

# Impact Wrestling – February 8, 2018: Just Like In Canada

## Impact Wrestling

Date: February 8, 2018

Location: Impact Zone, Orlando, Florida

Commentators: Josh Matthews, Sonjay Dutt

It's a new era around here and that started last week with some big time changes. Well mainly one as Austin Aries returned to the company and won the World Title in a big surprise last week. Now we head towards the next pay per view in April, but there's a lot of stuff to get through first. Let's get to it.

We look back at Aries returning and winning the title last week, including a quick bio for those of you unfamiliar with him.

## El Hijo de Fantasma/Rohit Kaju vs. Taiji Ishimori/Matt Sydal

Kaju is a newcomer. Fantasma and Ishimori get things going as Dutt (who has a very good voice for announcing) talks about the new Indian faction the Desi Hit Squad. They feel each other out to start without much happening early on. Instead it's off to Sydal to work on Kaju's arm, followed by some shots to the leg.

Ishimori comes in and works on the leg as well, only to get caught in a neckbreaker to put both guys down. Back from a break with everything breaking down and Kaju hitting a suicide dive onto Sydal. Back in and Ishimori gets caught in an armbar, only to get up without much effort and bring Sydal in again. Matt fires off the chops in the corner but Fantasma throws Sydal into a knee from Kaju for two. Everything breaks down (again) and Ishimori's top rope double knees sets up Sydal's Shooting Star to pin Kaju at 15:45.

**Rating:** C. Another match here with a bunch of people being thrown into the ring at once without much particular rhyme or reason. There should be more to a match with three champions involved (Fantasma is AAA Latin

American Champion) but that's how things work in Impact: just throw people out there and hope for the best. Kaju was pretty average but nothing terrible.

Austin Aries was having a press conference after winning the title and said he doesn't have a contract. So he's Cody from Ring of Honor last year. He's not worried about losing the title at a non-Impact event because, come on, he's Austin Aries. Eli Drake storms in and wants a rematch so it's on for next week.

We see a very long portion of Bobby Roode vs. Austin Aries from Destination X 2012 with Aries winning the World Title for the first time.

### Cult of Lee vs. Tech

Yes Tech, comprised of Monroe and Reed. The Cult has LAX's bandannas around their faces and the beating is on in a hurry. Lee throws Reed around and it's already time for the Cult to start taking turns on him in the corner. They're not wasting time tonight. A double elbow gives Konley two but it's heel miscommunication to set up the hot(ish) tag to Monroe. That's cut off in short order though and a spike piledriver is enough to give Konley the pin at 4:23.

**Rating:** D+. Just a quick tag match here to keep the Cult of Lee going. They're not exactly interesting but it's much better to move them away from the X-Division. There's nothing else they can do there and the tag division needs them far more. Maybe they can do something and maybe they can't but they need a chance and that's what they're getting.

Post match Konnan pops up on screen to say LAX is coming for the Cult.

Allie gives Kieran Hogan a pep talk when someone brings her a big envelope. It's a massive Valentines Day card, inviting her to meet whoever sent it next week.

### Knockouts Title: Laurel Van Ness vs. Kieran Hogan

Van Ness is defending after Hogan got a fluke pin last week. Laurel wastes no time in throwing Kieran into the corner to start and some hair mares give the champ two. A twist of the wrist puts Hogan down on the mat

and a curb stomp makes things even worse. The Unprettier is broken up and Hogan grabs the same rollup she used for the pin last week, only to get two this week. Instead it's a bicycle kick to the face before the Unprettier can retain Laurel's title at 4:10.

**Rating:** D. This was exactly what you would have expected it to be as Hogan didn't do anything to win the previous match. It's fine to have her get a hope spot with the rollup but it's not like anyone was really expecting her to win the title here. Laurel can move on to her big match with Allie and that's where she belongs.

Post match Laurel stays on Kieran until Allie makes the save. Makes sense.

Cage debuts next week.

Someone is filming Lashley.

Ethan Carter III is ready to win the #1 contenders match and go on to become an EC3 Time World Champion.

Video on Aries vs. Drake.

Jimmy Jacobs says he's not a bad guy but he wants Abyss here. If Joseph Park won't bring Abyss, they'll make him do it.

Sydal talks about his spiritual adviser bringing out what it took to win the match earlier. Ishimori is with him and Sydal wishes him luck in next week's title defense against Fantasma. I'm still not feeling any of these people.

OVE jumps Lashley and puts him in the trunk of a car.

Hania the Huntress vs. Amber Nova

This is Hania's in-ring debut. Amber tries a quick crucifix for two but gets take into the corner by the bigger Hania. A sunset flip gives Nova two and some bad looking dropkicks keep Hania in trouble. Amber grabs a hurricanrana but uses it to pull Hania face first into the buckle in a cool move. Another hurricanrana is countered into a powerbomb though and

a reverse DDT gives Hania the pin at 3:27.

**Rating:** D. Another quick match here to establish Hania, who has a great look and got to show off a lot here. Nova wasn't bad either though and that's a good sign for the future of the division. They need some fresh blood to fill in the lack of Gail Kim (oh I'm sure we're not done with her yet, at least in some form) and these two work well enough.

Post match Rosemary jumps Hania in revenge for a few weeks back.

### Johnny Impact vs. Alberto El Patron vs. Moose vs. Ethan Carter III

The winner gets a World Title shot at some point in the future. Everyone fights to the floor to start and it's an early double teaming to keep Moose in early trouble. Impact is put down as well and it's Moose being taken back inside for a double whip into the corner. Johnny comes back in to beat on the villains but gets thrown down again.

As is always the case, Carter and El Patron get in a fight over who gets to go for the pin, allowing Impact to come in with a corkscrew dive to take them both down. Moose is back up to throw everyone around, only to have Impact drop him as well. Everyone slugs it out and we take a break. Back with the brawl heading into the crowd with Moose being thrown into a fence. He comes up holding his knee, leaving the other three to fight on the other side of the crowd.

Johnny steals someone's crutches and beats on both guys, which he doesn't even give back. Instead Alberto throws Johnny into the trash but he comes back with what looked like a can to the head. Back in and Johnny gets DDT'd, only to reverse a double superplex. Johnny can't powerbomb both guys but Moose limps back in and takes Carter, allowing Johnny to powerbomb Alberto.

Moose throws people around but the knee is keeping him from running. Johnny reverses a powerbomb into the hurricanrana though and Carter plants Moose with the 1%er. The flip neckbreaker gives Johnny two on Carter but Alberto comes back in with the Backstabber on Impact. The cross armbreaker has Carter in trouble until Moose makes another save. Moose goes outside with Alberto, leaving Johnny to roll Carter up for the

pin at 20:33.

**Rating:** B-. Moose's knee injury (which is apparently legitimate) considered, this was about as good as it could have been. You're only going to get so far with the same four way tropes and the same match that we've done so many times. It was energetic but the spots were the same and that doesn't make for anything all that exciting. Impact winning is the best call as Impact vs. Aries feels like a big deal.

**Overall Rating:** D+. While not a terrible show, there really wasn't much to see here. They were trying to do some new stuff but it felt a lot like the Canada tapings: they're just throwing new people out there and not really giving us time to get to know them. Now this was nowhere near as bad because the new names weren't getting big spots, but it still feels like they're restarting again. When you do that this often, it gets old in a hurry and that's what happened here. Not the worst and not boring, but there wasn't much of a spark.

One more note: Dutt was very good on commentary, sounding both knowledgeable, excited and interesting at the same time.

## Results

Taiji Ishimori/Matt Sydal b. Rohit Kaju/El Hijo de Fantasma – Shooting star press to Kaju

Cult of Lee b. Tech – Spike piledriver to Monroe

Laurel Van Ness b. Kieran Hogan – Unprettier

Hania the Huntress b. Amber Nova – Reverse DDT

Johnny Impact b. Alberto El Patron, Moose and Ethan Carter III – Rollup to Carter

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