

Ring of Honor 16th Anniversary Show:



IMG Credit: Ring of Honor Wrestling

16th Anniversary Show

Date: March 9, 2018

Location: Sam's Town Hotel and Gambling Hall, Sunrise Manor, Nevada

Commentators: Ian Riccaboni, Colt Cabana

It's time for another Ring of Honor pay per view and that can mean a mixed bag of results. The main event this time around is World Champion Dalton Castle defending against Jay Lethal in what should be a good match. Other than that we have the Briscoes defeating the Motor City Machine Guns for the Tag Team Titles. I would say challenging but it's about as obvious as you can get. Let's get to it.

[Here's the go home show if you need a recap.](#)

Pre Show: Women of Honor Title Tournament First Round: Sumie Sakai vs. Hana Kimura

Deonna Purrazzo is on commentary. Kimura is from Stardom in Japan and one half of their Tag Team Champions with her partner Kagetsu, at ringside. Sumie's offer of a handshake is ignored and Hana pounds her down to start. A whip sends Sakai outside and Kagetsu chokes away like a villain should.

Back in and Hana pounds away, followed by a surfboard with a few presses up and down. A half crab stays on Sakai's back but she's still able to counter a suplex into a DDT. Sakai gets two off a bridging belly to back, only to have Kagetsu grab her leg on top. Hana's brainbuster is good for two but it's time for some heel miscommunication. The team is sent into each other and Sakai dives onto both of them in a good visual. Back in and Hana hits a Helluva Kick for two but Sakai grabs something like Cross

Rhodes for the pin at 7:59.

Rating: C. I'm not wild on a match like this as you're basically expected to watch the YouTube matches and Stardom to know who these people are. Sakai has been around Ring of Honor for a long time now and other than the fact that she's a wrestler and from Japan, I couldn't tell you a single thing about her. That's the case with most of the women's division and that's not good. Work on that and the division will get better in short order.

Post match Sakai gets beaten down by both villains.

Pre Show: Women of Honor Title Tournament Quarterfinals: Brandi Rhodes vs. Tenille Dashwood

That would be Emma if you've already forgotten and Mandy Leon is on commentary. Tenille easily takes the rookie Brandi down for some early near falls but gets taken down by a shoulder. Brandi points to her head...and gets tripped down with Tenille not even getting off the mat. Point to Dashwood.

Back up and Brandi runs the ropes for a crisscross but Tenille just stops, leaving her to run on her own. Brandi slaps her in the face and that means the beating is on, including a double leg takedown and some right hands. A chase goes a bit better for Brandi and an awkward back elbow to the face staggers Tenille. Brandi goes with a short arm scissors followed by a Sling Blade for two.

Tenille is back with a clothesline for two of her own and two more have Brandi in more trouble. There's the Tarantula and the Taste of Tenille (Emma Sandwich) gets another near fall. Brandi hurts her knee on a...yeah I'm not even going to bother saying it's real as the goldbricking sets up Cross Rhodes for two on Dashwood. A middle rope dropkick misses though and Dashwood hits the Spotlight Kick (running kick to the side of the head) for the pin at 7:31.

Rating: D. This really wasn't good as it was clear Brandi had no business being in the ring with someone like Dashwood. I get why Brandi is getting a push (gorgeous smile, married to Cody, has a ton of potential) but

she's REALLY not there yet and it's showing badly. They did play up the idea that she was in over her head but that's not exactly how you want to be presenting a title tournament match.

Post match Brandi won't shake hands and leaves with Leon.

The opening video is presented like a short documentary with wrestlers talking about their favorite memories over the last sixteen years. It switches up to a standard opening video for a very nice setup.

Bully Ray is in the ring and welcomes us to the show, promising a great night. He's very good in the role of a hype man.

The announcers run down the card that we've already paid to see.

Hiromu Takahashi vs. Flip Gordon

They fight over a wristlock to start, which really needs to stop being the opening to every match in so many promotions. Gordon does his nip ups to avoid everything but Takahashi just dances instead of wasting his time. Smart man there. A shoulder drops Takahashi and there's a hand walk into a headscissors out to the floor.

Flip hits a non-flipping suicide dive but gets the bad end of a chase with Takahashi dropkicking him off the apron. Back in and Takahashi starts in on the arm but now it's time to start with his stuffed doll, which is totally a thing in ultra serious Japan. Thankfully that goes nowhere and we hit a figure four necklock to keep Flip in trouble. Back up and Flip hits some forearms, followed by the running shooting star for two. That move is so overused anymore. A low superkick into the Falcon Arrow gets two more and it's time to head up.

The 450 misses and Takahashi snaps off a Canadian Destroyer, only to get superkicked before Flip goes down. Gordon wins a slugout with another superkick and the Star Spangled Stunner for two. Another 450 misses and Takahashi Death Valley Drives him into the corner, followed by a German suplex for a near fall of his own. A superkick sets up the Time Bomb to end Gordon at 12:22.

Rating: C. Good choice for an opener here as the company clearly sees

something in Gordon but can't put him over a pretty big name like Takahashi. You can tell Gordon is going to be a big deal in the near future and thankfully he has some more things going for him than just high flying offense. He needs more polish, but what he has so far is working well enough.

Quick recap of Punishment Martinez vs. Marty Scurll. Marty wanted to be #1 contender and tried to talk Martinez into giving him a title shot if he won the title. Martinez gave him a chokeslam so tonight we're having a #1 contenders match.

Marty Scurll vs. Punishment Martinez

Scurll jumps him before the bell and tries the Ghostbuster but Martinez throws it off with ease. The big flip dive to the floor rocks Marty and a curb stomp gets two. It's too early for the chokeslam so Marty chases the referee to the floor instead. Marty kicks him in the leg and hits a tornado DDT but has to escape a Last Ride attempt. The chickenwing is shrugged off and a full nelson faceplant drops Marty again. They're burning the mat up so far (at least by their standards) and I'm rather pleasantly surprised.

Back up and Marty breaks up a springboard by kicking the ropes out, banging up Martinez's knee again in the process. A running knee to the knee (not the smartest idea in the world) allows Marty to go outside and grab a bag, which is quickly taken away. Martinez hits a HUGE dive over the top to take Marty and security down and a curb stomp onto the apron...doesn't seem to do much damage. Well to be fair it is Ring of Honor.

It's table time but the springboard flip dive only hits table as Marty is somehow alive after a curb stomp onto the apron. Back in and Marty gets two off a piledriver and it's more superkicks, followed some hard stomps to the head. Martinez pops up again (to be fair, that's what a monster should be doing) so Marty loads up the powder, only to settle for a low blow and the rollup pin at 10:32.

Rating: C+. That's more like it and you can pencil in Marty for the title shot at Supercard of Honor. I really could go for him winning the title,

if nothing else for the sake of adding another issue tot he Bullet Club as Marty would be the only one holding a major singles title. Martinez is going to be fine as he can pop back up with the monster stuff and chokeslam people in have to recharge.

We recap the TV Title match. Silas Young cheated to steal the title at Final Battle but Kenny King won it back on TV. Tonight is the rubber match in a pretty decent feud.

TV Title: Kenny King vs. Silas Young

King, the hometown boy with his daughter in the front row, is defending while Young has the Beer City Bruiser in his corner. Young slaps away a handshake offer and flips out of a snapmare. A dropkick puts King down and Silas takes a lap despite being in control. Back in and Young shoulders him down again but King grabs a trip into a Last Chancery. As usual it doesn't last long so King is up with a hiptoss and a slam. Those are kind of a downgrade after a hold like a Last Chancery.

The announcers talk about Bob Holly as Silas gets forearmed in the face but still manages to break up a springboard. A chinlock doesn't last long so King gets thrown through the ropes and into a cameraman for a different kind of crash. Back in and King reverses a suplex into one that goes over the top, putting both guys on the floor in a heap. Just like their previous match, they're not exactly following a standard pattern here and I'm not sure how well it's working.

A spinning kick to the face knocks Young outside again and now the dive hits him instead of the hardworking crew. Back in and a high crossbody gives the champ two but Young gets the same off a spinebuster. Neither guy can hit the finisher so Young settles for the springboard moonsault for two instead. The ref gets bumped and OF COURSE Silas hits Misery a few seconds later, giving him a delayed two. I'm really, really over that trope. As expected, King hits a quick Royal Flush to retain.

Rating: C. I still don't like these two together but it's nice to get this done once and for all. King is turning into a nice midcard act and someone who could be moved up the card with a big feud. He has the natural charisma and the athleticism can go along with it. Young needed

to hold the title a little longer, but at least he got to win something.

Post match AUSTIN ARIES comes out with his belt collection, saying he's never won the ROH TV Title. That's a challenge, and odds are it's going down in New Orleans.

Long recap of So Cal Uncensored vs. Bullet Club. So Cal Uncensored seems sick of dealing with the Club on top of the promotion (preach it brother) and had the Six Man Tag Team Titles won via cheating, only to have new enforcer Bully Ray restart the match. Tonight it's a street fight for the titles.

Six Man Tag Team Titles: So Cal Uncensored vs. Young Bucks/Adam Page

The Bucks and Page are defending. The champs dive onto So Cal to start and it's already time for an assisted dropkick to stagger Daniels. A buckle bomb into stereo kicks to the head have Daniels in more trouble and a chair is brought inside. Page drops Sky onto the chair and scores with a dropsault for good measure. Sky's misfortune continues with Page toss powerbombing him onto the ramp.

Thankfully Sky is back in with a kendo stick to save Kazarian from a belt whipping but the beating continues, including a shooting star off the apron onto Daniels. Kazarian is busted open as the Bucks pull a table out. Daniels is up to shove Matt through said table though and So Cal pops up to triple team Nick. A slingshot hurricanrana to the floor drops Page and Nick gets crotches with the kendo stick.

Sky sticks Daniels by mistake but Matt gets pulled into a cutter to keep him down. Stereo dragon sleepers have the Bucks in trouble but it's Page coming in with a trashcan lid for the save. Page's belt with nails sticking out is whipped onto Kazarian's back and somehow doesn't horribly main him. A backbreaker through the chair keeps Matt in trouble and it's time to set up some pieces of the barricade on the floor. Nick is back up to save his brother and we hit stereo Sharpshooters.

This time it's Kazarian making the save so Daniels chokeslams Page and hits the BME for two. Daniels gets thrown through the barricade pieces though and everyone is down again. With Kazarian on the table, it's time

for a ladder. Sky makes a save with a cutter onto the apron but here's Matt with an elbow off the ladder through Kazarian.

Back in and a 450 onto a trashcan onto Sky gives Nick two with Shane Taylor coming in for the save. Nick can't slam him (thank goodness) but Page can give Shane the Rite of Passage. It's Daniels up with some zip ties to tie Page to the post though and Sky hits Matt in the bad back. A Boston crab/dragon sleeper combo is enough to end Matt for the titles at 19:03.

Rating: A-. This was a lot of fun as they didn't bother trying to waste time with the wrestling. The story called for a wild brawl and that's what we got. If nothing else it's fun to see the Bucks lose and having them be in tremendous pain makes things even better. So Cal Uncensored winning makes for a more interesting story as they're trying to stick around after their contracts expire at the end of the year. Obviously we have a bunch of stuff to get through first, but this was a great start. Very solid match.

Post match the Kingdom comes in to beat the Bucks down until Ray makes the save.

We recap the pre-show matches. Any excuse for more Dashwood is a good thing.

We recap Matt Taven vs. Cody. They both want to be in the World Title hunt so Taven stole Cody's ring (of honor). Cody turned face as a result, which is actually a better fit for him, at least in the short term.

Cody vs. Matt Taven

There's no Kingdom with Taven but Cody brings out Brandi and the All-In Bear. Taven bails to the floor to start before coming back inside to exchange standing switches. The threat of Cross Rhodes sends Taven outside again but Cody follows, only to rub his nose against the bear's. Back in and the American Deathlock has Taven in trouble but a rope is grabbed in short order.

Taven hot shots him to take over and stomps away but heads outside and

yells at Brandi and the bear. A dive misses and Cody stays in trouble, this time with a reverse chinlock. Cody's uppercut gives him a breather but Taven is right back with a Boston crab to stay on the back. Taven tries a Lionsault but hits knees, meaning it's time for a slugout. Cody's snap powerslam with a lack of snap gets two and an Alabama Slam gets the same. With nothing else working, the Bear tells Brandi to grab a chair but the referee takes it away.

The distraction lets Taven score with a kendo stick shot, followed by Cross Rhodes for a pretty good near fall. Cody's Beautiful Disaster is kicked out of the air but the second attempt works just fine. Taven is right back up with the Climax (1%er) for two more and there's the required ref bump, followed by a double knockdown. Cue the Kingdom to help with a low blow but Cody has a cup. Bully chases the Kingdom away and Cross Rhodes ends Taven at 14:08.

Rating: B-. This was a little more overbooked than it needed to be, though at least the right person won. Cody is actually clicking as a heel but the Kenny Omega match is going to be a huge deal for him. He needs that kind of character development and this is a big step for him going forward.

Post match Cody gets the ring back but the Bear knocks him down. It's Kenny Omega, who knocks Cody out with a V Trigger. Brandi makes the save and kisses Omega, saying to tell Kota Ibushi that he liked it. You think the fans went a little nuts over that one?

We recap the Tag Team Title match. The Briscoes are all serious again and want their titles back. That means crushing the Motor City Machine Guns in by far the biggest layup on the card.

Tag Team Titles: Briscoes vs. Motor City Machine Guns

The Guns are defending and the fans are very solidly behind the Briscoes. Mark suplexes Sabin for an early two and it's already time for an early exchange of stomping. Sabin gets over for the tag to Shelley so house can be cleaned in a hurry as everything breaks down. Double superkicks from the apron have Mark in trouble as the announcers go over various former Tag Team Champions.

Mark is right back up with the Blockbuster from the apron but Jay takes a hanging swinging neckbreaker to keep the champs rolling. With Mark busted open, Shelley rakes away at the cut and rubs the blood on the referee's shirt. Dude at least pay for the laundry. How much do you think these guys make? That's enough for Jay as he comes back in and kicks the champs in the head.

Shelley is taken outside and manages to dodge a dropkick through the ropes, sending Mark into Jay instead. A hot tag brings in Sabin and the rapid fire double teaming begins. An assisted Sliced Bread #2 sets up the Cradle Shock with Jay making the save. There's the Dream Sequence but Sabin dropkicks Mark by mistake for a double knockdown. The Froggy Bow gets two on Sabin but the Doomsday Device is countered into a rollup for the same. Jay gets two off the Jay Driller and I'm rather surprised on the kickout. Instead, the Doomsday Device connects to give the Briscoes the titles back.

Rating: B-. This was an obvious ending but at least the Guns were game here. The Briscoes are just on another level right now and there's no reason to not have the titles back on them. I'm not sure who could take the titles from them anytime soon and if that means more awesome, surly Briscoes, I'm very pleased.

We get the same promo from Castle that we've seen twice on TV as of late, with him saying he can feel it in his belly.

Jay Lethal is ready to get his title back and isn't leaving Las Vegas without it. At least this was something new.

Ring of Honor World Title: Jay Lethal vs. Dalton Castle

Castle is defending and of course we get Big Match Intros. Lethal's leg trip attempts don't get him anywhere and Castle is laughing. Castle shoulders him down and an early Bang-a-Rang attempt sends Jay outside. Back in and we hit the peacock pose before Castle forearms him in the corner. Castle blocks some suplex attempts and grabs one of his own to put Lethal in the most trouble yet.

Jay is right back with a trip to take it outside but Castle snaps off a

hurricanrana of all things. That might mean a knee injury though and Castle is backpedaling in a hurry. Well as much of a hurry as you can have with a limp. Back in and an enziguri knocks Dalton off the apron for two suicide dives. The third is blocked though and Castle muscles him over for a German suplex on the floor.

Castle can't follow up so the Boys fan the knee. How can you not chuckle at that? A chop hits the post though and Castle has another injury in short order. A ram into the bell has Castle in even more trouble but he posts Lethal for a breather. Back in and Lethal kicks one Boy off the apron but ring announce Bobby Cruise makes the catch. That earns Bobby a suicide dive so Cabana goes over to check on him.

Castle waistlocks Jay, apparently having recovered while Lethal wasted so much time. The Lethal Combination gives Jay two so it's off to a torture rack. For a unique change of pace, Lethal flips forward (think a Regal Roll) and gets two more to keep Castle's ribs banged up. Castle grabs a bridging German suplex for two, making sure to lift his leg to relieve the pressure.

A quick cutter drops the champ and it's right back to the knee to keep Castle down. Jay's Figure Four keeps him in control and the Lethal Injection scores...for two on a heck of a kickout. They head to the apron and a kick to the knee takes Castle down again. Lethal can't hit a cutter on the apron and it's Castle German suplexing him from the apron to the floor in a SCARY crash. Back in and they slowly slug it out with Castle barely able to stand. Another Lethal Injection is countered and the Bang a Rang retains at 25:57.

Rating: A-. This is the win that Castle needed. It's long been established that he can hang at this level but beating Lethal, probably the best big match performer Ring of Honor has at this point, is a requirement. This sets him on a roll going forward, likely with Scurll as the next challenge. The match itself was the back and forth fight that ROH does very well, especially without the standard WWE formula. Throw in a clean pin and no shenanigans and this was all you could have wanted.

Post match Lethal shakes his hand but Marty Scurll comes out for the

challenge to end the show.

Overall Rating: B+. Heck of a show here as Ring of Honor continues to know how to knock the big shows out of the park. I'm looking forward to Supercard of Honor and I wouldn't have bet on that being the case just a few months ago. Right now everything is clicking and it's become a very easy show to watch. Even the Young Bucks aren't as annoying lately, which I didn't think was possible. Very good show here though and worth checking out if you have the time.

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