

Death Before Dishonor 2023: Why Would You Do It Again?

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Date: July 21, 2023

Location: CURE Insurance Arena, Trenton, New Jersey

Commentators: Ian Riccaboni, Caprice Coleman

Ring Of Honor is back on pay per view and the card has been tacked together rather quickly. The World, Television and Women's Title matches were added in the last few days and the Tag Team Title match is a four way featuring two teams who haven't been around in months. They're going to need a heck of a show to make up for the build so let's get to it.

Zero Hour: Tracy Williams vs. Josh Woods

Pure Rules and Woods has Mark Sterling and Tony Nese with him. They go with the grappling to start and Woods takes him to the mat for an arm crank. That sends Williams to the ropes for his first break but he makes the mistake of grabbing the rope to avoid an Irish whip, meaning that's the second break.

Williams goes with a suplex to take over and hits a running shot in the corner for two. A piledriver gets two more, though Woods has to put his foot on the rope for a break. Woods is back up with a gutwrench suplex for two as Williams uses his last rope. They go to the apron with Woods snapping off a German suplex before tying him up in a guillotine in the ropes. With no more breaks, Williams has to tap at 8:40.

Rating: C. The match was fine enough but these matches just aren't that interesting. It doesn't help that so many of the same wrestlers are used in them over and over, but the bigger thing is nothing really makes them stand out. Other than the rope break, this was more or less the same match that you

could see from almost anyone. Perfectly nice technical match, but Woods doesn't feel like some breakout star.

Zero Hour: Workhorsesmen vs. Action Andretti/Darius Martin

The Workhorsesmen jump Andretti and Martin to start but the good guys fight back. We settle down to Martin getting beaten down in the corner, with Drake getting to stomp away. Henry grabs a front facelock to slow Martin down but he gets away and brings Andretti in to pick up the pace. House is cleaned but Martin gets taken down, allowing Henry to hit a moonsault. Andretti picks up Henry for a Death Valley Driver, with the referee being nice enough to stop and look at them before the save because they were quite late. Andretti muscles Henry up for the torture rack neckbreaker for the pin at 7:14.

Rating: C. That mistimed save in the middle was terrible but the rest was mostly just a power vs. speed match, which will work every time. I'm not sure why Andretti and Martin aren't in the Tag Team Title match tonight as they work well together and have at least been around. They got a bit of a showcase here, though the Workhorsesmen looked rather good as well.

Zero Hour: Trish Adora vs. Leyla Hirsch

Leyla wins the grapple off to start so Adora goes for the arm to take over with the power. That doesn't work for Leyla, who slips to the floor for a breather and leaves Adora frustrated. Back in and Leyla goes after the legs to take over but Adora blocks a suplex attempt with straight power.

Leyla switches to the arm and cranks away but Adora manages a bridging German suplex from her knees in a rather awesome power display. Leyla knocks her into the corner for a running dropkick, only to have Adora come back with a backbreaker. The running kick misses for Leyla so they trade rollups for two each. Leyla pulls her into the cross armbreaker to make Adora tap at 8:32.

Rating: C+. This was a nice power vs. technical match and I was getting into seeing how Adora was going to deal with Hirsch. There is something awesome to seeing Hirsch pick someone apart like that and it worked well here. Ring Of Honor has something with either of them and if they get built up a little more, the division could get a very nice boost.

Zero Hour: Shane Taylor vs. AR Fox

Fox tries to grab the wrist to start and is quickly knocked silly by a single shot. Back up and Fox kicks away, including an enziguri into a dropkick to send Taylor outside. The big dive drops Taylor again and Fox adds another one for a bonus. Back in and Taylor unloads in the corner to knock Fox outside, where the beating can continue. Fox gets in a shot of his own and hits a springboard imploding 450 to take Taylor down for a change.

Some more kicks to the head set up a springboard Stunner but Taylor headbutts him in the chest. A release Rock Bottom sets up a splash to give Taylor two. The apron legdrop misses for Taylor though, allowing Fox to hit a running hanging DDT for two more. Back up and Taylor...at least tries to crotch Fox on top but Fox rolls through. Welcome To The Land gives Taylor two as Fox gets his hand on the rope. A middle rope Marcus Garvey Driver is broken up and Fox manages a Death Valley Driver. The 450 finishes Taylor at 10:22.

Rating: B-. Match of the Zero Hour by far as they traded one big shot after another until Fox won. It makes sense as Fox has the International Title shot coming up next week on Dynamite but at least he had to work to get the win here. Taylor is still a great monster and I was getting into this one by the end. Good stuff.

Komander vs. Gravity

Gravity flips out of a wristlock to start and then bridges back into a rollup for two. Back up and Gravity does his slow

motion walk (because of gravity issues you see) before being sent outside for a big dive from Komander. One heck of a shooting star press gives Komander two but Gravity sends him outside. A big running dive is teased but Gravity flips onto the top turnbuckle instead, setting up the dive instead (that was cool).

Back in and Komander kicks him down but his moonsault hits raised boots. A sitout powerbomb gives Gravity two but Komander faceplants him down. With Gravity rolling to the floor, Komander hits the big multiple springboard spinning dive but Gravity crotches him back inside. Komander drops him ribs first on the top and hits the rope walk moonsault for two. Gravity gets planted again and tries to drag Komander to the middle of the ring, only to get small packed to give Gravity the pin at 10:02.

Rating: B-. This was on the weaker end for Komander, as he was taking a lot of time to set things up. The positive spin on that is that it played into the finish, with commentary pointing out that Komander was more worried about going for something cool rather than the pin. It's a solid choice to open the show, as despite not having a ton of importance, it had a lot of energy and that's a great thing.

TV Title: Dalton Castle vs. Samoa Joe

Castle, with the Boys, is challenging after winning a tournament. Stokely Hathaway joins commentary and Joe goes outside to glare at him to start. Back in and Castle takes a breather this time, meaning we get a lap around the ring. Castle comes inside again and starts striking away before tripping Joe down.

Some splashes to the back keep Joe down despite Castle's ribs being banged up. Back up and Joe is sick of Castle so it's a heck of a clothesline to put Joe in control. A chop to the back sets up the neck crank to keep Castle down. There's a

snap suplex for one and Joe sends Castle outside, only to have the Boys throw him back in.

Joe's powerslam gets two but a Boys distraction lets Castle get in a hurricanrana on the floor. There's the suicide dive to Joe, followed by a t-bone suplex. Joe is sent outside and tells Stokely to FIX THIS, which earns the Boys an ejection. The distraction lets Joe hit him low and grab the Koquina Clutch to retain at 11:40.

Rating: B-. Another good match but Joe's title reign has reached the point where it's probably time to take it from him. He doesn't defend it often and it isn't exactly changing much. Castle is such a ball of energy that it could have been interesting to see him get the title, though I can see why they've kept it on Joe here. Rather entertaining match, though some of that is Joe having to deal with Castle's antics.

Tag Team Titles: The Kingdom vs. Aussie Open vs. Best Friends vs. Lucha Bros

The Bros are defending and it's one fall to a finish. Chuck and Taven start things off but quickly hand it off to Bennett and Trent for the chop exchange. Fenix comes in and gets slammed by Fletcher, setting up a double Aussie elbow. We settle down to the Bros and the Aussies exchanging kicks to the head as everything breaks down. The Best Friends are sent outside but rent is back in to superplex Bennett onto the pile.

Back in and Taven hits Aurora Borealis for two on Trent but the Proton Pack is broken up. Trent gets in a tornado DDT and he reluctantly brings in Penta for a high crossbody to the Kingdom. The Fear Factor gets two on Taven but the Aussies kick Penta down. Fenix gets dropped into a cutter from the top and the Aussies kick people in the face. The Whirlybird gets two on Penta but the Kingdom is back in with the Rockstar Supernova for two, with Chuck making the save.

Hail Mary is broken up but the big hug is broken up as well. Soul Food into the dragon suplex drops Bennett but Maria gets on the apron and opens her jacket for a hug from Chuck. Trent gets said hug instead (Caprice: "BROS BEFORE MARIA!") but Davis pulls him into a piledriver.

The Bros are back in with the spike Fear Factor to Davis for two, with Bennett making the save. Hail Mary and the Proton Pack are both broken up and Storm Zero hits Bennett, with the Bros having to pull the referee at two. Penta takes out Trent and Davis has to make a diving save. The Coriolis hits Trent to give the Aussies the pin and the titles at 17:13.

Rating: B. This was all about the insanity and everyone making diving saves, so it was certainly not boring. At the very least, it ends the Bros' completely nothing reign and if the Aussies are actually around, they could make quite the champs. The titles really needed to change hands here and while the Kingdom feel like the better option, I'll take the Aussies over either the Bros or the Friends. Heck of an entertaining match here and they did what they should have done with it.

The Righteous and Stu Grayson threaten the Dark Order with pain, bruises and agony.

Six Man Tag Team Titles: Master Wato/Ryusuke Taguchi/Leon Ruffin vs. The Embassy

The Embassy is defending and Cage gets triple teamed to start, which is quickly broken up by Loa. Ruffin is suplexed hard into the corner and the champs take over in a hurry. Cage comes in to get in his own shots as we see Big Bill watching in the back. Kaun hits a running backplash for two but Ruffin grabs a jawbreaker.

A clothesline drops Ruffin again though and the beating gets to continue. Ruffin manages to reverse a backbreaker onto the top turnbuckle into a DDT and it's Wato coming in to clean house. Kaun has had it and grabs a suplex but Taguchi is back

in with the Funky Weapon. The ankle lock has Kaun in big trouble until Toa makes the save.

Taguchi gives Cage a 619 but Kaun elbows Ruffin's head off. There's a low blow to stagger Kaun though and a small package gives Taguchi two. Back in and Ruffin hits a flipping cutter on Cage but Toa gives him a swinging backbreaker for two. The champs all grab Ruffin and throw him into the air for the crash to retain the titles at 11:38.

Rating: C+. And that's a Six Man Tag Team Title match, as the action was fine but there is nothing resembling a division, meaning there is little reason to get behind the challengers. Ruffin can sell rather well and knows how to play his size. Wato and Taguchi were just there and there was little reason to believe the titles were changing hands. As has been the case for months. Ring Of Honor might want to work on that.

Pure Rules Title: Katsuyori Shibata vs. Daniel Garcia

Shibata is defending and takes Garcia to the mat to start for the stomp onto the fingers. A Figure Four has Garcia going straight to the ropes and taking a breather on the floor. That's fine with Shibata, who sends Garcia into the barricade a few times to put Garcia down again. Garcia gets in a quick shot though and holds up the title for some showboating.

Back in and Garcia works on a nasty hammerlock but Shibata pops up for the standoff. Garcia dances so Shibata sits down and grabs the arms. There's the slap to Garcia and Shibata takes him into the corner for the running basement dropkick. Garcia is right back with an STF but Shibata reverses into a bow and arrow.

An exchange of suplexed leave them both down and they slug it out from their knees. Garcia charges into a boot to the face and they trade clotheslines for another double knockdown. They slug it out until Garcia gets the Dragon Tamer. Shibata escapes as well and wins a chop off, setting up the sleeper.

The PK retains the title at 14:34.

Rating: B. This felt like the time to give Garcia the title but keeping it on Shibata is certainly a logical choice as well. I can't imagine Shibata holds the title that much longer, as it isn't like he is anything more than a glorified special attraction. The Pure division isn't much but I'll take Shibata retaining over having to see even more Garcia. Good match here, as they were beating each other up while telling the silly vs. serious story.

Post match Shibata shakes his hand but Garcia pulls away.

Aussie Open is proud of their win and promise more.

Dark Order vs. Righteous/Stu Grayson

Fight Without Honor, meaning anything goes. Uno hammers on Grayson to start but Grayson sends him to the apron for a spear through a well placed table. Dutch brings in a barbed wire 2x4 and Reynolds is already busted open. Silver busted out the bag of thumb tacks but is quickly Boss Man Slammed onto them for two. Uno chairs Grayson in the back but Vincent makes the save.

Vincent tears the mask open and Uno is cut, with Vincent hammering at the gash. Reynolds is back in with a chair for the save and the finishing sequence gets two on Dutch. Now it's Uno getting his own bag containing....Legos. A triple flipping slam to Grayson is broken up, leaving Dutch to powerbomb Uno onto the Legos.

Vincent tries a Swanton to the floor onto Silver on the table, which doesn't break at all. Back in and Uno gets powerbombed onto the Legos for two, meaning it's time to head up to the stage. Dutch is slammed through a table off the stage, leaving Silver to kick away at Vincent inside. Grayson kicks Uno down and sets up a huge ladder but takes WAY too long to climb. Instead, Grayson crashes through a table, minus Uno. The Order

triple slams Grayson for the pin at 15:36.

Rating: B-. It was your usual six man weapons match with the big ladder at the end being the high point. This was the big victory for Evil Uno over Stu Grayson, which in theory should set up a singles match to wrap everything up for them for good. It's still not a very interesting feud as there hasn't been an overly clear explanation for WHY Grayson walked out, but at least they got to the big team match here.

Ring Of Honor World Title: Claudio Castagnoli vs. Pac

Castagnoli is defending and hits a quick Swiss Death for an early two. They head outside with Castagnoli dropping him onto the barricade but the Swing is broken up inside. Back to the floor and up the ramp they go, with Castagnoli Swinging him on the stage. Castagnoli comes up favoring his knee though, allowing Pac to score with a top rope moonsault back at ringside.

A whip sends Castagnoli's knee into the barricade again, setting up a missile dropkick for two back inside. The top rope superplex gives Pac two but Castagnoli is back up to send Pac crashing through a well placed ringside table. Back in and the seated elbows into the Neutralizer gives Castagnoli two. Pac fights up and starts striking away until Castagnoli blasts him with a clothesline to leave them both own.

With Pac on the apron, the apron superplex is blocked but a super hurricanrana is blocked as well. What looked to be a super Riccola Bomb is countered into a hurricanrana. The lack Arrow misses for Pac but the Riccola Bomb is once again countered, this time into the Brutalizer. Castagnoli has to climb the corner for a super Air Raid Crash to escape so Pac goes for the turnbuckle. Cue Wheeler Yuta to distract Pac, allowing Castagnoli to hit a running Riccola Bomb to retain ta 18:56.

Rating: B. You knew what you were going to get here and it

still worked very well. These guys beat the figure out of each other, though suddenly having Wheeler come in to give us the lame distraction finish didn't help. The good thing is that Pac can slug just as hard as Castagnoli, meaning Pac can hang with him the entire way. Best match on the show here, which was all but guaranteed given who was in there.

Post match the Lucha Bros come in for the beatdown but the Best Friends and Orange Cassidy make the save. Cassidy Orange Punches Castagnoli and stands tall.

Here's what's coming on various shows.

Ring Of Honor Women's Title: Athena vs. Willow Nightingale

Athena is defending in the rubber match and immediately bails to the floor. Back in and Willow powers her around before they forearm it out. Athena gets two off a crucifix but Willow's fisherman's buster gets the same. A crucifix gives Athena two and she sends Willow outside in a crash. Back in and the double knees connect in the corner, setting up the chinlock.

Willow powers her way up and hammers away, only to get dropped with a quick shot to the face for two. Willow is fine enough to try the Babe With The Powerbomb but Athena reverses into a snapmare driver for two. Willow's swinging neckbreaker gets two but Athena is right back with Obliteration. She muscles Willow up and into a sitout powerbomb for two (that was impressive) before going up.

That takes too long as well though and Willow grabs a super Death Valley Driver for a rather near fall. They head outside and Athena posts her, setting up the O Face for a VERY near fall back inside. The Babe With The Powerbomb gets the same but Athena is back up with another O Face. The crossface goes on and Athena even grabs a leg. Willow passes out to retain Athena's title at 20:28.

Rating: B-. Well. Ok then. I'm not sure what this weird

obsession Ring Of Honor has lately with the heroes losing in the end but they did it again here. It also makes me wonder why the Owen Hart tournament wasn't just for the title shot with someone else in Athena's place, thereby giving us the same result and no Athena loss. They had a hard hitting fight, but that was one more deflating ending on a long list of them in Ring Of Honor's recent history. Someone is going to have to beat Athena, and it's going to have to be an AEW import at this point. Anyway, solid main event with a rather surprising result.

Post match respect is actually shown to end the show.

Overall Rating: B. As is usually the case with these shows, the action was good, but as is becoming the case with these shows, there is a grand total of nothing to really make you feel good. The biggest happy moment here was Evil Uno (a heel in AEW mind you) getting a pin over Stu Grayson. Willow doesn't win the big one, the Best Friends don't win the Tag Team Titles and Pac, who isn't really a face but he could have beaten the villain, loses too. This had a bunch of mostly good matches with some strange decisions, but what do you expect from a slapped together pay per view?

Results

Josh Woods b. Tracy Williams – Guillotine choke

Action Andretti/Darius Martin b. Workhorsesmen – Torture rack neckbreaker to Drake

Leyla Hirsch b. Trish Adora – Cross armbreaker

AR Fox b. Shane Taylor – 450

Gravity b. Komander – Small package

Samoa Joe b. Dalton Castle – Koquina Clutch

Aussie Open b. Best Friends, The Kingdom and Lucha Bros – Coriolis to Beretta

Mogul Embassy b. Leon Ruffin/Master Wato/Ryusuke Taguchi – Triple toss into the air to Ruffin

Katsuyori Shibata b. Daniel Garcia – PK

Dark Order b. Righteous/Stu Grayson – Triple slam to Grayson

Claudio Castagnoli b. Pac – Running sitout Riccola Bomb
Athena b. Willow Nightingale via referee stoppage

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