

Rampage – February 17, 2023: Sign Of The Times (lot)

Rampage

Date: February 17, 2023

Location: Saves Auto Arena, Laredo, Texas

Commentators: Jim Ross, Chris Jericho, Tony Schiavone, Excalibur

It's a special show this week with the show on at 7pm instead of the usual 10pm due to the NBA coverage. Therefore the show is call Slam Dunk as AEW stacks the card because it might be able to draw a good bit more fans this week. Hopefully that is the case as Rampage hasn't felt important in a few weeks now. Let's get to it.

[Here is Dynamite if you need a recap.](#)

Opening sequence.

Trios Titles: Elite vs. AR Fox/Top Flight

The Elite is defending and since this is Slam Dunk, there are a lot basketballs as props. Dante and Nick start things off by throwing a basketball at each other. Nick hits Matt in the face with the ball by mistake though and the champs are kicked out to the floor early on. Fox dives onto all of them in a pair of dives and then adds a third with a basketball. Back in and Omega grabs a headlock before running Fox over with a shoulder.

The basketball comes back in and the Elite tosses it around until Fox jumps for it, earning himself a double superkick. We take a break and come back with Fox kicking Nick into the corner. The hot tag brings in Dante to clean house, including a high crossbody for two on Omega. Everything breaks down (What took them so long?) and Fox dives off the top onto Nick

and chucks the basketball at Omega in the corner.

A 450 gets two on Matt but Nick and Omega hang Top Flight over the ropes for Nick's Swanton onto both. Fox makes the save and it's time for the exchange of kicks to the save. The double cutter drops the Bucks but Matt is back up to shake the ropes. Fox's middle rope moonsault is triple superkicked out of the air and Nick hits a big dive onto the floor. The One Winged Angel hits Fox to retain the titles at 10:22.

Rating: B-. The basketball stuff was goofy but harmless enough in a match where the Elite gets to beat another team. They need some challenges and that almost has to be the House of Black. I'm almost worried to see that match, but for now I'll settle for another entertaining but pretty much drama free Elite match.

Post match the basketballs come back in but the lights go out. Cue the House of Black on the stage and we have a staredown.

The Gunns aren't happy with the Elite bypassing the tag team battle royals but they'll deal with them anyway.

Mark Henry is praising Orange Cassidy when Wheeler Yuta comes in. Yuta is glad he left the Best Friends because he has gotten so much more out of being in the Blackpool Combat Club. Now Cassidy doesn't even think anything of Yuta being gone so Yuta is going to take the All-Atlantic Title from him. Cassidy says he wasn't there to be a teacher but to be a best friend. If Yuta wants the title, come take it. That was a rather harsh heel spin from Yuta, who is pretty neutral most of the time.

Daniel Garcia vs. Ricky Starks

Starks punches him into the corner to start and hits the dancing Old School. A tornado DDT is broken up though and Garcia knocks him outside. We take a break and come back with Starks' knee rather banged up as he walks into a Rock Bottom for two. The Sharpshooter goes on and here is Sammy Guevara to

hold the rope away. Cue Action Andretti to go after Guevara and they brawl up the ramp. Starks gets up and hits the spear, setting up Roshambo (with a point at Jericho on commentary) for the pin at 9:45.

Rating: C. The match was just shy of ten minutes and had a break plus interference. It also doesn't help as we're still on this idea of Starks running through the Jericho Appreciation Society on the way to a rematch of a match he won in the first place. This isn't the most logical story, but at least Jericho has someone to yell about.

Post match Guevara says he wants Andretti next week.

Evil Uno really doesn't like Jon Moxley.

TBS Title: Jade Cargill vs. Vertvixen

Jade is defending and retains with Jaded at 1:05. I'll take this over being asked to think Red Velvet is a threat.

Swerve Strickland is ready to go to war and thinks Dustin Rhodes has something to do with Trench not being here. Rhodes gets rather annoyed (granted that seems to be his default mode) and is ready to fight.

Swerve Strickland vs. Dustin Rhodes

Parker Boudreaux is here with Swerve (no Trench), who sends him after Rhodes on the ramp. That doesn't go well for Parker and Dustin knocks Swerve around to start. The beating heads back inside, where Swerve gets in a quick shot to the face but misses a running knee.

A release German suplex drops Swerve but he kicks Dustin in the face for a knockdown. Swerve adds a pump kick from the apron to drop Rhodes and there's a hard dropkick into the barricade. Dustin is busted open and we take a break. Back with Swerve hitting a Downward Spiral but Dustin fights up and yells a lot. Swerve bites his forehead but charges into the

scoop powerslam.

The Canadian Destroyer gives Dustin two and they head to the apron, where Swerve grabs a Death Valley Driver for two. A superplex and piledriver give Dustin two and Cross Rhodes gets the same. The Final Cut connects but Boudreaux pulls Dustin out at two and sends him into the steps...for the DQ at 12:24. You always hear about these things but you never think you'll actually see one.

Rating: B-. Rhodes is still one of the most consistently solid wrestlers anywhere, as you might not see him get to a great match but you'll see him have a good one almost every time. Granted having a nearly thirty five year career is going to have a lot to do with that, along with Strickland being in there to help. Good match, as Rhodes continues to defy Father Time.

Post match Boudreaux and Strickland load up the cinder block but Keith Lee (clean shaven and with white/gray hair) pops up behind them (with the camera being set up low instead of at face level so the rising up shot is lost). Boudreaux and Swerve are destroyed, with a discus forearm taking Boudreaux out. Of note: Jericho mentioned that Lee must have attacked Trench for a way to explain his absence.

Overall Rating: B. This was the best, or at least biggest feeling, Rampage in a long time. Granted that is almost guaranteed to be due to the different time slot but I'll take whatever I can get. There was nothing bad on here and the Lee return felt important, along with having the House of Black finally going after the Trios Titles. Good show here, and it's nice to see one that feels like it matters.

Results

Elite b. AR Fox/Top Flight – One Winged Angel to Fox

Ricky Starks b. Daniel Garcia – Roshambo

Jade Cargill b. Vertvixen – Jaded

Dustin Rhodes b. Swerve Strickland via DQ when Parker Boudreaux interfered

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