

# NXT – May 3, 2017: What Do You Get When You Cross A Ruby With A Moon?

## NXT

Date: May 3, 2017

Location: Full Sail University, Winter Park, Florida

Commentators: Percy Watson, Tom Phillips, Nigel McGuinness

We're rapidly approaching Takeover: Chicago and that means we need to fill in a lot of the card. As luck would have it, a major development is going to take place tonight as we have a battle royal for the #1 contendership to the Women's Title. That leaves a lot of doors open for challengers, including a potential Ember Moon rematch. Let's get to it.

Opening sequence.

### Killian Dain vs. Danny Burch

The monster Dain drives him into the corner and pulls him off the middle rope for a big crash. The backsplash connects and is greeted by a SHAVE YOUR BACK chant, followed by a series of elbow drops. Burch slugs away with a series of strikes but Dain flattens him with a running dropkick. The Ulster Plantation finishes Burch at 2:51.

The Velveteen Dream, whom I believe is Patrick Clark, is coming. The silhouette certainly looks like him.

### Heavy Machinery vs. Ricardo Watts/Hector Kunsman

The jobbers make Rey Mysterio look huge. Dozovich runs Hector over to start and a double falling headbutt makes things even worse. Ricardo is dragged in and Machinery exchange chest bumps. Knight splashes both of them in the corner before Dozovich lifts them both at the same time for a double World's Strongest Slam and the double pin at 2:41.

Post match Heavy Machinery says they love to have a good time,

meaning some carb shakes and trips to the buffet. When they step in the ring, they have a hunger for smashing bodies. The appetizers are over now and they want the main course: the Authors of Pain. Heavy Machinery is very much a case of “what you see is what you get” but they play their roles very well and that’s what matters the most.

Bobby Roode talks to Kona Reeves before Reeves faces Hideo Itami.

DIY might not have Heavy Machinery’s size but they’re the former NXT Tag Team Champions. They love more competition but the line starts behind them.

#### Kona Reeves vs. Hideo Itami

Itami has ditched the entrance gear and just comes out in his regular trunks and boots. Reeves jumps him before the bell though and has the advantage once the match actually starts. Kona turns up the cockiness but Hideo pops to his feet and fires off the clotheslines and kicks. More kicks knock Kona down in the corner and the GTS puts him away at 2:08. That’s an effective squash but I’m not sure a two minute match is the best way to get him back on his feet after an injury and so close to what’s going to be a twenty plus minute title match.

Video on Drew McIntyre, including a look back at his initial WWE run.

It’s part two of the mini documentary on Roderick Strong. This time we’re at home with his pregnant fiance and they’re getting things ready for the baby’s arrival. He loves the idea of being called a father and a husband and now those things are about to be true. We get some clips of Strong’s very early career from his days in IPW Hardcore Wrestling and then his time in the Performance Center.

Now we go back to the Ring of Honor days, which still messes with me just a little bit. He was there for thirteen years and then he got the call. With tears in his eyes, Strong says don’t give up and everything will be ok. We wrap it up with Strong holding his newborn baby. This was another excellent package and made me think more of Strong (who I’m a fan of) than I have before, which is exactly the

point. He hasn't made an impact yet (a match in Chicago would help) but that could change very quickly.

Roode is in William Regal's office and doesn't think much of the video. He also doesn't think Hideo should get the title shot yet because it could mess with the champ's face. Regal actually agrees and puts Itami in a #1 contenders match against Strong for next week. Strong comes in and has a staredown with Roode. I thought Roode vs. Itami was already set but I do like Itami having to earn the shot.

### Battle Royal

Lacey Evans, Billie Kay, Peyton Royce, Nikki Cross, Liv Morgan, Ruby Riot, Ember Moon, Aliyah, Bianca Blair, Candice LeRae, Kimberly Frankele, Rachel Evers, Sonya Deville, Victoria Gonzalez, Sara Bridges

The winner gets Asuka in Chicago. Evans is better known as Macey Estrella, Deville is the former Daria Berenato and a lot of these women are unknowns without entrances. LeRae is a heavy fan favorite and gets a LET'S GO CANDICE chant. Gonzalez, who has some size to her, goes after Royce and Kay to start but can't get rid of them. It's your usual battle royal brawling with teased eliminations that don't go anywhere.

We take a break and come back with Gonzalez having been eliminated at the hands of Royce and Kaye. Blair is out next, followed by Aliyah elbowing Evers out to a chorus of booing. Bridges, Evans and Deville go out in the span of five seconds and Riot eliminates Kimberly. We're down to LeRae, Royce, Kay, Cross, Riot, Morgan, Moon and Aliyah. Kay kicks Candice out, earning possibly the most heat of her career.

Cross dumps Aliyah and the fans are rather pleased. Come on, Aliyah isn't....ok maybe she is that bad. Nikki does the same to Morgan and the fans are pleased all over again. Moon superkicks Kay out and gets rid of Peyton a few seconds later, leaving us with Moon, Riot and Cross. Cross goes straight for Riot but Ember kicks her in the face. All three wind up in the corner with Moon kicking the other

two away and hitting the Eclipse on Cross. That's not enough for an elimination so Ember heads up again, only to have Asuka come in....for a no contest at 14:46.

**Rating:** D+. I liked the way they set this up with the unknowns not lasting very long, which should be the case when they didn't have any realistic chance to win the title. Just let us get to the big names and go from there. The ending though....yeah I'm not sold on that, though if they're going to a four way, this is certainly a better option than a triple elimination at the end.

Asuka sends Moon HARD to the floor and head first into the barricade. Riot gets kicked in the head and Cross is dropped as well, leaving Asuka to shout that no one is ready for her. Asuka runs off as Moon is holding her shoulder on the floor. Regal comes out to announce the four way title match for Chicago to end the show.

**Overall Rating:** C. This is another good example of a show that wasn't about the wrestling. Tonight we set up a Takeover match, set up a #1 contenders match for the NXT Title, looked at Roderick Strong some more and established Heavy Machinery as potential Tag Team Title contenders. They don't have a lot of time between Orlando and Chicago so this is about as logical of a path as they have.

### Results

Killian Dain b. Danny Burch – Ulster Plantation

Heavy Machinery b. Ricardo Watts/Hector Kunsman – Double World's Strongest Slam

Hideo Itami b. Kona Reeves – GTS

A Battle Royal went to a no contest when Asuka interfered

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# Monday Night Raw – December 2, 2002 (2017 Redo): The Best In The World Because They Say So

## Monday Night Raw

Date: December 2, 2002

Location: Frank Erwin Center, Austin, Texas

Commentators: Jim Ross, Jerry Lawler

So HHH is back and I'd assume that's about all you need to know for this show. That whole week without HHH around to really run the show must have scared the company as he interfered in last week's World Title match, seemingly setting up another pay per view showdown with Shawn Michaels. I'm as thrilled as you are. Let's get to it.

The opening video is about....well by George it's about HHH coming back last week! To be fair it's not like anything else was treated like it mattered last week.

Opening sequence.

## Dudley Boyz vs. 3 Minute Warning

They don't waste time with the wrestling to start and Rosey gets dropped with a double belly to back. A double crossbody puts Bubba and Rosey down and we get down to Jamal getting knocked back and forth between the Dudleys. Rosey and Bubba chop it out with the latter taking him down into what can best be described as a cross armbreaker. D-Von stays on the arm as this is already more technical

than I was expecting.

Rico gets involved for a distraction though and D-Von gets beaten down for a short while. For some reason a DDT stops Rosey but the referee doesn't see the tag. A neckbreaker puts Rosey down again and now the tag brings Bubba back in. House is cleaned but Rico gets in a kick to the back of the head. Cue Spike for the way too fast save, allowing the brothers to hit What's Up. After Rico's interference doesn't go anywhere, a 3D finishes Rosey.

**Rating:** C-. Well that happened. Really I'm not sure what else there is to say about the match as it just came and went. It's good to have the Dudleys back but it's very clear that there's nothing to the division at this point and if 3 Minute Warning is the best they have, they're in big trouble.

We come back from a break with all three Dudleys down, thanks to an off-camera attack at the hands of Chris Jericho and Christian and 3 Minute Warning. D-Von was put in the Walls for a Conchairto and Bubba was beaten down as well while Spike was already carried out. As much as I'd like to have seen it happen, I can greatly appreciate the idea of having stuff seem more realistic instead of having it so rigidly attached to the schedule.

Sean Morely tells Eric Bischoff that he's got this covered. Oh and call him Chief Morely. HHH to come in to say that he wrestled for thirty minutes in the Elimination Chamber but now he has to beat Rob Van Dam to become #1 contender. Bischoff doesn't want to hear it and demands great TV. Morely suggests a guest referee to be announced, likely as Shawn Michaels, so HHH can overcome even more odds.

We look at the Dudleys' beatdown again.

#### Trish Stratus vs. Ivory

They hit the mat to start before trading arm cranks. Ivory gets two off a rollup as this isn't exactly thrilling so far. We hit the chinlock with Ivory pulling on Trish's face until she fights up for a neckbreaker. The Chick Kick gets two as the announcers debate who the guest referee is going to be. Trish hits a very assisted Stratusfaction for the pin.

**Rating:** D. I know Trish would get much better in the coming years but she really wasn't able to lift anything up the ladder at this point. It doesn't help that Ivory is someone who has been the same

performer for years and isn't going to have a memorable match no matter what she does. They really need to bring in some exciting talent if they want this division to work as Trish vs. Victoria is only going to take them so far.

Speaking of dull women, Jackie yells at Victoria for going through her bag and a match is made. She doesn't even mind if it's not for the title, because why would she want that? Jackie beats her up because it's Texas and that means Jackie is all tough and awesome.

Jericho and Christian threaten violence against anyone who disrespect them. Christopher Nowinski instantly sucks up to them like the worm that he is. Of note: the champs' bags are chained to their lockers.

#### Jeff Hardy/Tommy Dreamer vs. Lance Storm/William Regal

This is the result of Regal dislocating Dreamer's jaw a few weeks back. They start fighting in the aisle with Jeff running around the ring to take both evil foreigners down. Dreamer grabs a half crab on Storm to start and gets his jaw broken again for the gimmick infringement. Regal comes in for a knee to the jaw as there's certainly a target so far. A front facelock allows Dreamer to get over for the tag to Jeff, which the referee naturally misses. With the referee dealing with Jeff, Regal gets a buckle pad off and Dreamer goes face first into the steal for the easy pin.

**Rating:** D. Jeff and Dreamer are a really lame low level team and having them waste Regal and Storm's time isn't that interesting. Then again, it's certainly better than the stupid hardcore feud with Nowinski. You really can tell that Jeff doesn't have any fire in him at the moment but at least he wasn't out there long enough to horribly botch anything.

Ric Flair talks about Batista's rough upbringing but Batista doesn't want to go into it. Flair doesn't seem to mind and brings up Batista bouncing from foster home to foster home. Now Batista gets to use the anger in the ring.

#### Batista vs. Hurricane

Spinebuster and Batista Bomb are good for the pin in under a minute. Sounds like Flair has a future as a teacher.

Kane comes out for the save because they were partners for like two weeks.

Shawn and Van Dam go face to face about how horrible HHH is. Bischoff comes in to officially make Shawn guest referee. That was ever in doubt? If Shawn doesn't play it fair, he loses the title.

#### Booker T. vs. Chris Jericho

Before the match, Booker makes jokes about Jericho being left without his clothes last week and makes jokes about size. Jericho throws some chops to start and dropkicks Booker out to the floor. The top rope back elbow to the jaw gets two and it's already off to the chinlock. After a little dance (you always need a little dance), Booker catches him on top for a big crashing superplex.

A missile dropkick gives Booker two and Jericho gets catapulted into the corner for good measure. Christian and Goldust run in but quickly cancel each other out, leaving Booker to hit the ax kick. And never mind as Chief Morely comes out and makes this a tag match, minus any sort of Teddy Long's charisma.

**Rating:** C+. The match was just there to fill time before the ending but it's always helpful to have people this talented in the ring. Even if they have nothing to do and are only having a simple match, they're going to do it well enough that it's something you can watch without getting bored. I mean, it's not good enough to have them get the World Title or anything but that's just crazy talk.

#### Tag Team Titles: Christian/Chris Jericho vs. Booker T./Goldust

Christian and Jericho are defending and this is joined in progress with Christian in early trouble. It's off to Booker to hammer away on Jericho until the champs get in a cheap shot to take over. Jericho's running crotch shot to the back sets up more dancing but Christian's attempt earns himself a crotching.

Goldust comes in to clean house and gets two off a rollup for very hot reaction. Booker's snap spinebuster gets two and he ducks Christian's belt shot. The Book End gives Booker two more with Christian pulling the referee out. Now the belt shot works and Jericho adds the Lionsault for the pin to retain because the Texas guys have to job in their home state.

**Rating:** C+. Another solid outing here with all four working hard before the annoying ending that follows the WWE formula of humiliating the hometown favorites. I guess it's a good sign that Goldust didn't lose in his hometown and it's not like Booker has



much more momentum to lose, even if the fans seem to love him. They really need to change the titles soon though as Goldust and Booker have been primed up for months now.

This week's Raw Retro is Austin with the cement truck destroying Vince's Corvette.

F-View shows us Test and Stacy making out on a couch, only to have her stop for the sake of a marketing idea.

#### Jackie vs. Victoria

Non-title. Victoria shoves her down to start and stomps a lot as the announcers make sure to talk about how tough Jackie is. Jackie gets in a hurricanrana for two but charges into a boot in the corner. The slingshot legdrop gets two but the Widow's Peak is countered with a backdrop. Jackie's spinning kick to the head gives her the clean pin and WOO TEXAS! I mean, Dallas and Austin are totally the same thing. They're only two hours apart and if you can have someone the fans don't care about win a non-title match it's completely the same as the popular team losing a title match right?

Steven Richards comes in to check on Victoria. They're still in the ring post match with Victoria demanding that Jackie come back out here. Instead it's Scott Steiner for some rhyming before destroying Steven. Cue a very smiling Bischoff to offer Steiner a contract pitch. The pitch is in the back though, where Bischoff has eight women waiting for him. Steiner says he already has a super freak tonight and opens his limo to reveal....Stephanie McMahon in a short skirt and low cut top. She has things to offer Steiner that Bischoff can't. So to sum this up: Stephanie is now hotter than eight good looking women combined.

We go to the World for RNN Breaking News....but we have breaking news in the arena, where HHH and Flair are looking for Shawn, who is in a referee shirt. Shawn is going to DQ HHH for any broken rule, which is totally going to happen because we're certainly NOT guaranteed to see HHH vs. Shawn for the title again.

#### HHH vs. Rob Van Dam

The winner gets Shawn, the guest referee here, at the pay per view. Actually hang on as Shawn needs to eject Flair before we get going. HHH isn't allowed to throw a closed fist so Rob springboard kicks him down for two. A slingshot dive drops HHH and there's the

spinning kick to the back. Rob kicks him in the face for two more, followed by a small package for a fast counted near fall. HHH gets caught in a sleeper with Shawn sitting in front of the ropes for a nice touch.

Back up and Shawn gets bumped and since he's a referee here instead of a wrestler, a single clothesline keeps him down for a good twenty seconds. Shawn gets up to pull a chair away from HHH so Rob kicks him down by mistake. Rolling Thunder hits HHH but a chair shot knocks Rob silly for the slow counted pin.

**Rating:** D. Not only was it short and not very good but this felt like something Austin would have done in his day. His only support is sent outside, he has a guest referee that can't stand him and he can't use a right hand. The only cheating HHH did was swinging a chair after Rob hit the referee by mistake. I know HHH is amazing and the best thing ever (save for Stephanie) but this made him look like a face instead of the top heel.

They fight post match and Shawn gets in a superkick to end the show.

**Overall Rating:** D-. Between the two really bad women's matches, the HHH/Stephanie worship and Booker/Goldust losing in Texas in a title match they should have won months ago, this was a really bad show. The Tag Team Title match was fine until the end but the rest of the show was the standard problem this era has: bad wrestling, uninteresting storytelling and pushing people who are only there because WWE has decided they're the best things in the world.

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# Smackdown – May 2, 2017: The Chris Jericho Alarm Clock

## Smackdown

Date: May 2, 2017

Location: Save Mart Center, Fresno, California

Commentators: Tom Phillips, John Bradshaw Layfield, Byron Saxton

Things are back to normal now and that means we're in the Jinder Mahal Could Be World Champion Era. Mahal cost Randy Orton the House of Horrors match on Sunday to help set up the title match at Backlash in just under three weeks so Orton is likely out for revenge. Tonight we have Chris Jericho defending his newly regained US Title against Kevin Owens, which sounds like something could be up. Let's get to it.

Earlier today, Jinder Mahal was in a photo shoot with the stolen Smackdown World Title. Shane McMahon came up and took it back while saying Mahal would be facing Sami Zayn tonight.

Opening sequence.

Here's Shane to introduce Chris Jericho as the newest member of the Smackdown roster. See, this is the new Show of Jericho so smack it down man! Cue AJ Styles, who will face the US Champion, whoever that is (Owens) at Backlash. Styles reminisces about their previous issues and says he's looking forward to Backlash where he can take the title.

That doesn't sit well with Jericho, and do you know what happens when you don't sit well with Jericho? It turns out that you get cut off by Owens, who is reminded that he tapped out. Owens wants AJ to get out of his ring so Styles goes up the ramp for a brawl. Shane:

"SPLIT EM UP!" Jericho: "LET THEM FIGHT!" Shane gets his way as security breaks it up.

#### Sami Zayn vs. Jinder Mahal

Zayn is still banged up after Baron Corbin attacked him last week on Talking Smack, earning Corbin a suspension for the week. Mahal elbows him in the back of the head to start but Sami speeds things up with a headscissors. A dropkick sends Mahal outside and we take a break. Back with Sami in a chinlock for a good while until Jinder gets two off a clothesline. And never mind as it's right back to the chinlock.

Sami misses a dropkick but starts his clothesline based comeback, followed by the high crossbody for two. The corner climb tornado DDT looks to set up the Helluva Kick but one of the Singh Brothers pulls Mahal to the floor. The other grabs Sami's foot, setting up the cobra clutch slam to give Mahal the pin at 10:57.

**Rating:** C. I think I might be starting to like Mahal and I don't know what that means. Mahal certainly isn't the next big thing in WWE but they've built him (with the Brothers) into enough of a threat that it could make for a good one off match. It's a simple act and sometimes that's all it needs to be.

Becky Lynch comes up to the Welcoming Committee and mentions them all by name for no apparent reason. They think Becky should be getting the shots that Charlotte gets but she doesn't seem convinced.

Dolph Ziggler and some friends of his watch a Shinsuke Nakamura video and aren't impressed. Ziggler runs his mouth about Nakamura and insults Shane, who is of course right behind him.

#### Tye Dillinger vs. Aiden English

English isn't happy with Tye for cutting off his song. Dillinger starts fast with a forearm and clothesline before stomping away in the corner. As usual, the TEN chants seem to be more over than he is but take what you can get. Tye loads up the Tyebreaker but spins English around into a facebuster instead of the backbreaker for the

pin at 1:05.

English seems to have a breakdown post match.

Jericho is about to talk to Renee Young (who he calls Ronnie) when he runs into the crying Aiden English. There's no need to cry when you can sing and have a hairy chest. That being said, do you know what happens when you cry on Chris Jericho's new show? HE JUST MADE THE LIST! And so did Renee for no apparent reason!

Charlotte doesn't think much of the Welcoming Committee so they beat her down.

#### Naomi/Charlotte vs. Carmella/Natalya

And there's no Charlotte due to the attack. An early atomic drop doesn't do anything to Carmella so Naomi kicks the heck out of her leg. Carmella's kick has no effect either and it's time for the dancing kicks. The fresh Natalya comes in and poses a bit before getting sunset flipped for two.

A headscissors puts Natalya on the floor but she blocks a baseball slide (that's a new one) and sends Naomi face first into the steps. The double teaming puts Naomi in real trouble with Carmella shouting about Naomi wanting to kick her. Natalya and Naomi collide on a double crossbody and here's a banged up Charlotte to take the hot tag. Now it's Charlotte's turn to get taken down by the numbers game and we take a break.

Back with Natalya fighting out of a bodyscissors with ease since Carmella really isn't that big of a threat, even when Charlotte is injured. Carmella misses a Bronco Buster and the real hot tag brings in Naomi for a springboard crossbody. The Rear View should finish Carmella but Natalya offers a distraction, allowing Carmella to grab a rollup with tights for the pin at 11:42.

**Rating:** C-. Not much to see here but that's all you can really ask for with people like Carmella and Natalya as your top heels. Natalya has been around forever and still doesn't really have a character aside from being a member of the Hart Family and Carmella isn't exactly ready for this spot. Not a bad match but the heels need a

bigger star to make this story work.

The Welcoming Committee beats on Charlotte and Naomi until Becky Lynch slowly walks out. She shakes hands with the Committee before throwing Ellsworth into the women and hammering on all of them. Tamina superkicks Becky down and the Welcoming Committee stands tall.

#### Sin Cara vs. Dolph Ziggler

Ziggler elbows him in the mask to start but eats a springboard elbow for his efforts. A big kick sends Ziggler to the floor and Cara only somewhat botches the suicide dive when his feet get caught on the ropes. Back in and Ziggler gets two off a neckbreaker before they botch...I think a reversal to a suplex where Ziggler couldn't stick the landing. Ziggler quickly recovers with a fireman's carry slam but the Fameasser is countered into a powerbomb. Not that it matters as Ziggler gets the superkick for the pin at 4:33.

**Rating:** D. The botches hurt it but Cara got in a lot more offense than you would have expected. That helps a match like this so much as it at least makes Ziggler look like he had to break a sweat. Cara might not be great but he's a step above the Brooklyn Brawler so he should take a bit more effort.

Lana vignette.

And now, the Fashion Files from the Fashion Police. We go to a police station where Breezango are investigating the Usos for a variety of crimes. Fandango: "They're twins." Breeze: "Identity theft!" Along with making their outfits making Breezango's eyes hurt, Tyler thinks they're guilty of Jimmy and Jey walking. The big bust goes down in Chicago on May 21.

The best part here is everything in the background, ranging from a framed picture of the Big Boss Man to various news articles about the tag match to some wanted posters. A few examples are John Cena with whereabouts unknown, Nakamura as the King of Strong No Style and the Colons for real estate fraud. This is what giving a fresh team a shot can do for you as this was the first entertaining thing

to happen to the division since American Alpha won the belts in the first place. Breezango might not be the best team in the world but they're likeable and this was funny so give them a one off chance.

#### US Title: Chris Jericho vs. Kevin Owens

Jericho is defending and Styles is banned from ringside. They waste no time in getting the fight started with Jericho stomping on the injured hand that cost Owens the title on Sunday. Owens sends him into the steps though and takes over without too much effort. The backslash keeps Jericho in trouble and he's thrown outside for a Cannonball against the barricade.

Back from a break with Jericho escaping the Pop Up Powerbomb but Lionsaulting onto knees. The second attempt works fine and it's off to the Walls. This time Owens makes the rope but another Pop Up Powerbomb is countered into the Walls in the middle of the ring. A much better tease of the tap out sets up Owens making the ropes again and it's back to the floor. Owens nails a loud superkick and DDTs him onto the ramp. Back in and another superkick sets up the Pop Up Powerbomb to give Owens the title back at 12:40.

**Rating:** B. I wanted to see more of this but they did the right thing by having Owens hit a big move with the superkick on the floor and then get in a few more moves to win the title back. It felt like Owens proving himself to be the better man and that's exactly what it needed to be. The ending wasn't exactly a surprise but Owens has the title back and that's what matters.

Medics come in to check on Jericho, who takes another powerbomb. Owens leaves and a very woozy looking Jericho is carried out. Of course Kevin comes back out and puts a chair around Jericho's neck which is sent into the post. Owens slowly walks up the ramp to end the show.

**Overall Rating:** C+. There was no secret to the fact that this was all about the main event and almost nothing more. You can see a lot of the Backlash card from here and they're actually doing a good job of setting up a show on such short notice. The title change felt like a big moment and it sets Owens on a roll before Backlash. It's

not a great show and it was rather dull at several points (namely the women's tag) but it worked well enough.

### Results

Jinder Mahal b. Sami Zayn – Cobra clutch slam

Tye Dillinger b. Aiden English – Fireman's carry into a facebuster

Carmella/Natalya b. Naomi/Charlotte – Rollup with a handful of tights

Dolph Ziggler b. Sin Cara – Superkick

Kevin Owens b. Chris Jericho – Pop Up Powerbomb

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# **WrestleCon Supershow 2017: I Don't Do This Very Often**

## **WrestleCon Supershow 2017**

Date: March 31, 2017

Location: Wyndham Orlando Resort, Orlando, Florida

Commentators: Marty DeRosa, Excalibur

This is something I've heard about for a few years now and when I saw the card, there was no question about taking it in. Basically



this is a HUGE indy show with talent from all over the world working one show tied together with the incredible WrestleCon convention. I was in the crowd for this show and I'm really curious to see if it holds up on a second viewing. Let's get to it.

No real intro for the show, likely because the show was already starting late.

Michael Elgin/Mascarita Dorada/ACH vs. David Starr/Trevor Lee/Caleb Konley

This is under Lucha Rules, meaning tags aren't required. ACH is billed as "Mr. I Paid My Bills With This Booking" in a funny bit. It should also be noted that a lot of these matches weren't announced in advance so these teams were total surprises. Dorada is better known as El Torito. The announcers talk about this being the fifth of Elgin's TEN matches over the week (it was his second of the night) compared to John Cena only wrestling one. Oh yeah it's going to be that kind of a show and that's a good thing here.

ACH and Starr run the ropes to start and it's already time for the dropkicks with all three heels (Starr and company) getting knocked outside. Starr offers ACH a free chop but gets hit low for his efforts with Konley getting one of his own. Lee blocks it though and a double superkick puts ACH on the floor. That means Dorada can come in for a triple armdrag and we have some heel miscommunication. Lee: "WHAT IN THE F\*\*\*\*\* F\*\*\* WAS THAT???" You can imagine the laugh that line got.

None of the villains can do a thing with Dorada, who grabs a headscissors on Konley but spins around him ten times before sending him down. Elgin takes a lap around the ring as Dorada collapses, finally allowing Lee to get in a hard shot on Dorada. I believe Dorada takes a thumb to the eye (the camera work is shaky at best and the arena is already dark so it can be a bit difficult to follow some of the action) and all three villains come in for some rhythmic clapping and a triple crotch to the face.

That actually doesn't have any effect on Dorada so it's a triple low blow and a hot tag to Elgin. Konley and Lee get suplexed at the same time and a Falcon Arrow gets two. That's not enough strength so he German suplexes Konley and Lee at the same time for a bonus. ACH, now in a hat, remembers that he's in the match as everything breaks down. Dorada is launched over the top onto all three but ACH's

followup dive is countered with a superkick. Not that it matters as ACH grabs a brainbuster, setting up Dorada's moonsault for the pin on Konley at 11:53.

**Rating:** B. About halfway through this match, I knew this show was going to be a blast. This was the perfect choice for an opener with the heels really just being there to give the fun good guys something to do, which made this feel a lot more fun than serious. That's likely to be the case with everything tonight and there's nothing wrong with that.

The winners dance post match with Elgin doing the Worm.

#### Shane Strickland vs. ???

Strickland is better known as Killshot in Lucha Underground. The lights go out and we've got a surprise opponent with.....Low Ki. This was a punch to the stomach for me as I'm REALLY not a fan of Low Ki so hopefully this one doesn't last too long. The announcers basically say Strickland is screwed here and I can't imagine we're in for much of an upset. Feeling out process to start with Low Ki working on the arm and kicking Shane away. I have a feeling you'll hear that more than once tonight. Say ten to fifteen times for a low number.

Strickland starts cranking on both arms to take over as the announcers praise Laycool with Low Ki's success. DeRosa: "Somewhere in a parallel universe Killshot is wrestling Kaval." We go to a test of strength with Strickland being driven down into a bridge. That just earns himself a hard kick to break things up, followed by even more kicks for two. Things slow down as Low Ki grabs a headscissors before chopping the heck out of Strickland's chest.

Back up and Low Ki flips him into the ropes, setting off one heck of a counter sequence capped off by Strickland spinning around Low Ki and nailing a dropkick. Strickland has to bail out of a flip dive but lands on his feet, only to eat a hard dropkick through the ropes. Back in and Strickland easily counters a waistlock (likely because it's a waistlock) into a catapult but Low Ki bounces right back off the ropes into a middle rope double stomp. Strickland won't stay down though and comes back with a 619, followed by a jumping cutter (Strickland: "GOTCHA!") for two.

A slingshot double stomp to the back gives Shane two and the announcers seemed stunned that Low Ki is in trouble. Both guys head

up top at the same time and there's no way this is going to end well. Strickland gets knocked down into a Tree of Woe over the apron, setting up a HUGE double stomp to the chest (think Del Rio's bad finisher done well) onto the apron. Low Ki throws what used to be Strickland back inside for the pin at 13:03.

**Rating:** C+. Like I said, I'm certainly not a Low Ki fan but this was a VERY hard hitting match and the ending looked awesome. Strickland isn't someone you see very often (save for Lucha Underground of course) and he got to show off quite a bit here. You knew there was going to be a kick based match on the card somewhere and this is as good of a place as you're going to get.

#### Impact Wrestling World Title: Jeff Cobb vs. Lashley

Lashley is defending and the fans IMMEDIATELY break into a F\*\*\* THAT OWL chant. Cobb is better known as Matanza in Lucha Underground but he's just a big athletic monster here. Now for the oddest part of the show, Lashley is announced and a country song comes on. There's no Lashley so they hit his entrance again and he's still not here. Fans: "F\*\*\* THAT OWL!"

Lashley appears through the crowd and we're ready to go. I actually got to talk to Lashley the next day at WrestleCon and there was a very simple explanation: they didn't have his song for some reason so he came to the ring anyway, knowing he was going to be the heel no matter what. Apparently it's a BIG offense if you come out to someone else's music so Lashley wasn't about to make his entrance to the country song.

We get some Big Match Intros and Cobb holds up the title to really rub it in. Fans: "F\*\*\* THAT HEADBAND!" The good thing is that Lashley is really soaking it all in and relishing the whole thing, as he almost has to do. Lashley goes for a single leg takedown but Cobb muscles him up onto his shoulders to block. A hard shoulder drops Cobb and it's time to slowly pound away in the corner.

Cobb gets in a clothesline to send Lashley outside but the champ whips him into the barricade, only to stop to argue with a fan. Back in and a neckbreaker sets up a chinlock as this is going really, really slowly. Lashley shows off a bit with a delayed vertical suplex, only to have Cobb muscles him up with a throw of his own.

It's off to a triangle choke on Cobb....who lifts him up for a powerbomb to break. That's the kind of thing they needed to do all

match. Cobb gets athletic with a standing moonsault followed by a standing shooting star press for two. A deadlift German suplex gives Cobb two more but the spear just ends him for the pin at 10:45.

**Rating:** D+. This was ok but really felt like a major disappointment. It was billed as and should have been a battle of two monsters hitting each other really hard but instead it was more of a technical power match. You don't see those very often and it made for a pretty slow match which didn't work very well. Not horrible by any means but it could have, and should have, been better.

#### Sammy Guevara/Flip Gordon vs. Angelico/Jack Evans

I actually hadn't heard of Guevara and Gordon, both of whom are apparently pretty talented guys from the northeast. Angelico might be my favorite guy from Lucha Underground so this was one of the matches I was looking forward to the most. Gordon and Angelico start things off with Angelico handling the early flipping. A roll through into an ankle lock sends Flip over to the ropes so it's time for some handstand dancing. As is so often the case you see.

Gordon won't shake his hand but he will bring in Guevara to face Evans. Jack wants a mic but can't get one that works. Instead he just shouts a lot, saying that he can't believe he's getting to wrestle Justin Bieber (who Sammy resembles). Evans even offers to lay down if Sammy will sing a bit. That just gets him a superkick because it's been too long since we've had one.

Sammy and Flip start stomping away in the corner, followed by a standing moonsault followed by a standing shooting star for two. Guevara gets a running start and flip dives onto Angelico and Evans for a nice pop despite being the heels here. Back in and we hit some fireman's carry squats on Evans, who quickly reverses into an ankle lock.

Sammy shouts that he has a good one and grabs a crossface chickenwing. That goes as far as it's going to go without Marty Scurll involved so Evans goes up top for a double Blockbuster. The hot tag brings in Angelico for the long legged knee shots as everything breaks down. Everyone kicks everyone until Evans does a ridiculous flip dive to the floor, leaving Angelico to hit the Fall of the Angels for the pin on Gordon at 13:02.

**Rating:** B-. Gordon and Guevara looked GREAT here and I could easily see them being a heel team in either NXT or TNA. Evans and Angelico

were the bigger names coming in and while I'm a fan of the latter, I thought they were out shined here. Good match and I had a lot more fun watching it the second time around.

Hands are shaken post match.

#### Team Ricochet vs. Team Ospreay

Ricochet, Jason Cade, Sami Calihan, AR Fox, Desmond Xavier

Will Ospreay, Lio Rush, Drew Galloway, Ryan Smile, Marty Scurll

The ten man tag has become a staple of WrestleCon weekend and this might have been the most anticipated match of the show, if not the entire weekend. It's fallout from the infamous match earlier in the year that saw the captains do an incredible match with all kinds of choreography. Just a hunch but I have a feeling that it's going to be a lot more of the same here. The teams were only partially announced in advance and the members weren't announced in the arena so this was a bit confusing.

Ricochet charges at Ospreay and they're on the floor less than three seconds in. Everyone other than Scurll and Calihan join them less than fifteen seconds in before it's off to Smile and Xavier for a double headbutt. They're FLYING in and out of here so I'm not even going to be able to try to call everything here. Cade DDTs Smile to the floor but Galloway comes in and launches the much smaller Cade into the corner for some chops.

Fox tries some springboards on Galloway but gets thrown down in a big crash. Rush comes in to speed things up even more with those rapid fire kicks of his, only to have Sami come in with a cat mask on. Apparently it's called space cat and as Rush says, "I F\*\*\*\*\* HATE SPACE CAT!". Ospreay comes in and rips the mask off, only to have Ricochet come in as well. Now, I don't usually do this, but I flat out admit I can't do the following justice. Therefore, just watch.

And the version I filmed myself for a bit of a different angle.

Some of you might not get this and that's fine but that's for you Sally. I wish you could have seen it.

Anyway, we're down to Ricochet vs. Scurll in the ring (for the second time tonight after their great match at the Rev Pro show) for all of five seconds before Cade and Smile come in for HUGE dives to take out a pile of people each. Ospreay gets superkicked by Cade and

Xavier who follow it up with stereo flip dives out to the floor.

Fox goes even crazier with a springboard imploding 450, thankfully not killing himself when his head bangs into the barricade. Now it's Galloway with a running flip dive (Marty: "He can dance! He can fly!") but the captains won't be outdone, meaning it's Ospreay taking Ricochet to the top. Me from the crowd: "Oh they're going to die." Ospreay hits a HUGE C4 onto the eight others and everyone is of course out cold.

Back in and it's Cade being put on top of a Tower of Doom with the superplex sending him into a sitout powerbomb from Galloway. Marty gets all fired up for the chickenwing on Calihan...who punches him in the face instead. Team Ricochet gets up first and puts four opponents in a corner each, only to charge into four stereo boots. They come back with superkicks but they all get stuck on top with their heads tucked on the buckles.

That means stereo superkicks, followed by everyone missing charges and taking similar superkicks of their own. We're still not done yet though as Team Ospreay is down in front of a corner as four members of Team Ricochet goes up top. We get a completely ridiculous quadruple dive off the top (shooting stars and 450s you see) with Calihan hitting something like a package Tombstone on Galloway for a quintuple near fall and a huge gasp from the crowd.

The announcers talk about how Dave Meltzer is in the crowd tonight and needs another notebook from Walgreens, which is probably the fourth plug of the night for the store. Seriously it's a great Walgreens. With nothing else left, it's time for a long exchange of strikes, starting with six straight superkicks just because they can. Then they upgrade things a bit with a series of Diamond Cutters, including Smile blocking ones by just putting his hands out.

Rush jumps into his and does Orton's pose on the ropes. Calihan flashes the Diamond Cutter sign and pulls Rush down (Marty: "Calihan yoga classes tomorrow morning!"), only to eat a Stunner, complete with middle fingers, from Galloway. It's back to the Diamond Cutters, capped off by Ricochet going to the top but getting caught in a crazy springboard cutter from Ospreay.

Everyone goes after Ricochet with Galloway hitting a piledriver to set up a dog pile pin. Four people dive in for a save at two and

this somehow keeps going. Fox and Ospreay slug it out until Scurll snaps AR's fingers. You really can hear the noise in the arena and it's impossible to not cringe. Calihan powerbombs Smile but gets dropped by Galloway.

It's back to Ospreay vs. Ricochet with their series of counters until Will hits the Stundog Millionaire (spinning Stunner) into a springboard cutter....for two. Excalibur: "Why would that be it? We're having too much fun!" Ospreay hits a 630 but walks into a Canadian Destroyer from Cade. Jason follows it up with a West Coast Pop to FINALLY put Ospreay away at 22:05.

**Rating:** A+. Much like the match, this might be a bit long. I've been accused, and probably accurately so, of being a bit of a wrestling snob at times. It's certainly true that I do tend to go a bit too hard towards the artistic side of wrestling where I need things to make sense and follow a logical progression or I get a bit annoyed at it. During and after this match, I started thinking about something.

In addition to being obsessed with wrestling, I'm also something of a movie geek (by last count I've seen I've seen just shy of 1400). I love old movies with the big sets and big performances but I'm also never going to miss a James Bond movie or anything from Marvel. Of course there's stuff in there that doesn't make a bit of sense sometimes but that's completely missing the point. Those movies mainly exist to entertain and just be awesome. Now why can't that be the case with wrestling as well?

I loved this match and after watching more live wrestling over the course of about a week than I had in my entire life, this was the match that stuck with me the most. This was incredible stuff with ten guys doing everything from action to comedy to emotion in more time than almost anything else got all night.

Of all the shows and all the matches I've ever been to in my life, I have never had more fun watching a single match than this one, including anything from any Wrestlemania I've ever been to. I got completely lost in this match and I nearly collapsed when it was finally over. Outstanding stuff here and a total blast, which is a lot more than I was expecting from what looked to be just another spot fest. Find this match if you can and just have fun watching some wrestling.

The fans chant ALL THESE GUYS as all ten sit in the ring and shake hands. Ricochet gets the mic and says that one year ago today, a British wrestler named Chris Travis passed away. That was a big deal at the Rev Pro show and it clearly meant a lot to them. As for this match, the captains actually got to pick their guys and it's clear who is on Ricochet's team because all of his guys are black (not quite) and all of Ospreay's guys are British (Rush, from Baltimore: "Ello governor!"). Ricochet thanks everyone, including Vader, who he certainly loves.

Intermission, during which I met most of the people on the card so far, plus several who haven't been on the show yet. I also ran to the fabled Walgreens and bought two big bottles of water because there were well over 1,000 people in a hotel conference room. That and the fact that a can of soda was SIX DOLLARS at the concession stand. I also saw Donovan Dijak watching the show as a fan, which is something you almost never see outside of something like this. The video actually includes intermission, which is just a still shot of the ring with no sound.

#### Ironman Heavymetalweight Title: Battle Royal

Now THIS was a treat. I've heard of this title for years but it's almost always been in Japan. Basically it's a parody of the Hardcore Title as it's defended in battle royals but someone always jumps the champ after it's over to win the title. Now I know that sounds like something you would see in WWE but oh not quite.

The belt has changed hands well over 1200 times (including once via dream sequence) with champions including a sex doll, a cameraman, a baseball bat, a ladder, the title itself, a young girl with the power to chokeslam adults, Vince McMahon's star on the Hollywood Walk of Fame (someone was in a hold and tapped out on it, which meant that they tapped out to the star) and of course Joey Ryan, who is defending here.

This is basically a Royal Rumble with one minute intervals and the title can change hands via pinfall or submission. However, pins and submissions don't count as eliminations and the only way to be eliminated is by being thrown over the top. Got all that? Good as I want to see Joey come out to the Pina Colada Song because it fits him so perfectly.

Colt Cabana is in #2 and we have one minute intervals. Here's how



this thing starts: Bell, Joey: "Touch my d\*\*\*!" Instead Cabana pulls out some chest hair, which you can see fall out of his hand. A low blow has no effect on Joey so the fans chant KING OF DONG STYLE. Thankfully Kikutaro, a Japanese comedy character, is in at #3 and tries to go in slow motion. A Shining Wizard gets two on Joey and they take turns kicking Joey low, only to keep hurting themselves.

The Underground Luchador is in at #4 and there's no hiding the fact that it's Matt Striker. Luchador rolls Ryan up for the pin and the title before revealing himself to be, in fact, Matt Striker.

Kikutaro grabs him low and spins around so Joey can eliminate him, meaning he's the new champion. The Manscout Jake Manning is in at #5 and goes to the corner to read his scout manual. Everyone charges at him but he raises his boot every time without looking away.

It's time for #6 and Welcome to the Jungle starts playing.

Excalibur: "This could literally be any indy wrestler from twenty years ago." It winds up being George South of all people and the fans....don't seem to care. For those of you who don't know, South is a former NWA jobber who Ric Flair thought he could have a classic with if they were given time. That never happened but South is kind of a mini legend as a result.

Suicide (apparently played by Caleb Konley) is in at #7 and the fans don't like the owl again. As you might be able to guess, there's nothing to the wrestling here as this is all about the entrances and wondering who comes out next. Speaking of which, Mr. Hughes is in at #8 with no music and missing about 140lbs. South is eliminated off camera and it's Zane Riley in at #9. He's a big guy named Mr. 305 Live and grabs various people by the tights. 2 Cold Scorpio (one of the reasons I wanted to go to this show) is in at #10, thankfully rocking the Flash Funk gear.

Billy Gunn of all people is in at #11, complete with his most famous song. Riley takes a Fameasser and gets tossed, followed by Kikutaro, Manning and Cabana. Moose is in at #12 and we have Moose, Gunn, Hughes, Scorpio and Ryan at the moment. We get something of a bizarre staredown between Gunn and Moose, which Marty describes as the staredown he never knew he wanted.

Nothing happens until Swoggle is in at #13 as I wonder if this counts as a DX reunion. Swoggle is shoved down so Moose and Gunn can fight with Moose scoring off a dropkick. Shane Douglas,

unfortunately not in a Target uniform and thankfully not in gear, is in at #14. Gunn gets rid of Hughes and Swoggle low bridges Suicide out. Kevin Thorn is in at #15 to scare Swoggle half to death. Shannon Moore is in at #16 but Gunn drops him with a side slam.

Hurricane is in at #17, complete with the full WWE entrance, to a huge reaction. That means chokeslams, including one to get rid of Thorn. Another one plants Gunn but he can't lift up Billy's dead weight. Abyss is in at #18 to get rid of Shane as Gunn was tossed off camera. Another chokeslam is enough to get rid of Scorpio before Hurricane's chokeslam is swatted away.

Gangrel is in at #19, complete with that still rocking entrance music. Moore and Helms use the power of 3 Count to get rid of Abyss as Gangrel spits the liquid. A clothesline actually gets rid of Hurricane as Swoggle hits a pop up powerbomb on Moore. Marty Jannetty is in at #20 and Jake Roberts might be passed on the "how out of it can you be while still working a match" scale. I actually got to shake Marty's hand in the lobby during intermission and mentioned that we had the same birthday. He didn't actually say anything but just walked away...without letting go of my hand.

Anyway we have a final group of Ryan, Gangrel, Jannetty, Moore, Moose, and Swoggle. Marty starts dancing as Moore is tossed out. To make sure you know how bad it is, Jannetty takes Gangrel down and the announcers can't keep straight faces over how gone he is. The fans think Marty is wasted (DeRosa: "That chant was true twelve hours ago." Excalibur: "We're going to have to have Sting come out here and give him a DDT to pin him.") and Gangrel throws him out to get us down to four. Moose gets rid of Gangrel and starts the pump jabs on Ryan.

I'm not going to try to spin what happens next so here's as literal of a play by play as I can give: Joey grabs Moose's hand and puts it on his crotch, which causes Moose extreme pain. Moose goes down, tries to Hulk Up, gets cranked right back down, and is tossed out of the ring, all due to the power of Joey's crotch. Swoggle runs up and throws Joey out for the win and the title at 25:00.

**Rating:** D. I think you can grasp (like Moose grasped Joey) that this wasn't about the wrestling or the action but just getting some older wrestlers (I hesitate to call most of these people legends) out there and wondering who was coming through the curtain next. The

anticipation here was outstanding and I really did have a great time finding out who they were dragging out of mothballs for each entrance. It doesn't hold up but this is the definition of a thousand times more fun live than watching it later.

Joey grabs a rollup to get the title back less than thirty seconds later. Since we need something else to get fired up about, Joey makes the mistake of saying he's the greatest champion of all time and issues an open challenge. In a moment that actually made me jump to my feet in shock.....ENTER SANDMAN starts up and we get the full on ECW entrance, complete with beer, cigarettes and the fans singing the song. I wasn't a huge ECW fan but I LOVED the Sandman's entrance so this was one of the coolest moments of my entire weekend.

Sandman drinks a lot of beer with the announcers ensuring us that he has personally checked every ID in the building. Excalibur gets to the obvious question: WHY IS RYAN STILL IN THE RING? Now it's off to the other side of the arena with Sandman actually holding a full twelve pack of beer. At least you know it's going to be a long entrance. Excalibur: "This entrance has lasted longer than Marty Jannetty's sobriety!" Sandman gets in the ring, offers Joey a beer, and canes him in the head for the pin and the title.

And of course a fight breaks out as Sandman leaves.

#### Brian Cage vs. Johnny Mundo

This is a TLC match for no apparent reason with Melissa Santos and Taya Valkyrie as the respective seconds/girlfriends (both looking great). Melissa even does Cage's entrance for a little Lucha Underground flavor. The announcers immediately start making fun of Lucha Underground's, shall we say, hit and miss taping schedule as Cage misses a charge to start. Mundo misses a dive but hits the Flying Chuck for two.

We get the first chair but Cage snaps off a release German suplex instead. Something like a Van Daminator knocks Cage outside so Johnny can spit on a fan. Taya gets in a few stomps of her own as Johnny goes over to find a ladder. Mundo throws it at Cage to send him into the chair as we're somehow five minutes into this.

The ladder is laid across the middle rope so Johnny can jump over it, only to have Cage dropkick it into his ribs. A backdrop sends Mundo into the ladder again and it's FINALLY time for a table. Cage takes too long going up though, allowing Taya to grab his foot.

Mundo gets knocked to the floor so Taya tries a hurricanrana....right in front of a table. One heck of a superbomb ends Taya so Mundo, without checking on Taya for very long, completely misses Starship Pain onto the ladder onto Cage.

We get another table set up in the corner but Cage is up and holding a chair. Ever the villain, Mundo grabs Melissa for a distraction so he can kick Cage low. For the first time that I can ever remember, Melissa gets physical with a kick to the head, earning herself the safest spear through a table ever as Johnny turns around, basically driving himself through instead. Cage is livid and basically murders Johnny with a Steiner Screwdriver onto the chair for the pin at 14:05.

**Rating:** D. Easily the weakest match of the night here, mainly because it was billed as a TLC match. This would have been better off as a street fight or something like that as the ladder was barely ever used (not climbed once) and the rest of the weapons were just kind of there. It wasn't so much bad as much as it was really disappointing, which is often a much worse case scenario.

We pause to clean the ring a bit before the main event with the broom guy getting a nice ovation. He even poses a bit because everyone is a ham at this show.

#### Hardys vs. Lucha Bros

That would be Pentagon El Cero M (Pentagon Dark in other words) and Rey Fenix, another pair of real life brothers and the PWG Tag Team Champions. The Hardys get an incredible reaction (as incredible as you're going to get at nearly 12:30 at night) as they might not be playing the Broken Hardys....but they're playing the Broken Hardys. The anti-owl chants begin again as we have the Big Match Intros. This turns into dueling DELETE/CERO MIEDO (zero fear, Pentagon's catchphrase) chants and for a little while, Cero Miedo is actually a bit stronger.

The dueling chants continue after the bell until the Lucha Bros take over with some kicks to the face. Pentagon picks Fenix up in a wheelbarrow slam but gets flipped forward into a 450 onto Matt in a cool spot. A double low blow gets two on Jeff but Fenix eats a Side Effect for the same. Matt and Pentagon clothesline each other and all four are down. Pentagon heads outside but Fenix misses a dive and takes his brother out by mistake.

That means a dive from Jeff to take both of them out and all four are down again. Back in and stereo Twists of Fate give the Hardys two before Pentagon loads Fenix up in a Gory Bomb but jumps forward for a backsplash/splash combo. There's the Twist of Fate to Pentagon, followed by another to Fenix to bring him down onto his brother. The Swanton to both Brothers gives Jeff the pin at 7:22.

**Rating:** D+. The time killed this one and there's no way around it. The show was pushing four hours at this point, meaning it was almost 1am. Couple that with the ten man tag and the battle royal and there was almost no way that anyone, even the Hardys, could make this work. They were probably smart to keep the match short as I don't think the fans would have been able to handle anything that much longer.

The announcers sign off but Matt grabs the mic and say these are the fans that make wrestling great. They come here to get good wrestling and that's what they get. Matt says the future of tag wrestling is safe with teams like the Lucha Bros, the Young Bucks and the Briscoe Brothers. If companies try to get rid of teams like them, they'll fade away and classify themselves as obsolete. Fenix thanks the crowd and the Hardys to finally end the show.

**Overall Rating:** B. This is a show where the right expression is "you got what you paid for". The Supershow isn't about angles or stories, but rather bringing together some of the top indy talent in the world for one show in a series of dream matches. I can easily get why this show wouldn't be for every wrestling fan but if you just love having fun with wrestling, there's almost no way you won't have fun with this. I'll definitely be taking this in every year and it was a major highlight of the weekend. Go out of your way to see the ten man tag and just have a good time watching the show.

Remember to follow me on Twitter @kbreviews and pick up the NXT: The Full Sail Years Volumes I and II, now in PAPERBACK. Check out the information here:

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# Monday Night Raw – May 1, 2017: The Two Fisted Problem

## Monday Night Raw

Date: May 1, 2017

Location: Golden 1 Center, Sacramento, California

Commentators: Michael Cole, Booker T., Corey Graves

We're past Payback and that means things can finally start settling down around here. The big story continues to be Roman Reigns vs. Braun Strowman with Strowman beating the injured Reigns clean last night. Extreme Rules is in just over a month and an ambulance match would seem to be the next logical step. Let's get to it.

Opening sequence.

The women's division is in the ring with a pedestal in the middle and here's Alexa Bliss for her coronation as the new champion. Bliss thanks everyone for being here tonight, even if Kurt Angle forced them to be here. The Queen is gone is gone but not to worry because the Goddess is here. These women are an inspiration, including Mickie James, despite her contemporaries Mae Young and Fabulous Moolah having moved on to a better place.

As for Sasha, she's the woman that Alexa beat to get where she is today. Sasha glares at her and Bliss backs into Nia. Bliss: "We're good. We're good." Alexa gets on the pedestal and laughs at Bayley for losing in front of all her family last night. At least now Bayley's nephews will have someone to look up to. The brawl starts in a hurry and we take a break.

### Alexa Bliss/Nia Jax/Emma/Alicia Fox vs. Bayley/Sasha Banks/Dana Brooke/Mickie James

Alexa hides from Bayley to start so it's Emma forearming Bayley in the back instead. Mickie comes in and starts on the arm before it's off to Alicia vs. Dana with Brooke scoring off a running cartwheel splash. Bayley works on Alicia's arm as they're tagging in and out at a very fast pace.

Fox sends Banks outside and it's a big staredown on the floor. Back with Nia throwing Sasha around and dropping an elbow for two. Bliss comes back in for some boot choking but Sasha avoids a charge. The hot tag brings in Bayley to take Alexa down and send her into the buckle ten straight times. Everything breaks down with everyone brawling to the floor, leaving Bliss to rake Bayley's eyes, setting up a DDT for the pin at 14:03.

**Rating:** C-. There's only so much you can do when you have eight people in there at the same time. With so many people floating around, especially people who don't have anything to do at the moment, you're not going to be able to really showcase anything other than a single feud. Bliss pinning Bayley is a good idea and I'm really glad they didn't go with the lame idea of the champion losing her first match after winning the title.

### Enzo Amore vs. Luke Gallows

Enzo says they have bags underneath their eyes (they're Gucci) because their real life is better than their dreams. Anderson and Gallows jump them from behind though and we take a break before the bell. The match is joined in progress with Gallows working on the arm. Enzo avoids a charge in the corner though and scores with some kicks to the face, only to uppercut Amore's head off. Another shot staggers Gallows and Amore goes up, only to have Anderson offer a distraction. The flapjack gives Luke the pin at 5:30.

**Rating:** D. I am so bored with this feud as I can't even remember why they're fighting in the first place. Enzo and Cass aren't exactly the most thrilling team in the world at this point and I don't see that changing anytime soon. The Enzo schtick is starting to get old

in a hurry as we have to wait a few minutes so he can say the exact same thing every single week. Then again the fans still react to it so at least it does serve a purpose, unlike this feud that doesn't seem like it's ever going to end.

Neville tells TJ Perkins to stay focused.

Here's Seth Rollins to talk about how he's persevered through everything and is doing everything he's wanted to do. Now though, he wants the Beast. Cue Finn Balor to say while Rollins has done a lot, he's the one armed man who became the first ever Universal Champion. Remember that Seth?

Dean Ambrose comes out to say he wants part of the fight but here's Miz to say he's awesome and Balor is a coward. Miz talks about being a threat until all three tell him to shut up at the same time. Dean asks who wants to see someone beat up the Miz and pulls out his phone to call Kurt. With the call over, Dean says Kurt has made Miz vs. Balor vs. Rollins with the winner getting an Intercontinental Title match.

We look back at last night's main event.

Tony Nese/Brian Kendrick/Noam Dar vs. Rich Swann/Akira Tozawa/Jack Gallagher

The good guys all have umbrellas for their entrances. Tozawa kicks Kendrick in the face to start but Nese runs him over without much effort. Everything breaks down in a hurry and the villains are sent outside, leaving everyone else to pose. Back with Tozawa in trouble at the hands of all three heels.

Tozawa finally gets in a kick and makes the hot tag off to Swann. Rich speeds things way up and hits a running flip ax kick (Booker: "Like a Harlem Hangover!") followed by a running 450. Everything breaks down with Gallagher and Kendrick being left alone in the ring. The Captain's Hook is broken up and Jack hits the running dropkick for the pin at 10:34.

**Rating:** C+. This got MUCH better after the commercial and made me less annoyed after thinking it was the old "throw them into one



match" concept. At this point 205 Live needs something to be built up other than the main event so having six guys go out there looking good is one of the best things that can be done.

We look back at Sheamus and Cesaro turning heel last night.

Here are Sheamus (who Graves correctly identifies as looking like Travis Bickle) and Cesaro for their explanation. Sheamus is tired of living in a fog where he had to pretend to like the fans. They were ready to take their titles back at Wrestlemania but then the Hardys were thrown in for the nostalgia reaction.

That moment didn't last long though because it was just a novelty. Now they're ready to dominate again, as only they can. Cesaro and Sheamus go to leave but here are the Hardys to cut them off. Matt talks about being banged up from last night's post match ambush but their response is DELETE. The champs chase them off.

Miz is ready to get his Intercontinental Title back but Ambrose comes in to ask if Miz's hair gel gets in his eyes when he wrestles. Miz leaves so "Mean" Dean Ambrose throws it back to Bobby and Gene at ringside.

#### Heath Slater vs. Apollo Crews

This is over Titus being annoyed that Slater gave Crews advice on being a new father. Crews takes him to the mat to start and Slater is already in over his head. A headscissors doesn't get Heath anywhere as Crews nips up for a staredown. Crews misses a charge in the corner though and we get a Titus vs. Rhyno staredown (Perhaps over Main Event issues from last week? I know you know what I'm talking about.). Back in and Crews hits an enziguri, followed by the Toss Powerbomb for the pin at 3:46.

**Rating:** D+. This was exactly what you would expect from these two and that's not a good thing. I know Titus seems like a death sentence for Crews but you have to go somewhere with him so it's not like he has anywhere to go but up. Not a good match or anything but it's getting Crews on TV, which is a good thing for him.

Here's Angle to talk about Reigns vs. Strowman. Last night's matches

had consequences with Reigns re-injuring his ribs and Strowman tearing his rotator cuff. Kurt has been thinking about this all day but here's Bray Wyatt to interrupt. Bray is here as a savior after rising from his own ashes with burnt wings. Angle says this is his ring but Bray says it's his world.

Dean interviews Rollins because there are cameras in the locker room and therefore there must be an interview. After listing off some potential names, Dean asks if Rollins would like an Intercontinental Title shot. Tensions are teased but Dean throws it back to Gorilla before it goes too far.

#### Austin Aries vs. TJ Perkins

They trade shots in the corner to start until Aries hits one heck of a shot to the jaw. Perkins comes right back by tying him in the Tree of Woe for a running dropkick to the knee to put Aries in trouble. Back from a break with Perkins putting on a butterfly lock, followed by a springboard spinning forearm for two. Aries' knee is too banged up to be thrown across the ring and his shoulder hits the post to make it even worse.

TJ doesn't even let him fall down before he grabs a half crab in the ropes. Aries comes right back though by kicking TJ to the floor for the suicide dive. The middle rope elbow to the back gets two but the knee gives out again. TJ tries the Detonation Kick, only to have Aries reverse into the Last Chancery for the tap at 11:20.

**Rating:** B-. The wrestling was good but the important thing was building up the Last Chancery as a potential finisher. If you're just going to have Aries use the move over and over, at some point it has to actually beat someone. Even if he only wins one or two matches with it, the idea is that he can do it again, which makes it an effective finisher.

Post match Perkins puts Aries in the kneebar to leave him laying.

Ambrose interviews Balor and suggests eating a carb. Balor takes a bite of a doughnut before heading to the ring but is replaced by the Drifter, who seems to confuse Ambrose.

Golden Truth's request for a Tag Team Title shot is turned down as they don't have the best win/loss record. Angle will however put them in a Tag Team Turmoil match next week, which seems to work fine.

Last night, Angle said goodbye to Chris Jericho after he won the US Title, sending him to Smackdown.

#### Seth Rollins vs. Finn Balor vs. The Miz

The winner is #1 contender to the Intercontinental Title. Miz heads to the floor like the coward he is so it's Balor vs. Rollins to start. Neither of them seem that interested in fighting though as they keep looking at Miz before finally heading out after him. He finally gets caught and tries to fight, only to be kicked out to the floor.

We get Rollins vs. Balor again but Miz pulls Finn to the floor and hides Maryse so Seth can't hit a dive. All three get back inside, only to have Miz shoves Seth off the top for a big crash as we take a break. Back with Balor elbowing out of Miz's chinlock until Rollins tries a high crossbody but lands on his head. Thankfully he's right back up but Miz sends him into Balor to put Finn down on the floor.

Both good guys take kicks to the chest until Finn throws Miz at Rollins for a DDT but dropkicks Seth down at the same time. They head outside with Balor hitting some HARD kicks to the face (Graves: "Who knew that in twenty four hours the Irish would revolutionize dentistry?"), followed by 1916 for a near fall on Rollins. Balor gets crotched against the post and Miz's low DDT gets two on Seth. Miz starts kicking at the bad knee to set up the Figure Four on Rollins but Balor makes the save.

They trade kicks to the face with Seth getting a near fall of his own. A double Blockbuster sets up a frog splash on Balor and Seth can't believe the kickout. Rollins runs the corner for the superplex into the Falcon Arrow on Miz but here's Samoa Joe to Rock Bottom him on the floor. Not that it matters as Balor is up with the Sling Blade and Coup de Grace....but here's Wyatt to shove him off the top.

Sister Abigail lays Finn out and Miz steals the pin at 22:25.

**Rating:** A-. Now that's how you book a match. With the World Title scene basically on hold until July, this set up the Intercontinental Title as a much bigger deal that three former World Champions are fighting over. It also helps set up Balor vs. Wyatt and Rollins vs. Joe, which should be two major headlining feuds over the next few weeks until Reigns and Strowman are back.

**Overall Rating:** C. This show suffered from two problems. First of all is the lack of anything on top as the champion is gone and the two main eventers are both out selling injuries. While that's a good idea and necessary, it makes for a very, very long night. It's not helping when this is the night after a pay per view, which automatically makes things feel long. We're looking at seven plus hours of wrestling in two days and that's a bit much to take. Couple that with a show where they were clearly filling in a lot of time and it's still good enough but it felt like it went on for about four days.

#### Results

Alexa Bliss/Nia Jax/Alicia Fox/Emma b. Dana Brooke/Bayley/Sasha Banks/Mickie James – DDT to Bayley

Luke Gallows b. Enzo Amore – Flapjack

Rich Swann/Akira Tozawa/Jack Gallagher b. Tony Nese/Brian Kendrick/Noam Dar – Running dropkick to Kendrick

Apollo Crews b. Heath Slater – Toss Powerbomb

Austin Aries b. TJ Perkins – Last Chancery

Miz b. Seth Rollins and Finn Balor – Pin after Sister Abigail from Bray Wyatt

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