

Impact Wrestling – August 11, 2016: The Lull Period

Impact Wrestling

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Location: Impact Zone, Orlando, Florida

Commentators: Josh Matthews, D'Angelo Dinero

It's the start of a fresh taping cycle here and we have a big main event as Bobby Lashley and James Storm face off in a winner take all match for all three men's singles titles. On top of that there's a new name debuting tonight which could make things a bit more interesting around here. The name is pretty much confirmed but I'll spare you the spoiler in case you haven't see it yet. Let's get to it.

We open with a recap of last week's main event where Ethan Carter III beat Mike Bennett to advance to Bound For Glory.

We also hear from James Storm about not having a one on one World Title match in five years.

Here's Ethan to open the shirt. Fans: "NEXT WORLD CHAMP!" Ethan: "Spoiler alert!" Carter talks about everything he's done in TNA, including campaigning for a World Title shot. However, now he's on a quest to be the best. Cue Lashley to say cut this off because it's his show.

Lashley lists off all the people he's better than but here's James Storm to interrupt. Storm goes on about how Lashley is jumping the gun (with his mic sounding way off) and tells Lashley to come fight him right now. Lashley and Storm fight to the back but here are Bennett and Moose to go after Carter. It's Eddie Edwards coming out for the save and the ring is cleared. Eddie wants to do their tag match right now.

Eddie Edwards/Ethan Carter III vs. Mike Bennett/Moose

The opening bell takes us to a break about fifteen seconds in. Back with Carter fighting out of trouble and making the tag off to Eddie. Bennett

gets kicked in the ribs a few times but an elbow to the jaw allows the big tag to Moose. The power game starts fast with Eddie getting dropkicked off the top and out to the floor in a crash.

The villains take turns on Eddie until he rolls over for the hot tag to Ethan. Everything breaks down and Carter/Edwards hit stereo suicide dives for a nice visual. Back in and a top rope hurricanrana takes Moose down, only to have him pull Eddie off the top with a lifting powerbomb. That's not enough for Bennett though as he makes a blind tag and pins Bennett at 11:14.

Rating: C-. Really lifeless match here as they were just went through the motions until the ending. Are they really teasing a split between Bennett and Moose? A pairing that's only been together for all of a month now? Bennett really doesn't need a bodyguard but I'm not sure if Moose is ready to be his own thing in TNA.

We look at Storm winning the TNA World Title five years ago. It's taken him twenty years to get into the best shape of his life and he's doing it for the people who have believed in him since day one.

Here's the former Damien Sandow for his TNA debut under the name Aron Rex. He still holds the mic like a wine glass and says TNA is willing to let him talk on live TV. Aron isn't here to talk about glass ceilings and brass rings because he's out here to tell the truth. For those that used to employ him, don't worry because this isn't about him. This is about the paying customer (So not fans here at this show.) and the fans.

Some people have labeled him as too entertaining to compete for World Titles. No matter what any authority figure says, everyone in the ring works for the fans. Some people are chosen to receive opportunity after opportunity while there are others who seize opportunity when it's on an even playing field.

Rex lists off some names that have proven that former WWE wrestlers can get a push around here. Given how the same four or five names dominated the TNA World Title over the years, TNA really doesn't have room to brag about that. It's gotten better in recent years but after so many years of Kurt Angle, Jeff Hardy and Sting, that's a bit hard to take. His name is

Aron Rex and he's here in TNA. Rex got a great reaction and they're smart to play to this area, but TNA has some issues with letting people into the main event scene. Hopefully he's more of an Ethan Carter style guy though because that's been a great success.

Gail Kim asks Maria what she has to do tonight and gets jumped from behind by Marti Belle. Maria makes Marti vs. Gail, No DQ.

Edwards yells at Bennett and Moose for cheating to win (they didn't really cheat) and wants Bennett one on one tonight.

Marti Belle vs. Gail Kim

No DQ. It's a brawl in the aisle to start as Maria and Ashley try their best to come down to the ring in heels. Gail yells at Allie so Marti can get in a cheap shot from behind to take over. Some suplexes have Gail in trouble and her comeback is cut off by another Allie distraction. Back in and Gail takes over with a few clotheslines followed by most of a Blockbuster for two. Maria interferes this time and tells Allie to hit Gail with Marti's baton, only to have Gail send Marti into Allie. A small package pins Marti at 4:19.

Rating: D. Sweet goodness they're in full on ALL PRAISE GAIL mode here. Sienna? Anyone want to mention her anytime soon? Nah that would make too much sense because we need to build Gail up again so she can win the Knockouts Title again at Bound For Glory against a woman we barely know anything about. Build Sienna up and let Gail go in on her reputation. It's not like we don't know who she is already.

The beatdown is on post match until Jade runs in for the save and decks Allie. Maria gives Jade a match against Gail next week.

Matt Hardy is riding in a car and tells whoever is driving to take him to the obsolete mule. We see Jeff standing by a pond and it's Vanguard 1 driving the car. Matt tells Jeff that he had a premonition of Decay trying to abduct Maxill so Reby and Maxill are at the Hardy Compound. Vanguard 1 is sent to the Compound to help guard them (with Vanguard's monitor saying GOODBYE) and Matt tells Jeff to get ready for his match.

James Storm wants to win the title for his family.

Next week: Hardys vs. BroMans vs. Tribunal vs. Helms Dynasty in a ladder match for the #1 contendership to the Tag Team Titles. Sweet goodness they have a lot of ladder matches around here. It's like triple threats in the WWE turned up even further. Just wrestle already and cut out the hardware.

Here's Matt with a threat to eat and delete anyone who questions his genius. We hear about his premonition and Matt orders Jeff down here to help him win the Tag Team Titles. Jeff mouths the words to his song and all of Matt's intro for him. Matt says it's time to fight but Jeff wants to ask why Matt bit that fan's face last week. I'd rather like to know why no one has suspended Matt for his actions, or why the Dixie vs. Corgan feud was dropped with no explanation (I'd like to know who pulled the plug so I can send them a fruit basket and a shop vac.).

Jeff tries to get Matt to forget all this and help him fight but Matt says the Hardys are done. Cue the Tribunal with Al Snow saying he's been to crazy town before but thinks Matt has gone over the edge. We get some standard French people are snooty insults and a bell rings.

Matt Hardy/Jeff Hardy vs. Tribunal

We take a break so early that I don't even have anything to talk about before the commercial. Back with Jeff in trouble and being double teamed. A quick comeback doesn't get him anywhere as Matt won't tag in, allowing Baron to take him down by the arm. The arm work continues as we go to Matt, who is looking straight into the eyes of a fan with a Jeff sign.

The fan starts saying DELETE as Matt has hypnotized him. Snow comes over with the whistle so Matt bites his finger (triggering rapid fire whistling) and beats on Dax with a boot. Jeff makes his comeback and hits the Twist of Fate for the pin at 7:14. We didn't see enough of the match for me to rate it but this was just angle advancement.

Post match Matt says that was close to good so Jeff snaps and hits a few Twists on Snow and the Frenchmen. Jeff puts Snow through a table at ringside and then puts himself through a second table because the only

person that punishes Jeff is Jeff. Matt laughs maniacally and Jeff says he is Brother Nero. Matt is thrilled because Jeff is finally broken.

Lashley comes up to Dixie and Corgan in the back and isn't happy that Storm is getting these vignettes tonight. Corgan says Lashley had the same offer but turned it down. Lashley doesn't seem to care.

Decay says they're the past, present and future. Abyss credits Decay with his beauty and Rosemary says what happened to Bram was a lesson.

Here's Drew Galloway for a chat. Drew hasn't been around for awhile because of everything that has happened to him recently. He's known that he needs to be away because he'll get thrown out and then go to jail if he does what he wants. It's been sixteen years to try to become World Champion and then it was ripped away from his hands. Then Ethan Carter III cost him his chance in the Bound For Glory Playoff.

Everyone has been telling him that Ethan is his friend but this is three times (losing the title, losing the rematch and losing in the Playoff) that Ethan has ripped him off. Now Drew knows that Ethan is trying to destroy his career so Galloway wants one more match: Drew Galloway vs. Ethan Carter III for the spot in the Bound For Glory main event.

Storm is tired of people telling him he can't do it.

TNA World Title/X-Division Title/King of the Mountain Title: Lashley vs. James Storm

Winner take all. Storm hits a Last Call at the bell and gets a delayed two because the referee is out of position. A staggered Lashley bails out to the floor and Storm knocks him around until we take a break. Back with Lashley in control with his power offense in the corner. Storm has nothing to fight back against the big heavy shots until Lashley misses a charge and gets caught in the Eye of the Storm.

Lashley rips the turnbuckle pad off to avoid a rollup before kicking Storm into the exposed steel. A spinebuster and the spear give Lashley two. Back to back Last Calls get two for Storm and so much for that finisher. The fourth Last Call is countered but Storm hits Closing Time,

only to have Lashley hit a spear to win the title at 16:40.

Rating: C+. This was fine enough albeit the most obvious ending in the world. Lashley winning the titles feels like a copy of Seth Rollins holding the US/WWE World Titles last summer but at least it's been a year and not a few days this time. Storm was a good choice for a transitional champion as he'll be fine, though I'm not a fan of one guy holding all the gold and likely having three matches in a night at some point. Lashley is good but TNA has a horrible problem of not understanding that less is more.

Lashley celebrates and here's Aron Rex to stare down Lashley to end the show.

Overall Rating: C. Aron was a good debut and feels like he could be something big but the rest of this show was a lot of slowly advancing the stories forward. It's not quite early enough to make matches for Bound For Glory but there's nothing in between now and then to build towards. Things are far from horrible and again they kept the Hardys to a limited space, though the idea of Broken Jeff makes me shake my head. Good enough show here but the only thing worth (arguably) seeing is Rex's promo.

Results

Mike Bennett/Moose b. Eddie Edwards/Ethan Carter III – Lifting powerbomb to Edwards

Gail Kim b. Marti Belle – Small package

Matt and Jeff Hardy b. Tribunal – Twist of Fate to Dax

Lashley b. James Storm – Spear

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