

Major League Wrestling Battle Riot II: Something That Rhymes With Boogaloo



IMG Credit: Major League Wrestling

Battle Riot II

Date: April 5, 2019

Location: Melrose Ballroom, New York City, New York

Commentators: Rich Bocchini, Jim Cornette

This is the big live Wrestlemania weekend show and that means we have a major battle royal, which worked well enough last year. I'm not sure what to expect this year as they've barely announced any stories for the match, though we do know a good chunk of the lineup. The winner gets a title match at any point they want so at least there's a big prize. Let's get to it.

Note that I actually watch this show regularly so for once I know what's going on. For those of you who are new, I'll mention names and characters where they matter.

We open with a list of most of the people in the match. It worked for the old Royal Rumbles so this is fine.

The announcers run down the card, which includes a pair of title matches to go along with Battle Riot.

Middleweight Title: Teddy Hart vs. Ace Austin

Austin is challenging and this could be good as the Harts are crazy popular around here. The Dynasty (MJF, Alexander Hammerstone and Richard Holliday) is watching from ringside. As Cornette rants about travel in New York, we start with the guys shoving each other and slowly slugging it out. A rather early Project Ciampa gives Hart the first big advantage with Austin rolling out to the floor. An overhead belly to belly on the floor makes it even worse for Austin and the springboard moonsault off the barricade keeps Austin down. Austin gets crotched against the post and Teddy heads over to steal some of the Dynasty's champagne.

Of course it goes into MJF's face and it's Austin coming back with a kick to the face from the apron. Back in and Austin kicks him in the head a few times before slamming him head first into the mat. Austin takes way too long coming off the top and gets crotched, though he's fine enough to do the same thing to Hart to block the super Canadian Destroyer. A spinning kick to the face drops Hart again and a spinning top rope Fameasser gets two. Austin gets knocked off the top again though and it's a super Canadian Destroyer into a regular Canadian Destroyer to retain the title at 6:54.

Rating: C+. Hart wasn't exactly sweating here, which is kind of annoying as I like Austin a lot and could see him going somewhere. That being said, this wasn't the place for some big, epic title defense so going with the quick match here with Hart hitting his usual stuff and winning definitively in the end was fine.

Post match Hart rhymes about Alexander Hammerstone, in red, seeing Ted, meaning he'll be dead. He shoves Richard Holliday but gets a champagne bottle to the head.

Minoru Tanaka vs. Myron Reed

Reed has Rich Swann with him as they continue to claim MLW is treating them unfairly. Tanaka is a big star in Japan and the current GHC Junior Heavyweight Champion. Reed bails straight to the floor to start where Swann offers some advice. Back in and Tanaka works on the arm before going with a standard dropkick to keep Reed in trouble. Swann's cheap

shot from the floor lets Reed score with an enziguri though and we take a break.

We come back with Tanaka's missile dropkick putting Reed in trouble again as Cornette goes over the history of Japanese wrestling. Reed uses the rope to get out of the cross armbreaker and Stuns his way out of a suplex. A slingshot cutter gives Reed two more but Tanaka rolls him up into a cradle for the pin at 8:48.

Rating: C. Nice little match here with Tanaka looking very good and polished as you would have expected him to. He's the kind of import that works very well on a special show like this. Reed's jumping cutters always look great and he got in some offense against the much more polished name.

Video on Contra, a terrorist style stable who have looked awesome in limited appearances.

Promociones Dorado (major heel stable run by Salina de la Renta, an awesome witchy manager) draw their Battle Riot numbers with Salina not being happy with how long it takes. The guys seem pleased when Sami Callihan comes in demanding his money from Salina. He'll see them tonight. As they leave, Mance Warner (feuding with the group) comes in and steals one of the good numbers, replacing it with a worse one.

We recap Jimmy Havoc vs. Tom Lawlor. Havoc was the last man to defeat him in MLW and now Jimmy is back to win the World Title.

Brian Pillman Jr. is happy with his number when Salina comes in and tries to buy it. Pillman would rather talk about her chest and Salina gives up.

MLW World Title: Jimmy Havoc vs. Tom Lawlor

Lawlor (a former UFC fighter) is defending and this is a street fight. Havoc jumps him before the bell and we lose a camera but Lawlor snaps off a release German suplex to take over. A Death Valley Driver out of the corner stops Lawlor and Havoc pelts a chair at him for two. It's time to bring in a table (a board in this case) with Lawlor hitting him in the head and bridging the table between the ring and the barricade.

Some kicks to the chest have Havoc in trouble but he avoids a chair and takes Lawlor down again. The chair gets thrown at Lawlor's head again but hang on as Havoc needs to yell at the fans, allowing Lawlor to send him into the table. They steal a horn from the crowd and Cornette gets in a few horny jokes. More tables and another chair are sent inside but Lawlor grabs a pumphandle suplex.

A charge hits chair though and Havoc gets two off a DDT. Havoc throws in four chairs and bridges a table between them as Cornette has just about had it with the hardcore stuff. Two more chairs are sets up on top of the table but a hurricanrana is countered into a powerbomb through everything for two. Lawlor sets up a table in a corner but gets sent to the floor before he can use it. Havoc finds a staple gun and that's just too much for Cornette, especially as it's used to break up a Figure Four on the floor.

Lawlor is busted open and Havoc licks the blood off, setting up another staple into the head. The referee gets beaten down and there's a Death Valley Driver through the door for no count. A belly to back faceplant onto some chairs gets a very delayed two from a fresh referee. With nothing else working, Lawlor knees a chair into Havoc's head twice in a row to retain at 13:13.

Rating: C-. As is usually the case with hardcore matches, your individual mileage may vary. I'm more in the Cornette camp, though he was the completely wrong choice to call something like this because he can't stand this kind of thing because it's not wrestling. Now to be fair I'm really not a fan of the staple gun and licking the blood and all that stuff. It comes off like it's all Havoc knows how to do and with the story not exactly being a violent one, it felt out of place.

Salina tries to buy a rookie's number but that isn't happening. Her goons come in and steal it instead.

Video on last year's Battle Riot.

The announcers preview the match.

Battle Riot

40 man Royal Rumble (with pin/submission/over the top eliminations) with one minute intervals and the winner gets a World Title shot whenever they want. Also, no commercials for a nice bonus. Maxwell Jacob Friedman is in at #1 and says he isn't shaking because the other thirty nine men in the back are shaking in their own boots. Dan Severn (of Dan Severn fame) is in at #2 and MJF panics in a hurry. The eye poke doesn't work to start and it's a belly to belly suplex to send MJF flying.

Hijo de LA Park is in at #3 as the intervals are already going fast. A dropkick puts Severn down but he's back up to suplex a gyrating Hijo. Air Wolf is in at #4 and it's a springboard armdrag to take Hijo down as the announcers talk about Teddy Hart being sent to the hospital, meaning he's out of the match. Severn gets MJF into the corner and it's Minoru Tanaka in at #5.

We get a weird yet cool slugout between Severn and Tanaka until Jordan Oliver (newcomer) is in at #6. With no one doing anything, Rey Fenix is in at #7 as they need to get rid of a few people. A rolling dropkick hits Hijo and the multiple springs springboard wristdrag have Wolf in trouble. Severn and Tanaka team up on MJF and it's Pentagon in at #8. Kicking and chopping go around the ring and it's a standoff with Fenix.

Avalanche (an Austrian from WW) is in at #9 and Oliver's high crossbody bounces off of his chest. Well you deserve that if you try to hit someone named Avalanche. MJF offers him money and that seems to be a business deal as Tanaka is on the floor but not eliminated. MJF does manage to get rid of Fenix for the first elimination so Pentagon gives him a beating. Ace Romero (400lbs) is in at #10, giving us MJF, Severn, Hijo, Wolf, Tanaka, Oliver, Pentagon, Avalanche and Romero at the moment. A Pounce eliminates Oliver and Hijo eliminates Pentagon in an upset.

Ken Kerbis (the newcomer who Salina tried to buy earlier) is in at #11 and it's Romero and Avalanche doing the big man showdown. As Severn and Tanaka hook holds on MJF at the same time, Leo Brien is in at #12. Tanaka gets rid of Severn to a chorus of booing as Severn (61) looked good for about twelve minutes. Michael Patrick (Brien's partner) is in at #13 but they can't get rid of Avalanche. Tanaka gets rid of Brien and it's Gringo Loco in at #14. A top rope cutter hits Romero as the fans are way into

Loco, as always. MJF gets rid of Hijo and Tanaka makes Patrick tap to a kneebar.

Kotto Brazil is in at #15 with a slingshot spear and a frog splash to Loco. There's a standing Sliced Bread to Kerbis and it's Rey Horus in at #16. A springboard crossbody gets two on Brazil with Loco making the illogical save. One heck of a pop up tornado DDT hits Loco and MJF steals the two count. Romero eliminates Kerbis and it's Rich Swann in at #17. Superkicks and running Swantons abound but Horus rips the tape off of Swann's mouth to start the slugout.

Myron Reed is in at #18 for the second back to back partners in a row. Thankfully Reed gets in his running cutter over the top for the always cool visual. Reed and Swann dropkick Tanaka out as they're getting better at keeping the ring from getting too full. Avalanches eliminates Loco and it's the nearly 500lb Barrington Hughes in at #19. Reed's springboard crossbody bounces off of Romero and Hughes, meaning an easy elimination.

It's Ace Austin in at #20, giving us MJF, Avalanche, Romero, Brazil, Horus, Swann, Hughes and Austin at the halfway point (I must have missed Wolf going out). A bunch of people get together to get rid of Hughes with Swann celebrating, earning himself the big elbow from Romero for the elimination. Jimmy Yuta is in at #21 as Avalanche is gone. Yuta superkicks Austin out and MJF is dropkicked through the ropes for a breather.

Jacob Fatu of Contra is in at #22 but here are Simon Gotch and Josef Samael through the crowd to clean house. A gas can to the head has Brazil in trouble and everyone but Romero is stacked up for the least connecting moonsault I've ever seen. Thankfully Fatu drops a backsplash to make up for some of it. The gas is poured on three guys and a lighter is pulled out, drawing in security to prevent the murder.

Fatu isn't having that and hits the moonsault onto Yuta and Horus before leaving, seemingly eliminating himself. As usual, Contra is the best thing going around here with Fatu looking like a star. MJF comes in and steals pins on Reed, Yuta and Horus in the most perfect thing he could have done. Brian Pillman Jr. is in at #23 for a showdown with MJF. A

superkick gets rid of MJF (Bocchini: "BRIAN PILLMAN YOU ARE MY SUNSHINE!") and it's Davey Boy Smith Jr. at #24. They shake hands but Romero is back up to prevent them from having to fight.

The double teaming works just fine though and Romero is out as Konnan and LAX (as in all three) are in at #25, #26 and #27 (I think?). Smith tosses Santana and Ortiz as Low Ki is in at #28. Konnan just leaves as Ki fights back with a springboard kick to both Harts. LA Park is in at #29 for the fourth or fifth instance of partners/stable mates in consecutive numbers. Park brings in a step stool as we hear about Fatu being arrested for fighting with the NYPD.

Emil Sitoci (Dutch wrestler from WXW) is in at #30 and hits a moonsault onto Pillman. That gives us Smith, Pillman, Ki, Park and Sitoci for a rather international grouping. Daga is in at #31 and goes straight for Low Ki (who nearly ripped his ear off a few months ago) with stomps and choking in the corner. Blue Meanie is in at #32 and it's a bunch of eye pokes until Smith suplexes him down. Alexander Hammerstone (a monster freak of nature) is in at #33 to kick Pillman out and Sami Callihan (with the bat) is in at #34 to a big reaction. Callihan bats Meanie in the head for the pin, followed by Ki and Sitoci being tossed.

Ariel Dominguez is in at #35 and Hammerstone gorilla presses him a few times before getting the easy elimination. Ricky Martinez is in at #36 as Ki comes back in to help Park get rid of Daga. Lance Anoa'i is in at #37 for some Samoan drops and Mance Warner is in at #38 with a 2x4. Some board shots (and a Jim Duggan thumbs up) clean house and a jumping knee gets two on Hammerstone.

Richard Holliday is in at #39 to complete the field as Hart isn't here. The final grouping is Smith, Park, Hammerstone, Callihan, Martinez, Anoa'i, Warner and Holliday, leaving the match pretty wide open. Holliday takes his time getting in and Callihan gives him a Russian legsweep with the 2x4. Warner tosses Martinez and a swinging neckbreaker gets rid of Anoa'i.

A running big boot eliminates Holliday but Hammerstone kicks Smith out to get us down to four. Callihan mocks Park's dance and gets kicked in the

face by Hammerstone but Park breaks up a cover on Warner for some reason. Warner and Hammerstone go to the apron with an eye poke getting rid of Hammerstone but Callihan gets rid of Warner, leaving us with Callihan vs. Park. Sami is ready so Park hits a spear and tosses Callihan out for the win at 47:13.

Rating: B-. It was better than last year's as they didn't have as many random entries, though having the wrestling world in town for the show helped out with that. Park winning is...weird, as he's undefeated in MLW and makes sense as a #1 contender but he was just one of the people in the match for the second half of the match. Other than the spear at the end, I don't remember anything he did the whole way through.

The rest of the match was pretty good with Contra looking like stars. It was a great way to keep them from being eliminated, though the gas can was a little much. They kept things moving well enough, even if forty people is a little much. This would have been better with just thirty entrants, though I can get why forty sounds better. Overall not bad, and it felt like a major event for a special show.

In a press conference, Tom Lawlor says he'll fight anyone from any country and he's ready for Contra. Speaking of Contra, here they are to lay him out, with the handcuffs still on Fatu's wrists.

Overall Rating: B-. Overall this was almost all about the Battle Riot as the other three matches just kind of happened. It's an entertaining two hours (or close to it) with MLW knowing how to do their bigger shows well, as usual. They were smart to go with so many people as it offered a little bit of everything and might make some people come back next time. Good show, though it still wasn't quite at that top level that they have trouble hitting.

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