

Ring of Honor TV – March 23, 2016: Can I Sign Up For Old Japan?

Ring of Honor

Date: March 23, 2015

Location: Sam's Town Hotel and Gambling Hall, Las Vegas, Nevada

Commentators: Mr. Wrestling III, Kevin Kelly

It's a special show this time as we have a new taping cycle including the New Japan crew. These things can go a bunch of different ways and unfortunately a lot of those ways don't often go well for the normal Ring of Honor guys. It's also the fight show after the 14th Anniversary Show so things can start moving forward. Let's get to it.

Opening sequence.

TV Title: BJ Whitmer vs. Tomohiro Ishii

Ishii is defending after taking the title in Japan because WE MUST PRAISE NEW JAPAN. The graphic says "Tomorhiro" but I can't find anything else that spells it that way. We're not quite ready to go yet though as Veda Scott and Cedric Alexander come out with Veda offering a check in exchange for the title shot. Whitmer is appalled at the suggestion that he could be bought off and then takes the check anyway.

TV Title: Cedric Alexander vs. Tomohiro Ishii

The match starts after a break with Ishii hitting a hard shoulder and throwing Alexander across the ring with ease. Ishii headbutts him down but Veda grabs the boot to finally give Cedric an opening. See, she's effective as well as gorgeous. Cedric starts stomping at the head before going with a far less painful chinlock.

That's enough for the champ though as he Hulks Up and scores with chops and a suplex. Cedric is up at two and climbs the corner for a spinning

kick to the head. Back up and Ishii just headbutts the heck out of him, only to have the sliding lariat get countered into a crucifix for two. Ishii is done playing though and he brainbusts Alexander for the pin to retain at 6:32.

Rating: C. I'm really not a fan of the NEVER stuff that Ishii does over in New Japan but he's perfectly acceptable when he's doing more wrestling than all that strong style toughman nonsense. Alexander is way too generic for my tastes but at least Veda is awesome in her role and can carry anyone however far she needs to.

Here's the Addiction to complain about the reunion of the Motor City Machine Guns. Oh great that's a thing again. They take credit for bringing Chris Sabin back from the depths (I'd have cheered if they added "of TNA") and now they've been betrayed for a Machine Guns reunion. Kazarian gets in a few shots at Las Vegas being the land of bad decisions and thinks this was all one bad choice. Daniels thinks the fans are all thinking it's Christmas morning to see Sabin/Shelley back together again but it's time for an apology.

Cue the Guns, unfortunately without their rocking TNA theme. Before they get going, how in the world is Sabin the only former World Champion out of this group? Sabin has reached the conclusion that the Addiction are just delusional jerks. The brawl is teased but of course the Addiction bails. Daniels says they'll have a match but it's up to them, the adults, to decide when that happens.

Jay Lethal is ready to defend against Hirooki Goto next week.

Reno Scum vs. Briscoes

Scum (Luster the Legend/Adam Thorestowe) is a team who has been around before but aren't that well known. Adam and Mark get things going with the former getting double teamed in a somewhat heelish attack by the Briscoes. Back in and Adam can't get anywhere with Mark so it's off to Luster for a running shoulder in the corner. Mark gets pounded down but finally comes back with some right hands to both Scum.

It's still not enough though as a catapult sends Mark into a Death Valley

Driver for two. Not that it matters as Mark flips onto his feet and makes the tag off to Jay as house is cleaned. Everything breaks down and a powerbomb into a neckbreaker gets two on Luster. A German suplex followed by a double stomp gets the same on Mark, only to have him pop up with a Death Valley Driver. The Froggy Bow is enough to put Adam away at 6:55.

Rating: C-. Scum didn't do anything for me here and I'm really not sure who is supposed to benefit here. The Briscoes were fine enough but this had that Ring of Honor style to it that doesn't get me interested. There are more than enough teams in Ring of Honor already and Scum really wasn't needed here.

Dalton Castle is excited for his Fight Without Honor with Silas Young in three weeks but the Boys aren't old enough to know what he has planned.

Young Bucks vs. Hiroshi Tanahashi/Michael Elgin

The fans are far more behind Tanahashi than the Bucks here, which is a nice sign for the future of wrestling. Elgin and Nick start with Michael actually trying a test of strength. Now since no power guy has ever gotten a small heel to try a test of strength, I'll let you guess how this goes. The Bucks start speeding things up and a pair of dropkicks have the good guys (I think?) on the floor.

Matt dives over the top to take Tanahashi out and we take a break. Back with Elgin bicycle kicking Matt out to the floor before giving him a double suplex. Elgin and Tanahashi give Nick a double SUCK IT in a nice visual. There's a delayed vertical suplex with Nick trying a save, only to have Elgin suplex both of them at the same time. Tanahashi grabs an abdominal stretch and uses Matt's ribs as an air guitar. Eh that was amusing.

We hit the chinlock for a bit until Nick pulls Elgin to the floor for our first superkick. Nick gets in a regular SUCK IT and there's the slingshot X Factor. We take a break and come back with the Bucks still in control and getting cheered way too loudly. Tanahashi gets in a cross body though and the tag brings Elgin back in. Big Mike picks up the Bucks for a Samoan drop/fall away slam at the same time because he's got freaking strength. The Falcon Arrow gets two on Matt but double superkicks set up

a double 450 for two on Elgin.

Tanahashi no sells ANOTHER superkick and gets loaded up into kind of a reverse Alabama Slam from Elgin to send him onto...Matt's knees. Now you might think we just had enough double superkicks for a lifetime, but that's not how the Bucks roll. FIVE more superkicks have them in control but the Meltzer Driver is countered with Elgin's powerbomb. The Sling Blade and another powerbomb sets up the High Fly Flow to give Tanahashi the pin at 16:10.

Rating: B. Better match here but I've made my opinions on the Bucks pretty clear over the last year. I still don't get why they're faces in this or any other promotion (well maybe PWG would make sense) but the fans go nuts over them and that's the point of bringing in acts like this. Tanahashi continues to be amazing (I'm a bit late on that one) and Elgin has that freakish strength that only a handful of people ever have, making this a rather fun match. Not exactly the kind of match I'd like as I'm not big on the styles of either promotion, but at least it was a fun performance.

Overall Rating: C+. This was good enough but the New Japan shows can get annoying in a hurry. At least we had a good match and the Fight Without Honor offers some promise, especially if it gives Castle the boost that he's been needing for months. Unfortunately I have a feeling we're in for A LOT more New Japan before we get there and that's not the most entertaining thing in the world.

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