

# NXT – September 25, 2013: A New Era In NXT

## NXT

Date: September 25, 2013

Location: Full Sail University, Winter Park, Florida

Commentators: Tom Phillips, William Regal

It's finally the start of a new set of tapings meaning things will start changing around here again. The main story tonight is a major announcement to be made by HHH. Let's get to it. They've got a long way to go to top how fun last week's show but maybe they can go in a different direction this time around. Let's get to it.

Tyler Breeze came in to see Brad Maddox earlier but CJ Parker interrupted them both. Apparently there's going to be a tag team turmoil match tonight for a future title shot. Naturally Parker and Breeze get teamed together.

Welcome Home.

## Tag Team Turmoil

You know the drill here I'm sure: two teams start and the winning team advances to face whomever the third team is, last team standing wins. We start with Colin Cassady/Enzo Amore vs. Breeze/Parker. Enzo insists that every other team in this match is S-A-W-F-T, or as the crowd says, SAWFT! The fans think Breeze is gorgeous.

Regal says that Amore and Cassady have been banned from all Disney parks and Walt Disney is spinning in his fridge over it. Parker and Amore get things going with CJ busting out an airplane spin. CJ hits a pair of knees in the corner but stops to look at Breeze, allowing Cassady to come

in for the spinning sitout Rock Bottom for the elimination at 1:20. Well that was quick.

Sylvester LeFort introduces Scott Dawson and Alexander Rusev as the next team. Dawson has a bad limp and the team is apparently called the Fighting Legionaries. Cassady starts with Dawson and the size difference is remarkable. Dawson gets taken down to the mat in a surprise move but it's off to Rusev for the power battle. A quick Samoan drop puts the legal Amore in and it's back to Dawson who sends Enzo into the corner. Dawson hits a big spinebuster to crush Amore but Enzo grabs a small package for the pin at 4:17 total.

Rusev destroys Amore and heeeeeeeeere's Ascension. O'Brian cranks on Cassady's neck after the break before it's off to Victor to pound away. Rick pounds away in multiple corners but charges into an elbow to the jaw to give Cassady a breather. Not that it matters as O'Brian comes back in for a bunch of shoulder blocks. Cassady gets a big boot for two and it's hot tag to Amore, only to have him walk into the flapjack and whatever Ascension calls Total Elimination for the final pin at 8:13 shown of 11:43.

**Rating:** C. Lack of Tyler Breeze aside, this wasn't too bad. The fans are completely behind Amore and Cassady as a face act but Ascension running them over at the end is the perfect call. There isn't much of a division at this point, but with just an hour a week what more can you ask for?

### Bayley vs. Sasha Banks

Renee Young is on commentary as her takeover of WWE television continues. Summer Rae and those legs of hers are with Sasha here. Bayley takes Sasha into the corner and hits a chop to her delight. Sasha comes back with rapid fire chops to almost scare Bayley out of her boots. Bayley gets dropped face first out of the corner for two as it's all Banks so far. We hit the chinlock as Regal hits on Renee.

A snap suplex gets two on Bayley but she comes back with forearms in the corner. Sasha comes back with a HARD overhand chop followed by an armdrag out of the corner. Bayley sends her into the corner and grabs the Hugplex (I didn't name it that) for two. Not that it matters as Sasha hooks a double arm neckbreaker (think Sandow's Terminus) for the pin at 4:00.

**Rating:** D+. Not much to see here but the fans are totally into Bayley's starstruck stuff. Sasha is just another evil Diva but she has a nice presence in the ring to make up for it. The match was more about character development for Banks but Bayley helped get things to work as well as they did.

Renee thinks Sasha is evil for breaking Bayley's headband because you don't mess with another girl's hair products. Summer says Fandango will be here next week. She and Sasha run things around here since Paige and Emma have been run off. Cue Emma to chase both girls off.

Aiden English sings about walking to the ring ("And all the while you get to hear me sing") as the brilliance of such a simple idea continues.

#### Aiden English vs. Bull Dempsey

English grabs a quick headlock ("THE DAY IS MINE!") and kicks Dempsey in the head for two. A legdrop sets up the Side Effect, which may be called Take a Bow, for the pin at 1:40.

The fans get the encore they demand.

Summer Rae challenges Emma to find a partner to meet herself and Fandango in a mixed tag.

#### El Local vs. Sami Zayn

The place pops BIG for Zayn. Local is of course Ricardo Rodriguez under a

mask. The Ole chants begin at the bell as they trade wristlocks. Zayn comes back with some armdrags and Local is in trouble. A nice hurricanrana gets two on Local but he comes back with a clothesline into a backbreaker (as in Sami's back landed on Local's knee on the way down from the clothesline) for two of his own. Local hooks a chinlock but Sami comes back with the leg lariat and the running boot to the face for the pin at 2:58. Squash for Zayn.

Post match here's Bo Dallas to say that he's finally healed after Zayn injured him at Summerslam Axxess. He's ready to put the title on the line in the Bo Dallas Invitational with anyone being welcome to enter. If anyone can pin him, they'll get a title shot in three weeks. Wait is the invitational for the title or a title shot a few weeks later? Zayn says he'll be the first to sign up and they can do it right now. Dallas says hold on a second because Sami isn't eligible to enter.

Kassius Ohno comes in to see Brad Maddox and wants to know why he isn't on NXT. Maddox says Kassius is a D+/C- talent, so Kassius suggests that he interrupt every match from now on. Brad blames it on "them", but is threatened into a match with a member of the Wyatt Family next week.

Here's HHH for the big announcement. He talks about how awesome people like Leo Kruger, Sami Zayn, Bo Dallas, Adrian Neville and Corey Graves are because they're the future of WWE. However, there have been some issues lately with the Rhodes family, primarily with Dusty Rhodes.

See, Dusty is the GM of NXT and that might not be what's best for business anymore. Therefore, Dusty has been given some time off and we have a new interim GM: John Bradshaw Layfield. JBL comes out in full on EVIL rich guy mode, telling the fans that this isn't sing-a-long with the wrestling god so shut your mouths. He welcomes us to his era to end the show.

**Rating:** B. Another solid show from the boys in Florida here. The JBL as GM idea is perfect as Bradshaw is about as perfect as you can get for a

villain when he's in full heel mode. That's a good change for the show and JBL could still be a good adversary for a number of people in NXT. Good show this week as NXT keeps rolling along.

### Results

Ascension won tag team turmoil last eliminating Colin Cassady/Enzo Amore

Sasha Banks b. Bayley – Neckbreaker

Aiden English b. Bull Dempsey – Side Effect

Sami Zayn b. El Local – Running boot to the face

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## **Thought of the Day: One At A Time**

So for the first time in forever I'm watching a WWE (Evolution of a Predator) and the DVD opens at Elimination Chamber. The narrator talks about how the Elimination Chamber is special because it only happens once a year. Not only does it happen more than once a year, it happens more than once a night. Just the sound of that on paper cuts down on how special the match should be. Make it once a year or at least give us several months between each match.

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# Thought of the Day: WWE Is Rocking Right Now

Really, they are. They have great talent down in NXT, a solid (though confusing) main event storyline, part timers doing what they should be doing, John Cena and Sheamus waiting in the wings, and Punk/Heyman owning the world. What more can you really ask for?

And cue everyone saying that WWE sucks.

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## Monday Night Raw – March 29, 1999: Did We Miss The Wrestlemania Turn Off?

### Monday Night Raw

Date: March 29, 1999

Location: Continental Airlines Arena, East Rutherford, New Jersey

Attendance: 15,213

Commentators: Michael Cole, Jerry Lawler

It's the night after Wrestlemania and the big story is Rock losing the WWF Title to Steve Austin. This will only serve to continue the war between Vince and Austin but at the same time we're continuing Vince vs. Undertaker. We're starting on the road to Backlash now which would be the

final In Your House PPV. Let's get to it.

We open with a recap of Austin's road back to the title, including the beer truck attack from last week.

Opening sequence.

Here's the new champion to open the show to an eruption, wearing black jeans for the only time I ever remember. Austin says he did exactly what he said he would do: head to Philadelphia, go up route 3:16 and burn the Smackdown Hotel to the ground. Now that we've got the sentimental crap out of the way, Austin thinks the WWF Title belt isn't worth all the trouble and aggravation. He wants Vince out here right now so he can relinquish the belt.

Vince cautiously comes to the ring and after taking forever to come down the aisle, Austin hands him the belt like it's no big deal. Vince goes to leave but Austin says it's not that easy. Austin has some footage for Vince, which shows McMahon running away with the WWF Title at Breakdown and then taking the Smoking Skull belt with him as a trophy. Vince can have the belt but Austin is the WWF Champion and there's nothing that can be done about that.

He wants Vince to bring the Smoking Skull belt back because that's the one he wants. If Vince doesn't have it back here in two hours, he'll be getting the beating of his life. McMahon says no because that belt reminds him that he owns a piece of Stone Cold. Austin looks ready for a Stunner but Vince says if Austin attacks him without being provoked, Vince can fire him on the spot. Austin has another clip from last night, showing Vince stomping Austin down in the corner. That sounds like provocation to Austin, so the two hours are ticking away. Vince hits Austin in the back with the belt and runs away.

A lot of people arrive at the show.

Vince sends Stephanie to get the belt.

### Sable/Jacqueline vs. Tori/Ivory

Sable is looking GREAT in a half shirt and some tiny shorts. This is a result of Jackie burning Ivory's face with a cigar last night on Heat. Ivory jumps Jackie to start and there's a giant swing for good measure. Off to Tori as Ivory chases Terri up the ramp for lighting another cigar. Sable is still holding the belt on the apron which she uses to clock Jackie in the back of the head. Tori gets the worst backslide ever for the pin.

Tori and Sable are about to brawl when the Ministry of Darkness interrupts. Sable can't escape because there are ropes with huge gaps between them behind her. Taker says he wants to see what she's got. Sable starts doing the grind so Taker grabs her by the throat. He says he's got Vince's meal ticket so he needs to get out here right now to save her.

Vince tells Shane to stay in the back with Stephanie while he takes care of this. Isn't she supposed to be going to Connecticut? Vince comes out, drops the mic and then heads right back through the curtain. He sprints to the back, screaming for Stephanie but finding no daughter in the dressing room. Vince yells at Shane as we take a break.

Back from a break with Vince telling Shane not to call the cops and saying Stephanie must be in the parking lot. Instead of, you know, going to look for her, he walks around the dressing room. This is very interesting to see when you know what's coming in the story.

Here's a sullen X-Pac with something to say. He came back here a year ago because of a phone call from HHH saying DX was falling apart. Then last night HHH turned on him by making a choice. The Outlaws and X-Pac will be out here every week to tell Hunter to suck it until the day they die. HHH's name may be Hunter, but tonight he's the hunted. Nice line there.



Vince gets a call from Undertaker saying she really is sugar and spice and everything nice.

### Big Show vs. Test

Big Show is freshly face after objecting to Vince yelling at him last night. A boot to the face sets up the chokeslam to end Test in about 30 seconds.

Big Show talks about how Vince is having some personal trauma right now, but Show doesn't really care. Vince thought that he owned Big Show but no one owns him at all. It was Vince that said when Big Show got to the WWF, everything was going to change. Starting tonight, Vince is going to eat those words.

Vince sends Shamrock to find Stephanie.

### Hardcore Title: Steve Williams vs. Hardcore Holly

Holly won the title back last week and is defending here as a result of accidentally breaking JR's broadcast table a few weeks back. Williams pounds Holly into the corner to start but Holly comes back with kicks of his own. Steve comes back with a quick belly to belly suplex as JR gets on (Spanish) commentary to rant about wanting to go back to work. Williams goes after Holly's leg, wrapping it around the post for good measure.

Nothing about this has been hardcore so far. A knee crusher has Holly in trouble but he comes back with a DDT before rolling to the outside. Here's a table but Williams hits a quick powerslam to drive Holly through, only to take out the referee in the process. Cue Al Snow with a frying pan to lay out Williams to keep the title on Holly.

**Rating:** D. They managed to make a hardcore match boring. That's really

hard to do when you think about how insane some of these matches could be. The JR/Steve Williams stuff needs to wrap up soon as there's just nothing interesting at all in there. People don't want to boo JR and these heel turns never work for him.

### The Rock vs. Billy Gunn

Shane joins commentary. Rock powers Billy into the corner and fires off right hands as Shane goes nuts. Billy comes back with a drop toehold and a dropkick before working on the arm for a bit. Rock slugs Gunn down as Shane tells everyone to focus. A suplex gets two for the Great One and there's a Stun Gun to Gunn for two more. They head outside with Billy being sent into the barricade and Rock jumping on commentary, only to have Billy flash him for no apparent reason. Back in and Billy fires off some right hands, only to be caught in the Rock Bottom and the People's Elbow (BIG ovation) for the pin.

**Rating:** D+. Rock's face turn is imminent at this point for the same reasons it happened last time: you can't hold that kind of charisma down. The other thing to remember is that Rock never really turned face in 1998. He just started fighting heels but still talked the same trash and acted arrogant before joining up with Vince and company. Billy Gunn continues to get on my nerves.

Shamrock says he'll beat the information out of whomever he has to in order to get Vince's baby girl back.

Austin watches the clock.

### Ken Shamrock vs. Gangrel

Shamrock starts fast and wins a quick slugout with a clothesline. Gangrel comes back with a quick powerslam for two and a DDT for the same. Ken fires off a dropkick and demands to know where Stephanie is. He takes

Gangrel to the floor and sends him into the steps before shoving the referee for getting in Shamrock's way.

Gangrel is rammed into various objects but still says he doesn't know where she is. Some whips into the steps soften Gangrel up a bit more before we head back inside for right hands and more interrogation. The fans get distracted by something so Shamrock stalls for a bit. The belly to belly sets up an ankle lock on Gangrel to end the massacre.

**Rating:** D+. This was much more of a match than an angle which makes it hard to grade. Gangrel was there as a warm body for Shamrock to beat on which is probably the best idea given his rather limited in ring skills. At least this short match had a purpose, unlike a lot of other stuff you'll see around here.

Post match Edge and Christian come after Shamrock and the lights go out. Shamrock gets a blood bath but he grabs Christian by the ankle. He cranks on the hold until Christian says Stephanie is in the basement.

Post break Shamrock is in the basement to find the lost princess.

### Intercontinental Title: Road Dogg vs. Goldust

Feeling out process to start until Ryan Shamrock heads to the ring, only to be sent to the back by Blue Meanie. Roadie pounds Goldie into the corner before Goldust cranks on the champion's arm. Road Dogg comes back with a rollup for two and we stop again. Shattered Dreams is blocked by the referee but Road Dogg goes after Blue Meanie for some reason. Meanie accidentally splashes Goldust and Road Dogg bulldogs Meanie into Goldust's crotch. The juke n jive sets up the shaky knee drop, only to have to escape the Curtain Call. Meanie clocks Dogg with the belt, allowing the Curtain Call to connect for the title.

**Rating:** D. How in the world do you overbook a match that runs four

minutes? Also I don't get the mentality of having the title change here instead of doing it the night before at WRESTLEMANIA. These guys were the last two in the fourway last night, so why not give Goldie the title there? Nothing match which was WAY overdone.

Post match Goldust says that was a raging climax, which was the tagline of Wrestlemania last night. He says we'll know something very soon, whatever that means.

Shamrock finds Stephanie crying with the Ministry mark on her forehead.

Stephanie cries on her dad's shoulder. That's a relief. It had been a full ten minutes since we saw Vince.

Tag Titles: Owen Hart/Jeff Jarrett vs. Legion of Doom

It's a brawl to start of course with the LOD (flanked by Paul Ellering) cleaning house to start. Animal slams Jeff down for two and we're ready to go. The fans call Owen a nugget but an Animal suplex quiets them down. Jarrett's knee to the back allows Owen to kick Animal's head off to take over before it's off to Jeff. Animal comes back with a double clothesline and cleans house as Hawk finally comes in to help out. The Doomsday Device puts Owen down but there's no referee. Jeff cracks the guitar over Hawk's head and puts Owen on top to retain the belts.

Vince thanks Shamrock for his services and Shane has the Smoking Skull belt. Vince doesn't care because this night is over. Shane is tasked with giving the belt back to Austin. They leave but Shane says tonight isn't over.

X-Pac vs. HHH

Shane is out here with HHH, meaning odds are he didn't give Austin the belt back yet. It's a big brawl to start of course with HHH firing off

right hands to take over. Pac comes back with some kicks and chops, only to be taken down by the knee to the face. Another kick to the face puts HHH down but he misses the Bronco Buster. The facebuster puts Pac down again but he comes back with a spinwheel kick and the flipping clothesline, but Pac wants to chase Shane. He runs right into a Chyna clothesline, drawing the fast DQ.

**Rating:** C-. Nothing match again here as it's barely long enough to rate. The DX split was fine as they had pretty much done all they could have done, but HHH wasn't ready to go to that next level yet. Feuding with X-Pac didn't help either as Pac was nothing more than a midcarder, but at least he was over so the fans cared.

Shane, HHH and Chyna beat X-Pac down post match until Kane makes the save. Shane actually goes after him but the distraction doesn't help HHH all that much. Chyna's distraction on the other hand lets HHH hit Kane in the head with a chair for not much effect.

Shane stays in the ring for the big closing number with Austin. He says they're both champions and if Austin wants his belt, all he has to do is look around the waist of the most electrifying man in sports entertainment. Cue Rock with the title over his shoulder, making Shane look like a mean old liar. Rock gives Austin credit before changing his mind because there's nobody (crowd: "NOBODY!" Rock: "Don't do that.") that can take this belt from him. He may have lost last night, but it took TWO Stunners to do it.

Cue Austin for the fight with Rock sending him into the announce table. They head back inside and there's a Stunner for Shane, only to have Rock take him down again. The Skull belt to the head drops Austin and here's HHH to help with the beatdown. Shamrock and Test are here as well but Big Show makes the save, allowing Austin to stand back while he cleans house. A chokeslam to HHH ends the show.

**Overall Rating:** C. If you didn't know any better, odds are you wouldn't

know this wasn't the show after Wrestlemania. What happened tonight? Austin vs. Rock and Undertaker vs. Vince continued, a midcard title changed hands, and we had two show long angles, only of which barely had a resolution at all. This could have been any given Raw after any given PPV, which is really hard to get accept the night after Wrestlemania. Not a bad show, but I was expecting something very different.

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## **On This Day: September 25, 2013 – TNA Weekly PPV #13: How This Company Survived Amazes Me**

### **TNA Weekly PPV #13**

Date: September 25, 2002

Location: Tennessee State Fairgrounds Arena, Nashville, Tennessee

Commentators: Don West, Mike Tenay

So after last week's near disaster we're back to Tennessee for more of TNA's early nonsense. This week our main event is Jarrett vs. BG James to keep up the feud that no one is really interested in but it's Jarrett's company so there's not much else you can do. Other than that we've got Lynn vs. Killings again, although this time for the X Title. Let's get to

it.

We open in the back with Siaki and Lynn brawling due to Sonny costing Lynn the world title last week.

Tenay and West run down the card.

### Sonny Siaki vs. Jerry Lynn

Siaki is a more generic heel now and isn't dressed like Elvis anymore. Red takes him out before Siaki can even get to the ring with a senton followed by a shooting star off the apron. They head inside where Siaki comes back with a flapjack and neckbreaker for two, only to have Red snap off a pair of kicks. The Amazing one shrugs off some shoulders in the corner to hit a reverse tornado DDT for two more.

Red charges into a backdrop to send him to the floor though, allowing Siaki to drop him onto various metal things. Somewhat geeky manager Mortimer Plumtree is watching from the ramp. Back in and Siaki gets a few near falls off a belly to belly suplex before putting on a quick bearhug. Red fights out and seems to leave a leapfrog a bit short. Oh wait he landed on Siaki's back on purpose to turn it into a sunset bomb for two. Red hits a kind of STO off the middle rope but misses some kind of a dive off the top, allowing Siaki to hit a kind of neckbreaker for the pin.

**Rating:** C+. Good opener here with power vs. speed which almost never fails. Red was a flip machine which is fine, as Siaki played the heel role well at this point. I don't remember Red being around much before this so seeing him was a nice surprise for the fans. He would be a big cult favorite for a long time.

Post match Jorge Estrada pops up on the stage and says before tonight is over, he's getting Siaki's Elvis gear. I've heard of worse reasons for a feud.

In the back, Ron Killings is beating up Amazing Red, shouting that he's getting rid of the X-Division because it devalues the world title.

We recap America's Most Wanted (Harris and Storm) winning the tag belts last week.

## Tag Titles: James Storm/Chris Harris vs. Brian Lee/Ron Harris

This is a tables match and Harris/Storm aren't known as AMW yet. For the sake of simplicity, only Ron Harris will be referred to as Harris here. The challengers jump them to start and only one person has to go through the table for the win. It's Lee pounding on Chris to start but Chris comes back with a backdrop and clothesline to put both guys on the floor. Chris dives on Lee but gets caught, only to have Storm dive as well to take everyone down.

Another brawl breaks out as the tables haven't been a factor yet. Harris pounds Chris down before it's back to Lee for more slow pounding. Harris slides in a table and sets it up in the corner but Storm makes the save. After Storm is sent out, Harris powerslams Chris down instead of sending him through a table because Harris isn't that bright. He does the same thing with a suplex and it's off to Lee for some of the worst elbow drops you'll ever see. He basically pulls his elbow up before hitting Chris' chest.

Lee misses a top rope knee drop and Chris makes the tag off to Storm. Everything breaks down and Harris is knocked to the floor. Lee is sent to the apron but manages to clothesline both champions down. AMW fights up and knocks Lee off the apron through a table which I don't remember being set up to retain.

**Rating:** D-. Not only did the match suck, but did we really need a gimmick to protect RON FREAKING HARRIS and Brian Lee? TNA is trying to push AMW as a big deal but they can't even get a clean pin over these two lunkheads? Last week there was the mess with the ropes and now they have to have a tables match? Is Ron Harris' spot THAT important? The match sucked too as the tables were barely a factor.

Post match Harris beats up the champions and puts Storm through a table. Security comes out to break it up until Don Harris, Ron's twin brother, comes out for a staredown. The champions are a complete afterthought here, and we get the last thing we need here: ANOTHER guy named Harris.

In the parking lot, Bruce gets into a fight with a handicapped woman named Sara the Ticket Lady. Can we please end this character already?



Here's Ron Killings to complain about how bad of a town "Trashville" is. Truth complains about rats and says the fans wouldn't like them in their bed. That's either a stupid line or a REALLY clever insider lingo joke but we'll go with the former. He's also not happy with the prejudice going on around here because he hasn't seen Ricky Steamboat since he won the title. Truth doesn't like not having merchandise or a private dressing room and as he's starting to complain about the X-Division, here's BG James.

James talks about a posse in his pants and their time back in the WWF where James stood up for Truth with the boys in the back. They go back and forth with stupid lines and the brawl is on with BG taking over. BG says that just unlike Demi Moore and Tom Cruise, he can handle the Truth. Next.

Brian Lawler and his girlfriend April argue about nothing in particular. At least I think they do as you can hear JB hyping up the card to the live crowd in the background. I mean he's drowning out the interview.

### AJ Styles vs. Low Ki

This is 2/3 falls and the winner gets a shot at the X Title. Feeling out process to start as AJ cranks on the arm before they head to the mat for a headlock by Styles. Back up and Low Ki escapes the wristlock and chops away, only to be taken down by an atomic drop. Low Ki sends him to the floor and hits a running flip attack off the apron to take over again. Back in and a hard kick to AJ's back gets two and it's back to the chops to the neck.

AJ crotches him on the top rope and hits a backbreaker/gutbuster combo to take over again. A nice dropkick in the corner gets two for Styles but Low Ki comes back with some chops. Off to a chinlock with AJ's knee in Low Ki's back for a few seconds before a double clothesline puts both guys down. Back up again and Low Ki hits what we would call the Disaster Kick for two before putting on the seated Dragon Sleeper for the submission and the first fall.

The second fall begins with Low Ki being sent throat first into the middle rope and clotheslined down for two. A delayed suplex puts Ki down

and AJ pounds away. Styles hits a standing enziguri to put Low on the floor, but as he heads out, Low Ki kicks Styles in the head. AJ slams him down onto the ramp to break another Dragon Sleeper before we head back inside. A sunset bomb is countered by Low Ki but AJ keeps rolling into a sunset flip for the pin and the second fall.

AJ poses so Low Ki kicks him square in the jaw to send him to the floor. Once they're both on the floor, AJ takes out Low's knee before firing off kicks to the knee back inside. They both go up to the middle rope and after the Styles Clash is broken up, AJ comes off with a shin breaker to Low Ki. Off to a modified spinning toe hold but Low Ki rolls through it for two. Low Ki rolls through a powerbomb into a rana for two but can't hook the Dragon Sleeper again. After a somewhat botched rollup attempt, AJ hits the Clash for the pin and the title shot next week.

**Rating:** C+. Not bad here but the lack of selling got annoying after awhile. I'm still not a fan of Low Ki at all as the kicking drives me crazy, but at least he threw in some ranas here to keep things fresher. AJ getting back into the X Title picture was a solid idea as he and Lynn had the best matches in the company so far. Not bad at all here.

Jarrett says he'll eliminate Hall, Waltman and BG to get the title that he wants.

#### Elix Skipper/Brian Lawler vs. Scott Hall/Syxx-Pac

Skipper slips while trying to moonsault into the ring. Lawler makes sure to cover up his girlfriend's body during the entrance. Pac and Skipper start things off with Elix getting a crotch chop for his efforts. Hall gives Elix one of the same, sending Skipper into such a rage that he misses a spin kick. A second attempt connects with Pac's jaw and it's off to Hall vs. Lawler. Hall throws the toothpick at Lawler, sending him out to the floor in a fit. Back in, more stalling, more yelling at the girlfriend.

Off to Skipper again before Lawler has any contact at all. At least he earned his paycheck tonight. Anyway Elix gets pounded down and chokeslammed for two before bailing to the floor. Some double teaming by the heels allows them to crotch Hall on the post and it's off to Lawler

for some biting and punching. A suplex puts Hall down and it's off to Skipper for a top rope ax handle.

Hall puts Skipper down with a belly to back suplex but let's look at Lawler yelling at Don West for talking to April. Off to Syxx who cleans house. An X-Factor gets two on Skipper with Lawler making the save. Everything breaks down and Pac misses the Bronco Buster on Skipper. Lawler and Hall fight as Elix goes up top, only to dive into the X-Factor for the pin.

**Rating:** D. These matches with the big stars are getting to be insufferable. They're sloppy, by the book and really dull all the way throughout. I have no idea why Elix Skipper was involved in the match here but at least he was someone young and different from the regular "stars". Nothing to see here at all.

Post match Jarrett runs out to beat down Hall and Pac.

AJ implies that he wants a ladder match for the title.

Bruce comes out and calls himself the only woman in TNA. Sara the Ticket Lady comes out and yells and that's about it.

#### Kid Kash vs. Jorge Estrada

Feeling out process to start with Estrada taking over with an armdrag. Mortimer Plumtree is watching again as Jorge headscissors Kash down and clotheslines him to the floor. Jorge leaves a suicide dive WAY short and lands on his head in a SICK crash. Back in and Kash takes over with a double springboard backsplash for two back inside. Estrada thankfully doesn't have a broken neck and comes back with a hiptoss and a standing shooting star for two.

Jorge goes up but Kash shoves the referee into the ropes to crotch him down. A top rope rana brings Estrada down but Kash charges into an elbow in the corner. Kash pokes him in the eye and hits a DDT for two, only to have his rana countered into a powerbomb for two for Jorge. Estrada busts out the TCB (Taking Care of Business), a big flippy dive for the pin.

**Rating:** C. Just a battle of the flips here which is about what you would

expect from a show like this. Estrada isn't bad and Kash is Kash so the match was entertaining but the lack of selling continues. This is another match which was here to give us the post match stuff because we need our Elvis developments.

Estrada demands his suit back and we see Siaki burning it in a barrel.

We recap Siaki costing Lynn the world title last week.

#### X-Division Title: Ron Killings vs. Jerry Lynn

This is a lumberjack match and all of the lumberjacks are X-Division guys. Killings tries to bail to the floor early but Low Ki sends him back inside. Back in and Lynn pounds away with a bunch of right hands before bulldogging Truth down for two. Truth bails to the floor again for the same result, only this time he manages a top rope shoulder to take over. Now it's Jerry getting thrown to the floor for a stomping by Kash. AJ, the only X guy not at ringside, is on the stage with a ladder.

Back in and the challenger gets two off a backbreaker and the same from a powerslam. That works so well that Truth hits another one before putting on a front facelock with his feet on the ropes. Lynn comes back with a reverse DDT and a powerbomb for two more but Truth stops him cold with a low blow. Low Ki is annoyed and yells at Killings, so Jerry rams them together and hits a TKO to retain the title.

**Rating:** C-. So let me make sure I've got this straight. Truth is feuding with the X-Division, so his first match in the feud is against the champion. He loses there, so now he goes down the division to fight lower level talent, all while being the World Champion? Does this sound as stupid to anyone else but me? The match wasn't great but it was better than last week's mess.

West hypes up the show for next week.

#### BG James vs. Jeff Jarrett

Main event time. BG says he's Jeff's second mountain and he can't be negotiated. BG shouldered him down to start and pounds away with right hands. The shaky knee gets two but Jeff comes back with an enziguri to

take over. Roadie fires off the juke and jive as we hear about them being together in the WWF back in 95. Out to the floor for some chair shots from James to knock Jeff into the crowd.

Jarrett gets in some chair shots of his own to take over and we go back to ringside. Jeff slams him into the announce table and pounds on the back and face with the chair some more. Back inside we go for the running crotch again in 619 position and a sleeper by Jeff. James fights up after two arm drops and puts on a sleeper of his own, only to be suplexed down by Jarrett.

Both guys are down now which is likely a good thing given the ample gut that Road Dogg has on him at the moment. Back up and James takes over with right hands but the referee takes a shot to the head. Jeff wedges a chair between the ropes but goes face first into it instead, giving James two. Elix Skipper and Brian Lawler come out to help Jarrett but Jeff nails Lawler by mistake, giving BG two more. The referee gets rid of the cronies so Jeff can hit James with a chair for a near fall. BG hits the anal rape pumphandle for two, only to have Skipper and Lawler run in for a DQ.

**Rating:** D. Could this have been any more overbooked? At the end of the day this BG James/Jarrett/Lawler stuff is completely uninteresting and I'm still not sure why they're even fighting. The match was your standard Attitude Era brawl and the match was nothing of note. The X Title match really should have gone on last here.

Post match Hall and Syxx-Pac come out for the big brawl but Truth evens the odds and Jarrett and company stand tall to end the show.

**Overall Rating:** D. These shows are all suffering from the same problems: the overbooking of the main event and the lack of anyone caring about people like Lawler and BG James. Now I will give them this: they're logically setting up feuds and stories with what looks like a six man tag set up for next week. The X Title stuff is WAY better than anything else but it's not enough to get you through a two hour show.

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## **New E-Book: KB's Complete Monday Nitro Reviews Volume I**

Yes I've done it again, this time with the first in a series Monday Nitro reviews. Volume I covers everything from the first episode through the end of 1996, which includes a lot of awesome moments and matches. These shows feature a long series of Eddie Guerrero vs. Chris Benoit matches, a bunch of world title matches and changes, the New Japan invasion, the debut of Chris Jericho, the Alliance to End Hulkamania, the reformation of the Four Horsemen, and of course the rise of the NWO in their dominance of WCW.

This was one of the most important times in wrestling history as the way wrestling was presented on television was changed forever. The days of an hour of squash matches a week were gone and the flagship show was now on Monday nights. The Monday Night Wars were underway and this show rocked Monday Night Raw to its core. These shows still hold up today and are well worth checking out.

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KB

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# Monday Nitro – May 4, 1998: One Of The Fatal Bullets To WCW

**Monday Nitro #135**

Date: May 4, 1998

Location: Market Square Arena, Indianapolis, Indiana

Commentators: Tony Schiavone, Larry Zbyszko, Bobby Heenan, Mike Tenay

It's another two hour show this week instead of the usual three hours due to the NBA Playoffs. My response: God bless the NBA. We're closing in on Slamboree and the main story is the NWO civil war. Nash, Savage and Konnan have officially formed the Wolfpack who will have their own everything very soon. Let's get to it.

We open with a recap of Konnan joining Nash and Savage.

Opening sequence.

Nitro Girls.

The announcers talk about the NWO's troubles. Brian Adams has officially sided with Hogan.

Now for a change of pace, we get a recap of the Wolfpack forming and Nash wanting a piece of Hart. We also see Konnan joining the team for the second time in less than six minutes.

Here are Eddie and Chavo for a match. Before the match, Eddie says he's going to be a good example for Chavo. The announcers go nuts on Eddie as he calls out Scott Norton.

#### Eddie Guerrero vs. Scott Norton

Surprisingly enough, Eddie doesn't send Chavo in instead immediately. He actually waits about thirty seconds before "hurting his knee" and sending Chavo in to face Norton. Norton slugs away on Chavo in the corner and press slams him down before going after Eddie. Chavo uses the opening to dropkick Scott's knee a few times. Norton comes right back with a powerslam and the shoulder breaker for the pin. Squash.



Ultimo Dragon comes in to check on Chavo but Eddie tells him to get away.

### Scott Putski vs. Kidman

Tenay talks about how Putski's dad, Ivan, was more of a power guy. Larry: "Let me put it another way. Ivan was stupid." Putski slams Kidman down and drops an elbow for two but Kidman hits a running bulldog out of the corner to take over. Scott comes back with a sitout spinebuster as the Wolfpack comes through the crowd, complete with the red and black NWO logo shirts. They storm the ring to take out Putski for the fast DQ.

Nash says this is how things are going to be from now on. The Wolfpack is very hungry, so they're going to pick Sting and Giant's bones at Slamboree. Nash refers to the team as the red and black attack and says it's about to be a war between them and Hogan's crew. Savage says that Hogan's new friend Bret Hart won't get screwed unless that's something he wants.

Nash brings out the newest member of the Wolfpack: Curt Hennig. Bryan Adams comes out to ask Hennig what he's doing but Curt blows him off. Hennig takes off the black and white to reveal the Wolfpack colors. Konnan challenges Adams for later and Nash wants a piece of Sting, so why not have Nash vs. Luger to show Sting what he's in for.

Video on Raven, talking about being alone. He wasn't allowed to play ball with the other kids but they wouldn't have let him play anyway.

Here's Jericho with the picture of Malenko again. We also get a video featuring Malenko talking about his dad passing away. Jericho says Dean's dad Boris must be rolling in his grave over how much of a failure Dean is. Jericho dedicates his career to someone who is much better than Dean and knows far more holds: Bore-Us Malenko.

### Chris Jericho vs. Bore-Us Malenko

Malenko is a tiny guy in Dean's gear and this is about what you would expect. Jericho pulls Bore-Us on top of him for two before making a comeback and taming the Bore-Us lion for the win.

More Nitro Girls with Alex Wright interrupting them again.

We get Hogan's comments from last week which didn't really say anything.

### Hugh Morrus/Barbarian vs. Public Enemy

This is a street fight which is probably the best idea all around. Grunge whips Morrus with a big rope as Rocco blasts Barbarian in the head with a trashcan. Morrus comes back with a trashcan lid to Johnny's head as Barbarian crotches Rocco on the top rope. It's amazing how often one guy on a team making a comeback triggers the same comeback from his partner. Everyone gets inside for the first time, including Jimmy Hart to get in some stomps of his own. Barbarian misses a dive through a table but Morrus slams Rocco through one to make up for it. Hart hits Morrus by mistake and gets splashed by Grunge for the pin. Ok then.

Bryan Adams suggests that everyone here have a glass of shut up. Are you telling me that Rock was ripping off BRYAN FREAKING ADAMS??? After my mind is blown by that line, Adams tells us all that Hulk Hogan made wrestling and is the reason we're here tonight. He'll fight Konnan tonight too.

Video on Chris Benoit vs. Booker T, making it look like a big time rivalry. Benoit swears he made Booker tap out but Booker says he was reaching for the rope. The video isn't conclusive enough to tell either way. Another match is set for Slamboree.

Heenan joins commentary.

We look at the end of last Tuesday's show with Hart not explaining his

actions.

Hour #2 begins.

### Saturn vs. Hammer

Kidman says this is a loser leaves the Flock match. Hammer sends Saturn into the steps to take over and gets two off something like an airplane spin. Saturn comes back with a superkick and some chops in the corner followed by a Cactus Clothesline to take both guys to the outside. We look at Raven's dressing room to see the Flock watching the match. Saturn dives into a powerslam for no cover and a delayed superplex gets the same lack of cover.

Hammer goes for the legs but gets kicked into the ropes, setting up a top rope legdrop from Saturn. Saturn brings in a chair which is legal here it seems. A springboard dropkick using the chair knocks Hammer into the corner but a second attempt hits the referee. Saturn hits something like a Van Daminator and loads up the Death Valley Driver, only to have Kanyon come in dressed as a beer vendor. One beer case to the head is enough to knock Saturn out of the Flock.

**Rating:** D+. This was better than I expected and it's nice to see the Flock have a story outside of whatever Raven is doing at the moment. Saturn leaving the Flock is interesting, but he's always been the rebel of the group. Nice match here though and it should set the stage for more interesting stuff in the future.

Raven is mad and comes to the ring, only to have Page storm into the locker room with a stop sign and a bullrope around his neck for no apparent reason. Page drags Raven around the back and into the ring. Pyro goes off as Page comes down the ramp and scares everyone to death. The guys are tied by the neck but Raven comes back with a low blow to drop Page. DDP counters the Even Flow and hangs Raven over the ropes, drawing in security as we take a break.

More Nitro Girls as Tony tells us there's no Thunder again this week. Well if he insists.

### Sick Boy vs. Juventud Guerrera

Is this Flock Night or something? Sick Boy jumps Juv in the corner to start and stomps him down in the corner. An elevated Pedigree gets two for Boy but Juvy comes back with a spinwheel kick for two. The ring is soaked from Canyon's drinks so they keep slipping out there. Juvy is sent to the apron for a springboard missile dropkick and there's the Juvy Driver. Horace breaks up the 450 and that's a quick DQ.

Juvy gets out of the double team but the seven foot Reese is too much for him. He isn't however too much for Goldberg who makes the save and Jackhammers Reese.

Here's Rick Steiner for a chat with Gene. Rick wants his brother to come out here right now and tell him whether the Steiner Brothers are getting back together or if one of them will be left laying. If Scott has any guts, he'll be out here right now. Scott does come out, but on crutches.

Scott says he's lost friends and their parents aren't talking to him the same. Sometimes bad things happen like what happened to Bagwell, but Scott doesn't want something like that to get between the Steiners. Rick says they either fight it out right now or walk to the back together. Scott denounces Hogan and the NWO, saying he wants to reform the tag team.

Rick, somehow the smartest guy in the room, says he can't trust Scott, even as he appears to be on the verge of tears. The intelligence is short lived though as Rick says he'll give Scotty another chance, but if Scott stabs him in the back, Rick will hunt him until he dies. They hug and here's Adams with a ball bat. Scott is of course fine and cheers Adams on, confirming his loyalty to Hogan's camp.

## Bryan Adams vs. Konnan

Konnan goes right at Adams to start and clotheslines him down. Can we please get Konnan some fitted pants? All that tugging must get annoying. Adams comes back with a bad looking piledriver (Tony says it was the jumping variety despite the complete lack of jumping) and sends Konnan to the outside. Cue Bret Hart to get a cheap shot on Konnan and send him back inside. Adams gorilla presses Konnan down but Nash comes in for the DQ.

Adams gets jackknifed.

Nitro Girls again, this time in silver.

We look at the Nitro Party winner of the week.

## TV Title: Fit Finlay vs. Booker T

Fit takes him into the corner to start and hits a hard kick to the champion's back. Finlay cranks on the leg as Tony is thrilled to have Nitro back to three hours next week. Booker fights up with a good looking spin kick to the face before backdropping Finlay to the floor. Back in and Finlay hits a hard clothesline, only to be taken down by a running forearm. The ax kick puts Finlay down and the whip spinebuster does the same. There's a flapjack from the champion as Benoit saunters down to the ring. The distraction lets Finlay tombstone Booker down for the pin and the title.

**Rating:** D+. Nothing special here but it furthers the Booker vs. Benoit feud, which has already had developments since the last time we saw them. Over the last week, Booker and Benoit traded the TV Title at some house shows, but neither of Benoit's two wins were acknowledged tonight. Instead we need Finlay to get the title. That's not a knock on Finlay, but he hasn't done anything of note in months and he gets a title?

## Kevin Nash vs. Lex Luger

We have less than five minutes of air time left during Luger's entrance. Luger pounds away in the corner to start but a Konnan distraction allows Nash to kick him in the face. Nash fires off elbows in the corner and does the foot choke to really expand the offense. A running clothesline hits Luger in the corner but a second one runs into Luger's boot. Savage and Konnan get taken down but Nash gets in a cheap shot to take over again as the Wolfpack comes in for the fast DQ.

Sting and Giant come out to break up the Jackknife and start a fight. Adams comes out but Bret stops him from hitting the ring, wisely saying let them fight to end the show.

**Overall Rating:** C-. This is an interesting case for Nitro. On one hand, this was a story driven show which did the last thing WCW needed: put even more focus on the NWO. The silver lining for this show though was the length. It's amazing how much easier it is to sit through Nitro when it loses that third hour. There's a lot of good stuff in WCW, but the extra time is always given to pad out the bad stuff, dragging the show down in the process. Not a bad show here, but the bad is going to take over in a hurry.

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# On This Day: September 24, 2000 – Unforgiven 2000: Benoit... .WINS?

## Unforgiven 2000

Date: September 24, 2000

Location: First Union Center, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

Attendance: 18,092

Commentators: Jim Ross, Jerry Lawler

Well we begin the new shows in this series here. The main event is a fatal fourway with Rock defending the title against Kane, Undertaker and Benoit. Kane and Undertaker are feuding because they're Kane and Undertaker and Benoit was having a brief feud with Rock around this time that had some good matches. Also we get HHH vs. Angle in a match about Stephanie and Edge/Christian vs. the Hardys in a cage, which is a month after TLC I so I wouldn't expect a tag match of the year out of it. Let's get to it.

The opening video is the whole Judgment Day idea and how no one is forgiven. WWE really likes putting the religious overtones in these things don't they?

Oh and Austin is back tonight, looking for who ran him over.

Kevin Kelly is waiting on Austin to get here.

Dudley Boys/APA vs. Right to Censor

"We're censors!" "We don't like censors!" "Let's have a pre-planned mostly athletic encounter to settle our scripted differences!" There's your backstory. The APA and the Dudleys dances with Too Cool on Smackdown which wasn't as funny as it sounds. Steven says his team will win in his hometown. D-Von vs. Goodfather to start which might be an Affirmative Action thing.

The fans, to no one's surprise, want tables. Let's see...four former ECW guys in this. No wonder the fans are into it. Bubba comes in quickly and the Ho Train misses. Belly to back gets two for Bubba. Buchanan is so mad he took his tie off. Bradshaw comes in to a nice pop and beats up Buchanan for awhile. Buchanan hits his pretty awesome walk up the ropes and hit a turning clothesline for two.

Venis comes in with his white pants and jokes run rampant. Fallaway slam puts Venis down and it's off to Farroq (how DO you spell that anyway?). This has been one sided so far which almost guarantees an RTC victory. Venis hits what is called the Blue Thunder Bomb on No Mercy and it's off to Goodfather. D-Von is the one getting beaten down at the moment.

Val misses an elbow and there's the hot (it's Philly so it's automatically hot) tag to Bubba. He cleans house 4-1 and again, why do face teams allow their partners to fight such huge odds? Doomsday Device puts Val down and it all breaks down. Steven slips in a kick to Bubba and that's enough for Val to pin him. Steven was never legally in.

**Rating:** C-. Just an 8 man here and the fans are into the show already so it's not like it took much. The ending was pretty clear after the RTC got beaten down so much. To be fair though every company has tendencies in their booking like that which if you watch enough you can almost always



pick up. ECW was really bad about that. Anyway, this wasn't great but it did its job well enough I suppose.

Post match Steven takes What's Up and goes through a table after a big brawl to keep the crowd from getting more rowdy.

Stephanie is worried about HHH's ribs but he says he's fine. Tonight everything with Angle ends, including him holding back his temper. Stephanie looks WAY better with straight hair. Foley is refereeing this match for some reason. HHH needs to know Stephanie is ok with HHH going all psycho tonight and Stephanie says she is and she might have been wrong about Kurt. HHH questions the maybe aspect and Stephanie says she was wrong.

### Jerry Lawler vs. Tazz

It's a strap match. We're also in Philadelphia so what are you expecting here? You win by pin, submission or four corners. That's a nice change of pace so we don't have to go through the whole dragging thing necessarily. These two hate each other in general so there's no specific backstory given. Plus it's Tazz in Philly so do you really think he's not incredibly over?

Tazz takes over to start and hits a suplex. We go outside and Lawler gets choked while Tazz talks trash to Ross. Lawler takes over and chokes a bit but gets whipped hard. Jerry isn't totally hated here and he hammers with right hands. To be fair though, when he's on offense the fans don't care as much. Tazz no sells a piledriver and then no sells another. Jerry hits a third (in Memphis the guy would be gone 4 months minimum) and Tazz gets up again but this time he collapses. Jerry celebrating is kind of cool.

Jerry gets three corners but stops to choke Tazz a bit and there goes the referee. Since it's Philly it's time for a run-in. And who better to debut in this spot than Raven? The place ERUPTS and Raven plants Jerry with a DDT. Tazmission goes on and Jerry is already out cold so the ending is academic. The fans LOVED Raven.

**Rating:** D+. The match was boring but the whole point was to prove to the ECW fans that maybe WWE isn't totally evil. There was no way you could put Lawler over here and never let it be said that he won't job when need be. Tazz was still serious here so the ending was all that mattered. Raven would be nothing for the most part but had some weird energy in WWF in 2001 which was cool to see.

Austin is here and the place goes nuts again. He beats up Kevin Kelly because that's what Austin does.

Cole takes Jerry's place on commentary. This is when he had blonde hair and is even stupider looking than he is now.

Hardcore Title: Steve Blackman vs. Al Snow vs. Test vs. Perry Saturn vs. Crash Holly vs. Funaki

This is a Hardcore Invitational which means it's like Mania 2000: there's a ten minute time limit and the last person to get a fall over the champion wins the title. Blackman is champion coming in. This was during Snow's reign as European Champion and what I thought was a hilarious gimmick as he would come out dressed as someone from a different European country every show, in this case Italy, complete with a fish and a

portrait of Tony Danza.

They cover the 24/7 rule as that rule is taken away for 24 hours so the champion has a day of rest after the match is over. Everyone goes after Blackman to start and it's a big mess as you would expect. Saturn takes Trish down and Test is mad. He clocks Saturn so Snow takes Test down with Head. Crash totally botches a rana and is more or less powerbombed. Funaki hits a cross body for two on the champ.

Saturn hits a decent moonsault to take out Crash and Snow on the floor. Everyone is on the floor now with seven minutes to go. Crash and Snow are still in the ring and doing nothing interesting. Test is the only one going after Blackman at this point. Scratch that as Crash gets a shot in and pins him with just over 6 minutes left. He runs down the aisle and right into a trashcan shot by Saturn for the pin. Most of everyone fights into the crowd and Saturn isn't smart enough to run for the hills.

There isn't much to say here as everyone is fighting in the same place and there isn't much to say. With three minutes left everyone is still in the same place they were in a few minutes ago. Saturn and Blackman are at ringside now as is Snow. Saturn is in the ring alone with a stick. Blackman grabs his two sticks while Snow grabs...a pizza box? Snow is back in with two minutes left. Steve gets the kendo stick and beats up everyone, winning the title after a shot to Saturn with it at a minute left. Everyone goes after him but they're running out of time. Blackman hangs on because no one covers since they're stupid.

**Rating:** D. This was boring. At Mania it was at least fun but this had a total of three changes. At Mania there were 11 in just five extra minutes. There was no insanity here and it wasn't fun at all. That's not good for a match that is supposed to be designed around total insanity,

which this was supposed to be.

Angle runs into Austin and is scared to death. I don't think they've ever met since Angle's first match was at the Survivor Series where Austin was run down. Angle runs his mouth and says Austin won't win a gold medal. He tries to give Austin one and Austin is about to explode. Angle gets destroyed and the fans are very pleased. Angle is still just an upper midcard guy at this point so this isn't a huge deal. He would however be world champion in less than a month.

### X-Pac vs. Chris Jericho

Pac has been attacking Jericho a lot lately because they needed something to do. He runs to start which is what he's been doing with the beatings also. Jericho is all mad here so he hammers away as does Pac. The announcers aren't sure why Pac has been acting like this either. Dang that was a loud chop by Jericho. Jericho blocks a Bronco Buster with a clothesline and hits a spinwheel kick for no cover.

The springboard dropkick to Pac on the apron is broken up as Jericho is sent to the railing. Pac leaves Jericho laying out there with a bunch of kicks including a baseball slide. Back in and a spin kick gets two for the American. Off to a chinlock which Jericho reverses into a quick sleeper. Pac gets a suplex for two. He hits the Bronco Buster but stops to pose, resulting in a powerbomb out of the corner.

Jericho speeds things up a bit as we talk about HHH vs. Angle. It's Stephanie's birthday. She's 24 today and that surprises me actually. Jericho hits a bronco buster of his own while Pac grabs some nunchucks. A low blow by Pac sets up the X-Factor for two. The kickout got a solid

reaction. Another powerbomb sets up the Walls but Pac grabs a rope. Jericho doesn't care and pulls him out to the middle where he has to break. That's good because it would have looked stupid otherwise. Lionsault is blocked and Pac goes up, only to jump into the Walls and we're done.

**Rating:** C-. This missed for me. It's not a bad match at all but it felt pretty disjointed at times and didn't work all that well. Both guys did ok but the match was really nothing special at all. I'm not sure why but this whole thing was off by just a few steps and it showed badly. Again not a bad match but it felt off.

Pac hits him with the nunchucks post match, setting up a cage match at the next PPV.

Foley is warming up for his refereeing later. Angle comes in to rant and says he had a head cold the night before the Olympics. Foley doesn't seem to care. It's now No DQ. He's Commissioner so he can do that.

Austin comes in to see Rock and they shake hands. He wants to know if Rock knows who stole his keys to the Rent-A-Car that night. Some named Just Joe comes in and says that he heard some information Austin might be interested in. Austin beats him up and leaves. That guy lost clean to the Brooklyn Brawler once.

Tag Titles: Edge/Christian vs. Hardy Boys

This is in a cage and the Canadians are champions. Pin/escaping. No submissions I guess. Also Fink says you have to go over the top even

though there's a door. Both guys have to escape though. We get a clip from Smackdown of the Canadians making fun of the Hardys indy stuff. Matt took a Concharito for his troubles. Big brawl to start as JR and Cole again leave submission out as a way to win. One pin wins it I think.

Matt hits a DDT on Edge so Christian is double teamed a bit. There's no Lita here due to her getting crushed on Smackdown. The Hardys both climb but the Canadians get back up in time. Jeff gets up for what was supposed to be a Swanton Bomb but Edge shoves him off the top of the cage to the floor with NOTHING to catch him. FREAKING OW MAN! Matt hits the Twist on Christian but Edge saves.

I'm not sure if Jeff was supposed to go out that early because there's no point to him being out there now. JR isn't sure if he can get back in or not. Matt gets Christian tied in the ropes and Edge in the Tree of Woe but the Canadians make the save and suplex him off the top of the cage. Matt is rammed into the cage and now Jeff is trying to get back in, failing repeatedly.

Jeff is up on top of the cage now but he gets knocked off the top for the second time in 8 minutes. And people wonder why he had such a drug habit. He steals the key to the door and slides a chair in, only to have Christian slam the door on him. Christian goes out the door which doesn't count here because this is a messed up cage match. He brings in another chair and I think you know what's coming.

Matt is busted. He gets beaten on a lot more and the referee asks if Matt wants it stopped. Conchaitro misses and the Canadians have sore hands. A double clothesline puts them down and Matt goes climbing. He gets his feet over but Christian saves. Jeff has a ladder and hits Christian with it, knocking him out of the cage so it's Matt vs. Edge now. Jeff is on

the ladder and Edge can't get to him and he's all ticked about it. Jeff goes up and it's Swanton time. Whisper in the Wind puts him right between the two of them because we don't need to catch him or anything like that right?

Here's Lita who hits Christian low and rans him off the ladder. Who else can look that good in a swimsuit and bust out a rana off a ladder like that? What a woman. She's holding her wrist after it though. Edge pelts a chair at Jeff and goes up but since he's a heel he's slower than Christmas. The Hardys catch him with chairs and give him a Conchairto, sending him flying to the ring. Matt and Jeff drop down to win the titles.

**Rating:** B+. The weird rules hurt this as again I don't think Jeff was supposed to go out that early. Jeff's bumps were absolutely scary here as he fell off the top of the cage TWICE. Lita served very little purpose here but the Conchairto made up for it. Also, it was Edge and Christian vs. the Hardys. Were you expecting anything less than really good?

Austin comes looking for HHH but finds Stephanie. She tries to suck up to him and has a gift for him. It's the hat he was wearing when he got run over. Austin isn't thrilled and Stephanie says go find Shane because Shane knows who it was. She can't act. I mean really, she can't. If she wasn't so hot it might actually annoy me.

Foley is still warming up and HHH comes up. He talks about bonding with Foley a bit recently but tonight it's all business. He's going to do to Kurt what he did to Foley before. Tonight HHH wants to make sure it'll be right down the line. Foley says that since it's no DQ he doesn't care what happens so he'll call it right down the line. Maybe one day they'll laugh together again but not tonight.

Jerry comes back for more commentary.

We recap Eddie vs. Rikishi. Eddie pretended to dance with Too Cool and beat them up. Rikishi came out for the save and they started feuding. Eddie cheated Chyna out of the IC Title and threw her out. Then he tried to reconcile which failed due to her being in Playboy, resulting in some bad comedy spots. Eddie blinded Rikishi, resulting in Chyna getting beaten up by mistake while Eddie did nothing to help. Eddie got out of it by asking her to marry him. This would all crash down next month when he got caught in the shower with two chicks, one being the future Victoria.

#### Intercontinental Title: Eddie Guerrero vs. Rikishi

Cole is gone. SWEET. Rikishi dominates to start but misses a drop onto the chest. That goes nowhere as Eddie runs almost immediately. Chyna says get back in there and he says don't tell me what to do. She shoves him and Eddie freaks. JR got an early copy of Chyna's Playboy so Jerry is asking as many questions as you can legally ask about women. Eddie avoids the Stinkface and heads to the floor. Chyna accidentally distracts Rikishi and Eddie takes over.

Back in the Frog Splash misses and Chyna Warrior Princess is worried. Rikishi tries to throw Eddie in the air and catch him with a Samoan Drop but totally misses it, making it look like...like a horribly botched one man 3D for lack of a better term. There's the Banzai Drop but Chyna comes in to break up the count. That isn't a DQ somehow as Chyna begs him not to count the pin. Rikishi gets in her face and throws her inside. She gets in his face so he superkicks her and hits the Banzai Drop. Somehow that's a DQ win for Eddie. Uh...sure?



**Rating:** D+. This was supposed to be heelish tendencies or something but his real heel turn, as in the one where he was revealed as the driver, was over two weeks later. I'm not sure what the point here was but the dance music doesn't work with it at all. The booking here was really weird and the match wasn't any good either.

Eddie gets the belt before checking on Chyna.

Undertaker doesn't care who he beats tonight but he'll humble someone and become champion. Not for about 20 months dead man.

Angle laments having a bad day when Trish comes up to offer a shoulder to cry on. He blows her off and says he has to go. This is Kurt's lack of getting it and it's still funny.

We recap Kurt vs. HHH. Basically Kurt wants Stephanie and kissed her after she got hurt in a match. HHH FREAKED and accidentally punched Stephanie in the process. Angle beat up HHH for it and cost him the world title. Stephanie is all torn and also keeps getting hit in the face by HHH by mistake. Foley made the match and for some reason is refereeing. Foley had no issues with Kurt so it made no sense. HHH wants to know what kind of a man wants to be friends with a woman that looks like Stephanie. Gay jokes started so Kurt hit him in the ribs with a sledgehammer then kissed Steph again.

Kurt Angle vs. HHH

Foley is referee and it's no DQ. Kurt sings Happy Birthday to Stephanie before the match. I miss the My Time music. Oh and HHH has really injured ribs due to the attack Thursday. Angle goes for the ribs so HHH punches him. Why would you wear rib tape? I mean doesn't that just make the beating worse? Don't wear them and maybe the other guy will just work on your arm.

They hit the floor and Kurt is thrown into the Fink. HHH sets up the announce table quickly but Angle manages to whip him into the railing. Back inside now and HHH spears him and pounds away. Now Kurt is all fired up and JR admits it's a big soap opera. He stomps away (Kurt, not JR) on HHH's ribs but the Game grabs a DDT for two. HHH goes after Foley but the REAL American gets a German to the normal American for two.

Now Angle goes after Foley and is shoved down. A regular suplex gets two for Kurt. HHH starts a comeback and doesn't really kick it into high gear yet. We look at Stephanie and good night she's gorgeous. HHH is thrown over the corner and out to the floor, hurting his ribs again. Kurt is thrown into the steps and now the Game goes to that announce table again. Then he just stops doing that.

Kurt gets popped in the back with a chair and HHH loads up the Pedigree on the table. Angle blocks it with a low blow and hits a wicked release belly to belly through the other table. HHH is bleeding from the mouth. Kurt works over the ribs and does it the right way: he mixes up the offense on it with various shots and doesn't stick with the same thing over and over again.

He tries a shoulder into the ribs in the corner but HHH moves, sending Kurt's shoulder into the post. Angle kind of shrugs it off and hits a belly to belly off the middle rope for two. There's an abdominal stretch

which is the right move for something like this. HHH is cut near the eye. Angle fires off the moonsault but since it's a Kurt Angle moonsault it misses.

HHH comes back but his left arm is pretty worthless due to the ribs hurting too much. He loads up the Pedigree but it's a one armed version so Kurt isn't dead. HHH waves Steph into the ring and says she has to choose. She hits Kurt low and HHH hits a regular Pedigree for the pin. She's not thrilled but it's more a look of shock than anything else.

**Rating:** B. That's as high as this can possibly get. They never kicked it into a higher gear, but Angle wasn't a higher gear kind of guy yet. He was still the heel that was a bumbling idiot but could turn it on when he needed to and that's ok. He also hadn't had his wars with Benoit yet to make everyone's jaws drop at once. Either way, this was good stuff, although definitely not great stuff. JR talking about how there's more to it is kind of stupid too as this came off like a blowoff match.

HHH kisses Stephanie in a weird hard way post match and she seems a bit messed up by it.

Too Cool are at WWF New York.

Here's Shane who claims to have video proof of who ran over Austin, which is why Austin is here tonight. Shane hoped they could do this in private...which is why he came out into the arena. He says it's not someone you would expect and it's someone with a history of vehicular assault. We get a clip of Steve Blackman hitting Shamrock with a car about a year ago. This is the proof that Blackman did it to Austin according to Shane. They had just gotten done feuding if that clears

anything up.

Here's Blackman and he's not happy. I may need some additional information here. He's especially not happy here. Cue Glass Shatters and Austin gets a huge pop. He's got the Disturbed song now too. Austin hits all four corners and Austin gets in Blackman's face. Blackman says he didn't do it and Shane is here too. Shane is behind Austin talking trash. Blackman tries to leave and takes a Stunner. Shane gets some beers and Austin has a drink. Shane has a Stunner and spits the beer in a nice touch.

JR questions Blackman's guilt and there's a Stunner for Shane. Shane gets up after a bit and goes down again from a second Stunner. The place gets louder for each Stunner too. Austin leaves him laying but goes back to flip the fans off a bit more. This is Austin's official return as he'll be on Raw tomorrow. Shane gets up and takes a third Stunner to just kill him dead. There's something awesome about Austin hurting people for fun and it never gets old.

We recap the main event where the idea is that Rock is a marked man. All four guys wanted to fight each other and all three said they should be #1 contender so Foley made the match. The video is about everyone beating up everyone.

Rock says he's ready as only he can. He talks about what all three of them might want, implying Kane wants to be burned, Benoit wants to perform oral sex on a wolverine and that Taker gets a, shall we say, nice feeling from a motorcycle. As always, words don't do these justice.

WWF Title: Kane vs. The Rock vs. Undertaker vs. Chris Benoit

One fall to a finish. Taker still has Kid Rock for his music here. There are about 7 referees in the ring to keep the brawl from starting until Rock is there. Taker vs. Benoit and Rock vs. Kane to start. No tags here so I'd assume no DQ. Now it's brother on brother violence as Rock vs. Benoit is out in the crowd. Top rope clothesline gets two for Kane. Taker's jumping version gets the same.

Big boot gets two for Taker. The others are back now and Rock gets a Samoan Drop for two on the Big Fried Freak. Rock and Taker put Kane on the floor so they can brawl a bit. Taker sets for Old School but Rock breaks it up, tossing Taker from the top and sending him to the floor. Kane is back in now as Jerry asks where Benoit is. There goes the referee. Taker caves Rock's head in with a chair and Benoit does the same to Taker. The referee gets up and BENOIT WINS THE TITLE?????

Oh of course not as here's Foley to say Taker was in the ropes. Did we really need a Dusty Finish here? Everyone is mad at Benoit for some reason and they stalk him up the aisle. Rock sends him into the set as does Taker. Back in the ring Taker gets two on Benoit with Rock making the save. We get a replay showing that Taker's leg was on the ropes so at least it was correct.

Rock pops Taker in the head with the steps. Well at least he wasn't touching a rope. Rock gets his move that is supposed to be an overhead belly to belly but is more like a random thrown. Rolling Germans get two for Benoit. The headbutt gets two and now Benoit is in the Crossface. Now there's something you don't see every day. Kane and Taker are back in now and Kane hits a chokeslam for two.

Benoit breaks up the elbow to draw MAD heat. It says a lot about Rock

that the People's Elbow, the most overblown of all overblown moves, is over in Philly. Last Ride to Rock but Kane saves again. Benoit cracks the brothers with chair shots and puts Rock in the Crossface. Taker FINALLY breaks it up after a record for most time in the Crossface. Chokeslam gets two on Benoit as Kane saves. The big guys slug it out and a Rock Bottom keeps the title on the Brahma Bull.

**Rating:** C+. Not bad here but it's really just like any other four way main event you'll see. It's fine for what it was but it didn't feel like a big deal at all at almost any time. The Dusty Finish wasn't needed and slowed things down a lot and I'd have rather seen Benoit get it. Then again he wasn't ready for it yet so I can live with that and totally understand it. Not bad but nothing worth seeing again.

**Overall Rating:** B-. Certainly not a bad show but it feels weak at points. Austin coming back was the real main event and that wasn't paid off until about two and a half weeks later. The tag title match is good but they've had better and Angle was good but has had better. It's that kind of show all around, so while it was entertaining there are far better shows worth popping in and checking out over this one.

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# On This Day: September 23, 1996 – Monday Nitro: The NWO Runs Things. Into The Ground.

## Monday Nitro #54

Date: September 23, 1996

Location: CSU Convocation Center, Cleveland, Ohio

Attendance: 4,308

Commentators: Bobby Heenan, Larry Zbyszko, Tony Schiavone, Eric Bischoff, Mike Tenay

As mentioned on the previous show, this is the one where everyone not named Savage is in Japan. Eric, ever the lunkhead, mentioned this last week and the NWO knows about it. Expect a lot of unusual names on this show and a lot of matches that no one would ever want to see. Oh and a lot of the NWO as well I'm sure. Let's get to it.

Tony holds up an ad that is allegedly in the USA Today, talking about Nitro being taken over by the NWO tonight. Larry talks about parasites.

We get clips of fans tearing up NWO stuff.

## Konnan/Kevin Sullivan vs. Brad Armstrong/Juventud Guerrera

The two Mexicans start us off and Konnan takes it to the mat. Juvy is like "screw that in Spanish" and fires off a plancha and slingshot leg to speed things up. And there's the 187 to stop that quickly. Sullivan won't tag in so Konnan has to keep fighting. Armstrong comes in and cleans house a bit but there's a powerbomb. Sullivan finally makes a tag and here are the NWO sign guys. Sullivan gets a pin. That's literally all he did in the entire match: walk in and get a pin. Pretty much a squash match.

The Dungeon beats down Konnan for no apparent reason post match. And then they stop and help him up. It was an initiation according to Sullivan.

We get some clips from the end of last week's show where the NWO said they were coming for Savage this week. Savage says he's a marked man and if that's what it takes to get at Hogan, that's cool with him. He's the last hope for WCW and says he volunteered to stay here tonight on his own. As for Liz, and I quote, "The only thing we have in common is that in a thousand lifetimes, we might be goldfish swimming in the same water." Kids, don't do drugs.

### Mike Enos vs. Chris Jericho

We're told that it's Harlem Heat vs. Outsiders for the titles at Havoc. They start fast and Jericho gets slapped, as does Enos. Enos channels his inner JYD and gets on all fours to headbutt Jericho. Pretty basic match so far as we talk about Savage and the NWO. Larry says there was something else Savage said that Larry didn't like. He doesn't bother saying what that is, but I guess that's an exercise left up to us.

They go to the floor and it's all Enos. He loads up the steps and suplexes Jericho onto them, which isn't a DQ I guess. Three minutes after he initially brought it up, Larry says it was the last hope for WCW line that he didn't like. Off to a bearhug and then a powerslam for two. All Enos so far. Jericho gets put into a Boston Crab which isn't ironic yet. Over the shoulder backbreaker now but Jericho counters into a sunset flip for two.

Missile dropkick puts Enos down and up to the corner we go. He sets for a super rana but Enos powerbombs him out of it (not as exciting as it sounds) for two. In a pretty cool ending that I don't think I've seen before, Jericho counters a powerslam into something like a powerslam of his own (better than it sounds) for the pin. That looked pretty sweet



actually.

**Rating:** B-. Much better match here than I was expecting. Enos was fine for what he was supposed to be here: a power guy acting as a foil for Jericho to look good against here. The ending was good too and it's always fun to see a guy like Jericho getting one of his first big breaks on national TV. Fun match that did things simply but well.

### Pat Tanaka vs. Glacier

Tanaka comes out to what would become Goldberg's music. The guy that got the music became one of the biggest stars ever while Tanaka became the referee for Micro Championship Wrestling. It's snowing again and we hear about Larry being a black belt also. Think they'll be kicking a lot? Larry explains what the fist behind the hand for the bow means (wanting violence to be the second choice). They avoid kicks for awhile until Tanaka hooks a sitout powerbomb. Ignore that as a spin kick ends this in about 30 seconds. Glacier won in case you're really stupid.

### Tag Titles: Harlem Heat vs. Public Enemy

Arn vs. Lex is announced for Havoc as well. The champs jump them and double team Rock for a bit. Booker vs. Rock to start but it's off to Grunge quickly. We take a break and come back with Heat in control now. Booker crotches himself on a kick attempt though and it's a not hot tag to Grunge. Big clothesline puts Johnny down (it's Booker T/Stevie Ray vs. Johnny Grunge/Rocco Rock if you've been confused so far) and it's off to Ray.

Time to talk about Savage again and we have a table from nowhere set up on the floor. Grunge is knocked to the floor and hit his back on it on the way down. Well that sucks. A Harlem Side Kick hits Grunge for two and we cut to the back to see the NWO arrive, now in two limos. At least it's a chinlock that we're missing which is an old school technique for

getting around this kind of stuff. It was usually used when there was a fight in the crowd or something. Whenever you see fans looking elsewhere, you'll often see a veteran go into a rest hold to make sure the fans don't miss anything. That's how a good wrestler thinks.

The hot tag brings in Rocco and he cleans house as well as a dirty man like he can. He fires off a bunch of right hands but runs into the Heat. The Hangover misses for the most part (Booker's back landed on him instead) and we get a near fall due to Grunge's foot being on the ropes. There's a small package on Booker and Rock reverses it for the pin and the shocking title change.

**Rating:** D+. The match sucked but this was the kind of surprise that was designed to make you think anything could happen. They lost the titles like two weeks later so that Harlem Heat could defend against the Outsiders so it's not like this lasted a significant amount of time, but it was a good surprise and I was legit shocked when it happened.

Second hour begins.

### Greg Valentine vs. Randy Savage

Eric says there's a new NWO member tonight. I can't think of who that would be as the next member wasn't until October and it was nothing of note unless I'm totally overlooking someone. Valentine jumps him and that doesn't work all that well. They go to the floor with Valentine having his token control period. We hear that Super Calo has injured his elbow in a dark match so he's out for awhile. Savage clocks Valentine with a chair twice and that's a DQ. The whole point of this is coming down the aisle though.

Here's the NWO and it's beatdown time. A Jackknife puts him down and Savage is in trouble. Giant grabs a mic and introduces Hogan. They beat him down even more and drop a leg on him. They even beat him with a Slim Jim. Hogan talks about

Savage being bald and they spraypaint the top of his head.

They storm the announcers' booth and Bobby runs with Tenay. Eric can't get away though and the announcers sit down with him. They debut their head of security: Vincent. That would be Virgil from WWF. To be fair, no one cared about him or had heard of him in years so it's not like this meant anything.

Ok so the NWO will be running the commentary for the rest of the night. Eric keeps trying to leave but can't get away. They debut the NWO Nascar car which used to be the WCW car. Kyle Petty is the driver.

### Jim Powers vs. Michael Wallstreet

Giant is the new announcer. Hall and Nash leave the booth and DiBiase sits down instead. The Outsiders are beating up Powers now so there's no match.

Randy Anderson walks out so Nick Patrick says he'll do all the refereeing.

Giant chokeslams Powers again and we cut to Hogan in the back, spraypainting something. He comes down the hall and runs into the Nasty Boys. Hogan gives them his hotel key and says tonight they won't be fighting the Outsiders because they can talk some business with Hogan later. A defection is implied.

### Jim Duggan vs. Syxx

It's supposed to be Ron Studd but that doesn't happen as Hogan and Nash beat him down in the aisle. We hear what might be the debut of the NWO theme song. Hogan jumps in on commentary which is something that is very rare to hear. Duggan takes over to start and gets the USA chant going. You know, Syxx is from Minnesota. Wouldn't a USA chant help him as well? The three point clothesline hits but Giant pulls Duggan out and hits one of the worst chokeslams I've ever seen on the concrete so that Syxx can get the pin. He had no other

offense.

### NWO Sting vs. Bo LaDue

LaDue has never had another televised match as far as I know. Sting does the usual Sting stuff and no one buys it. Splash and Deathlock end this.

Hogan talks about Savage a bit.

### High Voltage vs. Outsiders

This is part of the NWO Tag Team Tournament. The French Canadians are supposed to be the opponents but the Outsiders come out next so the French dudes run. I have no idea what there is to say about this. Hall beats on one of them, Nash beats on one of them, we take a break, we come back with more beatings, we get a Brooke/Nick reference, Hall suplexes Rage off the top, a Jackknife pins Kaos. That match lasted about 11 minutes.

**Rating:** F. Yeah it's a squash, yeah it's supposed to be dominant, yeah it was really boring.

The NWO talks for a few minutes to end the show.

**Overall Rating:** D+. This is one of the benchmarks where you can see that everything is about TV instead of being for the live audience. Can you imagine how bored they've been for the last two hours of this show? Nothing has happened at all. The whole thing was about the NWO and they have no idea that Vincent is the new man either. This was all for the TV show, which is fine but it takes the crowd out of stuff quickly. Not a good show, but a lot of that is due to everyone being in Japan.

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# Monday Night Raw – September 23, 2013: Now We Sound The Drums Of War

## Monday Night Raw

Date: September 23, 2013

Location: Allstate Arena, Chicago, Illinois

Commentators: Michael Cole, John Bradshaw Layfield, Jerry Lawler

Things are getting interesting around here with the locker room starting to revolt against the HHH regime. The main story at the moment sees a group of ten guys standing up to the boss last week, setting the stage for a potential showdown between HHH and pretty much everyone else. This has the potential to be a very fun time for the WWE and Raw in particular. Let's get to it.

We open with an in memory graphic of Angelo Savoldi, the world's oldest professional wrestler, who died over the weekend at age 99.

We recap the events of Night of Champions as well as the Bryan/Armstrong segment resulting in Bryan being stripped of the title. Some of the locker room revolted, setting the stage for tonight.

The ten men who revolted (Prime Time Players, Usos, Zack Ryder, Kofi Kingston, R-Truth, Rob Van Dam, Dolph Ziggler and Justin Gabriel) are on the stage as HHH and Stephanie head to the ring. The bosses welcome us to the show before turning their attention to the guys on the stage. Shield is standing guard as usual. HHH thanks the guys for finally standing up for what they believe in. RVD says they were fighting for Daniel Bryan because HHH would have done the same thing to them had the roles been reversed.

HHH thinks they're supposed to be fighting to be WWE Champion, not for the WWE Champion. The bosses ask why none of them are the face of the WWE, but HHH answers for them: it's because of the Shield. Therefore, tonight it's an elimination handicap match with Daniel Bryan joining the ten of them. Also there's going to be an audience poll on the WWE App to determine who faces Orton here tonight: Truth, Ziggler or RVD.

Cole shows us how to install the WWE App because we're not bright enough to do that ourselves.

### Alberto Del Rio vs. Kofi Kingston

Non-title of course. Del Rio shoulder blocks him down to start but Kofi comes back with the double leapfrog, only to be sent into the corner before he can hit the jumping back elbow. A running clothesline sends Del Rio to the floor and there's a BIG flip dive (much more like a flip clothesline with Kofi landing on his feet) to take Alberto out. Back in and Alberto hits a hard kick to the head before taking it to the mat for a bit. Another kick to the head has Kofi in trouble but he dropkicks Alberto the floor, setting up the aborted suicide dive as we take a break.

Back with Del Rio kicking Kofi in the back for two and cranking on the arm. Apparently Kofi sent the arm into the post during the break. Del Rio gets caught on the middle rope but pulls Kingston down into the armbreaker on the ropes. Del Rio clotheslines Kofi down and goes up, only

to jump into a dropkick which missed by nearly a foot. Some more dropkicks and the SOS are good for two on Alberto and the Boom Drop keeps the champion in trouble.

Trouble in Paradise is countered into a German suplex for two and a double stomp has Kofi down again. Kofi counters the armbreaker and a tilt-a-whirl backbreaker into something Cole calls a DDT for two. Kingston misses a springboard cross body, landing on the bad arm. Del Rio sends it into the post, hits a Codebreaker to the arm and the armbreaker gets the tap at 14:03.

**Rating:** C+. Nice match here as Kofi is continually good for a solid performance against anyone you put him against. Getting wins like this will only help Del Rio get his credibility back but he's too far gone to be saved now. It's nice to see the WHC get some exposure like this though so not much to complain about here.

Miz is about to talk about Orton's attack last week when HHH comes in. He laughs about Miz being hurt last week so tonight it's MizTV with Big Show as guest.

We recap the Rhodes' family troubles over the last few weeks.

### Wyatt Family vs. Prime Time Players

You could have known that the Wyatts were in action tonight had you downloaded the WWE App. Or you could have just watched the show and found out like everyone else. The Players get a jobber entrance and the squashing begins early. Harper pounds on Young to start before bringing in Rowan, who is still wearing the mask. A hard slam leads to the mask being revealed as Young is destroyed even more.

A backbreaker from Rowan and it's back to Harper who stops Young's comeback attempt. There go the lights for some reason but it appears to

be an electrical glitch as they're back a few seconds later. Darren kicks Luke away and makes the tag off to Titus to clean house. Darren hits a Cactus Clothesline to take Rowan to the floor but Harper catches Titus with the discus lariat for the pin at 4:26.

**Rating:** D+. Long squash here as the Players' push appears to be in trouble. The Wyatts continue to be awesome with that discus lariat becoming quite the weapon. Introducing the Sister Abigail plot point for Bray was a nice recharge for the characters and hopefully they'll add more to it soon.

Post match Bray hits Sister Abigail on Young.

Time for MizTV with Big Show. Miz is still favoring his arm after the Orton attack last week. He says he'd usually welcome us to the show but right now he's banged up and ticked off. It's a lot easier to put him down than to keep him down and payback is coming. Miz moves on to the Big Show/Dusty Rhodes segment from last week before bringing out the giant. Miz immediately asks Big Show how he could have done that last week before saying if Show didn't, Shield would have destroyed Dusty instead.

HHH and Stephanie are trying to break Big Show because he's the biggest guy in the locker room but now everyone is starting to step up. It's time for Big Show to step up to that witch, so here's Stephanie to her horrid music. She calls Miz's statements slander but Miz isn't scared. Stephanie talks about Miz's failures and calls him a utility player. He's good for all the promotional stuff but last week in his hometown, Miz failed his family, his friends and himself. Big Show is forced to knock Miz out before storming off.

Rob Van Dam wins the poll to face Orton in a landslide.

Randy Orton vs. Rob Van Dam



Orton takes him into the corner to start but has to bail to the floor to avoid a spin kick. Back in and RVD hits a kick in the corner to send Randy right back to the floor. Orton sends him face first into the apron as we take a quick break. Back with Orton getting two off a suplex and putting on a chinlock. RVD comes back with some kicks and Rolling Thunder for two. Orton charges into a boot and gets caught with the split legged moonsault, only to come back with the Elevated DDT.

The RK0 is countered with a kick to the face and a rollup is good for two on Randy. The middle rope kick to the face puts Orton down but he's back up before Rob can launch the Five Star. Instead it's the cannonball to put Orton down but he pops up to crotch Rob in the corner. A kick to the head puts Rob on the floor and Orton sends Rob into various objects until it's a double countout at 10:45.

**Rating:** C+. This wasn't bad but it was all to set up the post match stuff. Rob was looking good out there and Orton was his usual solid self. They actually had some chemistry together and the match was pretty entertaining as a result. A double countout wasn't necessary as Van Dam might be leaving soon, but at least Orton didn't lose.

Orton keeps up the attack and destroys Van Dam even more, sending him into the barricade, steps and announce table before taking Rob's unconscious body back inside. A top rope Elevated DDT knocks Rob silly, possibly to write him off TV since his 90 day deal is coming up soon. Appropriately enough, Orton put Van Dam out in 2007 for Rob's first exit.

Los Matadores are here next week!

The announcers show Del Rio attacking RVD during the break on the WWE App. He put Rob in the armbreaker for a few seconds but was pulled off by referees.

Randy Orton comes up to the Bellas to offer himself as a replacement man once he takes out Daniel Bryan. Brie turns him down and Orton talks some

more trash.

We get some clips from HHH and Stephanie's wedding as an ad for the new HHH DVD. Stephanie is watching in the back when AJ comes in to see her. Stephanie gives AJ a copy of the new DVD to show her what a real wedding looks like. AJ wants the Total Divas to go away like the reality show so Stephanie glares at her. Stephanie threatens to strip AJ of the title if she doesn't fight tonight. Again, who am I supposed to cheer for in AJ vs. Total Divas? It's never been made clear.

### Santino Marella vs. Fandango

Naturally we start with dancing until Fandango takes him down and stomps away. Santino hurts his head trying to nip up and it's off to a body scissors. The fans chant overrated which Cole says is actually Summer Rae. Back up for an abdominal stretch but Santino hip tosses out and starts his usual offense. A Summer distraction lets Fandango suplex Santino down and the guillotine legdrop gets the pin at 3:50.

**Rating:** D+. The match was nothing of note but we got to look at Summer in a very revealing outfit and the comedy goof gets pinned. What more can you ask for in less than four minutes? Fandango's push coming back would be fine but he doesn't really have anything to go after given how all the champions are heels.

Here's Punk, clad in a Chicago Blackhawks jersey, for the first time since Night of Champions. During the entrance we're told it's Punk vs. Ryback at Battleground. Punk is annoyed at the audience for ruining his bad mood because he hasn't smiled in eight days. He tried to get the Stanley Cup here tonight but he couldn't quite get it. It feels like he let everyone down just like he did in Detroit last weekend. It's going to read in Gray's Sports Almanac that Paul Heyman beat him.

Punk isn't smart enough to stay down a lot of the time but maybe he can't do this anymore. Maybe he doesn't deserve to wear this jersey anymore or

to wrestle in front of the best crowd in the world or to say he's from Chicago anymore. Then he comes out here and remembers being down 3-1 against the Detroit Redwings and coming back to win the series in seven games. That's the Chicago way: if you get beaten you come back and keep fighting. Punk wants to fight anyone right now but here's Heyman on a motorized scooter, singing what sounds like a Frank Sinatra song.

Heyman does his catchphrases but the fans finish it off for him in a funny bit. Punk threatens Heyman with an even worse beating than at Night of Champions because there are thousands of people here that will bail him out of jail. Heyman reminds us that he beat Punk but it's due to geography. See, Chicago is the Second City while the first city is Heyman's hometown: New York City.

We see a shot of Paul getting the pin at the PPV, triggering a walrus chant. Heyman says he may be a walrus, but he pinned the shark in Detroit. Punk wants to know if Heyman's goons can get to him before Punk gets to Heyman, because he only needs two seconds to rip Heyman's face off. Paul says he beat Punk with both hands tied behind his back and goes to leave but the scooter doesn't work.

Punk goes after him but Ryback and Axel save their boss just in time. Punk makes a comeback and sends Axel into the set before diving off the stage to take out Ryback. The numbers catch up to him though and Ryback rips off the Blackhawks jersey. Punk is thrown onto the equipment and onto the edge of a table for good measure. Heyman stands up and jumps off the ramp, revealing that it was of course a ruse. Ryback says this is what happens to bullies.

#### Total Divas vs. AJ Lee/Alicia Fox/Layla/Aksana

Nikki is back in the ring now. Punk is helped to the back during the entrances. Natalya and Alicia get things going and Fox has to escape the Sharpshooter after just a few seconds. A big boot in the corner gets two for Alicia and it's off to the chinlock. Natalya goes after the leg and

it's off to Brie for some dropkicks. Off to AJ for some kicks, only to get caught in the Bella Buster for the pin at 1:55. Great, this feud gets to continue.

We get a montage of RKO's from the Youtube channel. Thanks for adding in that Youtube detail. It really made the video that much better.

Shield says their backs are against the walls but that means they always win.

Here's Bryan with something to say. He talks about the allegations of a fast count from last week but doesn't think it holds up. Why would you need a fast count when the other person was out cold? Bryan doesn't really care though because he's taking back the title in two weeks at Battleground. There won't be any fast counts or conspiracies. After Orton wakes up, the only thing he'll be hearing is YES. Cue Shield for the attack but Cody Rhodes and Goldust jump the barricade to go after them, only to be dragged off by security.

Shield vs. Daniel Bryan/Usos/Prime Time Players/Zack Ryder/Kofi Kingston/Dolph Ziggler/Rob Van Dam/R-Truth/Justin Gabriel

Elimination rules here. Jimmy Uso starts against Rollins but it's quickly off to Ziggler. Kofi and Rob are both here though very taped up. The fans are way behind Ziggler but Ambrose gets the tag to take over. Dean takes him into the corner to bring in Reigns for the power strikes. Back to Rollins for a kick to the chest but the now legal Ambrose gets dropkicked down. The tag brings in Van Dam but a quick shot to the ribs slows him down. Van Dam misses a charge into the post and the bulldog driver makes it 10-3 at 2:57.

Back with Kofi's hold on Rollins being broken before it's back to Ambrose to work on Kofi's injured arm. Dean pounds away in the corner but Kofi flips out of a belly to back suplex. Ambrose goes right back to the bad shoulder to stop the hot tag though and the bulldog driver eliminates

Kingston at 8:06 (all times total).

Titus comes in next to throw Ambrose around before it's off to Reigns for the power showdown. Roman easily shoves him into the corner for some cheap shots from Rollins as Shield takes over again. This has been one sided so far. Titus gets away for a few moments but the spear takes him out at 9:44. Gabriel comes in and gets speared out 15 seconds later.

It's Ryder in now with some more luck, including the knees to the face and the middle rope dropkick, but a spear takes Ryder out at 10:30. GREAT sequence there by Reigns. Bryan comes in with the kicks and clothesline to put Reigns down followed by the running dropkicks in the corner. Jimmy Uso hits a SWEET superkick and Jey's superfly splash eliminates Reigns at 11:24. That's the first time Reigns has been pinned in WWE.

Back from another break with Rollins dropping Young face first onto the buckle before it's back to Ambrose for the dropkick against the ropes. To recap right now it's Rollins/Ambrose vs. Young/Bryan/Ziggler/Usos/R-Truth. Rollins hooks a chinlock before bringing Dean back in, only to have Young score with a belly to belly. The northern lights suplex gets two for Darren but Ambrose escapes the Gut Check. A blind tag brings in Rollins for the top rope knee to eliminate Young at 17:16.

Back to Ziggler to a BIG ovation as he scores with a neckbreaker. Ziggler goes nuts but charges into a release Downward Spiral into the middle rope to give Dean two. Ziggler pops back up and hits a Zig Zag out of nowhere to make it 5-1 at 18:45. It's Rollins vs. Ziggler/Usos/Truth/Bryan. Seth slams Ziggler down and puts on a chinlock but Ziggler comes back with a running DDT to put both guys down. The tag brings in Truth for the first time to clean what's left of the house, getting two off the sitout gordbuster. Rollins comes back with a kick to the ribs and the running curbstomp for the elimination at 11:12.

It's still 4-1 so Bryan sends one guy to each apron in a Shield-esque move. Everyone comes in at the same time for the big beatdown, but here's

Ambrose to brawl with Ziggler. The Usos superkick Reigns to the floor and hit BIG stereo dives to take the other Shield members out. Rollins jumps Bryan from behind and puts him on top, only to be shoved off for the flying headbutt. The running knee ends Rollins at 23:07 for the final pin.

**Rating:** B. Really fun match here with an amazing performance by Reigns in such a short amount of time. That's the kind of thing that got Diesel over back in the day and it set up a good ending to the match here. Bryan gets to stand tall and everyone looked great out there. Can you ask for something better?

**Overall Rating:** B-. The wrestling wasn't much for the most part, but the addition of a show long angle really helped things out here. The locker room revolting is a nice change of pace as you can only have Bryan vs. the world for so long. Other than that the Heyman vs. Punk segment worked really well for me and gives Punk more of a personal reason to want to take out Ryback. Good show this week and one of the better ones in awhile.

### Results

Alberto Del Rio b. Kofi Kingston – Cross Armbreaker

Wyatt Family b. Prime Time Players – Discus lariat to O'Neil

Randy Orton vs. Rob Van Dam went to a double countout

Fandango b. Santino Marella – Guillotine legdrop

Total Divas b. AJ Lee/Aksana/Layla/Alicia Fox – Bella Buster to Lee

Daniel Bryan/Usos/Prime Time Players/Justin Gabriel/R-Truth/Zack Ryder/Dolph Ziggler/Rob Van Dam/R-Truth b. Shield – Running knee to Rollins

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