

Ring of Honor TV – July 6, 2016: Enough

Ring of Honor

Date: July 6, 2016|

Host: Kevin Kelly

We're at a special show this week with the 250th episode, which is going to showcase the best of 2016 so far. This could mean several things, though I have a feeling we'll be seeing a lot of the New Japan wrestlers who have basically dominated the year so far. Unfortunately that means even more time away from the new stuff ROH is doing but that's a common problem for the promotion. Let's get to it.

TV Title: Tomohiro Ishii vs. Bobby Fish

From Global Wars with Ishii defending after taking the title from Roderick Strong, the champion that Fish had been chasing. Fish actually runs the much bigger Ishii over to start but Ishii does the same to send Fish outside for a bit of his time. Back in and Fish fires off some kicks to put Ishii in trouble, which isn't something you see happen to him that often. Ishii wins another slugout though and a headbutt puts Fish down with ease.

Fish makes the mistake of headbutting Ishii and the referee has to check on him as a result. The champ gets knocked off the top but Fish misses a flying headbutt, only to start back in with kicks to the knee. We take a break and come back with Fish hitting an exploder suplex for two but getting headbutted for his efforts. Ishii gets his own near fall with a delayed vertical superplex, followed by a Saito Suplex.

Fish looks mostly dead so Ishii powerbombs him for two more but Bobby grabs a sleeper. I could go for a small vs. big match without the smaller guy jumping on his back with a sleeper. It's just so overdone. Ishii, seemingly annoyed with how lame Fish's strategy was, German suplexes him down.

They head to the apron with Fish back on his feet and slugging it out. As expected, Ishii easily knocks him down but Fish kicks the leg out to put both guys down on the floor. Back in and a hard lariat gets two for the champ but Fish goes back to the sleeper. He fires off some elbows to the head and survives a flip attempt to actually knock Ishii out at 15:30 (original time).

Rating: B. The match was a good, hard hitting brawl but Ishii is the definition of a guy that had no business winning the title or being involved in this story whatsoever. Strong vs. Fish had been a well built up story but instead of getting the payoff we had been set up for, Ishii got the belt despite having no connection to either of them. That's becoming too common of a tradition and it's getting old in a hurry. This match was good but Fish vs. Strong would have been as well and had a strong story to go with it. Which sounds better?

Briscoe Brothers vs. Hiroshi Tanahashi/Michael Elgin

From the 14th Anniversary Show and no real story here other than ROH vs. New Japan in a "dream" match. Jay and Michael get things going with Jay kicking him in the face but getting gorilla pressed to put him right back down. We get the very cool delayed vertical suplex with Mark's interference not doing a thing to stop Elgin. That's such insane power.

It's off to Mark vs. Tanahashi for the air guitar vs. Redneck Kung Fu battle which results in Tanahashi grabbing an armbar. Naturally that means it's time to talk about Hiroshi's hair but Jay is tagged in, only to stay on the floor while Mark hits a Blockbuster off the apron to take Elgin out. We get the big showdown (which isn't treated as big or a showdown) with Jay getting two off an elbow to Tanahashi's jaw. Mr. Wrestling 3 finally realizes what we saw there but it's already off to Mark for a Russian legsweep.

The fans chant for Elgin but get a commercial instead. Back with the tag bringing in Elgin for some running strikes to Mark's chest. Jay has to save his brother from Rolling Germans as everything breaks down. A back elbow/German suplex combo sends Mark flying but Jay breaks up the High Fly Flow.

Mark shouts a lot and flips Mike off the top for two. With Tanahashi down on the floor, the brothers take turns with headbutts until Mark is backdropped over the top. Elgin no sells a boot to the face (he's from New Japan remember) and clotheslines Jay down for a breather. The hot tag brings in Tanahashi for some dragon screw leg whips but he walks into a neckbreaker.

Froggy Bow gets two before Elgin breaks up the Doomsday Device. In a cool move, Elgin gives Tanahashi a reverse Alabama Slam onto Mark for two more with Jay making the save. Jay is dispatched so it's a powerbomb into the High Fly Flow for the pin on Mark at 14:50 (original match time).

Rating: C+. The match was fine though I'm rarely a fan of these matches where the only story is one great team against two guys who might team together for a few months. Oh and of course the New Japan team goes over clean. Heaven forbid Tanahashi isn't treated as the biggest star in the history of ever over here.

Clips from the Fight Without Honor to blow off Silas Young vs. Dalton Castle. We see less than a minute of the match which ran over sixteen minutes. To recap: we can see a full TV Title match where a New Japan guy took a spot from an ROH guy for no reason other than "we need ROH vs. New Japan" and then we can see a full meaningless "dream" match where the freshly created New Japan team defeated the undisputed best team in ROH history. The blowoff match to a year long ROH only feud can't even get a minute of TV time though. I've said it many times now but this isn't an ROH show. This is New Japan TV: America.

ReDRagon vs. The Kingdom vs. Young Bucks

From ROH TV on January 20. It's Cole/Bennett for the Kingdom here and this is a street fight. The Bucks jump O'Reilly and Fish during the entrances and we're starting fast. The injured Taven gets a double superkick, as does ring announcers Bobby Cruz. ReDRagon gets back in to work on the Bucks, only to have the Kingdom come in again to turn this into a wild brawl that is going to be almost impossible to keep track of.

Bennett punches Fish down and it's Cole setting Matt in a chair in the middle of the ring. A running charge sets up a chinlock and even Kelly

has to acknowledge that it's a spot they've seen before. Kyle backdrops Nick on the floor for a thud before diving into a superkick. We take a break and come back with Cole in a shopping cart and being wheeled into a superkick.

The Bucks set up a table at ringside but it's ReDRagon double teaming Matt inside. The Kingdom brings in a ladder (Mr. Wrestling III: "It's amazing what you can find in south Philadelphia") to take out ReDRagon and it's Cole putting the ladder around his neck. That only allows ReDRagon to blast the ladder with chairs before setting the ladder on top of those chairs.

Bennett comes back in to spinebuster Kyle onto the steel but the Bucks powerbomb him (Bennett) through the ladder. A Swanton onto the ladder sets up More Bang For Your Buck but Cole pulls the referee out at two. Kevin Kelly accidentally eats a superkick and Mr. Wrestling III freaks out while still shouting SUPERKICK in a funny moment.

We take another break and come back with Cole hitting the Canadian Destroyer on Matt but walking into a superkick from Nick. Bennett takes Chasing the Dragon on the floor, leaving O'Reilly and Cole to fight in the aisle. That leaves Fish alone against the Bucks but he stops to spear Bennett through a table on the floor. A double superkick off the apron gives Fish the weakest table bump in history with Nick having to splash him the rest of the way through.

Back in and the Bucks put a party hat on Bennett for a superkick party, only to have Maria hit them both low for a save. This brings out AJ Styles to hit Bennett in the ribs with a chair before laying him out with Bloody Sunday. Maria gets a Meltzer Driver and the Indytaker into the Styles Clash puts Bennett away at 16:45.

Rating: B. Totally wild brawl here and a lot of fun at the same time. This wasn't about anything more than carnage and that's all they delivered the entire time. The piledriver to Maria was a good way to write her off TV and the Kingdom goes out in a great performance, especially considering it wasn't their usual combination.

Overall Rating: F. The wrestling wasn't the problem here (obviously). The

problem is the same thing I covered earlier: this isn't about Ring of Honor anymore. I know the next set of TV tapings doesn't feature the New Japan wrestlers but look at what they consider the best of the first half of 2016: New Japan wrestler, New Japan wrestlers, one minute of ROH only and the New Japan stable.

Also this was somehow their usage of the 250th episode. No mention of the history of the show, no classic matches (or even match), nothing but "Hey here's a bunch of New Japan stuff in case you haven't seen enough of it yet." ROH should be better than this by now and it's not like they can't stand on their own feet without New Japan.

I really can't imagine their ratings go up that high when they're there, especially when they're around that often. It's not even a novelty anymore as they're around so much that we just had a highlight show featuring them in every match. Having them around every once in awhile for a set of tapings here and there is fine as they're certainly an attraction but this is WAY too far and has been for a long time.

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