

Impact Wrestling – August 17, 2017 (Destination X): Enjoy It While It Lasts

Impact Wrestling

Date: August 17, 2017

Location: Impact Zone, Orlando, Florida

Commentators: Jeremy Borash, Josh Matthews

It's a big night around here as we have Destination X. This show is almost all about the X-Division, but it turns out that we also need a new World Champion. Alberto El Patron is still suspended and has now been stripped of the title. The situation will be handled tonight but we have no idea how. Let's get to it.

Bobby Lashley and American Top Team (MMA camp) arrive with the leader meeting with Jeff Jarrett.

A video recaps the card.

Opening sequence.

McKenzie Mitchell can't get an interview with Bruce Prichard but did see someone shocking in his office. Naturally she can't say who that was but she did see someone.

Knockouts Title: Gail Kim vs. Sienna

Kim is challenging and the ropes are now green. They look like the tubes of mutagen on Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles. Gail grabs a crucifix to start until they head outside with Sienna dropping her onto the steps. Back in and Sienna knees her down for two, followed by a backbreaker into a fall away slam. A superplex is countered into a sunset bomb to kickstart Kim's comeback, including a crossbody for two. The AK47 doesn't work but Gail grabs Eat Defeat, which draws KM onto the apron. Gail forearms him to the floor but here's the returning Taryn Terrell with a cutter to lay Gail out. Now the AK47 can retain the title at 7:02.

Rating: C-. Better than I was expecting here but I don't buy for a second that this is it for Kim. This seems to be looking towards Gail winning the title and retiring at Bound For Glory because that's what someone of her magnitude gets to be awarded. The match wasn't bad and Taryn being back is a very welcome surprise.

Matt Sydal is ready to show what he can really do because he moves at hyper speed and sees in slow motion.

Here's Bruce Prichard with the new World Title to announce that Alberto El Patron has vacated the title and wishes him the best in his future endeavors (without ever saying he was released or fired etc.). As head corporate adviser, it turns out that Bruce can return the title to any former champion he wishes. Therefore he'll give it to Bobby Lashley, but here's Jim Cornette of all people instead. He and Bruce have a short chat (with Bruce mentioning double cheeseburgers at Dairy Queen to silence) but Cornette has a bit of a surprise.

See, Anthem has a lot of interests but doesn't know much about wrestling. Therefore, he's been brought in to take care of some of those issues. Bruce calls security on him but Cornette goes on a rant (I'm as shocked as you are) and yells at Bruce for overstepping his bounds and driving everyone crazy.

Therefore, Bruce is fired and security takes him away. Cornette sets the record straight: Alberto didn't vacate the title because he was stripped of it. We're not going to have big stars come in here and say they're on vacation while being handed things. Instead they're going to have to fight to earn things or deal with him. Next week we'll be having a twenty man Gauntlet for the Gold to crown a new World Champion.

Cornette goes to leave but here's LAX to interrupt. After a break, Konnan says Low Ki should be the #1 and facing the winner of that gauntlet match. Cornette doesn't agree because he may be a cracker (which Konnan had called him) but he's not a liar. Low Ki says he smells fear on Cornette but Cornette says Low Ki can be #20 in the gauntlet. Konnan isn't scared of legal threats and threatens violence. Cornette doesn't seem to care and leaves.

Super X Cup Finals: Taiji Ishimori vs. Dezmond Xavier

They speed things up to start with neither being able to hit much until Xavier nails a dropkick. Ishimori sends him outside without too much effort though and things slow down a bit. Back in and a gutbuster puts Xavier down as Josh talks about the upcoming GFW Network streaming service. After a waistlock keeps Xavier in trouble, Ishimori hits a springboard seated senton, followed by some double knees to the chest. Xavier is right back up but his hurricanrana is countered into a faceplant. The 450 gives Ishimori two so Xavier enziguris him into the corner, followed by a moonsault Pele for the pin at 5:30.

Rating: D+. I'm sorry what now? After hearing about how AMAZING this tournament was for over a month, the finals don't even go six minutes? This was an amazingly disappointing and completely unnecessary tournament, which really doesn't surprise me in the slightest. Xavier is a good choice to win the tournament but he beat a bunch of people who mean nothing in this promotion. Ishimori never showed me much, though it's not like he was given the chance in the first place.

Xavier says this means a lot but he's coming for the X-Division Title.

Bruce and Karen Jarrett shout at each other a lot in a story that hasn't been explained and no one cares about. Basically Karen is glad to see him gone and is glad he's out.

Grado's visa has expired and he has to leave. Joseph Park says he won't let Grado go out like a mark because he'll get to say his goodbye in the ring next week.

X-Division Title: Trevor Lee vs. Sonjay Dutt

Ladder match with Dutt defending. Sonjay sends him outside in a hurry before grabbing a hurricanrana back inside. Lee gets in a ladder to the ribs to take over and sends the ladder inside. Something like a suplex drops Sonjay back first onto the ladder and we take an early break. Back with Lee loading up the ladder for the slow climb, allowing Sonjay to make the save.

Lee takes him down again and brings in a table, because that's likely to help him climb a ladder you see. The delay lets Dutt kick him down and put Lee on the table, only to get crotched on top. A hard forearm puts him outside and the announcers recap things instead of talking about the match.

Lee bridges a ladder between the ropes and the standing ladder but Sonjay takes him down again. A springboard splash onto Lee onto the ladder allows Dutt to climb but here's Caleb Konley to powerbomb Dutt through the table. Cue Petey Williams of all people with a Canadian Destroyer on Konley to put everyone down. Dutt springboards up onto the ladder, knocks Lee down, and retains at 16:03.

Rating: B-. Best match of the night by far with the right ending. Dutt has barely been able to have the title after this whole thing with Bruce allowing Lee to hold the title as long as he did. Williams returning is a nice moment for older fans but I'm not sure how much it does for the modern audience. Good match, though nothing we haven't seen a dozen times in ladder matches.

Lashley knows his opponent's name: Loser.

Jason Cade/Zachary Wentz vs. OVE

OVE is Ohio vs. Everything, better known as the Crist Brothers or the Irish Airborne. Wentz knees Jake in the face to start but he charges into a boot in the corner. It's off to Dave for a knee to the head, followed a superkick to knock Cade out of the air. A spinning kick to the head sets up a running kick to the leg/running kick to the knee combo (something like High/Low) for the pin on Cade at 2:12. Not the best debut but I've seen worse.

Eli Drake, Chris Adonis, Moose and Ethan Carter III annoy Cornette and get put in the gauntlet with Drake going in at #1.

Video on Lashley vs. Sydal with the winner getting a shot at whatever title he wants.

Matt Sydal vs. Bobby Lashley

Lashley runs him over to start with a shoulder sending Matt outside. A kick to the head staffers Lashley but he comes right back with a crossbody for two. Sydal can't hit a pop up hurricanrana and gets thrown outside again as we take a break. Back with Lashley destroying Sydal as the announcers brag about Lashley's MMA teammates, which really just makes me want to watch UFC.

We hit the face ripping for a bit, followed by a delayed vertical suplex. Lashley misses the spear though and a spinwheel kick puts him down. A tornado DDT drops Lashley again but he breaks up the shooting star. The top rope double knees get two on Lashley but his powerslam gets the same. The Dominator gets two more and it's chair time. That means a Van Daminator to put Lashley down, which somehow isn't a DQ. Sydal's shooting star hits knees but the spear hits post, allowing Sydal to grab a rollup for the pin at 14:50.

Rating: C+. Lashley is a great monster heel but it seems like he loses far more than not lately. Sydal winning is the right call and there's no reason not to put the X-Division Title on him (unless you do the smart thing by moving him towards the main event scene, even if it would prove that the X-Division means nothing). Lashley will be fine with whatever he does of course and I'm sure he'll be a force in next week's gauntlet.

Post match one of the MMA fighters chokes the referee until his teammates break it up.

Johnny Impact (Morrison/Mundo/Hennigan) is here next week. He even mentions all of the titles he currently holds.

Overall Rating: B-. There are still some big problems but this was light years better than the previous shows. While I'm not exactly sold on the idea that everything is better (this company has a long history of starting great and then faltering in a hurry), this was a major improvement and an entertaining show. In other words, once you get to the end of the stories instead of dragging them out forever, things get a lot better. Or maybe it's a lack of focus on Alberto vs. LAX in the least interesting feud of the year. Anyway, good show tonight and I'm interested in the title match next week.

Above all else though, this show felt like it was changing a lot of the stuff that didn't work. Prichard was one of the worst on screen authority figures I can remember in a long time and Cornette is a major upgrade. He's much more well known and a far better talker, though you can expect him to blow up and leave in a matter of weeks. The wrestling was better and some of the bigger names being brought in help. I have no confidence in it lasting but it's a good sign that a lot of the bad stuff is gone and they went with some stuff that worked.

Results

Sienna b. Gail Kim – AK47

Dezmond Xavier b. Taiji Ishimori – Moonsault Pele

Sonjay Dutt b. Trevor Lee – Dutt pulled down the title

OVE b. Jason Cade/Zachary Wentz – Kick to the head/kick to the leg combination

Matt Sydal b. Bobby Lashley – Rollup

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