

Evolve – March 18, 2026: Because They Put In The Work

Evolve

Date: March 18, 2026

Location: WWE Performance Center, Orlando, Florida

Commentators: Blake Howard, Peter Rosenberg

It's time for another title match and one way or another, the title is changing hands tonight. Jackson Drake is defending the Evolve Title against Aaron Rourke in Drake's last match as part of Evolve and either loses the title or vacates it after winning. That's quite the big deal for Rourke so let's get to it.

[Here are last week's results if you need a recap.](#)

The Vanity Project is in the back and talk about how they feel like they were just formed a few days ago. They go over the people that Jackson Drake has defeated to retain the Evolve Title and say Aaron Rourke will be light work tonight.

Opening sequence.

Kam Hendrix vs. Dante Chen

Harley Riggins is here with Hendrix. Chen shoves his way out of the corner to start but Hendrix takes him down by the arm. Hendrix cranks on an armbar, which doesn't last long as Chen snaps off about a dozen armdrags in a row to send Hendrix outside. Back in and Hendrix drops him with a rolling clothesline and we hit the chinlock.

Another rolling clothesline is countered into a German suplex though and Chen gets a breather. Chen knocks him outside for a suicide dive, followed by a springboard chop to the head back inside. Riggins offers a distraction though and it's Lights, Kam, Action for the pin on Chen at 4:39.

Rating: C. Well at least Hendrix won. Hendrix really got my attention when he helped run the show and hopefully that leads to some better things for him. He certainly has charisma and can talk rather well so it would be nice to see something else. A win is a start, and having Riggins as a sidekick is far from a bad idea.

Post match Hendrix and Riggins call out Tate Wilder.

Timothy Thatcher is in his office and messing with a lamp but he has some updates. The Women's Title will be addressed next week, but in two weeks, we'll have some new talent being showcased. It's Gal comes in to ask about himself and gets a wad of paper thrown in his face. Thatcher asks if Gal wants attention, he can be on the April 1 show. Gal: "It's Gal. It's Gal. It's Gal." Thatcher: "I've got to get a lock for that door."

Braxton Cole reads Aristotle and says he is the epitome of privilege with an education from Brown University. He is the perfect combination of brains and brawn and you'll see why he is straight A's all the way. That's more than we've ever heard about him so I'll take it.

Laynie Luck vs. Zena Sterling

Sterling works on a headlock to start but gets her leg swept out for a fast two. An armbar works a bit better for Sterling and she drops Luck with a shoulder. Luck is back up to send her to the apron for a Codebreaker, followed by a top rope double stomp onto the apron (ouch). The seated abdominal stretch goes on for a bit until Sterling escapes, setting up a big slugout. Sterling gets in a reverse DDT but Luck is right back with the Death Valley Driver for the fast pin at 4:45.

Rating: C+. Neither of these two have much of anything going on at the moment but it's nice to see Luck getting a win. She's been around the independent scene for such a long time and it's awesome to see her finally getting a chance on a

bigger platform. This win isn't much but much like the opener, it's certainly better than nothing.

Mike Cunningham talks to Lince Dorado in the parking lot and talks about growing up watching him. Dorado isn't overly impressed but agrees to a match with Cunningham.

Here is Cappuccino Jones for a chat. Jones is ready to see Aaron Rourke take the Evolve Title tonight and bring it home with everyone in his corner. On his own side though, he's tired of dealing with Brooks Jensen, who can remember any match but not the time when Jones beat him in the gauntlet match. Now he wants to fight so here is Jensen, who agrees to the match for next week.

Luca Crusifino gives Chuey Martinez a friendship bracelet and explains how inspired he was to roll all the way through Evolve. He is most effective when his energy is vibrating with love and it's all "plur". That means Peace, Love, Unity and Respect, which needs to be used more in Evolve. This is...I don't know actually and I think I'd rather keep it that way.

Evolve Title: Aaron Rourke vs. Jackson Drake

Drake is defending. They fight over wrist control to start with Rourke rolling him up for two. Rourke flips out of a belly to back suplex and dropkicks him to the floor as we take a break. We come back with Drake still in trouble but Brad Baylor offers a distraction on the floor. That's enough for Drake to grab a headlock on the mat, which is quickly reversed into a headlock.

Drake slips out of that and stomps away to take over, setting up a knee drop for two. A Russian legsweep gives Drake two and we hit the chinlock. That's broken up so Drake goes up, where he blocks a super hurricanrana attempt. Drake's brainbuster gets two but Rourke ducks a superkick and hits a German suplex. Now the super hurricanrana connects and Eat Defeat gets two. A spinning Vader Bomb elbow gets two more and they

go to the apron, where Drake manages a fast suplex.

We take another break and come back again with Rourke taking over and grabbing a half crab. Rourke stomps away at Drake, who comes back with a penalty kick for one. Rourke gets fired up but the referee is bumped, meaning Swipe Right can come in for the Super Swipe. That's only good for two so Drake hits a Burning Hammer, followed by the Unaliving...for two more. Drake goes up but gets speared out of the air. Over The Rainbow gives Rourke the title at 14:08.

Rating: B. This is where Evolve feels different. On the surface, Rourke is not someone who feels like he would be the top star anywhere. It feels like a less than serious character that we've seen for years and would mostly be relegated to bad comedy. The difference is that Rourke was treated differently and it started with those vignettes and interviews with him a few months ago. They let you get to know him and made you want to like him, which wound up being the case. Without that kind of stuff, this doesn't work, but because they put in the groundwork earlier, this is a pretty awesome moment.

As for the match itself, it was another chance for Drake to show what he could do, as he has come a VERY long way during his title run. After basically being just another guy at first, he wound up having a rather nice title reign and that makes Rourke being the one to beat him feel that much more important. This felt like a big time match and that is rather impressive as it wouldn't seem likely on paper.

Post match the locker room comes in to celebrate with Rourke, who accidentally drops the title before posing with it to end the show.

Overall Rating: B-. This was obviously all about the main event and that worked rather well. That was pretty much the only thing that felt important here, which is why it was nice for this show to be a bit shorter. They didn't stretch it out

longer than necessary and that made things a bit easier. I liked the title change a good bit and Thatcher's stuff was amusing as usual, so call it enough of a success this week.

Results

Kam Hendrix b. Dante Chen – Lights, Kam, Action

Laynie Luck b. Zena Sterling – Death Valley Driver

Aaron Rourke b. Jackson Drake – Over The Rainbow

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