

Impact Wrestling – August 31, 2017: In Need of a Blow Torch

Impact Wrestling

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Commentators: Jeremy Borash, Josh Matthews

It's officially the Eli Drake Era here and that means the talking is going to get a lot better. Last week Drake became the new World Champion by outlasting most of the roster in Gauntlet for the Gold. Now it's time to get ready for Bound For Glory and that means starting to set up a card, though they have some time to work with for a change. Let's get to it.

Chris Adonis and Eli Drake arrive.

In the far more important story though, American Top Team arrives with owner Dan Lambert telling Jeff Jarrett that he doesn't want any peace with him.

Here are Drake and Adonis for a chat in front of a big zebra print couch. Drake has worked hard for fourteen years and now he has this title. It actually makes him mad because it should have been so much faster. Earlier today, he was at the pool and wound up having a rather nice afternoon with a cougar featuring some nice plastic. He didn't get much rest today but now he's here to say that Drake being champion is just a fact of life, no matter who you are.

Cue Johnny Impact to say he's had more names than Drake has won titles and knows what it takes to become a champion. This brings out Eddie Edwards to say he's been around here a long time and that means he's above Johnny on the totem pole. They both want shots and Johnny is willing to fight to earn his.

Cue Jim Cornette to make a tag match between the four of them for tonight. If Drake gets the pinfall, he doesn't have to defend against any

of them. If any of the other three gets the fall though, they get the shot. Of note here: Cornette came out, talked about how hot the title hunt was, made the match and was done in less than 75 seconds. Now that's how this kind of stuff should be.

Allie comes up to ask Taryn Terrell why she was so mean to Gail Kim. Taryn: "You re so f'ing annoying!" Allie gets punched in the face and slammed into a wall with Taryn saying to make sure Gail gets the message.

Mario Bokara/Fallah Bahh vs. OVE

Bokara gets caught in the wrong corner and a swinging neckbreaker gives Jake two. We see LAX watching from their clubhouse. Bahh comes in and runs Jake over but misses the legdrop, leaving Mario to take a double kick in the corner. Dave comes in for a Doomsday Device with a cutter instead of a clothesline for the pin on Bokara at 2:52. Another squash.

Moose is in Cornette's office where Jim tells him that he'll be on TripleMania in Mexico (which has already taken place), along with Lashley, who is looking for him. Ethan Carter III comes in to ask why he's not on TripleMania but Cornette says he's got a Grand Championship defense. Ethan: "I didn't know about that." Cornette: "Oh you didn't know?" Ethan: "No I didn't know." Cornette and Moose: "Your A** BETTER CALL SOMEBODY!"

Caleb Konley vs. Petey Williams

This is Petey's first singles match on the show in eight years. Don't care? Well neither do I, but they've mentioned it three times now so it must be a big deal. Konley has Trevor Lee with him. Petey headscissors him over a few times but gets distracted by Trevor, allowing Konley to leg sweep him down.

Petey gets beaten down and sent hard into the corner for two. A Russian leg sweep into a crucifix gives Petey two and he avoids a moonsault for good measure. Lee gets on the apron to break up the Canadian Destroyer though, sending Petey over the top for a slingshot hurricanrana to take Trevor down. A slingshot Codebreaker sets up the Destroyer to give Petey the pin at 5:54.

Rating: C. So....Petey Williams is back. I'm not sure why this is supposed to be a big deal but that's exactly what we got. The match was fine but nothing we haven't seen, including all of Petey's big spots. The division can use the extra talent, though Williams isn't someone I've thought of since he left.

Sonjay Dutt saves Petey from a post-match beatdown.

Richard Justice has a match tonight.

Karen Jarrett yells at Taryn for attacking Allie and makes Taryn/Sienna vs. Allie/Gail. She might even throw in some stipulations when we get to the match. Karen is just so forced in this role.

Richard Justice vs. Kongo Kong

The top rope splash ends Justice at 51 seconds.

Mahabali Shera comes out to save Justice from a post match beating.

Johnny Impact is ready to take Eli Drake's gravy train to Slam Town.

Konnan tells Low Ki to send James Storm to the hospital.

James Storm vs. Low Ki

This is Storm's first match since Slammiversary. Ki knocks him into the ropes to start so LAX can get in some cheap shots from the floor. Some right hands in the corner set up the same result and it's off to a seated abdominal stretch on Storm. James fights up with a running enziguri and a running neckbreaker.

The Eye of the Storm is countered so Storm tries a catapult, only to get caught with a middle rope Warrior's Way for two. A second attempt at the Eye of the Storm doesn't work either but Ki misses the real Warrior's Way. Now the Eye of the Storm gets two but LAX offers a distraction. The Last Call looks to finish Ki, only to have Santana come in with a belt shot. Ki adds the Warrior's Way for the pin at 9:20.

Rating: B-. Good match but sweet goodness I do not care about Ki or LAX in general. They're not interesting in any way and that makes for some

dull moments. At least they're not the focus though and this midcard role is WAY better for them than as the top heels in the company. Assuming Alberto doesn't come back as their top star in November, I'm fine with them where they are.

Allie is telling Braxton Sutter about what happened when Garza Jr. comes up to check on her. Sutter doesn't like it and tells him to get out.

Jim Cornette recaps the Lashley/American Top Team stuff, which is mainly a way to show Karen screeching a lot.

Pagano is coming.

Joseph Park goes over Grado and Laurel Van Ness' wedding checklist. Park's uncle Tobias is going to be DJ and he's one of the best in Sheboygan, Wisconsin. Laurel's family is coming down from Canada and Park panics. It's about time they got to that detail.

Taya Valkyrie is coming.

Lashley hasn't made a decision on his future yet but he's ready to go to TripleMania and clean house.

Eli Drake/Chris Adonis vs. Johnny Impact/Eddie Edwards

If Johnny or Eddie get the pin, they're #1 contender. I'm going to assume there's something else after this as the bell rang at 9:30. Eddie chops Adonis to start before it's off to Johnny for a headlock. Drake comes in and runs from an Impact kick to the face. Instead it's back to Adonis who eats a standing shooting star for two.

Everything breaks down and the Shot of Caffeine drops Drake, followed by a running corkscrew dive to drop Adonis as we take a break. Back with Johnny's breakdancing legdrop getting two on Drake. Impact gets taken into the wrong corner for a beating as the announcers keep name dropping MMA fighters. Not only do most of them not mean anything to me as a casual MMA fan, but if I wanted to watch MMA, I'd be watching that instead.

A double suplex gets two on Impact but he kicks Eli away for the hot tag

to Eddie. Some chops and a Blue Thunder Bomb get two on Adonis and we take a break. Back with Adonis grabbing an abdominal stretch on Eddie with some bonus forearm to the ribs. Eddie fights out and brings in Impact to speed things up. Adonis saves Drake from the split legged moonsault and it's a double Moonlight Drive for two on Drake. Eli throws him into a bearhug from Adonis before forearming Edwards off the apron.

The match just keeps going as Eddie saves Impact from taking another double suplex. Everything breaks down and the Flying Chuck sets up kind of a cartwheel 450 (with the fans counting him down) for another near fall as Adonis makes the save. Eddie dives onto Adonis and Drake for no cover but Eli gets in a low blow to set up the Gravy Train (Eli Drop/White Noise) for the pin at 26:00.

Rating: C-. Well that was long. I have no idea why this needed almost half an hour when it was an average tag match at best. It was completely watchable but that doesn't mean I need to see that much of it. Drake getting the pin is interesting as he needs a challenger and I kind of like the idea of not going with the obvious for a change.

Post match American Top Team comes out to say these four should be scared to death right now. Cornette comes out and tells Lashley to tell Lambert under control before he goes to TripleMania. That's not all though as Cornette makes Drake vs. Matt Sydal next week for the title. Matt comes out to stare at Drake to end the show.

Overall Rating: C-. I really don't have any feelings about this show whatsoever, save from wanting to weld Karen Jarrett's mouth shut and ban any mention of mixed martial arts from this show forever. It's pretty clear that the American Top Team stuff is going to be a major story all the way until Bound For Glory and that's really not good news.

It's also not a good sign that the story is completely overshadowing the new World Champion and whatever he's doing but that's always been a trope of this company: you have the biggest title in the promotion but then you have the REAL top story above that. Good enough show this week but as always, it's far from without its big flaws. Like not knowing when TripleMania aired. Get that stuff right.

Results

OVE b. Mario Bokara/Fallah Bahh – Top rope cutter to Bokara

Petey Williams b. Caleb Konley – Canadian Destroyer

Kongo Kong b. Richard Justice – Top rope splash

Low Ki b. James Storm – Warrior's Way

Eli Drake/Chris Adonis b. Johnny Impact/Eddie Edwards – Gravy Train to Edwards

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