

Rampage – June 23, 2023: Add It To Wednesday

Rampage

Date: June 23, 2023

Location: Wintrust Arena, Chicago, Illinois

Commentators: Excalibur, Tony Schiavone, Chris Jericho

It's the last Rampage before Forbidden Door and the first show after Collision has debuted. That means we could be in for something very different, though I could go for seeing more of what the show has been doing as of late. If nothing else, we should be in for a quick and efficient show, as has been the case around here. Let's get to it.

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

Opening sequence.

United Empire/Swerve Strickland vs. Chaos

United Empire: Will Ospreay/Jeff Cobb/Kyle Fletcher/Swerve Strickland

Chaos: Best Friends/Yoh/Rocky Romero

It's a brawl to start with Ospreay hammering on Yoh in the corner and throwing in some hip gyrations. Yoh is back with gyrations of his own so it's off to Swerve vs. Chuck. A rollup gives Chuck two and he kicks Strickland in the face. Trent comes in and gets to chop away at Fletcher, who backdrops him down to cut that off fast.

Fletcher slams him hard but Romero sneaks in for a double jumping knee to the face. The Roppongi Vice reunion lets them hit their big Shawn Michaels/Diesel jumping high five. The Empire pulls the good guys outside though and Strickland hits the rolling Downward Spiral to drop Romero to take over. One

heck of a spinning backbreaker drops Romero for two but Cobb's bearhug is broken up rather quickly.

We take a break and come back with Romero fighting out of a chinlock. Swerve hits the middle rope elbow to the back but Romero is fine enough to bring in Yoh. The forearms don't do much to Ospreay, who rips the skin off with a chop. A running forearm works better for Yoh, even as the fans are chanting for Ospreay. Everything breaks down and Romero lariats Ospreay, setting up the four way hug. Swerve is back in to backdrop Romero to the floor, leaving Cobb to hit the swinging belly to back for two. The Hidden Blade finishes Yoh at 10:31.

Rating: B-. It was a fast paced start and that is how an opening match is supposed to go. Ospreay absolutely feels like one of the bigger stars around here and it is nice to see him getting to showcase himself on a big American stage. Other than that, Swerve gets to rub elbows with a fairly high profile match, though this was more about making Ospreay look strong for his big Forbidden Door match.

Video on Toni Storm vs. Willow Nightingale, with only Storm's title on the line.

Here is Adam Cole for a chat but MJF, making his Rampage debut, interrupts. MJF is happy that his new partner got him in action at Forbidden Door so he has evened things up a bit: MJF has gotten Cole a Forbidden Door match with Filthy Tom Lawlor! Cue Lawler (with cohort Royce Isaacs) to jump Cole from behind, with MJF taking his very sweet time walking to the ring. The other villains run off, with MJF being annoyed but then walking off as Cole cringes in pain. This was short but made perfectly logical sense.

Acclaimed/Billy Gunn vs. ???/???/???

The Acclaimed and Gunn waste no time and it's Scissor Me Timbers into the Arrival into the Mic Drop to finish at 51 seconds.

Post match Harley Cameron and two masked me interrupt, with Cameron bragging about her musical skills (she did the music video for the IInspiration in Impact). Cameron offers a partnership with the Acclaimed but Gunn shuts that down, saying they already have the best rapper in the world. She gets to rap anyway and Caster is already covering his ears (and Gunn hugs him).

Then she hits on Bowens (Jericho: "I don't think so."), who cuts it off and points out that he's gay (which gets a very positive reaction). Cue QT Marshall and Aaron Solo, with the former calling Caster a John Cena impersonator. The Acclaimed go after them but one of the masked guys unmask as....Johnny TV (Morrison/Elite/you get the joke). The beatdown is on and QTV seems to have a new big name.

Swerve Strickland is ready for Hiroshi Tanahashi.

Women's Owen Hart Foundation Tournament: Skye Blue vs. Anna Jay

Matt Menard/Angelo Parker are here too. Skye chases her to the floor but a Menard distraction lets Jay get in a cheap shot. Back in and they trade hip attacks until Anna kicks her out to the floor. A not great looking DDT on the floor plants Skye and we take a break. Back with Anna hitting another DDT but Skye fights up with forearms.

A kick to the head staggers Anna again and a high crossbody gets two. Anna's Backstabber gets two and a Gory Bomb connects for the same. The Queenslayer goes on but Skye sends her into the corner to break it up. Skye superkicks her into Code Blue for the pin to advance at 9:15.

Rating: C. This got some more time and it helped things out a bit. Blue is on a bit of a roll right now and it wouldn't shock me to see her winning the whole tournament. If she isn't going to win one of the titles, giving her this is certainly better than nothing. Skye has gotten better, so giving her

something like this wouldn't be the worst idea. Anna has more or less stopped cold though, as she isn't even doing the over the top insane stuff about choking people out anymore.

Video on the Collision eight man tag.

Video on Jungle Boy vs. Sanada.

Here's what's coming on various shows.

Jungle Boy vs. Douki

Yoshinobu Kanemaru is here with Douki. Jungle Boy runs him over with a shoulder to start and runs the corner for the bouncing armdrag. Douki sends him outside though and there's the suicide dive to cut him down again. A hard whip into the barricade drops Douki though and we take a break.

Back with Douki hitting a running double stomp and getting quite the positive reaction. Something like a Widow's Peak gets two on Jungle Boy, who grabs a tiger driver for the same. Commentary points out that Jungle Boy is being more aggressive lately (ahuh) as he loads up a table at ringside.

Douki gets in a cheap shot though and a top rope backsplash drives Jungle Boy through said table. We get a LOUD DOUKI chant as he hits a brainbuster for two. A slingshot DDT gets the same on Jungle Boy, who comes back with a superkick and poisonrana. The running forearm to the back of the head draws all kinds of booing as he grabs Sanada's Skull End to make Douki tap at 10:15.

Rating: B-. This was more about the crowd reactions than anything else, as the crowd seems to be ready to turn Jungle Boy than AEW is, or maybe they just really like Douki. For now, it felt like a big enough main event and the action worked. The turn almost has to be coming soon though, with commentary bringing it up to really hammer in the point.

Post match Sanada (rocking a blue suit) comes out for the

staredown to end the show (with Jericho getting in a shout about Sting in the last thing you hear, which is a rather smart thing that he does every time he's on commentary for a go home show).

Overall Rating: B. This was a rare instance where the show felt like another hour of Dynamite. Normally that is rather annoying, but when there is so much going on at the moment, AEW needs that much extra time to let things breathe a bit. I had a good time with this show and it absolutely flew by, as Rampage continues its recent roll. Good show and Forbidden Door feels that much bigger so well done.

Results

United Empire/Swerve Strickland b. Chaos – Hidden Blade to Yoh
Acclaimed/Billy Gunn b. ???/???/??? – Mic Drop
Skye Blue b. Anna Jay – Code Blue
Jungle Boy b. Douki – Skull End

Remember to follow me on Twitter @kbreviews and head over to my Amazon author page with 30 different cheap wrestling books at:

<http://www.amazon.com/Thomas-Hall/e/B00E6282W6>

AND

[Remember to check out Wrestlingrumors.net](http://wrestlingrumors.net) for all of your [wrestling headline needs](http://wrestlingrumors.net).