone up to sacrifice them on the altar of WWE Studios? Miz got an RKO to emphasize that the entire Miz vs. Mizdow story meant nothing.

Ryback mauled Adam Rose and then beat up a hot dog and banana.

Kane and Rollins bickered some more with Rollins offering an apology.

Rollins vs. Ziggler was every Rollins vs. Ziggler match you've ever seen. The cage lowered post match so Rollins could hide from Kane. If you don't know what was waiting for him when he turned around to end the show, you haven't been paying close enough attention.

Raw really wasn't very good this week and so much of it revolves around how lame the main stories have been. Kane was the focal point of the show this week with this never ending argument with Rollins, which seems destined to result in Kane screwing Orton over on Sunday and the Authority revealing it was all a huge swerve that we never saw coming. The wrestling was nothing to see this week either and it made for a really weak three hours. Extreme Rules and these rematches need to be gone soon, as does Kane's never ending main event run. He just isn't interesting and it's killing the rest of the card.

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<http://www.amazon.com/Thomas-Hall/e/B00E6282W6>

Smackdown – April 23, 2015: Why Go Extreme When You Can Go Better Than Average?

Smackdown

Date: April 23, 2015

Location: Dunkin' Donuts Center, Providence, Rhode Island

Commentators: Michael Cole, Jerry Lawler, Byron Saxton

It's the final show before Extreme Rules and for some reason in 2015, one of the major stories is Kane seemingly about to turn on the Authority and becoming a bigger deal than he is now. Of course it's possible that it's all a swerve and Kane will cost Orton the title match on Sunday, making the last few weeks a big waste of time, much like Kane in general. Let's get to it.

Opening sequence opens, as is its custom.

Here are Rollins and the Stooges to open things up. After a recap of everything that happened on Monday with the RK0's all around, Rollins mocks the RK0 OUTTA NOWHERE concept. It's a good thing Orton got all those out of his system because the RK0 is banned on Sunday. Speaking of Sunday, Rollins doesn't need anyone's help, including an aging former monster' like Kane.

Strike up the organ of course so Kane can come out and threaten to chokeslam Rollins right now. He can either keep the title on Rollins this Sunday or destroy him right now. Seth laughs it off and says Kane will be fired for crossing the Authority. HHH only gave Kane that job to make him feel better because Kane is just a suit these days. Kane obeying the Authority is what's best for business.

Seth brings up Kane laying down and says that's what he should be doing, but Kane thinks Seth should lay down for him right now. He'll even make it non-title. A referee comes down and we get a bell. Rollins says this isn't right but Kane says he's the Authority tonight. The threat of

disembowelment convinces Seth to lay down but as Kane goes to cover him, he says he's just kidding and helps Seth up.

However, Kane isn't done yet as he makes Rollins vs. Dean Ambrose RIGHT NOW. Ambrose comes running out but Luke Harper follows, setting up a big beatdown on Dean. With things going bad, Roman Reigns comes out for the save, chasing off Rollins and Harper with Superman Punches.

Dolph Ziggler/Neville vs. Bad News Barrett/Sheamus

On the way to the ring, Sheamus says it's an insult to have underdogs like the men in the ring compared to real men like them. He even offers to bring Ziggler a stepladder to help Ziggler kiss up to him on Sunday. Neville starts with Sheamus and starts kicking away at the leg, followed by a running hurricanrana to send Sheamus outside. Barrett gets sent out as well and Neville hits a big running flip to take them both down.

Back from a break with Barrett holding Neville in a chinlock before Sheamus drops him with a release suplex. Neville finally fights up and kicks Sheamus in the head, allowing the hot tag to Ziggler. The jumping elbow and running DDT get two each on Barrett but a Sheamus distraction lets Barrett hit a quick Wasteland for two more. Ziggler spins around the shoulders though, setting up a Zig Zag into the Red Arrow for the pin on Barrett at 8:39.

Rating: C. This was a nice way to set things up, but again, well done on having a guy who might be winning the Intercontinental Title in three days look bad. That being said, it's really nice to see Neville get yet another pin over a big name. Even though everyone pins Barrett, it's still the biggest fall of Neville's career.

We get the Tough Enough announcement and see some of the best/worst video submissions so far. Yeah fine. Just let me know when the winner (other than John Morrison) means anything.

Bray Wyatt says someone's strength is an illusion, just like anyone else. He sees right through this person because fear is the same for every man. Bray will expose him as a weakling very soon. How does life work for a butterfly with no wings?

Naomi vs. Natalya

I guess Natalya is a face again. Naomi slugs her down to start and catapults Natalya throat first into the bottom rope for two. A chinlock doesn't last long so Naomi drops an elbow, only to miss a legdrop. Natalya does the stepover into the dropkick, only to walk into the Rear View for the pin at 2:28. As usual, the week to week continuity dominates the Divas.

The next target for the Prime Time Players is the Tag Team Champions. Kidd is whipped and Cesaro is interesting. Why is he interesting? Well....uh....you see.....he's German! Uh I mean Swiss, but it's the same thing.

Ryback vs. Rusev

Jobber entrance for Rusev but Lana gives a speech about the strength of the Russian chain, which has protected the greatest of Russia for years. Rusev says the chain is his weapon and a burden to Cena, to whom no mercy will be shown. They stare each other down to start before locking up with Rusev shoving him into the corner. Ryback nails a running clothesline for two and the Russian is stunned. A delayed suplex puts Rusev down again but he rolls to the floor before Ryback can stay on him.

Back in and Ryback misses a charge into the post, sending us to a break. We come back with Rusev putting on a quickly broken bearhug. Ryback fires off some right hands and gets two off a belly to belly, only to splash legs. The Meat Hook and jumping superkick are countered but the second Meat Hook connects. Rusev slips out of a Shell Shock though and heads outside, where he hits Ryback in the ribs with the chain for the DQ at 9:57.

Rating: C-. Take two guys and let them beat on each other for a few minutes. It's a strategy that has worked for years and it worked well enough here. This was a pretty good way to make Rusev look like a killer again, even if it's just a way to set him up again to be destroyed by Cena.

Ryback gets the Accolade with the chain around the face.

Jamie Noble isn't worried about Harper because it turns out they're cousins. Harper comes up in his usual trance and Noble tries to get his attention, but Harper is annoyed that they broke his concentration. He was thinking of all the ways he can hurt people you see.

Kofi Kingston vs. Cesaro

Before the match, the New Day blames the lack of positivity in WWE on the lack of clapping. Have no fear because New Day is here! Woods says they're like medicine: they may not taste good going down, but they're the right thing for you. Kofi goes on a rant about how the WWE isn't listening to them but soon enough they will embrace the New Day. They're kind of awesome at this.

The fans aren't pleased and chant their version of the catchphrase. A dropkick puts Cesaro down to start but he uppercuts Kofi into the Swing, only to have everyone else brawl on the floor. Trouble in Paradise hits out of nowhere for the pin at 1:30. That's not as bad as it's not a tag match loss.

Big Show has had enough of Roman Reigns and is ready to expose him for what he is.

Roman Reigns/Dean Ambrose vs. Seth Rollins/Luke Harper

Kane is at ringside. Ambrose and Harper get things going with Dean taking him down to the mat and ripping at Harper's face. Off to Reigns for a stomping in the corner before Dean gets another tag and hits a basement clothesline. Harper finally gets Ambrose into the corner for a tag to the champ to take over. A headlock into a front facelock keep Dean in trouble before Rollins throws him to the floor for a big boot from Harper.

We take a break and come back with Dean fighting out of a chinlock but having to DDT Harper instead of tagging. Seth comes back in to break up the hot tag attempt with a clothesline before both guys try cross bodies. The double tag brings in the power guys with Roman cleaning house but having to Superman Punch the Stooges off the apron. Harper takes one as well before Dean nails Rollins with the top rope standing elbow.

Luke partially blocks Dean's suicide dive and sends him over the timekeeper's area, only to eat a clothesline from Reigns. Rollins comes back in with the springboard knee for two and it's the discus lariat for two. Dean comes in off the hot tag to clean house. The rebound clothesline puts Rollins down and Dean low bridges Harper to the floor. Dean dives on the pile at ringside, only to have Kane throw Rollins back inside, allowing Reigns to hit the spear on Rollins for the pin at 16:44.

Rating: B. This was a much better main event tag than I was expecting. I'm not wild on the champion getting pinned but that's one of those things you learn to live with in WWE. It's also par for the course for this title reign but that's another story for another time. Anyway, good, long tag match here which was better than I was expecting.

Overall Rating: C+. Pretty fun show tonight with a good main event to carry things. Extreme Rules isn't the most interesting card in the world but a lot of that is due to the show just being a bunch of Wrestlemania rematches. The direction of a lot of things is still questionable but at least we had a fun two hour show to get us to the pay per view.

Results

Dolph Ziggler/Neville b. Bad News Barrett/Sheamus – Red Arrow to Barrett

Naomi b. Natalya – Rear View

Ryback b. Rusev via DQ when Rusev hit him with a chain

Kofi Kingston b. Cesaro – Trouble in Paradise

Roman Reigns/Dean Ambrose b. Seth Rollins/Luke Harper – Spear to Rollins

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Wrestling Wars Podcast Episodes 3 and 4

Coming this weekend! NorCal and I will be doing an Extreme Rules preview tomorrow night to go up on Saturday and an Extreme Rules recap show immediately after the show goes off the air to be up that night.

NorCal and I are blown away by how well the show has been received and the amount of times people have been listening to it so we're going to keep going and see where this takes us. I'll let you know when both of them are up and I've already got my match/show picked out.

Keep checking here to see when the next show goes up.

Lucha Underground – April 22, 2015: Not Since NXT....

Lucha Underground

Date: April 22, 2015

Location: Lucha Underground Arena, Los Angeles, California

Commentators: Vampiro, Matt Striker

We're coming up on the season finale of this series, which is scheduled to end with a big PPV style show that hasn't been announced on TV as of

yet. The big story tonight is the finals of the Trios Titles tournament with the three way final for the inaugural titles. We also have Sexy Star vs. Pentagon with Star finally standing up to his evil. Let's get to it.

The opening recap sets up the tournament final and a bit about Pentagon vs. Star.

Black Lotus says she isn't sure when she gets to fight but she knows she's ready. Now she's just waiting on her master. We see a montage of her beating people up in shadow. The master shows up and easily puts her down, saying Lotus isn't ready.

The house band plays us in. They could easily drop this in season 2.

The Trios Titles are at the commentary desk.

Sexy Star vs. Pentagon Jr.

Ring announcer Melissa Santos limps away after seeing Pentagon coming in due to him injuring her last week. Star takes over to start and the camera makes sure to keep showing Santos at ringside with the tape around her ankle. Pentagon comes back with a hard chop as the fans are split on who to cheer for, which Striker says represents the evil spreading throughout the temple.

Star sends him face first into the middle buckle and chokes in the corner, followed by something like a slingshot bronco buster for two. A HARD kick to the ribs puts Star back down so Striker calls him a no limit soldier. Please, ANYTHING but that horrible stable again. Bring back the Beverly Brothers before you make me sit through that one more time. Star rolls away from the armbar attempt and gets to the floor, only to start a chase scene capped off by a tornado DDT for two on Pentagon.

A dropkick puts him on the floor, setting up a big dive from Star to put both of them down again. Back up and Pentagon gets two off something like Project Ciampa (powerbomb into a Backstabber) for two. The armbar is escaped again and Star spins around his shoulders into a Backstabber of her own for the pin (with the referee ignoring the arms flailing everywhere, including off the mat).

Rating: C+. Good enough match here that likely sets up Pentagon's master going after him for punishment. Pentagon should have been a bit more dominant and, perhaps, GONE AFTER THE ARM, but the action was good enough and you get a quick feel good moment with Santos some revenge.

Johnny Mundo is working out when Alberto El Patron comes in to remind Johnny that he lost last week. Alberto came here because of Johnny's match with Prince Puma, which made it an even bigger surprise when Puma beat him in Aztec Warfare. Mundo isn't cool with this line of speaking and says he isn't just some guy that Alberto can slap around. Alberto tells him to chill and leaves.

The announcers talk about Drago's huge night next week: either win the title or leave forever.

Trios Titles: Texano/Cage/King Cuerno vs. Mack/Big Ryck/Killshot vs. Ivelisse/Angelico/Son of Havok

Elimination rules with three in the ring at once (old school WCW triple threat tag rules for a BIG plus). I don't know if it was mentioned earlier but Ryck and Mack are cousins. Angelico and Killshot double team Cage to start but he clotheslines both of them down with ease. A double suplex doesn't go over with as much ease but it looks more impressive. Off to Cuerno, Angelico and Texano with Angelico getting double teamed, including Texano lifting him into the air for a knee to the face.

Killshot, who I believe is still legal, gets back in to give Angelico a breather so Cuerno kicks him in the ribs. Angelico gets stomped as well as Cuerno and company are dominating so far. A kick to the head staggers Cuerno and Killshot hits a double running knee to Texano's chest. The referee is fine with four people being in the ring at once. Well five if you count the referee but who does that.

Mack comes in for a swinging slam on Texano, leaving us with a showdown of Mack vs. Havok. That's fine with Mack who quickly dives over the top to take out Texano all over again. Havok teases a dive of his own but has to bail out, allowing Cage to take him down with a big clothesline. We get the big showdown between Ryck and Cage with Cage easily slamming the eyepatched one down.

Cage isn't done though as he moonsaults down onto a big group of people, only to have Ryck take his head off with a clothesline back inside. Angelico hits a running knee off the apron to drive Texano into the front row, only to draw a "fan" (Daivari I believe) out to beat him up. Killshot hits a top rope double stomp to Texano and we have our first elimination as we go to a break, I believe for only the second time ever in this company. Oh that's a nice thing to be able to say.

We come back after missing nothing (again, that's REALLY nice to say) and Ryck splashing Angelico in the corner. Ivelisse seems to be holding her leg on the apron and Havok is nowhere to be seen. Mack chops Angelico down and Killshot hits a sick looking jumping kick to the back of the head for two. Ivelisse and Havok are back in the corner (adjacent to their opponents' corner for some reason) but Angelico is still being destroyed.

Mack drops a top rope elbow to the back but Angelico is able to dump everyone not named Killshot and make the tag to Havok. Killshot is waiting for him with what looked like a running C4 for two but Havok blocks the top rope reverse hurricanrana. The injured Ivelisse goes up top but dives into the arms of Mack and Ryck. Havok dives onto all of them, leaving Angelico to hit the Fall of the Angels on Killshot for the pin and the titles in a nice surprise.

Rating: B. Fun match here and the ending wasn't quite what I saw coming at first. It was a bit more obvious once Cuerno's team was eliminated, but they gave it some good drama to get there. Also, I liked Angelico getting the pin instead of going with the more conventional idea of giving Ivelisse the big feel good win. Angelico has earned the right to get the pin in a big match.

We're not done though as Cueto says there's one more team and for fun, let's make it a No DQ match. I don't remember anyone not named Vince being this evil as the boss and I LOVE it.

Trios Titles: Angelico/Son of Havok/Ivelisse vs. The Crew

Anything goes. The Crew goes right after the winners on the floor and my fun is instantly marred as I can't remember which Crew member is which.

Bael stays on Ivelisse and the bad leg as we're still waiting on anyone to get inside. Cisco beats up a mostly defenseless Angelico as Bael throws Ivelisse inside. Castro holds her for a cane shot but Havok remembers that he's in this match and comes in for a save. Bael and Angelico go up the stairs with Angelico getting backdropped onto a platform above the ring.

Castro chokes Ivelisse with the stick as Havok gets suplexed off the barricade. That's fine with him as he pops back up for a moonsault off the same barricade.....AND ANGELICO DIVES OFF THE PLATFORM TO TAKE OUT CASTRO AND BAEL!!! Good night that was awesome and thankfully they let the match stop for a second to breathe. Ivelisse gets the stick and hammers on both downed guys before ordering her partners to the top. A stereo shooting star from Havok and double stomp from Angelico are enough to finally give us new champions.

Rating: B. The match wasn't great but that dive was something else. I really liked the ending too as it felt like something special instead of just another title change. I don't see them holding the belts for long but that's a great way to give us the first set of champions. Angelico is on a roll right now and I actually want to see more of him, which isn't something I say often.

Overall Rating: B+. This was WAY better than I was expecting and it got me into things in just forty five minutes. Outside of NXT, almost nothing is capable of doing that and it was a really nice surprise. This show has hit a huge groove and knows exactly what it wants to do every week, which is one of the most important things a wrestling company can do. The fact that Lucha Underground has done it in about six months is all the more impressive. Check this show out if you want a fun hour of wrestling that flies by.

NXT – April 22, 2015: The New Plan

NXT

Date: April 22, 2015

Location: Full Sail University, Winter Park, Florida

Commentators: Corey Graves, Rich Brennan

We haven't heard from NXT Champion Kevin Owens in a good while so it's probably time to get him out here for more greatness. Alex Riley has called Owens out to meet him in the ring tonight because, due to quitting his commentary job, Riley has nowhere else to go but the ring. Let's get to it.

Opening sequence.

Finn Balor vs. Tye Dillinger

Balor starts with some dropkicks as the fans want him to KILL THE JOBBER. The Pele sets up the Sling Blade and the Coup de Grace ends Dillinger at 2:28. This was an old school squashing and Balor looked great.

Tyler Breeze pops up on screen to call Finn Balor the flavor of the month. See you around Finn.

Dana Brooke says last week was the rebirth of the women's division in NXT because it was the debut of the strongest Diva ever. It's play time.

Kevin Owens is asked his thoughts on the match with Riley tonight but first, he thinks it's cold. Riley gave him a good fight a few weeks back but he's never going to be NXT Champion. After the loss tonight, he can go find a chair, table and headset to use because his future isn't in the ring. If you'll excuse him, he'd like to go find a coat.

Charlotte vs. Bayley vs. Becky Lynch

#1 contenders match. Becky gets double teamed to start and Bayley throws her to the floor, setting up another showdown

between herself and Charlotte. A chop out goes to Charlotte (of course) and we hit the figure four headlock with the flips to knock Bayley senseless. Becky sneaks back in with a nice German suplex to take Charlotte down and we take a break. Back with Becky dropping some running legs on Bayley for two.

Off to a knee hold as we get what might be the first ever crawler advertising NXT live shows. A limping Bayley fights out of the corner but charges into a knee. Becky outs on a complicated leg lock but Charlotte breaks it up with Natural Selection and no cover. The fans think that this is wrestling and better than the Divas.

Becky pulls Charlotte off the middle rope to break up a superplex attempt but Charlotte pulls her away from the corner into a powerbomb with Bayley adding a middle rope elbow to the jaw to drive Lynch down. Charlotte pulls Becky off the cover and puts her bad leg in the Figure Eight (the official name for the bridging version). Charlotte can't see though and Becky drapes her arm over Bayley for the pin at 11:32 with the hold still on.

Rating: B. The girls continue to steal the show and Becky is getting better every week. Lynch vs. Banks could be something interesting given their history and now I have a reason to believe it could be a good match. Charlotte has nothing left to do in NXT and is ready for the main roster and the destruction of her career as a result. Bayley needs to find something to do as she's been running in still adorable circles for a while now.

CJ Parker vs. Hideo Itami

Dang Parker just won't leave. Parker stalls to start as the fans want Hideo to kick his head off. A headlock slows Itami down but he drives a knee into Parker's ribs to set up some kicks for two. CJ punches him in the corner and gets two off a suplex. Another attempt doesn't work though and it's time for the strike off. A running delayed corner dropkick sets up the Shotgun Kick to give Hideo the pin at 4:06.

Rating: D+. This has to be Parker's last match as I can't find anything else taped for him. Hideo looked better here and it seems that the GTS is going to be his super finisher when he isn't using the Shotgun Kick. This did its job of getting Hideo back on track after his big moment was treated like nothing special by Big Show at Wrestlemania.

Becky Lynch doesn't like Sasha Banks taking credit for her career.

Rhyno vs. ???

No name for the jobber. Gore ends this in 27 seconds.

Blake and Murphy sing to Carmella when Enzo and Cass come up to accuse the two Sinatras of having Halitosis. Carmella is wearing the jewelry they gave her and that's not cool either. Cass brings up getting Carmella a job.

Alex Riley vs. Kevin Owens

Non-title and no sign of the coat. Owens gets in his face in the corner but Riley shoves him into the same corner. A nice dropkick sends Owens outside and the champ needs a breather. The mind games begin as Owens won't get back inside, which eventually draws Alex outside for a whip into the barricade.

We come back from a break with Owens choking on the middle rope and not seeing Riley as much of a threat. The backsplash gets two and we hit the chinlock. Riley fights up and hits a running elbow in the corner, followed by a flipping neckbreaker. He gets crotched on top though, setting up the Cannonball and Pop Up Powerbomb for the pin at 8:44.

Rating: C-. I wasn't wild on this one as it was basically a less energized version of their first match. Owens is a killer and looked fine while Alex looked like he could still go in the ring, but we knew those things after their match in Columbus. Not much to see here but Owens is always entertaining with his explosiveness.

Post match Owens loads up the apron powerbomb but Sami Zayn comes out for the big brawl. Security comes out but Sami dives on the pile to send Owens running away to end the show.

Overall Rating: C. This wasn't the best show but it seems that this was a show taped out of order which took away a lot of the chemistry. Sami coming out to go after Owens was a great sign though as it's time to pick things up all over again, likely for the next upcoming Takeover. Not a great show but it set up the future and gave us a good triple threat.

Results

Finn Balor b. Tye Dillinger – Coup de Grace

Becky Lynch b. Charlotte and Bayley – Lynch pinned Bayley while Bayley was in the Figure Eight

Hideo Itami b. CJ Parker – Shotgun Kick

Rhyno b. ??? – Gore

Kevin Steen b. Alex Riley – Pop Up Powerbomb

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