

Ring of Honor – January 31, 2018: And Border to Border

Ring of Honor

Date: January 31, 2018

Location: 2300 Arena, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

Commentators: Ian Riccaboni, Colt Cabana

Ring of Honor is on a roll right now and that's not something I get to say all that often. The wrestling has been good and the storytelling has been better, especially around the top of the card. There are several places they could go at the moment and that makes for some entertaining television. Let's get to it.

We open with a recap of So Cal Uncensored attacking the Bullet Club last week, thanks to a distraction at the hands of Shane Taylor.

Opening sequence.

Punishment Martinez vs. Dobbs

Yes Dobbs. Martinez knocks him into the corner to start as we hear about Martinez's accomplishments last year. Cabana: "And Dobbs is here too." For some reason Dobbs hits him in the face and tries a dropkick, earning himself a glare from Martinez. The spinning kick to the face seems to have a bit better effect and the South of Heaven chokeslam ends Dobbs at 1:49. The squash it should have been.

Post match here's Dalton Castle to suplex Punishment down. Martinez pops up but walks away instead. Castle looked like a star here and that's what he should have done.

Coast to Coast is ready to put their career on the line.

War Machine vs. Coast to Coast

If Coast to Coast loses, they have to split up, though this weekend's NXT show kind of gives away the ending. Caprice Coleman is on commentary. Ali

dives onto War Machine during the entrances and a double dropkick puts Hanson down. Rowe is thrown onto Hanson but War Machine pops up without much damage done. Ali is taken into the corner so the beating can begin, including Hanson slamming Rowe onto Ali for good measure.

Ali finally avoids a charge and makes the hot tag to LSG so things can speed way up. A 450 gets two on Rowe and LSG manages a suplex on Hanson in a rather shocking power display. Ali's spinning layout Rock Bottom drops Rowe but Hanson is back up with a handspring elbow as we take a break.

Back with Hanson slamming LSG into a backbreaker, followed by a gutwrench backbreaker from Rowe. A powerbomb into a frog splash gets two more on LSG and Rowe isn't sure what to do. LSG rolls over to bring Ali in with the hot tag, which is rather nice of him considering War Machine has been in the ring at the same time for a long while now. Hanson charges into a boot, followed by a side kick to put him on the floor.

A Stroke/Downward Spiral combination plants Rowe for one and it's the pop up powerslam to crush Ali. Somehow that's only two as well and Rowe is TICKED at the kickout. Coast to Coast puts Rowe in the corner for some splashes and Rowe is actually in trouble. The Coast to Coast double Van Terminator gets two on Rowe but Hanson is back in. Fallout gets two on Ali as the kickouts are getting ridiculous now. They load up Fallout again but Ali reverses into a rollup to pin Rowe (ignore the shoulder off the mat) for the pin at 13:28.

Rating: B-. I dug the story here but they went one move too far with the kickouts to the point where it stopped keeping my interest. Coast to Coast is a nice high flying team and this win should help them (especially with War Machine on their way out), but of course they need to do this more often. A better finisher might help too. Say do the dropkick with someone in the middle of the ring, assuming they can get the timing right.

We recap Brian Milonas joining forces with Beer City Bruiser to go after the Tag Team Titles.

Bruiser calls Milonas a diamond in the haystack and a needle in the

rough.

Here's Bully Ray for a chat. Final Battle was his final battle and he's retired. After he lost, his entire career flashed before his eyes. As the fans give him a standing ovation, Ray holds up his boots and says he was born in New York City, but as a wrestler, he was born in Philadelphia. He talks about being born in this building in 1995 and knew that this was the city, the building and the ring to leave his boots in.

Ray says it was his honor and sits them in the ring as the locker room comes out and the fans chant THANK YOU BUBBA. Jay Lethal gets in the ring and talks about how he wasn't sure what to think when Ray came here. There are some rumors about Ray out there and some of them are really not that good.

Then Lethal saw Ray at every show, opening up the learning tree for everyone from the top of the card to the guys just starting out. Ray came here because he wanted to and that's what Ring of Honor is all about. Lethal calls him a legend and says the door is always open if he wants to come back. A big hug wraps up a very nice segment as Ray gets a strong sendoff despite not being around Ring of Honor for very long. Nice job indeed.

We recap the start of the Women's Title tournament. At some point they actually need to have the tournament and stop just talking about it. We see a bunch of names competing in the tournament but no brackets are revealed. Four Stardom women will be competing and the matches start airing in two weeks.

So Cal Uncensored vs. Cody/Marty Scurll/Adam Page

Marty Scull is on commentary. Sky and Scurll start things off with Scorpio getting in a double stomp to the back on a leapfrog in a nice touch. Scurll stomps on the fingers though and it's off to Daniels vs. Cody, the latter of whom only after some coaxing from Daniels. Cody's tiger bomb is countered into a hurricanrana as Taven makes Harry Potter references. Page and Kazarian come in to continue their rather violent rivalry with Page Cactus Clotheslining him out to the floor.

Everyone brawls at ringside until Cody can hit a dive over the top to take them down. Back in and the Club loads up a clothesline train in the corner, though Scurll keeps charging into boots. Cody and Adam finally pick him up and ram the boots into Daniels' face to send us to a break. Back with a bloody Cody snapping off a powerslam on Kazarian and the hot tag bringing in Page to clean house.

Page takes Daniels outside for a suicide dive and a bunch of whips into the barricade. Everything breaks down again and they head outside for the bit series of dives, even with Page's top rope moonsault hitting the barricade. He's fine enough for the slingshot lariat but Kazarian catches him in a Backstabber. Sky's jumping knee to the head is good for the pin on Page at 10:50.

Rating: C+. Nice fun brawl here to continue the issues between the groups...whatever those may be. I'm not entirely sure why So Cal Uncensored wants to destroy the Bullet Club but that's not the worst sounding idea I've ever heard of. Daniels and company are a good act and if it helps push Sky, so be it.

Overall Rating: B-. This was a good show in a different way as the wrestling was solid enough but the real highlight was the Bully Ray segment. They treated him like a star, which isn't the kind of sendoff he's going to get in WWE. He deserves this kind of treatment though and a smaller company like Ring of Honor is where it fits best. Nice show here with the wrestling working and moving stories forward.

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